

USING TOWNSHIP RELIEF MEN ON COUNTY ROAD WORK

By Chas. Mann, Marion County Highway Superintendent

This subject is very important, not only to the taxpayers, but to the workers and their families. In my estimation, keeping up the morale of these "made-work" men is more important than the benefit that the taxed community receives. *Most of these men want work, not charity.* By keeping up their morale through right treatment, proper food and clothing, we are benefiting the community by forestalling the development of radicalism. Our foremen are instructed to be as considerate of these men as of our regular employees. Some of these men probably do not earn all that they receive, but the greater part of them really earn more than they receive.

The "made-work" idea as used in Indianapolis and Marion County originated from the plans of the Indianapolis Commission for Stabilization of Employment. This commission is composed of fifteen business men of Indianapolis, appointed by the Mayor and the Chamber of Commerce. The "made-work" committee is incorporated so as to relieve from any damage suits all departments using these men. It is under the direction and supervision of William Book and George Gill, who deserve a great deal of credit for its success. The idea is to provide work on public projects, wholly outside of regular budgets but for useful purposes. These men are furnished us by the various township trustees. They work from one to four days of eight hours each a week, depending upon the amount of relief required by each individual.

We use these men in cleaning out roadside ditches, shaping up berms, cutting bushes, widening curves, shoveling gravel, constructing new roads, opening drainage ditches, etc. We have accomplished a large amount of work that would not otherwise have been undertaken. In two years' use of these men, we have benefited by approximately 1,000,000 man-hours of work. An analysis of several thousand of these workers showed that half were white and half negroes, a majority being 36 to 40 years of age, ranging from 17 to 86 years of age. The industries represented by these men were as follows:

Building and Construction	38.4%
Metal and Machinery	22.5%
Transportation and Public Utilities	15.7%
Clerical, Professional, Technical	5%
Woodworking and Furniture	3.5%
Foods Industries	3.1%
Agriculture	1.3%
Miscellaneous	10.5%

L. F. Bauer, my assistant in charge of these men, deserves a great deal of credit for the way that these men have been handled on this work. Bruce Short, County Surveyor, and his deputies have been ready at all times to co-operate.

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By Lester Janney, Delaware County Surveyor

Using township relief men on county road work is just another effort of public officials to handle efficiently public funds, or, in other words, to show some practical returns for the taxpayers' dollars, flowing so freely through the channels of relief.

It seems rather general practice to assume that when funds are carefully distributed to the needy for food, fuel, and other necessities, a grand and glorious work has been accomplished and there ends the responsibility. But let you as hard-boiled engineers and superintendents just try to get some actual labor accomplished by this pit-run bunch of relief men and, bingo, the foregoing erroneous theory will almost explode in your face.

This relief work, in a large way, has been going on now more than three years; and, although most of the men are appreciative and willing to work, many on relief are living as well as and easier than they have formerly lived. At the beginning of this depression men wanted and demanded work as a right, and I feel that all were entitled to it. Especially for the actual needy, work should have been provided. Now many men, formerly willing to work, refuse work relief when they find they can get as much relief without work. I say many subscribe to this theory; but it has been so evident to all, over such a long period, that more and more are becoming willing to practice it. The former good habits of useful citizens are degenerating for the lack of work.

I have had only slight contact with work of this kind in Delaware County but am familiar with it and will attempt to tell briefly of results there. This work-relief plan was inaugurated in the spring of 1932, after more than two years of operation on a large scale of relief without work. Suddenly, without much ceremony, the Center Township Trustee issued to able-bodied relief applicants the usual tickets for food or fuel, but with the additional instructions to report on a specified day for work on a certain road.

Arrangements between the trustee and county commissioners provided that the county road department should superintend the work. Some men were transported in county