

BUREAU OF MUNICIPAL RESEARCH

TORONTO'S CITIZENS CAN CONTROL TORONTO'S AFFAIRS ONLY THROUGH FREQUENT, PROMPT, ACCURATE AND PERTINENT INFORMATION WITH REGARD TO TORONTO'S BUSINESS.

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Unemployment Relief in a Metropolitan Community

Unemployment relief, as distinct from chronic relief, is largely an industrial problem. It is not confined to municipal boundaries and any attempt to solve it on a municipal basis is obviously doomed to failure. Chronic relief is not an industrial problem. It exists during good times, and bad. It is naturally a community problem and is properly in the field of local administration, as is Public Health.

Control of immigration, regulation of trade and commerce and inter-community transportation are not and never will be within the competence of municipal corporations. How then can they be held responsible for unemployment relief, the acuteness and amount of which varies from locality to locality without any local means of control? Is it not evident that local communities have logically nothing to do either with the cause or treatment of unemployment or of its consequences?

It is coming to be recognized that unemployment is not a passing phase of national and international life, but that in future the figures for a normal amount of unemployment are apt to be much greater than any figures which obtained before 1929. As a matter of fact, unemployment relief has been a factor in every Toronto budget since 1920. Even if a final cure is discovered, it may appear in the annual budget of Toronto until, say, 1948.

Unemployment relief is apt to become most acute in large metropolitan areas. The table within gives some indication of the size of the burden in one such area, and also illustrates the fact that the burden is not distributed evenly over the area.

FAMILIES ON UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF, TORONTO AND SUBURBAN AREAS† IN 1933

	Scarborough	East York	Leaside	Forest Hill	York	Swansea	Mimico	Etobicoke	New Toronto	Weston	North York	Total without Toronto	Toronto	Total with Toronto
January	1,034	2,071	39	94	3,983	111	287	596	491	108	861	9,675	24,244	33,919
February	988	2,269	45	87	4,352	113	308	587	510	115	909	10,283	25,469	35,752
March	1,054	2,262	34	86	4,367	115	318	621	510	116	946	10,429	26,846	37,275
April	1,065	2,270	29	85	4,004	115	293	608	480	101	815	9,865	25,617	35,482
May	924	2,138	30	86	3,727	116	272	593	447	88	672	9,093	25,304	34,397
June	874	2,145	30	84	3,673	109	275	500	372	69	606	8,737	25,862	34,599
July	881	2,051	26	82	3,586	99	260	448	321	66	526	8,346	24,015	32,361
August	884	2,023	27	81	3,687	96	243	439	326	59	541	8,406	23,399	31,805
September	932	2,054	27	83	3,667	90	239	447	352	56	556	8,503	23,627	32,130
October	961	2,099	28	86	3,864	92	235	430	362	59	598	8,814	24,542	33,356
November	1,072	2,239	28	79	4,058	103	250	546	378	64	674	9,491	25,778	35,269
December	1,121	2,385	30	80	4,317	106	250	615	402	80	746	10,147	27,396	37,543
Total Cost	\$395,842.68	\$662,533.16	\$9,929.72	\$28,029.08	\$1,760,381.38	\$30,948.09	\$102,939.65	\$182,615.29	\$169,343.28	\$22,024.41	\$232,901.97	\$3,597,489	\$6,686,933.86	\$10,284,423
Municipalities' Share of Cost	58,196.43	138,934.26	3,309.90	10,521.81	239,193.77	11,558.33	11,995.93	52,534.59	14,110.90	7,115.66	60,772.88	608,244	2,400,791.36	3,009,036
Paid out of Debenture Issues	Nil x	Nil x	Nil xx	Nil	Nil x	Nil	Nil x	Nil xx	Nil xx	Nil	Nil xx	Nil	2,400,791.36*	2,400,791
Type of Voucher	Closed	Open	Open	Closed <small>(at close of 1933)</small>	Closed	Closed	Closed <small>(at close of 1933)</small>	Closed	Open	Open <small>(at close of 1933)</small>	Open	Open	Closed <small>(1933)</small>	
Population of Municipalities	18,876	36,202	1,304	7,130	69,573	5,232	6,733	13,601	7,861	4,828	\$13,964	185,304	623,562	808,866
Per Capita Cost of Unemployment Relief	\$20.98	\$18.30	\$15.28	\$ 3.93	\$25.30	\$5.92	\$15.29	\$13.43	\$21.54	\$4.56	16.68	\$19.41	\$10.72	\$12.71
No. of Individuals on Relief, Dec. 1933	4,677	11,865	129	347	22,028	449	1,341	2,527	1,690	319	4,544	49,916	113,770	163,686
Per Cent of Population on Relief, Dec. 1933	24.78%	32.77%	9.89%	4.87%	31.66%	8.58%	19.92%	18.58%	21.50%	6.61%	32.54%	26.94%	18.25%	20.24%
Est. No. of Families in the Municipality on basis of 4.6 per family	4,103	7,870	283	1,550	15,125	1,137	1,464	2,957	1,709	1,050	3,036	40,283	135,557	175,840
No. of Families on Relief in Dec. 1933	1,121	2,385	30	80	4,317	100	271	615	402	80	746	10,148	27,396	37,544
Per Cent. of Families who were on relief in Dec. 1933	27.32%	30.30%	10.60%	5.16%	28.55%	8.80%	18.51%	20.80%	23.52%	7.62%	24.57%	25.19%	20.21%	21.35%

x Under Boards of Supervisors. xx Not under supervisors, but in default on principal. (x) (xx) Varying percentages of net, over administration and service charges, assumed by Province. * According to introduction to estimates.
 † Long Branch not included as figures incomplete.

QUERIES.

1. To what extent is the difference in per capita cost between Toronto and suburban municipalities and between the different suburban municipalities due to
 - a. Difference in size of families.
 - b. Difference in efficiency of administration.
 - c. More acute unemployment conditions.
2. To what extent are the differences in percentage of families on relief due to
 - a. Real differences in unemployment conditions.
 - b. Differences in efficiency of administration.
 - c. Differences in standards of unemployment relief.
3. Can there be equity as between localities unless the actual administration of unemployment is centralized and the cost distributed evenly over the nation?
4. Can standards of unemployment relief be properly determined and adjusted without centralization of administration?
5. Can proper standards of administrative efficiency be set up and maintained without centralized administration?
6. Can anything more than alleviation of acute conditions be expected under the present system?
7. Can removal of causes, or effective treatment of the problem be expected from any authorities save those which have powers of establishing unemployment insurance, building up work funds, regulating trade and commerce, and controlling immigration, settlement, transportation, etc.?
8. Why cannot administrative committees of local citizens appointed by central authorities, do all that locally elected authorities can do, possibly without as great influences of favouritism or local political considerations?
9. How long can the municipalities, the provinces and the nation support a burden which in the long run is only being made more intolerable by the widespread policy of financing unemployment relief costs out of borrowed funds?

10. Are the Canadian people willing that a policy of drift be pursued until another crisis comes, or have they the courage, honesty and ability to work out a constructive national policy with regard to unemployment and unemployment relief?
11. If the "dole", as distinguished from unemployment insurance payments, is apt to be demoralizing to individuals in receipt of it, is not the system by which one grade of government pays out to subordinate governmental units unemployment relief "doles" apt to be equally disastrous to the morale of the body politic?
12. Is it a wholesome influence on the public life of Canada, that municipalities which are careful in the selection of families and individuals for unemployment relief, and efficient in controlling the costs of such relief should be penalized, as they are, by the present system of percentage payment by the Provinces and Dominion, by being compelled through provincial and national taxation to help pay the costs of municipalities which in their administration of unemployment relief have been lax, improvident and inefficient? (The inefficient we have always with us, but why put a premium on inefficiency by subsidizing it?)

SUGGESTION.

That a co-operative study be made of the causes of unemployment and the best means of dealing with it by the National and Provincial Governments and that, on the basis of that study, a nation-wide policy as to unemployment prevention and relief be adopted and implemented, with continuous revision, as warranted, of methods of administration and operation.

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