Memorandum: Unemployment Conference, October 27, 1921

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Out of several of the Committees there came suggestions of definite things that might be done to ease the immediate situation. The Shipping Committee suggested that its Shipping Board's wooden vessels and any others that are unsuitable for use should be at once torn to pieces and the material used for commercial purposes. They urge the overhauling and putting into first class condition of such ships as are now tied up but likely to go soon into service.

It was the Public Works Committee naturally that found the largest amount of definite work. Neither the Manufacturing Committee, the Transportation Committee or the Committee on Agriculture had much that was definite to offer. They seem to have found themselves so fettered that their suggestions were chiefly directed to discussions of the fetters which they find upon their activities and to suggestions as to how these fetters may be lessened. The manufacturer threw his case on labor; the railroads, theirs upon Congress, politics, the War Labor Board, the War; the Construction Committee found itself fettered by its own combinations and abuses as well as by the railroads, the manufacturer, taxes, the War.

The really important suggestions for relief came naturally enough out of Public Works. The Conference was able to point out many million dollars worth of work available at the moment but held up for - what sometimes the Conference considered - mistaken notions of economy, such as road work stopped because of high freight rates or the high cost of materials. Appropriations held back by Congress for the finishing of certain of the irrigation projects - municipal, and state funds voted for specific buildings held back because later it might be cheaper, thus all of this public work thrown at once in the pool of depression.

The bestirring of municipalities and governors and Congress to push it forward was the most important emergency suggestions that
the Conference could offer outside of its plan for the proper organization of communities.