1934 MOBILIZATION FOR HUMAN NEEDS
1810 GRAYBAR BUILDING
420 LEXINGTON AVENUE
NEW YORK, N.Y. · MOHAWK 4-6605
OCTOBER 21 TO NOVEMBER 11

NEWTON D. BAKER, Chairman
MRS. FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, Chairman
National Women's Committee

ALLEN T. BURNS, Executive Director

September 5, 1934

Miss Ida M. Tarbell
120 East 19th Street
New York City

My dear Miss Tarbell:

I am returning the article which you and I have talked over and labeled "Mr. Chenery." I have numbered the paragraphs in which I thought slight changes should be made and stated my reasons, which I submit for your judgment.

In addressing Mr. Chenery, you may think it fitting to state as a sales argument that you have taken up the article with Newton D. Baker and know it is a subject which he would like very much ~~to~~ discuss, and also that Mr. Baker has promised that the promotion services of the Mobilization will be put behind this article so that the attention of hundreds of American communities will be called to it.

The dates for the Mobilization are October 21-November 11. The period was decided upon because it is at that time that the majority of American communities hold their campaigns for privately supported social work. An article, therefore, run just before the Mobilization period, or in the first week of it, would be particularly helpful.

And now for the changes which I am submitting for your consideration:

Page 4 - Paragraph marked "A" - I thought it best in this paragraph to play a little safe, because one cannot get facts to substantiate the report referred to, in all sections of the country. There are sections where relief is being administered on a pretty honest, fair basis. I suggest, therefore, that the sentence read that "These facts illustrate one of the most disconcerting developments in the present program of Federal relief."

Page 5 - Paragraph marked "B A" - I didn't think that "Unemployment has reached its maximum decrease" and "Relief has made its maximum increase" were very clear, unless tied up again with the spring of 1934 or some such phrase as "to date" were introduced. Figures on unemployment relief are subject

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to such constant changes, and by the time the article is published are so likely to have assumed entirely new proportions, so I thought you might want to safeguard it in some way.

Page 5 - Paragraph marked "B" - The two paragraphs included in this grouping seem to me to give only one side of the picture and it seems that in all fairness we should consider certain other factors. I have made these changes in the following paragraph, which I am submitting to you for the facts contained, knowing that you will want to put it into your own phraseology:

"The man from the desert has it that people are admitted to the relief rolls who have no legitimate place there.

"No doubt, this is true, but there are other reasons for this seeming paradox of more people with jobs, more money spent, and more people on relief than a year ago. When the relief plan was first set up, families in cities were given about $18 a month, families in rural communities less. Today, families in cities are averaging about $24 a month, although these figures vary with the states.

"It doesn't take much Yankee figuring, whatever the amount of money received by a family on relief may be, to show that it is scanty enough at best. And yet, it is true that Federal relief has tried to make the distribution of its money more adequate to the individual needs of the families, in the last year or two, with the result that more money has been received per family."

(Please note in this connection the Bulletin on "Unemployment Relief During April, 1934," which I am enclosing. In the section marked "2782" you will find the rates by states; for instance, in Alabama the average relief per month (April of this year) was $10.71; in Arkansas, $5.00; in Delaware, $13.11, and in District of Columbia, $35.71, etc.)

People with savings and out of work have been literally "eating up" their resources in the last few years. Each month has added thousands of these people to the relief ranks with the confession that all they once had is gone. It is necessary, therefore, when we read that more money is being spent on relief,-more families are receiving aid,-that we keep in mind these various facts. This does not mean that we are blind to certain abuses which have crept into the relief system. Armed with the knowledge of these facts, we are more than ever determined that the money appropriated for relief must go only to those in actual need, and that political proteges and hangers-on must be ~~blocked~~ Knocked off the list.

Page 5 -"B" - I do not feel that the last paragraph, starting,-"The state accepts the money and now it must be divided. This is not done according to absolute need," - and the lines which follow after, is entirely a fair statement. This has happened in some states, surely, but I do not think we could prove that it happened in all states. Therefore, if this statement is used, do you not think it should be modified?

Page 6 - "C" - I omit because, although a lot of us are hardened, I do not believe the majority of social workers are, and the public is all too apt to think of us in this way, so that perhaps it is just as well not to add to

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this belief. This, however, is a matter for you to determine.

Pages 6 and 7 - "D" - Contains one sentence which we feel is quite wrong. That is the sentence at top of page 7, in which you state, referring to politics: "They have penetrated Federal relief from top to bottom." The situation is bad enough, but there really are dozens of places where politics has not entered in, to any considerable degree. I should like to suggest that this be modified, admitting that politics exists and that we must safeguard our people in distress from political graft, but owning at the same time that there are communities which have really achieved what seems impossible in American life, - the administration of relief without damaging political interference.

Page 9 - "E" - Have you proof to back up the last three paragraphs? I know such things exist in isolated instances, but I wonder if we ought to give the public the impression that they are general.

Page 11 - "F[A]" - First sentence in this paragraph. Suggest change in tense of verb "is" to "was," for the reason that the C.W.A. passed out of existence last spring.

Page 11 - "F[B]" - I wonder if you will want to play up the C.W.A. quite so much, in view of the fact that it no longer exists. Add to this, also, the fact that there were some very worthy C.W.A. projects, although I recognize full well that there were many which were exceedingly harmful.

Page 13 - "G" - Suggest on this page, instead of "an invasion of politically administered relief," some such phraseology as "the inherent difficulties of mass relief."

Page 14 - "H" - Suggest changing "clean" in first sentence on page, to "clear." Note change in last sentence of second paragraph.

Page 14 - "I" - Second sentence, last paragraph, should read: "In 1932, in the third year of the depression, contributions to community chests had risen 30 per cent (instead of 42) above the depression year of 1929. Expenditures from local public funds had increased rapidly (instead of 40 per cent)."

Page 15 - "J" - Second paragraph, second sentence: "While contributions to community chests, for example, were increasing 30 per cent and this additional being spent for relief (instead of 42 per cent)." Same paragraph: "Recreation 'commissions'," instead of 'committees'.

I think that these are all the changes, and you can see that they are minor ones, based chiefly on the fact that with all the faults which we know of in the Federal relief system, it really is not fair to say that it is politically controlled from top to bottom, nor that it is administered locally on a political basis or that the increase in relief is the result of a large number of people receiving aid who do not need it. It is difficult to get honest reports on these matters, and I do not wonder that you found it confusing to "dish up" the material which has come in to you through many ~~reports~~ sources.

I feel that I know you so well, however, through following your writing for many years, that I am sure, above all things, you want to be fair, and it is with this in mind that I have dared to go over your manuscript and make suggestions

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of places that I thought you would want to change. I wish I had the faculty of writing these changes the way you would state them, but I know I haven't, so my suggestions are submitted in crude form.

When you have made your changes, if you would like us to retype the article, we shall be very happy to do so and mail it directly to Mr. Chenery, if you will enclose the letter you wish to have go with it.

I think this is an excellent article, and I especially like your ending.

Every good greeting!

Cordially yours,

L F Bache

Louise Franklin Bache
Director of Publicity

LFB/bh

P.S.--We have recopied the article for the Herald Tribune and are enclosing it.

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