

# THE FRONTIER

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## WHAT'S DOING AT THE STATE HOUSE

By James R. Lowell

One of the most interesting propositions up before Nebraska at the present time is the matter of relocating destitute rural families so as to be able to make their own living.

The Nebraska Federal Emergency Relief Administration has inaugurated a plan whereby this rural rehabilitation can be carried forward.

Pages could be filled with examples of why hundreds of thousands of competent, eager to work people are jobless today. Still other hundreds of thousands have been left stranded by drouth. Dry areas covering a belt of two hundred and fifty to three hundred miles wide from Canada to the plains of west Texas have caused normally self sustaining rural families to fall upon Federal Relief for their sustenance.

During normal or unusually moist cycles and attracted by temporarily high farm prices, new farmers flocked into this section only to lose most of their earnings when the moist years were succeeded by ultra dry years.

This rural rehabilitation work in Nebraska is being carried on under two plans. The first of these is assisting relief families to obtain a small acreage where they can have a cow, chickens, pigs and a garden; also furnishing of livestock to families on relief who have such ground to care for same but need assistance in buying them. About five hundred of the above have been dealt with by the Nebraska FERA.

The second program of the rural rehabilitation division of the FERA is establishment of groups of relief families on small acreage homesteads, which is accomplished by buying a suitable tract of land, approved as to soil, water and location, by the College of Agriculture as suitable for the sustenance of a family on a small acreage; the building of homes on these tracts by relief labor, and selling them to these families on a long-time financing plan.

At the present time there are six rural rehabilitation projects in Nebraska. The largest is the most recently acquired. It is near Jackson in Dakota county and consists of one hundred fourteen acres. At Kearney there is an 80 acre project which has been almost completed. The Chamber of Commerce there at first was reluctant to welcome such a project but at the present time they are enthusiastic about it and are attempting to get another subject of the same type.

A similar project is underway near Fairbury where construction of buildings has started. An 80 acre tract was recently purchased near Falls City for the same type of work, and near Grand Island an 80 acre tract was recently acquired by the Federal Government for rural rehabilitation.

Each of these subsistence acreages will be completely developed. The idea is to put these persons on their own and take them from relief rolls. Pretty soon they should be able to start paying the Government for its investment.

Better teaching in small Nebraska schools is the goal of a new Federal Emergency Relief Project instituted at the University of Nebraska thru the professional work bureau of the FERA. Sixty educational workers and 20 clerks will work under the university extension division to prepare special correspondence courses.

The project will develop work already carried on in the last six years to make correspondence courses available to students in small high schools where curricula might otherwise be limited.

Sixty high school courses now are available, most of which have been added in the last three years.

Because of small teaching forces many schools can offer only a limited number of subjects. The FERA correspondence courses with carefully prepared lessons and texts permit an expansion with local teachers furnishing only supervision.

The group of educational workers, most of whom hold degrees from universities, will make a thorough study of correspondence courses and self-teaching materials. The work is expected to add more high school subjects and to provide assistance to pupils in rural and small elementary schools.

Also to benefit will be the CCC members who will be able to take the correspondence courses at low rates this year, and relief study centers which are starting their second year of existence in Nebraska.

State Game Warden, Frank B. O'Connell, now serving as a hold over since the expiration of his regular term last March, is coming in for a bit of grief at the hands of the democrats. State Accountant, Ruud, has submitted a report in which he claims that state statutes are not being complied with. Ruud claims that guns have been returned to persons arrested for violation of the game laws and that the department has not collected all of the fees due it.

The hand of politics is seen in this report by O'Connell. He claims that Ruud is pulling for his friend Tolen, Assistant Secretary of State, a democrat who would like to have the game warden's job.

The uncollected accounts held against O'Connell by Ruud represent but one-half of one per cent of the total funds handled for the year. Most of the funds complained of are tied up by bank failures and a considerable amount may yet be collected.

Word has been received at the State House that the AAA is expected to seek only half as large a cut in next year's corn acreage as it did this year. The Farm Administration will require signers to cut corn plantings ten to fifteen per cent below the 1932-33 base acreage. This compares with a 20 to 30 per cent cut asked this year.

The cut in hogs is expected by Nebraska officials to be between 5 and 10 per cent compared to this year's 20 to 25. Hog numbers are already low and officials believe they can be controlled by the feed situation.

**Gist of the State House News**  
Dr. P. H. Bartholomew, State Health Director, reports that the principal diseases in Nebraska are on the up swing for the month of October. Chicken pox is on the increase as is diphtheria and measles. Tuberculosis however dropped in October from 31 to 16 cases and typhoid fever cases dropped from 5 to 1.

The highway letting at the State House last week, which was estimated by state engineers at half a million dollars, was let to contractors for \$441,188. Bids were deferred on two state projects for grading, culverts and bridges between Plainview and Randolph, awaiting right-of-way, and culverts and bridges west of Pender where plans are being rechecked.

Bids are to be called for November 16th for \$390,000 worth of road construction with federal funds. These projects include a new viaduct over the Burlington tracks at McCook, paving in Fairmont, Schuyler and Shelby, and grading and structures preliminary to paving on a stretch of almost three miles south of Grand Island on highway No. 281.

The beet harvest in the North Platte Valley centering upon Scottsbluff was practically completed last week. Operations will be wound up at Mitchell, Minatare, Bayard and Scottsbluff about the middle of November, while the Gering and the Lyman plants will close about December 1st.

The sugar content of the beets this year has been slightly higher than last, but the yield has been reduced to less than ten tons per acre.

State Auditor Price has withdrawn his objection to an item of \$47.00 subject to the processing tax on sugar purchased to manufacture ice cream and serve students on the tables of state dormitories.

The \$47.00 is payable to the AAA and a warrant is being drawn against the University cash fund for that amount. The state legal department ruled that while the state government is exempted from paying federal taxes on materials it buys for public use, the sugar bought by the University is intended for commercial purposes and therefore subject to the processing tax.

A program of feeding pheasants, quail and prairie chickens this winter is being mapped out by the State Game Commission. Arrangements are being made to obtain waste grain from the federal government to aid in the feeding program, made necessary by the 1934 drouth.

Most of the game commission's revenue is from hunting and fishing licenses, supplemented by sales of fish and salvage work, and J. B. Douglas of the commission declares that because of reduced income this year arrangements will have to be made to scale down the commission's overhead as a means of avoiding a deficit.

### Economic Highlights

Today, in the words of the United States News, "the biggest business in America is the administration of relief to the needy. More people are living on the funds they obtain from the Government—Federal, state and local—that live on the revenue from professional service, from transportation, or from clerical occupation."

The most accurate figures place the number of persons now on relief rolls at 17,000,000. Best estimates say that this number will rise to 20,000,000 and perhaps more during the winter. Two millions of those on relief give work in exchange for the money they get—the balance, many of whom receive rent, clothing and grocery orders instead of cash, do not work. They are simply "on the dole," whether that term is used officially or not.

The number of persons receiving relief, in comparison to the total population, is staggering. Conditions are worse, of course, in the great, heavily-populated industrial

sections—New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Ohio and Illinois. These five states account for nearly 40 per cent of all who receive relief. In Illinois, 14 per cent of the total population is on the relief rolls; in New York, 16 per cent; in Ohio, 14 per cent; in Michigan, 12 per cent. Highest percentage is reached in New Mexico, where 27 per cent of all the people are given aid—but, by number, they naturally total much less than do the needy in a representative industrial state.

These figures may give the impression that unemployment is more severe now than at any time during depression. It is not—the worst unemployment was March 1933, when 13,000,000 men who would normally be employed were out of work. There are no relief figures for that period as, at the time there was no organized governmental relief. Since then, three or four million men have gone back to work—the nine or ten million who are still out account for the 17,000,000 persons receiving relief.

Government—national and local—is frankly stumped for a solution. It has spent billions—and the problem has barely been touched. Present efforts are designed to keep sufferers from dire want until jobs can be found for them—they are in no sense a solution of our most crucial and most difficult problem. The Federal government is carrying the bulk of the burden—state and municipal aid has been inadequate for the most part.

Many believe that government will be forced into adopting a definite pension system for those who are unemployed thru no fault of their own, and for those who have outlived their usefulness as workers. But the gigantic cost involved stands in the way of this—untold billions would be necessary if these people are to be given even a subsistence allowance. And in the meantime we face a bleak winter so far as the needy are concerned—and what the story of next year will be no one knows.

When the Administration first came into power, it had few critics. Many industrial leaders were afraid of its announced policies, believed them inimical to their interests—but they said little and followed a policy of watchful waiting.

During the next year and a half many business men found themselves more and more at odds with Administration principles. This reached its high point a few months ago, when the United States Chamber of Commerce addressed a pointed letter to the President, said that confidence was fading, asked that he give definite replies to a number of questions involving our financial and economic future.

The President did not reply—but since then there has been a rapprochement between government and industry. The President apparently has more faith in industrial executives than he did when he first came into office, and industrial executives apparently have

more confidence in the President. One sign of the trend is found in the declining of the "brain trust"—most of these young men, who carried such weight in the early days of the Administration, have dropped out of sight, and their places have been taken by practical thinkers, rather than theorists.

The President's recent much-anticipated speech before the American Bankers' Association, shows the way the wind blows. While he committed himself to little, Mr. Roosevelt said one thing of great importance—that he did not contemplate the issuance of new currency against the Treasury's vast silver holdings. Bankers and other industrialists cheered—Mr. Roosevelt's statement was the first assurance from a high source that there would be no major inflation in the near future.

The U. S. Chamber of Commerce reported that it saw indications of a "convergence of the general aims of business and the Administration" in the speech.

As for business conditions, they seem to be on the up-grade. For the past month the volume of bank loans outstanding has been increasing, and there is a growing demand for bank credit. Late statistics show a substantial rise in general business activity.

### Pig Figgerin'

Sioux City Live Stock Record: Many of the live stock markets have been receiving a larger number of extremely light pigs which are a problem at some places since the outlet in pork channels for these small carcasses is rather limited and it does not take a lot of them to be too many for the packer to handle, says the Chicago Drovers Journal. The majority of them weigh under 100 pounds and the price is so much under what a good

light hog would bring that some cannot understand why either the packer or the hog feeder cannot find some way to create a profitable outlet for more of them.

Of significance is the fact that a great many more pigs weighing 75 pounds and less, than pigs weighing 100 to 125 pounds are being sold, and one member of the trade believes he has the reason for this figured out. Farmers, he said, are feeding their 100 to 125 pound pigs, and those who are in the market for feeders are showing a marked preference for these rather than the lighter weights because of the high price of corn. While the 100 to 125 pound feeder pigs of good quality are selling well above the lighter weights, the stronger weight feeders still figure the cheapest, he contends. For the sake of figuring he takes the old rule

that 10 bushels of corn equals 100 pounds of pork, and concludes that the feeder buyer can more economically pay \$3.00 for 100 pounds averages than he can \$1.00 for the 50 pounders. A pig weighing 50 pounds at one cent per pound or 50 cents plus 40 cents for vaccination and 50 cents for delivery to the farm would aggregate \$1.40. A 100 pound pig at three cents per pound plus 50 cents for vaccination and 50 cents for delivery, would cost the feeder \$4.00 per head. However, with corn at 80 cents per bushel the corn bill for 15 bushels on the lighter pig would be \$12.00, whereas on the heavier pig the corn bill for 10 bushels would be only \$8.00. At 20 pounds the 50 pound pig would cost \$13.40, and the 100 pound pig \$12.00. How's that for figgerin'?

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