
The idea of self-help has historically permeated American attitudes toward social welfare. Nineteenth-century “scientific philanthropy” implanted a basic hostility toward public outdoor relief in the Progressive mind. And throughout the prosperous twenties, social workers believed that only private charity should provide for the needy who did not require institutional care. Staunchly adding support to this doctrine of voluntarism, President Hoover voiced his confidence in the superiority of the “American way” from the outset of the Great Depression. Hoover’s Quaker upbringing and previous successes in voluntary relief work—in Belgium, Russia, and along the banks of the Mississippi—helped convince him that “voluntary cooperative action would accomplish the dual purpose of relieving distress and exercising vital national traits.” In opposing paternal statism, he expressed the fear that any transfer of individual responsibilities and local obligations would undermine the safeguard “against overwhelming centralization and degeneration of that independence and initiative which are the very foundations of democracy.”

Although voluntarism was not as strongly emphasized in the twenties as before, it faced no serious challenge prior to 1930. In the two

3 Albert U. Romasco, The Poverty of Abundance: Hoover, the Nation, the Depression (New York, 1965), 143.
years following the Great Crash, urban settlements began struggling with mounting case loads and diminishing revenues. Questioning the validity of Hoover’s doctrine, social workers rapidly lost any lingering aversion they may have felt toward “official assistance.” By 1932 most welfare spokesmen asserted that unemployment relief could no longer be regarded as a form of charity. They recognized it as a public obligation to which the jobless were entitled as a matter of right. When the resources of local communities broke down, social workers did not hesitate to solicit from the states, and even the national government, additional funds for the emergency. 5

Philadelphia’s experience during this period provides an excellent case study of a “breakdown of local resources.” 6 This metropolis had always taken pride in its impressive private philanthropic and settlement work, which dated back throughout the Gilded Age. When the city suffered the severe effects of economic depression even before the Great Crash, its welfare leaders instinctively reacted as they had in all previous panics. Initiating the most imaginative and efficient program of private community service, they made Philadelphia a model to other cities and future inspiration for New Deal projects. Both contemporary observers and subsequent historians have highly praised its unemployment relief organization. President Hoover congratulated the city, and Depression historian Broadus Mitchell characterized it as “the utmost local effort.” 7 Yet despite the strong traditions, ingenious leadership, and effective execution, Philadelphia’s experiment in local co-operation completely failed by June, 1932.

To cast back, a cursory glance at Philadelphia in the 1920’s would convey the image of a prosperous metropolis. The “City of Brotherly Love” ranked as the third largest city in the nation and was a major industrial, financial, and distribution center. Almost half its 2,000,000 inhabitants depended on manufacturing and construction enterprises for their livelihood. Of all the assessed valuations in the city, nearly one third were in industry. A Federal Reserve Bank and a United States Mint contributed to Philadelphia’s financial promi-

6 Bernstein, 287.
nence. And, in addition to seaport facilities, numerous railroad terminals situated in or near the city handled the trade for the entire Delaware Valley.\textsuperscript{8}

A closer examination, however, reveals that Philadelphians did not share in the national economic boom of the twenties. During this decade, the city's industries (as a whole) suffered a relative decline in importance compared with other production centers. The biennial manufacturing census, taken in 1919 and alternate years, showed a substantial decrease in the number of wage earners employed by Philadelphia manufacturers.\textsuperscript{9} A federal survey of unemployment made the following introductory comment:

The existence of unemployed labor and unemployed productive equipment in such a highly industrialized community as Philadelphia . . . is not confined to these periods of cyclical depression [1914 and 1921]. Even in years of prosperity much of industry's manpower is idle and unproductive.\textsuperscript{10}

This study, made in April, 1929, revealed 10.4\% of Philadelphia's labor force unemployed—three quarters were idle because they could find no work.\textsuperscript{11} Men constantly begged the welfare societies for any kind of jobs, not for relief. One man pleaded:

Have you anybody you can send around to my family to tell my wife you have no job to give me? Because she does not believe that a man who walks the street from morning till night, day after day, actually can't get a job in this town. She thinks I don't want to work.\textsuperscript{12}

Dr. J. Frederick Dewhurst, director of the federal survey, observed:

"It seems significant that this unemployment surveyed in good times, matched that of 1915, a period of severe depression and desperate idleness."


\textsuperscript{10} \textit{Ibid.}, iii.

\textsuperscript{11} \textit{Ibid.}, 17.

\textsuperscript{12} Harry L. Hopkins, \textit{Spending to Save: The Complete Story of Relief} (New York, 1936), 84.

\textsuperscript{13} Clinch Calkins \textit{Some Folks Won't Work} (New York, 1930), 14.
Declines in textile mills and building contracts during the mid-twenties contributed especially to this local depression.¹⁴ In the early summer of 1927, cloth manufacturing became irregular. Orders came so slowly that one would be completed before another arrived. Plant workers began losing a day occasionally. As the depression continued, laborers missed two and three days a week. A loom operator told a Lighthouse welfare worker that two of her four machines stood idle; and she remarked sadly: "Where there were formerly sixteen weavers employed, there are now but four."¹⁵ St. Martha's House in South Philadelphia reported many cases of unemployment due to "the general business depression."¹⁶

Family and neighborhood life consequently suffered the effects of these industrial stoppages in the twenties. When more than 4,000 families were evicted as early as 1926, social workers lamented the irony of Philadelphia's reputation as a "City of Homes." By 1929 the figure doubled, as unemployed families continuously "felt the sheriff's hammer" and lost all the equity invested in their homes.¹⁷ While those who had houses sheltered their evicted friends, caseworkers marveled at "the humanity of the poor toward the poor." So-called "combined-families" comprised 30% of the families on relief.¹⁸ A welfare investigator reported:

People slept on chairs; they slept on the floor. A case of a family of ten moving into a three-room apartment with a family of five was not exceptional. Daily calls came into the social agencies for beds or chairs. The demand for boxes on which people could sit was almost unbelievable.¹⁹

The sheer magnitude of distress exposed the inadequacy of unorganized private relief. Individual families, neighbors, landlords, and employers, even when they wished, proved incapable of grappling with relief on this scale. As the burden shifted to private neighbor-

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¹⁵ Marion Elderton, ed., Case Studies of Unemployment (Philadelphia, 1931), 47.
¹⁶ Ibid., 147-148, 234-235.
¹⁸ This term referred to a situation where two to four families lived under one roof as one household. Florence Peterson, "Unemployment Relief—Local and State," in John R. Commons, ed., History of Labor in the United States, 1896-1932 (New York, 1935), 234.
¹⁹ Maxine Davis, They Shall Not Want (New York, 1937), 24.
hood agencies, social workers questioned their capability of meeting future needs. The Philadelphia Family Society, for example, had reached its maximum capacity of caring for 750 families a month by 1929. Unless an old case closed or some benevolent individual made a contribution, it could offer no further assistance. Helen Hall of the University Settlement wrote:

We like to feel that no neighbor knocks in vain at the settlement door, but these days . . . these knockings reach a crescendo. In years of apparent prosperity, they have become insistent.

By 1930, a study of nineteen major cities revealed that the severity of Philadelphia’s unemployment exceeded that of all others except Detroit and Cleveland. Business Week reported in June, 1930, that a count of the city’s jobless “ran 40 per cent heavier than a year ago.” Although some explained their idleness by sickness or old age, 11.7% of the labor force were unemployed because they could find no work. The Great Crash of 1929 had aggravated Philadelphia’s previous local decline; and the formation of eighty breadlines and soup kitchens signaled industrial failures and future hard times. Because of the shortcomings of private relief programs, many jobless flocked to City Hall. Huddled in the corridors of the public mansion, Philadelphia’s destitute waited their turns at the welfare application desk. Since no tax revenues had been allocated for public assistance, the City Council had no funds to offer them. This embarrassing display, however, forced the City Fathers to abandon their policy and appropriate $150,000. In a few weeks, this small sum became exhausted, and Philadelphia approached the winter of 1930–1931 with a deficit.

20 Bernstein, 291.
27 Calkins, 9–10.
29 Peterson, 228.
Although municipal officials lacked the foresight needed for concerted action, other individuals recognized the emergency. Jacob Billikopf of the Federation of Jewish Charities and Karl deSchweinitz of the Community Council of Philadelphia had been preaching "unemployment as an industrial and social disease to be attacked with measures for prevention and control." By emphasizing co-ordinated activity and a steady enlargement of area co-operation, they stimulated public interest in organized relief. A plan for a council of social agencies in 1929 illustrated the influence of this growing trend. Since that time, social workers, university professors, and businessmen had continued to support integrated welfare service. Their efforts culminated in the formation of the Committee of One Hundred with Jacob Billikopf as chairman. On November 7, 1930, this committee initiated community action at a luncheon in the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel. The meeting attracted more than 200 persons of the city's leadership in industrial, professional, and business life. And in an opening rally, the president of Strawbridge and Clothier declared: "The situation calls for the same spirit of fighting as that which engaged Philadelphia during the World War!"

The conference first considered the possibility of extending the activities of the Municipal Department of Public Welfare. But such an action would signify a radical departure for Philadelphians, who had discontinued public outdoor assistance in 1879. Since that time, the city was known as one of a few metropolitan areas with practically no public relief disbursements. During a recession (1914-1915), however, a private agency administered some appropriations.

Clinging to the orthodox belief that there was something sinful about public relief, the City Fathers thoroughly agreed with Herbert

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33 Philadelphia Public Ledger, Nov. 8, 1930, 3.
34 Philadelphia Inquirer, Nov. 8, 1930, 2.
36 In the crisis of 1894, Philadelphia relied entirely upon private contributions and private agencies. Leah Hannah Feder, Unemployment Relief in Periods of Depression: A Study of Measures Adopted in Certain American Cities, 1857 through 1922 (New York, 1936), 104, 126.
37 Davis, 24
38 City Council's appropriation of $150,000 in 1930 represented another exception. Feder, 310.
Hoover's theory of local responsibility.\textsuperscript{39} Karl deSchweinitz, a longtime political reformer and public servant, stated: "My belief is that relief is normally a neighborhood affair. I would say first the neighborhood, then the municipality, then the state."\textsuperscript{40} In a letter to the \textit{Public Ledger} entitled "How to Help Philadelphia Relieve Unemployment," Constance Biddle suggested:

Institutions have been built up by Philadelphians in their own city over long years. They have grown with the growth of the city and are ready and willing to serve this great need.\textsuperscript{41}

Although severe unemployment created a grave emergency, most people doubted the Depression would continue for a long time or that it would prove extensive or devastating.\textsuperscript{42} Philadelphians thus adhered to their traditional attitudes toward relief and proceeded to remedy the present distress in accordance with President Hoover's philosophy. A comprehensive program of \textit{private} rather than public participation unfolded, resulting in the establishment of the Committee for Unemployment Relief. Horatio Gates Lloyd, a partner of Drexel and Company (the Philadelphia branch of the House of Morgan), accepted the chairmanship and abandoned his lucrative business for a fourteen-hour daily schedule of community service.\textsuperscript{43}

With a conservative outlook toward the Great Depression and its own welfare role, the Lloyd Committee considered its immediate task merely to raise sufficient funds from the people of Philadelphia "to tide over the temporary distress."\textsuperscript{44} With this goal, the Committee conducted a campaign which collected $4,000,000 in private donations.\textsuperscript{45} Fearing the eventual exhaustion of this money, the members suggested a small municipal appropriation to supplement these funds. After months of numerous conferences between Committee representatives and city and state officials, the Pennsylvania General Assembly passed the Sterling Bill, which authorized the city to

\textsuperscript{39} U. S., Congress, Senate, Subcommittee of the Committee on Manufactures, \textit{Hearings, Unemployment Relief}, 72nd Cong., 1st Sess., 1932, 52.
\textsuperscript{40} \textit{Ibid.}, 137.
\textsuperscript{41} \textit{Philadelphia Public Ledger}, Nov. 14, 1930, 12.
\textsuperscript{42} \textit{Philadelphia Record}, June 20, 1932, 1.
\textsuperscript{43} For this position, he received a dollar a year. deSchweinitz, \textit{The Survey}, LXVI, 217.
\textsuperscript{44} \textit{Philadelphia Public Ledger}, June 20, 1932, 4.
\textsuperscript{45} Joanna C. Colcord, \textit{Cash Relief} (New York, 1936), 132; Bruno, 301.
borrow $3,000,000 for relief.\textsuperscript{46} Despite many fears of the "iniquitous dole system" penetrating the community, the City Council yielded by adopting an ordinance creating a Bureau of Unemployment in the Municipal Department of Public Welfare.\textsuperscript{47} Instead of the Council's distributing its appropriation, however, Horatio Lloyd himself was appointed by the city as special administrator to disburse the public funds. He agreed to take this additional position provided there be no political interference.\textsuperscript{48}

Philadelphia, therefore, functioned as a "community" during the winter of 1930-1931 largely through the co-ordination of voluntary private organizations.\textsuperscript{49} Strictly in line with tradition, the municipal government, up to the middle of 1931, took only a minor part in the relief program. A \textit{Survey} editorial commented:

Thus Philadelphia steps out, first among large cities with its unemployment relief program geared to its revealed needs, freed through Mr. Lloyd's captaincy of any political entanglements. . . . The line between public and private responsibility is clearly drawn with complete confidence on both sides. Here, if ever, would seem to be a demonstration worth watching.\textsuperscript{50}

With adequate financial support, the Lloyd Committee embarked upon "the most imaginative and effective of municipal relief programs in the early years of the depression."\textsuperscript{51} This organization represented the greatest array of lay service and co-ordinated social work that Philadelphia ever experienced. Both the University of Pennsylvania and Swarthmore College sponsored research programs; and the entire press, especially J. David Stern's \textit{Philadelphia Record}, vigorously supported Lloyd's organization. All the business, political, and

\textsuperscript{46} \textit{Philadelphia Record}, Mar. 27, 1931, 1; "Shaking Hands with Starvation," \textit{The Survey}, LXVI (June 15, 1931), 301.


\textsuperscript{49} Ewan Clague and Webster Powell, \textit{Ten Thousand Out of Work} (Philadelphia, 1933), 87. The Russell Sage Foundation figures showed that in the spring of 1931 the country as a whole had 72% of its unemployment relief coming from public sources and 28% from private. In Philadelphia, the proportions at this time were 45% public and 55% private.

\textsuperscript{50} "Forehanded Philadelphia," \textit{The Survey}, LXVI (Aug. 15, 1931), 459.

\textsuperscript{51} Bernstein, 298.
welfare forces in the city rallied behind his leadership to serve in a single integrated movement.\textsuperscript{52}

The establishment of the Lloyd Committee as a central planning organization represented a new co-ordinative method in private social work. Each settlement house, however specialized its immediate task, began to realize that its own work impinged upon many other undertakings. Individual case workers came to appreciate their role as part of "a great network serving the welfare of the people of Philadelphia."\textsuperscript{53} Traditionally autonomous local agencies now participated in a co-operative movement.

Lloyd and his associates felt that "social planning based upon the scientific method" was the only means of coping with city-wide unemployment.\textsuperscript{54} Sociological investigations, conducted by university professors, revealed valuable data which aided in forming the welfare programs.\textsuperscript{55} Committee members examined these studies, considered past experiences, and eventually devised effective means of coping with the emergency. They undertook to provide for direct relief, made-work relief, a revolving loan fund, shelter for homeless men, and breakfasts for school children. Because these five programs made Philadelphia a model for other communities during the early years of the Depression, they are worth considering in greater detail.\textsuperscript{56}

For each activity, the Lloyd Committee created subcommittees to decide on policies and direct the actual procedures. A Subcommittee on Relief, for example, consisted of ten executives from private agencies engaged in family service. This group believed that direct relief had to be decentralized and disbursed through the existing local agencies. Where no agency existed, the Committee itself assumed the responsibility by using the services of trained personnel.\textsuperscript{57} The Subcommittee on Relief formulated a program to deal with the local settlements and also created a special unit of fifty social work-

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{53} Community Council of Philadelphia, 2-3.
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{56} Copies of the studies and outlines of the programs were requested by officials of the President's Organization on Unemployment Relief (POUR). Karl deSchweinitz to Fred C. Croxton, Nov. 7, 1931, POUR Papers, National Archives; Olga A. Jones to Karl deSchweinitz, Nov. 16, 1931, and Karl deSchweinitz to Olga A. Jones, Nov. 23, 1931, \textit{ibid}.
\textsuperscript{57} Colcord, Koplovitz, and Kurtz, 180.
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ers. This relief corps, paid from the Committee's own funds, assisted in disbursing private contributions and special city appropriations among the needy.58

The actual distribution was highly co-ordinated. It involved the opening of four application centers located in different areas and staffed with workers directly employed by the Committee. When private agencies lent their personnel, the Committee paid a fixed sum toward their salaries; and the agency made up the balance.59 A "Social Service Exchange" immediately cleared all the applications (received at the centers) through direct wire connections or by messengers.60 Additional file clerks and typists, furnished by the Committee, handled the increased volume of work. No relief was given out by the application centers. After an interview and report from the Exchange, an applicant received advice on his problem or was referred to a relief-dispensing agency. This reference was final, and the application center registered the family with the Social Service Exchange in the name of the agency to which it was assigned.61

Through a special voucher system, the Committee reimbursed the local agencies for the funds expended. In the same manner, the Committee assumed responsibility for the salaries of the additional personnel. This left the local agencies, with their original staffs and regular budgets, free to handle the burdens they had previously assumed. The Lloyd Committee paid all the added expenses due to the recent unemployment.62

The relief dispensed was "scarcely lavish."63 For the most part, it consisted of weekly grocery orders which ranged in value from a dollar and a half for two adults to five dollars for a family of six. A sadly limited amount of coal, shoes, and second-hand clothing were also provided. Young children received milk only in case of illness.64 And the Committee paid no rents at all, so that 25% more food orders could be distributed in corresponding measure. The members be-

58 Harry A. Mackey, Great Characters the Spirit of Giving Has Revealed in Philadelphia, 1930-1937, 8.
60 Colcord, Koplovitz, and Kurtz, 180-181.
61 Colcord, Koplovitz, and Kurtz, 181.
62 Ibid.
63 Davis, 24.
64 Ibid.
lieved: “It is more essential that the unemployed at least get something to eat.”

To employ the able-bodied of families that would otherwise require direct relief, the Lloyd Committee appropriated funds for a work program. The members intended that this form of assistance be as extensive as possible. A Subcommittee on Work, supported by the Chamber of Commerce Committee on Unemployment, designed the details for this program. A prominent businessman assumed the chairmanship, and an Emergency Work Bureau was created. The director, a man of wide experience in industrial and personnel management, previously visited several cities for possible suggestions. And his three chief assistants, who served as department heads, were also highly skilled and experienced in their several duties. While welfare agencies loaned a number of social workers, business firms offered executives, personnel, and clerical workers who formed a nucleus for the Bureau’s organization. The made-work program involved an administrative staff of 300 persons, half being part-time volunteers. The majority of the remainder came from personnel departments and clerical forces of public service corporations and other large firms, like Sears, Roebuck.

The Subcommittee on Work held certain positive convictions: “that the work should be decentralized, that alarming publicity should be avoided, and that time should be allowed for developing a sound scheme and organization.” Within a few weeks, however, the Bureau received applications (only through local agencies), arranged for jobs, and actually put men to work. The most striking feature of this experiment, aside from its size, was the wide diversity of work provided. Not only did the program utilize common labor, but even skilled and professional workers found opportunities. The only criteria were that the work be something for which no money was available and which would not be accomplished without the labor supplied by the Bureau.

66 Clague and Powell, 135.
69 Colcord, Koplovitz, and Kurtz, 167.
70 Ibid.
Manual labor engaged in more clean-up and repair work than in new construction. Demolition of buildings was avoided because of the danger of accident. The Division of Housing and Sanitation of the Department of Health used more than 1,200 men whose wages amounted to $120,000 in jobs like removing rubbish from vacant lots, boarding up slum dwellings, cleaning alleys, and posting signs. While landscape gardeners trimmed and planted trees and hedges, the Department of Public Works and the Park Commission employed men to lay walks and drives, build and paint fences, and clean the woodlands. In private institutions, men made repairs and renovations, while women were assigned as domestic servants.\footnote{Ibid., 172.}

Philadelphia offered more original employment for white-collar workers than any other city at this time. The local chapter of the Institute of Architects, for example, surveyed the city's colonial landmarks by using unemployed architects and draftsmen. For this job, each one received twenty dollars a week.\footnote{H. Louis Duhring to Herbert Hoover, June 9, 1932, POUR Papers.} Expert typographers set Braille type for the blind, while dietitians and cooks participated in school feeding experiments. More than 118 jobless entertainers, musicians, and recreation leaders brought their talents to settlements, playgrounds, hospitals, and children's institutions. Their visits had a special value as a morale-builder, both for the unemployed and for those whom they served.\footnote{Colcord, Koplovitz, and Kurtz, 173.}

The Lloyd Committee tried to fashion its forms of assistance to complement the varied needs of the unemployed. While the work program and direct payments provided for the most impoverished, families with available resources were urged to negotiate a commercial loan. The Committee believed, however, that there still existed an area of need intermediate between complete destitution on one hand and unused credit resources on the other. The members considered the welfare of families which would fall in neither of these classes—"Working people who, except for the present crisis, would not be dependent and who would be too proud to accept charity, but whose needs are desperate." \footnote{Community Council of Philadelphia, \textit{Personal Loans in Unemployment Relief} (Philadelphia, 1932), 4; Davis, 25.}
At the suggestion of Judge Horace Stern, a fund was created to issue loans to such families. Since its primary purpose was to prevent the necessity of appealing for relief, the fund attempted to preserve the self-respect and prevent the keen mental suffering of those families which would feel humiliated by having to make such an appeal. The Committee hoped these loans might prevent families of proved financial integrity and responsibility from lapsing into a dependent state.

Loans from this revolving fund differed materially from those previously in existence sanctioned by the Small Loans Act of Pennsylvania. They were issued upon the personal signatures of the husband and wife with no interest or an optional maximum rate of 3% net. After the borrower obtained a job or found other resources, he repaid the money in weekly installments. During the period from January to May, 1931, a total of 563 loans ranging from $18 to $175 each were granted to 517 families. This particular program was one of Philadelphia's unique experiments that received national attention.

Another nationally publicized program, and one that affected dramatic changes, involved the care of homeless men. Prior to the Committee's attention, the city had grossly neglected the transients who had roamed the streets. By the fall of 1930, more than 500 men spent each night sleeping on the bare concrete floors of police station cellars. Mayor Harry Mackey commented on this tragic inadequacy: "These men, who through no fault of their own are out of work . . . are not to be classified with the 'down and outer' as we know him in normal conditions . . . They sought relief only when all efforts failed to procure employment." Alarmed by this fact, the Lloyd Committee took immediate action and appointed a special planning committee. A mission superintendent with unusual executive ability, community leadership, and years of experience in dealing with transients became the chairman. His Subcommittee for the

76 Community Council of Philadelphia, Personal Loans in Unemployment Relief, 40.
77 Ibid., 5.
79 Philadelphia Public Ledger, Nov. 8, 1930, 3.
80 Mackey, 8.
Homeless included religious leaders, social workers, business executives, and recreation organizers.\textsuperscript{81}

The core of their program centered about an emergency shelter in an enormous eight-story building loaned by the Baldwin Locomotive Works. Crews of homeless men, from the missions and police stations, rapidly removed the accumulated grease and grime and installed plumbing and heating. While the superintendent secured 3,000 cots from the War Department, the Red Cross furnished commissary equipment. Before opening the shelter, the Committee decided not to replace the work of existing missions, but to handle only additional transiency caused by the Depression. The members also agreed that every man should work for three or four hours a day in exchange for meals and lodging.\textsuperscript{82}

The Committee anticipated that no more than 500 would need shelter; but when the lodge opened on November 28, 1930, 831 men applied. Although they originally intended to use only three floors, all eight stories were eventually equipped for service. At its peak, the shelter handled nearly 3,000 men a night, while regular missions continued to house their capacity loads.\textsuperscript{83}

Mayor Mackey took a particular interest in the shelter. Disguising himself as a vagrant, he spent several nights there to see how the homeless men fared. Reporters, who compared his make-up talents to Lon Chaney's, wrote: "Unshaven and roughly dressed, wearing a bushy false mustache and sideburns and using a red bandana handkerchief, Mayor Mackey has been eating and sleeping frequently of late with the penniless unemployed men." \textsuperscript{84} Each Friday night, the mayor provided entertainment for the lodgers. In addition, Charles H. English, Executive Secretary of the Playground Association, taught the men how to entertain themselves. As a result of his suggestions, the men staged "everything from boxing bouts to minstrel shows." \textsuperscript{85} These activities played a vital role in maintaining morale and keeping the transients mentally fit for their return to industry.

\textsuperscript{81} Charles H. English, "Recreation in the Unemployment Relief Program," \textit{Recreation}, XXV (December, 1931), 493.
\textsuperscript{83} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{85} deSchweinitz, \textit{The Survey}, LXVI, 218.
A city-wide provision of breakfasts to needy school children represented another of Philadelphia's innovations in social welfare. Nowhere else in the United States was this particular form of relief so extensively applied. Remarking that school breakfasts "represented an excursion into a hitherto unexplored field of relief giving," teachers and social workers watched the Committee's procedures with special interest.  

Because evidence had shown increased malnutrition among school children, the Lloyd Committee decided to introduce a breakfast program. Economic need, however, became the sole basis for selecting the participants. Philadelphia school authorities decided to assist in this project as an "expedient means of meeting an emergent need." They held no conviction that relief measures were a function of the Board of Education.

The comprehensive program, designed by an appropriate subcommittee, attempted to provide breakfasts for every needy child. While an average of 8,000 were fed each school day, almost 4,500 also received breakfasts on Saturdays and Sundays. These meals were provided under the direction of the Division of School Medical Inspection, and principals and teachers personally supervised the activities in each school. The enterprise cost approximately $100,000, one-third assumed by the Lloyd Committee. Unsolicited private subscriptions and actual food donations made up the balance. Under the supervision of the Diocesan Superintendent of Schools, breakfasts were extended to parochial school children of the Roman Catholic Church. Following similar arrangements as those made with the public schools, the Lloyd Committee contributed toward this work also.

These five programs illustrated the intimate working relationship that existed between businessmen, social workers, school personnel, and city officials. From these various projects, the Lloyd Committee acquired a fund of knowledge and experience, which would affect measures for alleviating distress in years to come. Businessmen as-

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87 Ibid.
88 Ibid., 3; James M. Williams, *Human Aspects of Unemployment and Relief* (Chapel Hill, 1933), 199.
assumed a greater social responsibility in meeting the present needs than ever before. And their future role in these relief activities would surely increase. Because the Lloyd Committee fostered city-wide co-operation, it created a new co-ordinated network for Philadelphia's welfare programs. Karl deSchweinitz felt that a precedent had been established for future settlement work in all large urban areas:

Out of our present misery . . . will come a better organization of society. Social work was never in a better position to assume leadership and to influence the course of events. Not in a generation have we experienced such an integration of social work, business, and politics. Social work will be modified in its expression by the institutions through which it will now operate.

The Lloyd Committee served as both a financial and co-ordinative body. Relief distribution was completely in Lloyd's charge. As its five major programs illustrate, the organization supervised and co-ordinated all the city's private agencies also. To staff all these projects, Lloyd built a corps of 250 workers "beholden to no political machine or privileged group." And these extensive efforts were accomplished in an efficient manner with a minimum overhead expense. The Philadelphia Record commented that the Committee

struck the happy mean in administering relief to the unemployed. A larger staff would have cost more in administrative expenses than would have been saved by closer investigation. And fewer workers would have permitted many families not entitled to aid to receive relief funds.

In fact, the Committee's overhead charges, including general supplies and the workers' payroll, averaged only 6.8% of its total outlay. The remainder of the funds could thus go toward all the relief projects. Startled by such efficiency a journalist in The Nation stated, "This is probably a better record than can be shown by any similar organization in the country."

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90 Ibid., 219; English, Recreation, XXV, 492.
92 Hallgren, The Nation, CXXXIV, 276.
93 Ibid.
94 Philadelphia Record, Apr. 16, 1932, 6.
95 Hallgren, The Nation, CXXXIV, 276.
The Lloyd Committee's highly organized program made Philadelphia a national model. But despite this remarkable achievement and efficient management, its financial resources quickly reached the point of exhaustion. By the end of the first year, the city's $3,000,000 appropriation was gone, and Lloyd's organization "resorted to pan-handling on a large scale." 

Joining the Welfare Federation and the Federation of Jewish Charities, the Committee helped to launch a "United Campaign" in November, 1931. The three groups set a combined goal of $9,000,000 to be proportionally divided between them. To arouse the public to the tragedy in their midst, the Committee used shocking human interest stories for propaganda purposes. Mayor Mackey dramatized the appeal by warning the wealthy to "give for their own safety." At a fund-raising dinner he told the audience:

Empty stomachs cry for food, scantily clad people demand clothing, and cold men, women, and children must have fuel. . . . The responsibility of the moment knocks at our door. Today marks the hour for performance, while tomorrow must take care of itself.

The campaign officials, at first, doubted that such a large sum was attainable. But as public enthusiasm grew, many corporations, firms, and individuals of all classes made contributions. The Philadelphia Record reported: "In a scene reminiscent of the war chest campaigns of 1917-1918, $255,000 was raised in ten minutes yesterday for the relief of distress among the unemployed of Philadelphia." The final results demonstrated Philadelphians' strong adherence to the theory of private local responsibility. By accumulating more than $10,000,000 in cash and pledges, the United Campaign eventually exceeded its goal. This drive collected "the largest sum ever raised in Philadelphia for charitable work."

Karl deSchweinitz rejoiced:

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96 Ibid.
98 Williams, 185.
99 Philadelphia Record, Feb. 16, 1931, 1.
100 Remarks of Mayor Harry A. Mackey before a United Campaign Dinner, Nov. 9, 1931, Gifford Pinchot Papers, Box 2523E17.
101 Philadelphia Record, Feb. 12, 1931, 1.
"I do not recall an occasion when the citizenship at large rose to such emotional heights as it did on that particular day when it announced that $10,250,000 had been raised."

Upon receiving its $5,000,000 share from the United Campaign collection, the Lloyd Committee felt more optimistic. But amid this slight ease of tension, grave statistical realities pointed toward an uncertain future. When the campaigners projected their drive, 2,700 families were relying on the Committee for support. By December, 1931, when President Hoover and POUR (President's Organization on Unemployment Relief) officials congratulated Philadelphia on its "charitable performance," the number reached 4,000. And in early February, 1932, Karl deSchweinitz reported to the House Committee on Labor, "We are spending at the rate of thirty-five thousand dollars a day which is over a million dollars a month. You can see that the figure is going up."

Lloyd addressed an urgent appeal to Governor Gifford Pinchot:

With forty-eight hundred families now receiving assistance and an additional two thousand coming under its [the Lloyd Committee] care each week, Philadelphia is rapidly approaching a situation where, unless help comes speedily, thousands of men, women, and children will actually face starvation. . . . The money from the recent United Campaign will be exhausted by May.

The $5,000,000 barely lasted three months! By April, 1932, the Committee had almost completely expended its allotment. In an emergency meeting, Lloyd and his associates quickly adopted three temporary measures to give them a reason for existence. With their few remaining dollars, they supplied milk to families with infants and small children. The shelter remained open on a day-to-day basis. And since the National Red Cross had donated government flour, the Committee took charge of its distribution. But now more than

103 Committee on Manufactures, Unemployment Relief Hearings, 1932, 116.
104 Ibid.
106 House Committee on Labor, Unemployment Hearings, 1932, 93.
107 Ibid.
109 Philadelphia Record, Apr. 12, 1932, 1.
5,000 families actually faced starvation. Their funds exhausted, the Lloyd Committee discontinued regular food orders.

Testifying before the LaFollette-Costigan Committee, Karl deSchweinitz related an "intensified picture of human misery" when he described how these families managed:

One woman went along the docks and picked up vegetables that fell from wagons. Sometimes fish vendors gave her fish at the end of the day. On two different occasions the family was without food for a day and a half. . . . Another family did not have food for two days. Then the husband went out and gathered dandelions and the family lived on them.110

The only hope for the future lay in possible state aid. Anxiously reading the daily papers, the starving families prayed for headlines announcing the constitutionality of the Talbot Act.111 This law, which had passed the Pennsylvania General Assembly in December, 1931, appropriated $10,000,000 to be allotted to the State Department of Welfare for distribution to the "Poor Districts" of Pennsylvania.112 The act was promptly challenged on the grounds that the state constitution prohibited such charitable grants to individuals. In April, 1932—just when the Lloyd Committee ran out of funds and unemployed families faced starvation—the state supreme court began deliberating the test case to decide the constitutionality of the Talbot Act. Finally, on April 7, 1932, by a four to three vote, the court upheld the appropriation: "There is no direct prohibition against the use of state money to pay for the care and maintenance of indigent, infirm, and mentally defective persons, without ability or means to sustain themselves. . . ."113 The court stretched the police powers to sanction this state aid as part of the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of the people. This incident illustrates the constitutional limitations and long, devious channels that con-

111 Philadelphia Record, Apr. 11, 1932, 1; ibid., Apr. 12, 1932, 6; Arthur Dunham, "Pennsylvania and Unemployment Relief, 1929-34," The Social Service Review, VIII (June, 1934), 249.
113 Quoted in Dunham, The Social Service Review, VIII, 250.
fronted such bills and frequently delayed funds from reaching the needy unemployed.\textsuperscript{114}

Eleven days after the Lloyd Committee suspended relief payments, Philadelphia received its share of the state fund, $2,500,000.\textsuperscript{115} An administrative disagreement arose when a few local poor boards in the city insisted on their right to handle their individual shares. Except in four districts, where neighborhood agencies held their ground, differences were finally resolved.\textsuperscript{116} Lloyd again administered the money, except for these four areas. He insisted upon the same condition as before—that there be no political interference.\textsuperscript{117}

When the Lloyd Committee resumed its work, families received food orders once again, but welfare officials clearly realized the severe limitations of the small appropriation. Where would they turn when these Talbot funds ran out? Karl deSchweinitz considered alternatives: “The financial situation of Philadelphia is such that no great help can be hoped for from the city. Since pledges to the United Campaign continue to fall due until next October, it is difficult to see how additional private funds could be raised. . . . Taking the community as a whole there seems to be no united sentiment in favor of federal relief.”\textsuperscript{118}

The Talbot funds barely lasted two months. “An army of grim hunger and agony was invading” Philadelphia; on June 20, 1932, it attacked 57,000 defenseless families.\textsuperscript{119} The \textit{Philadelphia Record} headlined the frightening details that morning:

The Lloyd Committee is through. For fifty-seven thousand families to whom the Committee has meant life itself, STARVATION is “just around the corner.” The Committee for two years has fought the wolf away from the doorsteps of Philadelphia’s worthy poor. It has tapped and exhausted every available source of succor. And now its funds are gone.\textsuperscript{120}

The Lloyd Committee decided to disband. Fearing it would cruelly mislead dependent families to believe that help was in sight, the or-

\textsuperscript{114} Peterson, 231; Romasco, 171.
\textsuperscript{115} “Pennsylvania’s Ten Millions,” \textit{The Survey}, LXVIII (May 15, 1932), 178.
\textsuperscript{116} \textit{Ibid}.
\textsuperscript{117} \textit{Philadelphia Record}, Apr. 16, 1932, 1.
\textsuperscript{118} “How the Cities Stand,” \textit{The Survey}, LXVIII, 75.
\textsuperscript{119} \textit{Philadelphia Public Ledger}, June 20, 1932, 1.
\textsuperscript{120} \textit{Philadelphia Record}, June 20, 1932, 1.
ganization stopped dispensing all forms of assistance and closed the shelter.\textsuperscript{121}

For ten agonizing weeks, 57,000 families were left to shift for themselves in the summer of 1932. Philadelphians wondered "what was happening to these families? There were no reports of people starving in the streets, and yet from what possible source were they getting enough food to live on?"\textsuperscript{122}

A survey of 400 representative families provided tragic answers to these questions. These people lived from one day to another with no dependable income and all possible credit exhausted. While shelter was assured as long as landlords remained lenient, the question of food required more drastic remedies. A common source of food was the docks, where fruit and vegetables were sold for market. People gathered around stalls and snatched at anything cast out. Hunger occasionally motivated street begging and petty thievery of milk and groceries from doorsteps. Playing on the sympathy of storekeepers, children forced tears down their cheeks to induce them to offer a little food.\textsuperscript{123} After citing these examples, the study concluded:

Families visited did not starve to death when relief stopped. They kept alive from day to day, catch-as-catch can, reduced for actual subsistence to something of a stray cat prowling for food, for which a kindly soul sets out a plate of table scraps or a saucer of milk.\textsuperscript{124}

Philadelphia's critical emergency shocked its most traditionally-oriented citizens and aroused them to advocate \textit{direct federal} relief. Despite its drive and ingenuity, the Lloyd Committee had fought a losing battle. Although it had made innovations in social work techniques, the local effort could not meet the needs of Philadelphia's unemployed. The number of destitute families continuously outgrew the available resources. The city itself was so bankrupt that the mayor had to declare that no one was starving to bolster the courage

\textsuperscript{121} Ibid.; Philadelphia Public Ledger, June 20, 1932, 4.
\textsuperscript{122} Ewan Clague, "When Relief Stops What Do They Eat?" The Survey, LXVIII (Nov. 15, 1932), 583.
\textsuperscript{123} Ibid., 584.
\textsuperscript{124} Ibid., 585.
of reluctant bankers to buy municipal bonds.\textsuperscript{125} The Pennsylvania legislature also failed to rectify the situation quickly. Other constitutional limitations still remained which prevented the state from incurring large debts.\textsuperscript{126} A social reformer remarked: “When that constitution was framed, they had no thought of any such emergency as this arising.”\textsuperscript{127} As a final consequence, Billikopf, deSchweinitz, and even Lloyd led Philadelphians in becoming insistent champions of direct federal relief.

As early as 1931, Jacob Billikopf had recognized the enormity of the unemployment relief problem when he stated: “Private philanthropy is no longer capable of coping with the situation. It is virtually bankrupt in the face of great disaster.”\textsuperscript{128} And Karl deSchweinitz also realized the practical ineffectiveness of the theory of local responsibility: “We do not pretend to be perfect in the administration of unemployment relief in Philadelphia, but humanly speaking I do not see how we could have done anything better. . . . It was physically impossible to handle this great number of people.”\textsuperscript{129}

The most exemplary change in approach, however, was that of Lloyd, the chairman. He had previously been characterized as a conservative banker, typical of his class, with little concern for the masses. But after his experience with the Unemployment Committee, he also acknowledged the limitations of private charity and the American tradition of self-help.\textsuperscript{130} As his Committee disbanded Lloyd made a final statement:

The situation today is quite different from what it appeared to be when the Committee was first formed. The duration of the depression, the vast and increasing numbers of unemployed, and the general economic conditions are

\textsuperscript{126} Romasco, 170–171.
\textsuperscript{127} From statement of Fred Brenckman, Washington Representative of the National Grange, Committee on Manufactures, \textit{Federal Cooperation Hearings}, 1932, 13.
\textsuperscript{130} Hallgren, \textit{The Nation}, CXXXIV, 276.
such that it requires no argument for the realization that the situation has progressed far beyond any possibility of relief from sources of private philanthropy, even for the most primitive necessities of life.

The present need is on a scale that calls not for more charity but for governmental action to save the health and indeed the lives of a large portion of the citizenry.\textsuperscript{131}

Philadelphia’s experience during 1930–1932 illustrated the practical failure of Hoover’s theory of local responsibility. When faced by a crisis of such magnitude, private and municipal resources broke down. The needs of the unemployed overwhelmed traditional community institutions even when organized at peak efficiency. A national problem could not be managed with local means, and unemployment relief had ceased to be “an emergency to be dealt with by stop-gap measures.”\textsuperscript{132}

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\textsuperscript{131} Quoted in Gertrude Springer, “Getting the Most from Federal Relief,” \textit{The Survey}, LXVIII (July 15, 1932), 325.

\textsuperscript{132} \textit{Ibid.}; Gifford Pinchot to Jacob Billikopf, Jan. 11, 1932, Gifford Pinchot Papers, Box 2561E25.