

FILE NO. 58428

Communication  
OF  
Chief of Police  
in re  
unemployed

FILED NOV 11 1914  
BY  
ADDRESS H. W. CARROLL  
CITY COMPTROLLER AND EX-OFFICIO CITY CLERK  
BY [Signature] DEPUTY

ACTION OF THE COUNCIL

|                         |                        |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| REFERRED<br>NOV 16 1914 | TO<br>COMMISSION       |
| REFERRED                | TO                     |
| REPORTED                | REPORT ADOPTED         |
| REPORTED                | REPORT ADOPTED         |
| REF. FOR ORD.           | C. B.<br>ORD.          |
| DEC 21 1914             | DISPOSITION<br>ON FILE |

REPORT OF COMMITTEE

Mr. President :  
Your Enclosure Committee  
to which was referred the within Communication  
would respectfully report that we have considered the same and respectfully recommend that it be placed on file

CHAIRMAN

[Signature]



# The City of Seattle

Washington

DEPARTMENT OF POLICE

WHEN ANSWERING  
KINDLY REFER TO  
INITIALS AEG.

Nov. 10, 1914.

Honorable Mayor & City Council,  
City of Seattle.

Gentlemen:-

In accordance with the suggestion of the Mayor, I beg to call your attention from a police point of view to the necessity for adequate provision to care for the unemployed. Unless times soon change for the better it will be necessary to choose between providing men with work or furnishing them on a large scale food, shelter and clothing.

The number of sleepers coming to the City Jail for a night's shelter is increasing and the Jail in that respect is now crowded; the same is true of the Workingmens' Home. This is only a beginning. I am informed that beggars are increasing and those who go from house to house seeking work and odd jobs are also on the increase. The Brotherhood League is in the same situation. The effort of Mr. Pauli to find work in the country or in clearing land has not yet, I am told, been put on a large or entirely satisfactory basis.

It is probable that at this writing there may be two thousand unemployed men, most of them stranded or who very soon will be, in the Washington Street and Occidental Avenue part of the city. Our city is the gathering place for men out of employment not only for a large part of our own State but, in a measure, for a part of Canada and Alaska. It is not humane neither is it practical to attempt to drive these unemployed persons or any of them from the city. Other cities in the State to a lesser extent are affected the same way.

In addition to the foregoing, there are undoubtedly, to say the least, many hundreds of our own residents, most of whom are married, without any employment. Also there are many young persons of both sexes who do not belong to the laboring class, who are out of any steady employment.

Measures equal to the growing task ought to be taken at once to deal with this situation, in fact, owing to the cosmopolitan character of the city the State itself, if it were possible to do so, ought to join in some concert of action toward this end. It is my opinion that whatever is done ought to be done quickly so that there will be no unusual distress and no public disorder allowed to grow out of this unusual, or worse than usual condition of the labor market.



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Honorable Mayor & City Council - #2 -

It is not a police problem but is a social problem. In the main these conditions are social and not always individual in their origin and must be dealt with by social action and not by police methods. The police are unable where the numbers are so great to sift out the worthy unemployed from those who are unwilling to work at all and who are properly known as vagrants. But unless society acts through the legislative branch of the city government, or through voluntary agencies does put forth organized effort to provide adequate means for caring for the worthy unemployed, the matter is left to the police to handle as best they may. Necessarily the handling under these conditions amounts to suppression and the lumping together of good and bad, and does more harm than good. To the misfortune of being without work is often added the stigma of being treated as a vagrant or criminal.

It is the opinion of this department that something definite ought to be done to ward off the possibility of disorder and distress. For this purpose I venture to suggest, that the city and county ought to unite to provide county and city work and that all individuals and civic agencies ought to be appealed to to provide work and odd jobs of every sort from now on until the coming of spring.

There ought to be an administrative committee appointed for this purpose, made up of at least representatives from the county and from the city and from the social agencies, which is itself said to be representative of all the other civic bodies in the city. Possibly one or two other public bodies of the city ought to be represented. On this committee there ought to be a representative of federated labor and a representative from unorganized labor.

At any rate such an administrative committee ought to be appointed and then let such committee attend to all the details and work out the problem.

The county theoretically is the source of poor relief, but practically this burden falls upon the city. However, in a situation like the present the county should not hesitate to furnish work or money or both, and the city the same, and private individuals likewise. With proper organization directing this matter there need be no unemployment leading to serious distress in this city. Such a committee could well grade and sift out



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Honorable Mayor & City Council - #3 -

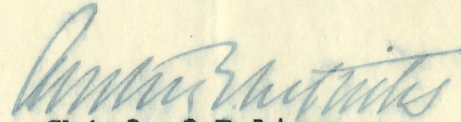
residents from non-residents, the married people from the single workers, the able bodied from those who are not such and day laborers from clerks, and arrange as far as possible work adapted to these several classes of applicants. In this way honorable and useful work would be obtained and the people would be able to support themselves and at the same time save their own self-respect. We can not forget that the people must be or will be supported whether they work or not. It is, therefore, far better that useful work be provided.

I am told that the city of Vancouver, B. C. is doing something of this sort already. Steps are being taken there to economize work and do as this city did a part of last winter, allowing workers about three days a week so as to give the same amount of work to more workers, and Vancouver, I am told, is endeavoring to have private employers follow this course.

Hoping that your honorable body may see fit to take this matter up most seriously at the earliest possible moment, as an aid to this department if for no other purpose,

I beg to remain,

Yours very sincerely,

  
Chief of Police.

GGE.