

The Great Depression as seen through *The Daily Record* in Morristown, NJ

January through December 1931

The glow of the holiday season pushed articles about the depression off the pages of the Daily Record until mid-January. On January 12 an article on page 1 related “that the Chamber of Commerce will employ a full-time clerk to take care of the work of the Chamber’s Free Employment Bureau”, as “During the last three months this work has increased so greatly that...there was insufficient time to develop an aggressive campaign for placements. This also resulted in the many activities of the Chamber of Commerce being almost entirely curtailed in order to take care of the more important work of trying to find positions for the unemployed.”

The Morristown Board of Aldermen reported on January 24th that eighty men were currently working on “developing the Morristown parks....Mr. Bowden [Superintendent of Parks] said it would be necessary to make a few shifts so as to give additional applicants a chance.”

On January 15th an editorial agreed with the report of the Russell Sage Foundation that “urges strongly that the emergency employment committees set up all over the nation to deal with the present situation do not disband when the emergency is over.....Our chief fault in the past has been an eagerness to forget all about depressions once they are past; and in consequence we have never prepared for them in advance...”

And on June 3, 1931 an editorial reiterated the above point. “People are beginning to realize that something fundamental must be wrong with our economic order if a depression like the present one can engulf it, and people are beginning to insist that the defect be set right. The nation is not going to be satisfied much longer with a process of muddling through. If we have an economic system that produces periods of distress every few years, we shall insist that the system be changed, instead of being content to devise relief measures after the damage has been done.”

An editorial on January 23rd discussed a proposed study by scientists at Yale University along “with a number of leading industrialists and engineers” to delve into the nature of unemployment. “Professor Elliott D. Smith of Yale...remarked “‘Unemployment...is not a single disorder but a common symptom of many, among others of seasonal production, cyclical depressions and unabsorbed increase in productive efficiency.’” The Daily Record approved, saying “Some such study as this undertaken at Yale is long overdue.”

A despairing poem was published January 24th, “No Help Wanted”, by Anthony DeRugiero. Part of it reads “In the town of many riches/Bringing sufferings and many promises/Still, no help wanted, no help wanted./Men walk the streets in rags/Starving and begging for cash;/Morristown, Oh Morristown what shame is upon us/Still, no help wanted, no help wanted.”

The **Market Street Mission** was there, though, to succor the starving and homeless. On January 27, p.5 the newspaper reported that “During the past week the Mission has cared for more homeless and unemployed men, by furnishing lodgings and meals, than in any other similar period for many years past it being necessary to install additional sleeping facilities to meet the demand. The number cared for Sunday night being the largest number that has ever been housed in any one night during the history of the Mission. It was found necessary to place cots in the reading room and the chapel to take care of those who need help.”

An editorial of January 28th updated the editorial of November 11, 1930 on the automobile industry. “...**the prosperity of the entire nation is so closely tied up with the prosperity of the automobile industry. A recent bulletin from the Bureau of Business Conditions of the Alexander Hamilton Institute makes this clear.** This bulletin...points out: ‘The curtailment of automobile production in 1930 was sufficient by itself to cause a substantial business setback. The industry not only supports directly a larger number of workers, but it is a leading consumer of raw materials. It is estimated that 4,700,000 persons were dependent on the automobile industry in 1929, or one out of every 10 gainfully employed.’ And The Daily Record concludes, “Considered from the viewpoint provided by those figures, the importance of a healthy automobile industry to the nation at large is obvious.”

Accountability for business management was the subject of an editorial on January 30, 1931. “...when one looks back at the record of bank failures during the past year, one is forced to the belief that some of these... would have been averted if the directors had known before hand that they would be held strictly accountable for the collapse of their business....one is impelled to wonder...if such a system should not apply to all large business corporations as well as to banks.” “All too often, under present conditions, corporate directors are little more than rubber stamps for the management. The law, of course, looks on them as representatives of the stockholders; but...this, very frequently, is not the case in the modern business world.”

On April 6, p.1, we read that “the Linden National Bank and Trust Company and the State Bank of Linden which were closed Saturday, the former by national bank

examiners and the latter by the State Department of Banking and Insurance”, were to be reopened. “...a group of financially responsible persons would take over the banks, put in enough money to insure the banks against shortage of ready cash and continue to operate.”

Morris County ratables were up around \$4,000,000 (January 31, p.1), so the county was weathering the early depression pretty well. Yet residents were feeling the pinch. The article on February 7, 1931, p.1 tried to put a positive spin on the situation. “Proof that the Morristown Chamber of Commerce Free Employment Bureau is accomplishing excellent work in aiding the unemployment situation now prevalent and that the local bureau is one of the most popular agencies in the State is shown in a report compiled by Edwin J. MacEwan, executive secretary of the Chamber. At the present time there are 706 applications for employment now on file at the Chamber free employment bureau. Forty-three towns and cities, excluding Morristown, are represented in that total of applications....there are 451 applications for work from Morristown on file.....As quickly as the positions are filled, new applications are received....In the month of January, 49 persons, both male and female, were placed at work...” People were applying for jobs in agriculture, building and construction, clerical, labor, and domestic work.

Despite bank panics and closures around the country, *Trust Companies Magazine*, the leading publication in the trust company field has just completed a survey from the banking authorities of 48 states...and from the Comptroller of the Currency, showing...that the beneficiaries of estate or trust funds, administered by trust companies and national banks, have not suffered the loss of a single dollar through failure of any bank or trust company. The survey...takes in the period of business depression in 1930 during which 1,326 banking suspensions have occurred.....when this survey...was undertaken, serious misgivings were entertained as to the consequences of the more than 6,500 banking failures or suspensions of the past 10 years.....The proof ... shows that, with but few exceptions, the failed or suspended institutions which carried the words ‘trust company’ in their corporate titles, had neither trust departments or had made no attempt to assume trust responsibility.’ ”

(February 10, 1931, p.2)

Opposite a list of failed investment schemes over the years, Morristown Trust Co. contrasted its stability: “A Trust Fund under our experienced and prudent management will protect your heirs from speculative temptations and risks. It will insure safety of principal and a regular income free from the problems and cares of investment.” June 3, 1931, p.12)

An editorial on February 10, 1931 addresses the **dance marathon phenomenon** of the depression years, with a tone of mild disapproval. “For the last 500 hours, they [two dancers] said the other day at the Chicago dance hall where they are doing a marathon, they have been dancing without rest periods....they have been trying to keep step to the music for 1,343 hours....The people who participate aren’t to be censured. They are merely engaging in an occupation to earn some money. Those who sponsor the everlasting rhythm exercises by no means compel anyone to take part....”

Was buying on the installment plan a cause of the depression? “Did it lead to bankruptcies and misery?” “The *Magazine of Wall Street*...contains a report ...which indicates that installment buying stood the strain remarkably well. It finds that during 1930 the installment buyers managed to liquidate the debts they had incurred in the boom year of 1929. The number of ‘repossessions’ and final losses was no greater than the average for the preceding five years. So far...there has not been a single failure among the thousand or more companies engaged in handling installment purchase paper. Installment sales are now going on, just as briskly in proportion to the total volume of trade as before the crash.” (February 20, 1931, editorial)

The trade deficit and protective tariff were the subject of an editorial on February 26, 1931. “...discussion of the relation of the business depression to the nation’s foreign trade was given recently before the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce by John McHugh, chairman of the executive committee of the Chase National Bank of New York, the largest bank in the world. Part of it is worth reproducing here. ‘...Today we are seeing that if we do not buy we cannot sell....The foreigner must use such dollars as he can get, first to pay interest and amortization on the debt to us, and then only what is left is he free to use in buying our goods. We intensified his difficulty in this matter by raising our tariff in 1930. The time has surely come to forget whether we are Democrats or Republicans, and to think of this matter in business terms. This is no time...to advocate the sweeping away of the whole protective tariff system...But it is time to consider downward adjustments designed to permit the foreigner to sell enough goods in our market to put him in possession of dollars that in turn will enable him to carry out the volume of exports which is necessary to keep a balanced situation in the United States....’ ”

On March 9, 1931, on the page Women’s Organization Doings, appeared an article about **New Jersey state welfare bills**. “The Morris County League of Women Voters has taken the initiative in opening up for discussion in the county the welfare bills recommended by the State Pension Survey Commission....These measures provide for a county welfare board composed of outstanding citizens, including a member of the board of chosen freeholders and the county adjuster.

This board is appointed by the Freeholders and serves without pay, and a director of welfare...is appointed by the welfare board to take over all poor relief work now handled by the municipalities through the overseers of the poor.....The second bill...makes such welfare boards mandatory.....Provision for old age security has also been recommended by this [Pension Survey] commission, in the form of a bill in the Legislature. Representatives of various local organizations [many organizations listed]...have been specially invited to the meeting, and it is hoped that there will be participation in discussion...”

Alleviation of unemployment, and a criticism of the economic system that leads to unemployment, is the subject of a heartfelt editorial on March 24, 1931. “An Omaha judge...has arranged for several hundred [unemployed workers] to go to various Nebraska farms, working throughout the winter at farm chores in return for their room and board... In this way approximately 100 men a month have been kept from hunger and coldHowever, it is quite possible to pour out too much praise for this scheme... The judge is to be commended...but...the whole thing, at best, is only a pitiable makeshift. That is the trouble with all of these plans for unemployment relief. When they work out well, we are apt to get too satisfied with them - apt to feel that because they are working so well we need not worry very much about the general question of unemployment....For our present economic system seems to call for recurring waves of unemployment. It seems to be fated...that poverty and hunger shall descend on millions of Americans every eight or 10 years. But because we have a few years of prosperity between these depressions, and because, when the depressions come, clever stunts are devised to ward off actual starvation, we manage to pretend that the problem is not...so very pressing....” (see also Jan. 15, 131 and June 3, 1931)

Only three days later (March 27, 1931) another editorial explored the consequences of unemployment. “It is worth while to look at a study of the effects of unemployment on 50 American families, made by the magazine, *The Family*, which is published by the Family Welfare Association of America....’The center of interest in these 50 households...was food...After a shortage of funds compelled public relief agencies to stop aiding these families, it was found that many of them were living on bread, potatoes, coffee and weak soup....**A scattering of part-time jobs kept the families from actual starvation.** Their incomes, over a period of months, averaged from \$5 to \$15 a week per family. Rent and insurance were the first obligations...to lapse. Thirty-two of the families were from one to 16 months rent in arrears; and this was despite the fact that their rent averaged only about \$15 a month. Nine families had been evicted. The three families that had been buying their homes had either lost them or had received warning notices. Incidentally, there were more native-born than foreign-born families in this group, and some of

the wage-earners had been highly skilled workers whose pay checks normally ranged from \$60 to \$75 a week....’ “

In yet another follow-up to this theme, the newspaper stated in an editorial on April 21, 1931, “We must have conditions in which an honest, capable and industrious worker will always be sure of steady work and a steady income.”

Local people and companies pitched in to help those in distress, as we read in an April 6, 1931 article on page 1. “The employees of the Jersey Central Power and Light have helped many families through a special unemployment fund. Several families in dire distress were given food, coal, medicine and clothing...The Park Bakery for weeks baked about 50 extra loaves of bread every Saturday to give to families referred by the bureau [Central Bureau of Social Service] and churches. Hipson’s Dairy has been giving away gallons of skimmed milk to families with little children...Epstein’s, Greenberger’s and Salny Bros. have sent children’s clothing which was greatly needed this winter.....”

Were wage reductions the answer for economic recovery? The editorial on April 22, 1931 discussed this issue. “In the depression of 1920-21, business and political leaders were almost unanimous in demanding that labor ‘be deflated’. We still felt, in those days, that it was somehow abnormal and improper for the factory hand to be buying luxuries. We still felt that the wage earner ought, normally, to be just a jump or two ahead of poverty....[in] the last decade...The country at large has accepted the notion that prosperity is not worth having unless it means prosperity for the mechanic, the weaver and the lathe-tender. Our conception of the workingman’s rights has broadened enormously....Cutting wages may reduce production costs; it also, inevitably, reduces purchasing power as well.”

A May 20, 1931 editorial followed up on the subject of **wage deflation**. “One by one, the deflationists are getting vocal....One of the sanest criticisms of this attitude was provided recently by Mr. Glenn Frank, president of the University of Wisconsin....’The inflationists of yesterday brought the stock market to collapse. The deflationists of today will bring our entire business system to collapse if they succeed in seducing the majority of American business men, bankers and industrialists to their point of view. ‘ ”

Radical ideas evidently were becoming more common in Congress. Regarding blame for the depression, “Senator James Couzens...insists that it is not a question of ‘who’ is to blame, but a question of ‘what’ – in other words, that the trouble does not spring from the wickedness of perverted individuals, but from a basic force.....’all those who are actuated by unrestrained greed share in the responsibility.’ “ The *Daily Record* editorial on May 12, 1931 says “This is

coming close to stepping over the line into the field of the Socialists and the Communists. It is one of the basic tenets of their creed.” But then the editorial adds, “And we can agree with it without in any way adopting socialism or communism. The whole business is worth looking into.....The most encouraging thing about the whole situation today is the fact that it is stimulating men to question things that never before were doubted. Greed – or, to put it more simply, the desire to make big profits – does not seem to be quite as beneficent a force in human affairs as it used to appear.”

A generous banker is praised in an editorial on May 16, 1931.

“Last year a bank in Vineland failed. School children lost \$37,000 Colonel Evan O. Kimble, the head of another financial institution in the same city, knew...those youngsters...would come to the decision that the wisest thing to do is to spend your money before something happens to it. Colonel Kimble realized that boys and girls who held this attitude couldn't train for the best citizenship. Therefore, from...his own bank, he dragged out the money bags and restored to each child the sum that he had lost....**the children...are going to realize that fair play and generosity still make up a big part in life**....There are those who will say that the bank acted as a benefactor because it is counting on the profits which will accrue from the new accounts which will be opened. But such accounts will be small, at best.....”

The dole was the subject of the editorial on May 19, 1931. “England has missed actual revolution, in the years since 1918, by an incredibly narrow margin – the margin of the despised dole. With all its evils, the dole has kept the nation from collapse....The ordinary man is entitled to a job. If his country's economic system is so poorly constructed and so badly synchronized that he cannot get one, he is entitled to some sort of pittance that will keep him and his family from starvation....”

“G.O.P. to Offer Own Solution to Unemployment”, headlined an article on page 1, May 21, 1931. “The Republican platform builders...believe that relief should come first from the municipalities and the townships, with the state contributing its proportionate share to alleviate the situation. The local units of government, in their opinion, are better equipped to deal with the emergency than the federal government....It is hoped to have a constructive declaration that will offset any Democratic attack blaming the Republican for ‘hard times’. “

Should married women take priority over single women in the job market?

“Thousands of girls and women who work in factories are doing it, not to earn pin money or to achieve a feeling of independence, but to support their families while their husbands remain unemployed....In normal times it may be no more than fair

to give the preference to single women in passing out jobs. But times right now are far from normal.” So married women should take priority over single, concluded the paper. (May 21, 1931, editorial)

The economy was suffering, people were out of work, but **bankers still had faith** in the stability of Morris County’s finances. “Exceptionally fine prices were obtained by both the Freeholders and Board of Education yesterday afternoon when bids for the sale of bonds were opened. At the Freeholders’ meeting, where \$1,000,000 worth of bonds were disposed of, the prices were said to have been the best ever obtained by a county in New Jersey.” (May 28, 1931, p.1)

Bamberger’s took a full-page ad (May 29, 1931, p.3) to promote their lower prices, based on the dramatically lower prices of raw materials such as cotton, rayon, wool, silk, and silver. This was followed by another full-page ad (page 7) on June 2nd saying, to persuade the buyer, “we don’t expect you to spend your money for altruistic reason, even though you will be glad that your buying helps create jobs. The real reason you’re going to spend money now is because you are going to get extraordinary bargains...”

The Morristown Chamber of Commerce proposed a plan to **offer the unemployed plots of land to grow their own vegetables**. But the plan was contingent on there being “vacant land owned in Morristown or in the immediate neighborhood that would be donated for gardening purposes by the owners...Whether or not the plan is put through depends on the amount of land that is offered and the number of applicants for these garden plots.” (June 9, 1931, p.1)

“Pensions for the Needy” is the headline of an editorial on June 9, 1931, a discussion of married women in the job market and of the necessity, in the future, “of giving money from the public treasury to people who are unable to support themselves without help,” furthering the discussion of May 19, 1931 about the dole and of May 21, 1931 about working women. “After the World War various states began to pay pensions to widows who were unable to support their children...The Children’s Bureau of the Department of Labor...found that on the average only about a third of the families aided under these pension laws get as much as is necessary for bare existence.” The newspaper concedes that women who work are “in most cases...entirely or partially supporting a family” and that “in some parts of the country ... men’s wage scales are based on the assumption that either the wife or... children will also be working...” “Direct payments to the needy from the public...are going to increase, not diminish. We might just as well make up our minds to it.”

Competition for jobs was at a peak, as a front-page article on June 11, 1931 reveals. “Over 40 Firms After Contract for Construction Physician’s House at **Shongum Sanatorium**” was the subhead. “For general construction a total of 17 bids were received...Eleven bids...for the plumbing contract... eleven ...for the heating work...Only three...received for the electrical work contract...”

The stars were particularly malevolent for June 17, 1931: A day of disturbance, disruption and agitation is indicated....These dire situations may be suddenly precipitated and bring about far-reaching condition of unrest and anxiety in both business and personal affiliations....”, though it was really just another bad day during the Great Depression.

DEFICIT ! “The threat of a huge deficit in the federal treasury...has strikingly emphasized the tremendous increase in the government that has taken place during the past decade or two. In 1911...the federal government spent a little less than \$700,000,000. In the fiscal year now ending the government has spent almost \$4,500,000,000....One item... in this increase is the practice of spending money from the federal treasury on state projects. Uncle Sam...now contributes around \$150,000,000 a year to state activities. Two decades ago such contributions came to only \$8,000,000. Many thinly-populated states receive far more from the federal treasury than they pay back into it in the form of taxes.” But all benefit. “State lines...are not water-tight boundaries. We do not live in isolation...” (June 16, 1931 editorial)

The opposite point of view is expressed by “John K. Fitch, president of the Fitch Publishing Co., Inc., financial statisticians” who disputes the value of government expenditures, and argues against increased taxation that supports those expenditures, in his column on June 22, 1931, p.10. He writes, “Present onerous taxes are the result of a heavy increase in government expenditures during the years preceding the depression and of their steady expansion during the depression for financing ...construction work in efforts to reduce unemployment. This present increased construction program is a reversal of the traditional policy in depressions of reducing expenditures on construction work...efforts toward reduction will be slow of fruition....Encouragement is...to be had in the fact that Washington...is taking active measures toward retrenchment, even to the extent of letting up on its advocacy of public improvements as a panacea for depression ills.”

Hard times call for new measures, the *Daily Record* argued in an editorial on June 17, 1931. “It is a fairly safe bet that some of the most radical speaking and planning of the coming decade is going to be indulged in by the country’s most fervent conservatives...it is the iron-ribbed conservative who has the greatest stake

in the existing social and economic order. It is he who can be counted on to take the strongest measures to prevent a change in the direction of communism or socialism. How is he going to do it? Not, in the long run, by chanting over and over again the wearisome refrain that ‘conditions are fundamentally sound.’ Not by calling out the police to club the heads of dissatisfied men who can’t get the jobs they want. Not by insisting that business always has and always must run in cycles. He will do it, eventually, by making such changes in the machinery of production and distribution as will ensure to the ordinary man a chance to have steady work at good pay throughout his lifetime...To do that will take some very radical measures...He will adopt them because he will realize that there is no other way of saving the form of society that he wants to preserve. He will become a radical...to preserve and justify his conservatism. If he doesn’t the things he is so anxious to conserve are very apt to get knocked out from under him.”

The theme of repeating the past if changes weren’t made in the economic system, and of the **psychological effects of the depression**, was addressed once again in a prescient editorial on June 26, 1931. “The man who has lost his job...may lose the equity in his home. He may be forced to move into a less desirable neighborhood, or live in crowded quarters. He may have to let his insurance lapse. He will undoubtedly get saddled with a huge load of debt. Plans to give his children college educations may have to be given up...he undergoes a loss of self-confidence and self-reliance. He has lost, forever, that feeling of security that is essential to a contented life. In the future...he will never be quite free from the spectre of fear...that some day there may be another depression that will...plunge him into the depths of despondency again....The ‘business cycle’ that we hear so much about is a frightfully expensive thing – expensive not only in dollars, but in suffering for millions of human beings.”

Another editorial calls for a 10-year plan to dig the country out of the depths and assure its future prosperity. “Just what the details of such a plan might be is a matter for future discussion.” Without a plan, “We shall recover from this depression whether we lay our plans wisely or not; but if we let ourselves drift as we have in the past, we shall bump into another depression in a matter of eight or 10 years just as surely as the Lord made little green apples. And it all so unnecessary! Surely, no country on earth ever enjoyed the natural advantages that America enjoys today...is there anything lacking, except an intelligent plan that would insure the best use of these blessings?” (June 27, 1931)

Unemployment relief was still mainly local. Page 1 of the June 29, 1931 *Daily Record* featured **a letter from the mayor of Morristown, Clyde Potts**. “...the Brookside Reservoir is now substantially completed...it is necessary for the Town to lay off men...about fifty or more men will be thrown out of work...I am asking

the citizens of Morristown who have any work to do on their property or any repairs or renewals about their homes to be made that they make them now so as to continue these men in some remunerative employment whereby they can take care of their families. It is to be hoped that the special session of the Legislature now convening will find it possible to pass a law permitting municipalities to undertake public works for the purpose of relief to the unemployed; the other legislation having expired June 1st....”

Another article on page 1, June 29 on the special legislative session explains that “the law expiring the first of the month concerning the right of municipalities to exceed their debt limit to provide for public improvement to aid employment is to be re-enacted so that it will continue as a means of providing work.”

The two remaining operational mines in Morris County were struggling.

“The Warren Foundry and Pipe Company, which operates the Mt. Hope mine has announced a ten per cent cut in wages. This will enable it to keep operating and keep quite a large number of men at work, even though they will receive less. The Richard Mine, at Rockaway, is going to keep running...A few small orders have been received...With this small boom, the mine will continue to run and thus keep 100 men working...” (June 29, 1931, p.1)

An editorial on July 14, 1931 chastised those who “are still trying to make conditions of 1931 conform to standards and rules of a vanished era.” In particular, they refer to the attitude that those who are out of work are by definition “improvident” and should be left to their own devices. The *Daily Record* argues, “...through no fault of their own. It is not only the improvident who are needing relief these days; sober, industrious and thrifty workmen are, in thousands of cases, existing on the very edge of utter destitution. In the old days...the individual...could always go back to the land and support himself. Except in rare cases, only the shiftless and the spendthrift ever had to depend on charity. Today it is different. Men who obeyed all the rules of thrift and hard work are very badly up against it...Times have changed, and industrialists will not enhance their reputation for all-seeing wisdom by chanting the outworn slogans of a century ago.”

A front-page article on July 21, 1931 stated “figures made public today by the commerce departments showing that in 1930 there was a **drop of \$75,858.855 in the value of merchandise exported from New Jersey** from the figure for 1929.” Those products included lubricating oil, copper, automobile parts, lard, electrical apparatus, trucks and buses, automobiles, chemicals, dentifrices, explosives, soap, pencils and pens, etc.

War debt was an ongoing issue. The newspaper agreed with a prominent economist that “We’re paying, right now, for the World War...The United States, which made billions out of the war and escaped much of the fighting, is paying...-- through the nose, with 5,000,000 men out of work and long breadlines in the cities. Everyone is paying, with suffering and privation; and the payment is not yet complete...big wars...are too expensive.... neither we nor anyone else can ever afford to indulge in another big war.”
(July 21, 1931, editorial)

Morris was one of 15 New Jersey counties that “reported an increase” in real estate assessments from the previous year, indicating that somehow much of the state was still on solid ground, despite huge losses in exports, the closure of businesses, and growing unemployment. (July 23, 1931, p.1)

The President of the American Bankers Association, Rome C. Stephenson, discussed his vision of combating unemployment in an article on July 24, 1931, p.12. His views of social welfare are such that the *Daily Record* already deemed antediluvian in their editorial of July 14, but his economic proposals were practical. “The public welfare of the United States demands that industry as a whole...adopt a long range viewpoint and lay out its production and distribution plans with the thought that it is far better to have a long period of good sound business activity than a short period of frantically over-competitive endeavor....All finance...should seek by their influence in granting or withholding credit to stimulate and build up a balanced economic situation.” But he rejects unemployment insurance and government intervention for “individual responsibility to guard against the contingency of unemployment by means of a sound program of thrift and savings...”

On the same day, July 24, the *Daily Record* editorialized once again on the subject of individual responsibility, refuting Mr. Stephenson in an exasperated tone: “If any industrious and conscientious citizen could always hold a job as long as he deserved it, there would be no sense in talking about unemployment insurance. It is precisely because millions of men in the last two years have lost their jobs through no fault of their own that unemployment insurance is a live issue today. When depressions are done with forever, and every citizen can stay on the job as long as he delivers the goods – then it will be time enough to talk about the individual’s duty to take care of himself. Just now that kind of talk is not very convincing.”

Historical perspective was provided in an editorial on July 25, 1931. ...The Hudson Bay Company has passed a dividend.....This depression is not the first it has seen, nor is it the worst; and one is safe in guessing that it will not be the

last....To some of us the depression looks like a calamity that will never end – a prelude to universal downfall. But to the gentlemen of the Hudson Bay Company, probably, it is visible in its proper perspective. In the days since 1670 it has weathered a good many storms. “This, too, will pass.” “

The tone of anger and exasperation continued in another editorial, this one on July 31, 1931. The newspaper concedes that “We have all been to blame, because we all contributed to the causes of the business collapse in one way or another.....Some of us, though, have been more to blame than others, because some have been in places of economic power and have had exceptional opportunities to see the storm coming....bankers...held the strings of credit, and they allowed the money power of the nation to be used in a wild orgy of speculation when the purse strings should have been tightened. Some critics complain that bankers...are doing no less harm now by withholding credit for general relief of business men and property-owners....”

On the theme of credit, an editorial on August 8, 1931 promotes the extension of credit by American producers of raw materials to foreign countries so that they could buy our products. “The most striking thing about the present depression is that it is caused, not by scarcity, but by surpluses. There exist plenty of potential customers for the surplus goods of the earth. The one great problem is to make it possible for them to buy.”

In his Washington Notes column on August 12, 1931, p.6, Rodney Dutcher discusses the **plight of the railroads**, including a huge drop in revenue, and of the unions, with 350,000 railway workers unemployed and a fear of wage cuts. “The railroad executives have declined to confer about the unemployment problem with the heads of the 21 standard railway labor unions....This refusal appears to have headed off what might have been a tremendously important experiment toward solution of unemployment problems. For the railroad unions seek a six-hour working day and a five-day week. The short day and the short week are often advanced by the most distinguished authorities as the most effective methods of absorbing large labor surpluses....The five-day week is now operating in many individual plants.”

Proposed wage cuts were leading to a “nation wide strike in the silk stocking industry”. The new contract accepted an **18 percent cut in wages**, but manufacturers were demanding “that workers accept a further wage cut of 25 per cent. The Gotham, VanRaalte and other mills in this county will be effected, there being plants in Dover, Wharton, Boonton and Rockaway.”
(August 13, 1931, p.1)

A pointed editorial on August 13, 1931 discussed “the general business attitude toward government regulation. If there are profits to be made, then government interference is crippling, inefficient, politics-ridden and altogether damnable, and no sane American can even hint at it. But if the money is not coming in...then Uncle Sam’s activity will be welcomed, and the sooner he acts the better. Of course, once conditions improve and everybody is making money again, Uncle Sam would be expected to withdraw gracefully, and governmental interference once more would be a spectre to evoke shudders and chill the blood.”

Local efforts to alleviate unemployment continued. “Hiring local individuals in order to keep the work and money in Morristown, the Board of Education had necessary painting done in the local schools at a cost very slightly in excess of what out of town contractors bid and lower than the best prices given by local firms.” (August 15, 1931, p.1)

John K. Fitch, in his column on August 19, 1931, p.10, “...maintains high wage scales in certain industries retard business recovery; American industry faces problem of removing present inequalities” [sub-headline]. The farmer was underpaid, he claimed, while workers in construction and “in many other fields” were overpaid. “...such labor” he argues “is exacting too large a share of the value of the product”...”with its resultant reflection in sharply reduced corporate earning power...” His solution is to readjust wages downward to “bring about a better balanced relationship among the various working groups. A proper equilibrium among the various claimants to national income is essential to the smooth functioning of the price system under which our economy is carried on....” This was the industrialist view of wage deflation which the *Daily Record* railed against in numerous editorials.

The *Daily Record* waxed philosophical in an editorial on August 19, 1931. “It sometimes almost seems as if the present depression is simply part of the price we have to pay for the privilege of our civilization.” The editor referred to “a passage in Stuart Chase’s recent book, ‘Mexico’ ” in which he described a Yucatan village which was totally self-supporting. “Stock market crashes and industrial depressions meant less to them than the weather on the far side of Mars.” But in the United States, “We stand or fall together because of the complexity of our society. Yet it is this very complexity which has given our civilization its brightest distinction....But the present depression is the price we pay for what we have.”

Kudos to the American people, rhapsodized the *Daily Record* in an August 20, 1931 editorial, for “displaying a great deal more common sense and levelheadedness than most people gave them credit for possessing.” Despite some labor troubles, “The nation has been singularly peaceful in the face of trouble. Six

million men have lost their jobs...The American workman has had plenty of excuse for falling for various “isms” if he cared to, but he hasn’t done it. Instead he has simply said, ‘Let me have a job again and we’ll call it quits.’ ”

The front page on August 24, 1931 related the fall of the Labor Party government in Great Britain because of “inability to cope with the nation’s financial crisis...” The adjacent article reported **various “irregularities” in New Jersey state government**, such as the “ ‘state yacht,’ which cruises about New Jersey waters and upon which are entertained large groups of public officials and private citizens, for which an appropriation of state funds is provided.” Other “irregularities” included “those holding railroad passes while posing as clerks to Legislative committees” and a dubious “issuance of ...two checks by the Pension Fund Commission...” all this occurring while the state needed to find money for unemployment relief.

So where was extra money coming from? “Great as the federal government’s need for additional revenue is, under the pressure of a \$903,000,000 deficit last year and expenses exceeding revenue this year, it cannot afford to dip hungry tax fingers into people’s pockets at random.” The editorial on August 24, 1931 objected to motorists being subjected to additional taxes and suggested that alternative sources be found.

Back in Britain on August 25, 1931, p.1, “...the London Daily Herald...official organ of the Labor party, declared without reserve that the attitude of American bankers with respect to Britain’s credit was directly responsible for the failure of the labor cabinet and the appointment of a non-party coalition in its stead....the late government was informed by the Federal Reserve that...credit would only be granted provided specific and considerable economics were at once made in the administration or in actual benefits paid under the unemployment insurance scheme This virtual ultimatum by New York bankers played a vital part in dividing the late cabinet...”

While Morristown was considering **garden plots for the needy** (June 9, 1931), Henry Ford was already putting such a plan into effect (editorial, August 28, 1931). “Henry Ford made a sweeping statement the other day when he announced that those of his employees who have families, and who do not raise a garden next year, will be out of jobs in his plant....There is a touch of the feudal lordship, in the edict, some people are saying....The gardening is an added expense to him. He has...offered to provide land for those who do not have it. He is putting expert advice at the service of every man and woman.” Then the *Daily Record* romanticized home gardening: There is something in working with the soil that develops a keener appreciation of simple values in men and women. They come a

little closer to the life-giving urge. Their souls grow along with the lima beans and rambler roses and radishes....”

Following the story of the fall of Great Britain’s Labor government on August 24th, an editorial lauded the vision of the Labor Party leader, Ramsey MacDonald, who compromised and formed a government with his political enemies in the Conservative and Liberal parties. “The best men in each of the three...political groups are now working hand in hand to rescue their nation from threatened economic disaster....above them all is MacDonald himself, who might, had he chosen to play the part of a blind and selfish politician, forced a victory for his party at the expense of the public welfare....The world needs more great political leaders...with a vision broader than mere party politics...who are brave enough to conciliate with the opposition parties when conciliation means advancement of the public welfare.” (August 29, 1931)¹

“...**the Employment Bureau**, operated by the Morristown Chamber of Commerce...is making a canvas of all business houses and manufacturers in this vicinity trying to find additional jobs for more people....It is planned that as soon as the work is completed in this vicinity that it will be extended to include the rest of the county. Employers...have recently received a special letter...stating that employees were available from their own town and that the Chamber of Commerce would be very glad to put them in touch with applicants. The Employment Bureau does not restrict its applications to Morristown but has applications of people out of work in nearly every town in the county and in some towns in nearby adjacent counties....the number of unemployed has increased slightly rather than decreased.

“
(August 31, 1931, p.1)

As a counterbalance to columns from bankers and investors, President of the International Seamen’s Union, Andrew Furuseth, was featured in a large article on September 5, 1931, p.3. The legendary fighter for sailors’ rights “ascribes a large part of the depression to worthless stocks. ‘Since 1924,’ he declared, ‘more than \$24,000,000,000 of worthless securities have been saddled onto the American public. People naturally want to get rich quickly, and as a result, the slick salesman of watered stock has an easy time of it, and we—why, we have a depression period.’ “

Along the conclusion of the Ramsey MacDonald editorial on August 24th, the editorial on September 9, 1931 states “What happens in future will be determined by leaders in thought and statesmanship. If they recognize that changes must be made, that there are probably good features in systems other than our own and the future demands that present conditions be solved with a blending of new and old

ideas.....” “...it is evident that some of our traditional ideas must be discarded if we are to build a new American social structure, adequate to withstand the batterings of the machine age and the onrush of progress.”

Empathy for the suffering was discussed in a September 16, 1931 editorial. “It is a great deal easier to feel sorry for one person than to feel sorry for 500. It is also easier to extend help if the need can be made dramatic and exciting....A great many men, women and children will be in danger of death this winter through unemployment; not only because of hunger and cold, but because of sickness aggravated by poverty. We shall save most of them, of course—but we shall have to be stirred by elaborate campaigns, speeches, advertisements and radio talks before we can do it....So it goes. We will do almost anything for one individual. When a group is involved we are apt to be indifferent.”

Wage deflation was already a terrible reality for many in Morris County. “Over 1000 hosiery workers living in the vicinity of Dover will be thrown out of employment for a considerable length of time as a result of their refusal to accept the 40 per cent cut in wages....it is probable that the Gotham Hosiery factory in Dover and other plants in Morris county will shut down on Monday.....This latest cut is the third wage reduction imposed on the hosiery workers within the past year. The first two, for 25 and 15 percent respectively, were accepted, but the latest cut is “too much,” according to the union heads. They point out that...most of the workers are not earning a living wage. As an example, the knitters, one of the most prized jobs in a hosiery factory, earn in normal times between \$100 and \$125 a week. At the present time, however, the knitters are being paid exactly \$18 a week...” (Sept. 18, 1931, p.1; see also August 13, 1931)

As predicted by the tone of previous editorials, The Daily Record was enthusiastic about the proposals by Gerard Swope, President of General Electric, “for the stabilization of industry.” “Swope plunges boldly into a series of proposals that would that would sound fearfully socialistic, not to say subversive, if they came from a politician. To group the industries of the nation into gigantic trade associations under the friendly supervision of the federal government; to provide for every worker life insurance, accident insurance, unemployment insurance and a pension system that would enable each worker to retire at 70 on half pay; to give workers and the general public a controlling voice in the administration of these schemes—this surely, is as radical a set of suggestions as any one could ask. Nevertheless, this, or something like it, will undoubtedly be put into effect in the not too distant future....Purblind industrialists can emit gasps of horror about “governmental interference” and “the dole” until they are hoarse; Swope has indicated the path they are going to follow, and they might as well recognize the fact.” (Sept. 18, 1931 editorial)

Group efforts to aid those in need were found everywhere around the country in addition to initiatives on the municipal, county and state levels. For example, page 7 on Sept. 22, 1931 featured a photo story of church women canning surplus fruits and vegetables for the needy in Ohio. “The movement is supported by newspapers, city officials, women’s clubs, church organizations and other groups.”

On the state level, New Jersey was gearing up to help. “Financing of Unemployment Big Problem” reads a headline on page 1, Sept. 23, 1931. “Indications are that the \$6,300,000 which the state [New Jersey] is to have as surplus from the sale of the Camden-Philadelphia bridge will be to switch from its original destination—a direct refund to the taxpayers...--to the use of the municipalities for unemployment relief during the coming winter....The small property owner would have received but a few cents refund anyhow....The big returns...would have gone to the large holders of property.”

Governor Cross of Connecticut called for personal responsibility in addition to leadership from above. “A citizen of a democracy such as ours cannot with a clear conscience delegate his authority to the expert in times of prosperity and hide behind him times of trouble. The present period of adversity will have its uses if it recalls people in all walks of life to the elementary rights and duties of citizenship.” The Daily Record strongly agreed. “We let politicians run governmental affairs about as they pleased...We were too busy to bother about developments in finance and industry...Now we are getting precisely what we asked for. Corruption in city affairs, inefficiency in state capitals, a mounting federal deficit, industrial stagnation, unemployment—we refused to worry about any of them until times got hard.” (Sept. 23, 1931 editorial)

John K. Fitch addressed the balance of payments and restrictive tariffs in his column on Sept. 24, 1931, p.13. “Exports for the first seven months of 1931 dropped to two-thirds of those during the same period in 1930, and to less than one-half those in the similar 1929 months...payments on debts owed to the United States and its nationals must be made in goods or services, but the mighty stumbling block...is the high Hawley-Smoot tariff. Not only does this tariff hinder the payment of the debts but it is throttling world trade since foreign nations find it impossible to build up sufficient credits in the United State to permit purchase of the goods we wish to supply...Release of the tariff load on imports is mandatory to allow discharge of foreign obligations and revival of export trade.” The Daily Record previously addressed this subject in an editorial on February 26, 1931.

The New Jersey legislature was being asked to approve \$8,000,000 for unemployment relief, most of it from the sale of the Camden-Philadelphia

Delaware River Bridge. Governor Larson's plan for unemployment relief was summarized at the top of page 1, Sept. 26, 1931. Point 8 called "for the temporary suspension, for the period of this emergency, of certain parts of the Civil Service Laws, in order that needy persons may be employed in temporary emergency work in the various public departments. Such suspension of the Civil Service laws and regulations should not apply to the permanent employees and it should be understood that this is purely an emergency measure, to be terminated when this emergency is past."

Tax relief, "tea parties" – not a new concept ! "No one...really enjoys paying taxes, of course. But it is only when a depression comes that the average citizen really puts his heart into his complaints. In Ohio, numbers of taxpayers are organizing formal associations in the hope that something can be done about tax relief." The editorial writer then challenges, "How are you going to reduce taxes—by cutting down expenditures? Fair enough; and how are you going to do that? Suppose it is municipal expenses you want to reduce. Where will you start? With the fire and police departments? With the school budget? With the street maintenance department? With the water supply organization? With the playground budget? With such services as sewage disposal, garbage collection, building inspection? There is hardly a city...where cuts would be made in any of those services without doing genuine damage...What is the answer, then?.....Politics...inevitably means waste, inefficiency, and graft....If the taxpayer wants relief, let him organize...to put his governmental institutions on a sound and sensible basis." (Sept. 28, 1931, editorial)

On October 3, 1931, p.2, Jersey Central Power and Light Co. advertised their new Saving-for-Investment Plan whereby \$10 could be invested each month towards a \$100, 5 ½% Cumulative Preferred Share of their stock. The appeal was towards saving money in a systematic way so as never to be caught without a nest egg – an appealing argument for those with a little extra in their pockets. 5 ½% was a pretty impressive rate of return !

Morristown had no bridges to sell. So where was money coming from for unemployment relief? "So far Morristown has been holding back waiting for indication of approved state...schemes..." A charity football tournament between Morristown, Dover, Boonton and Madison was the only proposal on the books so far. (October 24, 1931, editorial)

We learn on October 27, 1931, p.1, that the per capita public welfare cost in Morristown would be 24 cents in 1931, "the estimated expenditure ...being \$3,700." This was in stark contrast to 1930, when the expenditure was 15 cents per capita. A very few towns saw a drop in expenditures, some a modest increase.

“...six municipalities in Morris County [spent] nothing for public relief.” The greatest increases were in Parsippany, “from nothing to 58 cents”; “Rockaway Township, from 14 to 47 cents”; “Chatham Borough, from 12 to 35 cents”; and “Mt. Olive from 24 to 40 cents”.

On August 20, 1931 an editorial lauded the peacefulness of the American worker. Then on November 7, 1931, p.2 a photograph was captioned, “...some 600 unemployed men seeking to register for jobs at one of the emergency relief committee’s bureaus in New York stage a small riot...”

Morristown expected its own “stampede” of job-hunters seeking employment...when the doors of the headquarters of the Mayor’s Committee on Unemployed, located in the American Legion building on Speedwell Avenue, are thrown open to the public....Over 50 applications have already been received, but to date no persons have been placed in positions...” (Nov. 9, 1931, p.1) “Over 75 applications for work were received up to 3 o’clock this afternoon, with the line of unemployed stretching clear from the inner office to the outside door and at times beyond that.” (Nov. 10, 1931, p.1) “At noon today 150 persons out of work in this city had filed applications for work and no signs of a letup in the stream of eager jobless were evident. Thirty requests for direct relief have been received...The Social Service...will supply food until employment has been given the heads of new families....The most unusual feature of the unemployment relief is the absence of “white collar” workers from the list of applicants....This is in direct contrast to the list on file at the Chamber of Commerce employment bureau, where hundreds of office workers and other “genteel” workers have been given employment in the past.” (Nov. 13, 1931, p.1)

White collar workers certainly also needed jobs, and a plea was issued by “Major Farny, Chairman of the National Committee on Good Roads: The unemployment problem affects not only the laboring but also the professional man such as the Civil Engineer. It is important to find employment for the latter in view of the fact that close to 33 per cent of Civil Engineers are without work.” (Nov. 13, 1931, p.7)

John K. Fitch (Nov. 9, 1931, p.9) urged a 10% pay cut in the wages of railroad workers in order to keep railroads solvent and competitive. He said salaries, though not wages, had already been cut. “Average compensation per hour for labor rose steadily to \$0.678 per hour in 1930 from a low of \$0.610 per hour in 1923. On a yearly basis each employe^{3e} received on an average \$1,714 in 1930, compared with a recent low of \$1,613 in 1924 and with \$761 in 1913.....the sharp drop in the cost of living removes all hardship from a wage reduction. In the third quarter of 1931, the cost of living was 14% below that in 1929 and in 1923, so that

a 10% wage reduction would still leave a goodly margin of wage buying power above the preceding periods.” After discussing railroad income and expenses, he concluded, “Lower wage costs, in order to allow a “living wage” to railroad capital, are therefore indicated.” Local Morris County laborers in the silk industry would have disputed the benign effects of wage reduction.

Richard H. Grant, vice president of the General Motors Corporation, making a valiant effort to be positive in extremely difficult times, predicted a better year for the automobile industry in 1932, based on the habit of people replacing their cars every six years. “The biggest automobile year was 1929, when 4,100,000 cars were produced for American consumption. This year the industry will produce somewhere between 1,800,000 and 1,900,000 cars....regardless of how many automobiles are sold in 1932, we are storing up a big business for the future....since the obsolescence is so great and we have sunk so low in this year’s sales, we figure that the first half of 1932 must necessarily be better than was the first half of 1931.” He did recognize that “it was necessary to measure what statistically would be a big year against a practical consideration of the curtailment of expenditures which is going on...” (Nov. 12, 1931, p.4)

New Jersey Bell Telephone published a notice on Nov. 12, 1931, p. 10 that had been sent to its “more than 13,000 telephone employees in New Jersey”: “Until the present period of distress due to unemployment has passed, no regular employee of the New Jersey Bell Telephone Company will be laid off on account of lack of work....Actually, few employees have been laid off up to this time, and such transfers and part-time work as have been required have been accepted cheerfully by our people....”

“Who Said There Was a Depression?” headlined a photograph of New York high society at the Metropolitan Opera. “Among the brilliant throng was... Natalie Coe...debutante...whose exotic beauty caused much raising of lorgnettes.” (Nov. 12, 1931, p.12) The lesser lights on the local scene continued their activities and good works as chronicled on the social pages of the *Daily Record*.

Some of the needy were finding aid through the Unemployment Relief Committee and The Central Bureau of Social Service. “The county...has figured that it can provide work for 200 men.” “**A standard of 50 cents per hour has been adopted for unskilled labor...8-hour-5-days a week, or a maximum of \$20 per week.** The money available under this plan will provide 15,000 working weeks or give 750 men in the county work for the 20 necessary weeks.” In addition, “from ten to 25 men will be added to the town [Morristown] payroll early next week...It was first planned to add only 10 men...but the urgent pleas expressed by all of the applicants enrolled at the Committee headquarters has prompted the town to

employ a larger number. Practically all of the job-seekers enrolled have told investigators that they and their families are destitute and without any means of support.....” (Nov. 13, 1931, p.1)

A notice on page 1, Nov. 16, 1931 announced “Morristown is apt to be minus its official 1932 directory on account of the depression. The Polk Directory Company, which edits the town book every year, recently notified the Chamber of Commerce here that due to the small amount of advertising solicited thus far, it was found inadvisable to publish a Morristown directory for 1932. The chamber of Commerce is making an effort to induce the Polk people to continue the directory and will urge its members to advertise as usual.” In fact, no directory was published for 1932.

“Chester I. Barnard, State Director of Unemployment Relief is not satisfied with the program mapped out by the Legislature to relieve the present situation....He described the plan as ”half baked”.” The Legislature passed acts providing over nine million dollars to be matched by the cities and counties for wages for those to be hired and for poor relief.” Barnard believed at least \$20 million was needed, if not \$40 million or \$100 million.

“He thinks the state should take over the relief work...out of the hands of the city overseers of the poor.” He believed “that the overseers are ‘almost hopelessly inadequate.’ ...“ (Nov. 17, 1931, p.1)

Florham Park seemed barely affected by unemployment, according to the director of municipal relief of the town, reporting “only 14 unemployed... out of a population of 1,268 or 1 1/10 per cent of the 1930 census population.” The council considered at the meeting that it would be best to afford relief “by private contributions and small borough projects” but decided to “give further consideration to the matter”. (Nov. 17, 1931, p.13) By contrast, Mendham Borough had “Forty-six unemployed men... registered with Harry W. Redfield...Municipal Director of Emergency Relief...Employment has already been given to twelve of these men...It is obvious...that the amount of work which can be financed by the Borough and County authorities will not be at all adequate to handle the large number of worthy applicants” and citizens were urged to find work around their homes to “keep some men busy for a time at least”. (Dec. 11, 1931, p.1)

The Economic Policy Commission of the American Bankers Association reported on the overall strength of the more than 22,000 banks in the United States in the face of adversity: “ ‘...the vast majority of bankers have... successfully met their difficulties and obligations. The effects of the drought...demoralization of agriculture... stagnation of industry... breakdown of trade...inability of ...

customers to meet their obligations to the banks, the impairment of public confidence by mob scares and false rumors resulting in unreasoning runs, the abnormal depreciation of quoted security values...the utter collapse of real estate values..." In short, the trials of Job that were afflicting the country were battering the banks fearfully, "Yet...the great bulk of our banking deposits has been protected without harm..." (Nov. 19, 1931, p.20)

"Emil Heller, Dover real estate operator and prominent Democratic leader" sent a plan to President Hoover for the relief of unemployment, in which he urged that "every commercial concern employing ten or more persons be requested...to increase their working force by at least six per cent. **Every bank...to extend additional credit of 10 per cent...workers would become purchasers and consumers instead of unemployment charity cases...**" Along with the national prosperity plan proposed by the Morristown Chamber of Commerce reported on Oct. 29, 1930, it was yet another well-meaning suggestion sent to the beleaguered President. (Nov. 21, 1931, p.1)

"Charles A. Beard, the historian, declared in an article in Harpers Magazine...that the creed of individualism...is actually a menace to society. **An age of technology and science needs careful planning and thorough-going co-operation;** the old creed calls for action with each man taking care of himself and the devil taking the hindmost." The Daily Record editorial writer continues, "If we insist that the old machine is practically perfect right now, needing nothing but a diet of optimistic speeches and a sit-tight philosophy", then a Soviet system awaits. "...if we discard our prejudices and insist that co-operation and planning are possible within the existing framework", then we do not lose the essence of America. (Nov.23, 1931 editorial)

Despite the depression, "Turkey dinners with all the trimmings will be served to the patients and nurses at both local hospitals, All Souls and Memorial. These turkeys are always donated by friends of the hospitals....

The Board of Managers of the Old Ladies' Home will provide a turkey dinner for tomorrow. At Shongum, a turkey dinner with all the extras will be served. Ex-service men at the sanitorium have been remembered with special baskets of fruit. A chicken dinner with pumpkin pie will be served at the Welfare House while chickens raised at the Welfare House have been killed to furnish a chicken dinner for the prisoners at the Morris County Jail. a chicken dinner with all the "fixin's" will also be served at the New Jersey State Hospitals at Greystone Park." (Nov. 25, 1931, p.1)

The Emergency Employment Bureau at 1 Speedwell Avenue reported having registered 475 people in need of employment. Work had been found so far for 77

people. “Women registered for general house work appear to fare the best...”
(Nov. 30, 1931, p.1)

Jazz ain't what it used to be, was the subject of an editorial on Dec. 2, 1931. It was Roaring Twenties music—“All of the old ways were going to be discarded, and the man who saved his money and took thought for the morrow was simply a dolt. A new era was dawning. Stamp your feet, clap your hands and get excited—we're the children of tomorrow, and the sky's the limit!...Red-hot jazz music, hectic and giddy, no longer appeals to us as it used to. We're not quite so ready to kick up our heels as we were a few years ago.”

The December 8, 1931 issue published President Hoover's message to Congress on page 1. “An 8-point program, designed to strengthen the general business situation—primarily by broadening and liberalizing the country's credit structure—was proposed to...Congress....With it went the unwelcome news that there must be a material increase in Federal income taxes for the next two years in order to rescue the Treasury from existing and future deficits....Concerning the...issue of unemployment...the Government was spending \$780,000,000 on public works this year...[the President] is still unalterably opposed to anything approaching the dole. ‘Our people are providing against distress from unemployment in true American fashion by a magnificent response to public appeal and by action of the local governments.’ “

On the same day the newspaper published a photograph of **“members of the “hunger army” which advanced on Washington** from distant parts of the country and massed in front of the Capitol with signs. (Dec. 8, 1931, p.11)

Donations of “money, milk and food to help relieve suffering among the poor and unemployed” were reported to the Morristown Board of Aldermen, including a check for \$100 from the Italian-American Civic League to be used to feed **“undernourished children”**. (Dec. 24, 1931, p.1)

On the state level, many politicians were not on board with the legislative proposal to “cut salaries of state employees”. “County Clerk E. Bertram Mott...did not see any necessity of making any cuts in salaries” because he felt sufficient changes had already been made. A decision would be made in a special legislative session the evening of December 30th. (Dec. 30, 1931, p.1)

A front-page article the next day reported “The whole program of salary slashing for state, city and county officials appeared dead today following the action of the House of Assembly last night in refusing to accept the economy proposals...emanating from the State senate. Bills on unemployment relief,

however, were ready for signing. “The measures... take \$3,500,000 from the motor vehicle license fees and \$3,000,000 from the gasoline taxes ordinarily used for road improvements and set the two sums up for the unemployment relief which is to be distributed to the counties and cities.” (Dec. 31, 1931, p.1)

“**Glad To See 1931 Depart**” was a heartfelt headline on page 1, Dec. 31, 1931. “Seldom in recent years will the people in general welcome more the departure of an old year and welcome in a new one than just at present....It is to be hoped that 1932 will have attached “A.D.—After the Depression”.