

January 29, 1935

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Statement of Governor Horner, with respect  
to the tragedy of Friday, January 25, 1935.

I have requested and received a report from the Illinois Emergency Relief Commission on the recent tragedy in which, during the performance of their duties, Chicago relief workers, Caroline Wallace and Alice Irwin were shot to death and Hazel Dugan and Niels Nielson were seriously wounded, all at the hands of Henry Arden and his mother, who were on relief. The deaths of Mrs. Arden and her son by self inflicted wounds followed the attack on the relief workers.

The facts revealed in this report bring to our attention the acute problems and difficult tasks confronting the men and women who are actively engaged in caring for the needy in our State. Some of these needy persons who, under normal conditions, would support themselves by gainful employment, are undergoing severe emotional strains through long enforced idleness. The tension of these strains is relieved to some extent by our understanding relief workers and by providing work relief, but in some instances all the efforts of our relief workers cannot prevent emotional disturbances. The Ardens were undoubtedly insane.

Having the utmost confidence in the devotion of our relief workers to the problem, I know that they will not permit this tragic occurrence to deter them in their brave efforts to aid the destitute. As shocking as is the occurrence, it shall not discourage any of us, whether public servant or private citizen in our efforts to help those who cannot find employment.

On behalf of the people of Illinois, I extend profound sympathy to the relatives and friends of Miss Wallace and Miss Irwin and to Miss Dugan and Mr. Nielson my wishes for a speedy and full recovery. In the members of the Illinois Emergency Relief Commission and its many agencies throughout the State responsible for the difficult task facing them, I have the utmost confidence.

The Relief workers throughout the State are entitled to our commendation for their loyal devotion and for the intelligent consideration generally shown by them in ministering to the needs of those in distress during those trying times.

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