

President's address at
Luncheon meeting, Community
Chest, Wood Nelson Hotel
Oct. ~~20~~ 30/33.

I do not know, but I suppose, that the reason for my being asked to address you today is that, along with some others, I have succeeded in my begging. As one sturdy beggar I am asked to exhort other sturdy beggars. And in fact some of you may think that you are obliged to be sturdier beggars than ever just because I, and others with me, have this year added to the amount which must be begged. I shall come back to that, after a few moments.

First of all, however, let us see what the general situation is that confronts the Community Chest this winter. As I see it, our organized charities are faced with an acute crisis: this winter will in all probability show the peak of distress, when we look back upon it a few years hence. Since 1929 things have grown steadily worse; there are now world-wide signs of im-

provement. Nova Scotia and Halifax are bound to share in that improvement. But we shall reach it slowly, just as we were slow in reaching the depression. Apple growers, miners and steel workers are already in an improved position in this province. But we must not forget that misery has been slowly accumulating in our poorest classes. Family after family has been falling from easy circumstances into difficult circumstances, and from difficult circumstances into sheer poverty. The strong have been weakened, and the weak have grown ill and weary. Even if employment were miraculously to improve, there are many men and women who are not in physical condition to avail themselves of it. But there has been, of course, no miraculous upturn in employment as yet.

In other words, the need this winter is greater than ever before. And what of the purses from which we are to supply the need? It is obviously true that there are fewer purses to draw from than there were. People who a few years ago could be counted upon to contribute to organised charities are now deep in difficulties themselves. And there are undoubtedly some, who though not in distress or difficulty, have either a smaller income, or who have drawn upon their resources to help individuals and causes, and who cannot give as much to the Community Chest as they formerly did. We need not close our eyes to all that. But it is undoubtedly just as true that there are many in our midst who have not, in the past, contributed anything like as much as they could be made to contribute this year. When I say "could be made to contribute" I am not thinking of the methods used by former English

Kings to extract money from unwilling subjects. I am not advising any of you to take a pair of thumbscrews along with you on your canvass. I mean that there are men in Halifax who have never yet had the Community Chest put up to them in the right way. They know what a chest is; but do they know the meaning of Community? Do they know that it is literally the truth that they cannot be well either in purse or in health, if men and women and children in their own city are moneyless and ill? We all know now that one nation cannot prosper if other nations are pauperized. The shiploads of reparation gold that poured into the United States have not saved the United States from the acutest distress to be found anywhere in the world today. Even the millionaire nation cannot prosper when other nations are in distress. And it is the same within states. Why have Finland, and Sweden, and Denmark and Switzerland

made such prodigious efforts to make all of their citizens, ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~
~~XXXX~~, highly educated? Because they believe that an ignorant citizen is a
dangerous citizen. But the same thing applies to sickness and to unemployment
as to ignorance. No city can have a good average health if it has a large
slum area. That is not merely because the slum brings down the average,
it is because the slum infects the whole city. And if there are many unem-
ployed the rich merchant cannot prosper, because there are fewer consumers to
buy his merchandise. But if he and others will give some of their goods
away, keep the unemployed from getting permanently impoverished and ill, there
is a great chance that in the future he will find consumers who can pay.

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Men, Amsterdam know that a famine in China, or an earthquake in the Malay Archi-
pelago instantly affects the market in diamonds in their city, though no dia-

monds are sold to the wretched peasants in those distant countries. And so every doctor, every lawyer, as well as every business man in Halifax, is affected by cholera infantum in Water Street. That's the meaning of Community, and it's a literal, demonstrable fact. And it was realised 2200 years ago, when it was said "Every man is a member of a community, unless he be a god, or a beast".

If we can make these things understood, or rather appreciated - for they are so plain that any one can understand them - we shall find many who can greatly augment the aid they give. For example, I was in a small company the other day, where this very argument was advanced, and one man present said: I've been giving ten dollars to the Community Chest, but I can just as easily give twenty, now that I see it in this way". This I heard with my own ears, but I have since been told, indirectly, of a wealthy man who said he had always

given ten dollars, but perhaps he should give a hundred." I'm sure that there are more men in Halifax than these two who could be made to see the thing in the same way.

And, not a word, about R.H.C. The Public Health Clinic serves as an outpatient hospital for all the hospitals in its neighbourhood; it ministers to the sick who are quite unable to pay doctors. The doctors who work there give their professional services gratis. All the other expenses have never, up to date, cost the community a single penny. I am going to take a moment to go into this matter for there has been a very general misunderstanding about it. Nine years ago the Rockefeller Foundation of New York built the building, on ground belonging to Dalhousie University. But there was no endowment whatever for current expenditures. For a while the expenditures were not very great,

for the Massachusetts Relief Commission provided the nurses. But even during the first few years Dalhousie University contributed on the average about \$ 10,000 annually, which was much more than we could afford to pay. Then, five years ago, the Relief Commission withdrew its nurses, and the expense to Dalhousie jumped to \$ 17,000 a year. For five years the University has struggled on, with this crushing burden, and no sick person has ever yet been turned away. But Dalhousie last year encountered very serious financial difficulties, and was absolutely unable to go on. We appealed to the City, to the Provincial Government, to the Community Chest, and they have all given us some aid. They have taken over about half of the burden. In recognition of this local interest the Rockefeller Foundation has added to its already great gift and established a new department at the Clinic, for the prevention of disease. It is in this

respect, namely its preventive nature, that makes the institution unique, among the institutions which serve the community of Halifax. [If it were not for the Public Health Clinic hundreds of sick children and adults would have chronic cases, and be thrown upon the other institutions where the cost of maintaining them would be much greater.] We aim at stamping out diseases that can be stamped out, diphtheria in particular; we save many a wage-earner and supporter of a family from becoming too ill to work; in one clinic we do much to prevent insanity; and so on. And we do all this, if a patient can prove his inability to pay a physician, absolutely free.

In fact the Public Health Clinic is as good an illustration of the meaning of the word Community as could be found.

One final word. All over America the pooling of charities

in one Community Chest has been tried and found valuable. Once tried the scheme has never been abandoned. But it has also appealed, year after year, to an increasing number of citizens. Especially so in recent years. If the depression has had one benefit it has been this: to make men feel and know more and more that they cannot live to themselves alone, ^{that they are members of a Community.} In some places, worse stricken than Halifax, if this had not been so, society would have dissolved altogether. But we must all try to make Halifax more conscious of it this winter, for the need is greater than ever before.