

FERA MATTRESS JOBS GO TO 1,400 IN OHIO

Project, Fought by Private Business, Is First Relief Enterprise for Women.

COLUMBUS, Sept. 30 (AP).—A relief project, described by Governor George White as “in the twilight zone of socialism,” keeps nearly 1,400 Ohioans busy.

Selected from about 900,000 relief clients, they are engaged in the Federal Government’s “self-help” mattress-manufacturing program.

Widespread criticism from organizations greeted the announcement of the starting of the project. Private mattress manufacturers, the chamber of commerce and other organizations contended the program was competition with private industry. They asserted the government should buy its relief products from factories already established.

Governor White, supporter of New Deal policies, suspended relief mattress making temporarily when the protests became loudest. He authorized establishment of the factories only after a hearing granted the objectors, a hearing at which Adjutant General Frank D. Henderson, State relief chairman, argued the program was necessary to meet unprecedented conditions.

Miss Hannah L. Protzman, head of the Women’s Work Division of the Ohio Relief Commission, says that one of the principal objectives “is to distribute to needy families vital necessities; namely, decent mattresses and bedding.” Relief funds are not available for this purpose, she says.

Employing women except for the heavy work, the program represents the first women’s work relief project originating under the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. Under it the Federal Government will finance the manufacture of some 2,000,000 mattresses, 150,000 of them in Ohio, for distribution among poor families. None of the mattresses may be sold.

Except for sewing machines and hand-operated pickers, all work is done by hand. Mrs. Henderson estimated the cost of each mattress at \$14.30. The factories—in Ohio there are thirty-nine—are operated by local relief authorities under the direction of State relief commissions.