

CITY PUBLIC WORK EXPENDITURES HIT

Administrative Costs Up 300 Per Cent, Chambers' Report Shows.

Administrative costs of the city of Atlanta's construction department increased 300 per cent between the years of 1929 and 1931, an audit of the office of the chief of construction, made public Saturday by W. Evans Chambers, survey expert, shows.

Administrative costs in 1929 were less for each dollar expended than they were in 1931 for each 35 cents paid out, the audit shows.

The finance committee of council Monday night will begin a study of the Chambers report in an effort to cull about \$250,000 from the June finance sheet and balance the city's budget.

Mayor James L. Key will attend the meeting of the finance committee and will recommend reduction in personnel to balance the budget rather than a further clash in salaries, he said Saturday. Formulation of the June sheet is sure to precipitate a bitter fight because of the varied interests which will be involved in the construction department slashes, elimination of employees and in culling nepotism from the government.

Chambers' report shows that the city expended \$2,396,663.01 in 1929 and that the overhead in administration was \$130,920.35, and that while only \$886,257.12 in improvements were done in 1931 overhead was listed at \$131,394.07.

He recommends drastic economies in the administrative staff and retrenchments and improvements in other branches of the department to save about \$215,000 a year.

Councilman James L. Wells, chairman of the finance group, also has announced that nepotism in the municipal government should be eliminated in an economy program which must be enforced if the deficit is to be averted.

Changes Recommended.

In an 18-page survey of the construction division of the government, Chambers recommends many drastic changes, chief among which follow:

1. Elimination of 19 office employees, including the superintendent of prison, four engineers, a plumbing inspector and several bookkeepers, clerks and stenographers. He estimates the saving by such personnel reductions at \$71,459 a year on the basis of the present pay.

2. Elimination of 23 foremen of construction crews, to save about \$52,000 a year.

3. Reduction of wages of truck drivers from \$4 to \$3.50 a day and of white laborers from \$3.60 to \$3 a day, and adoption of the five-hour day for all labor in the department: these economies to save about \$40,000 a year.

4. Purchase of crushed rock to supplant the city's operation of its own crusher plant. This would save

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Continued from First Page.

\$36,000 a year, Mr. Chambers estimates.

5. Construction of lateral sewers by contract instead of by city forces, to save about \$15,000 a year.

6. Reduction of labor force at city dairy farm to save about \$8,000 a year.

More Spent for Less.

Chambers' report showed that \$2,396,663.01 was expended by the department in 1929 at a total cost of \$130,920.35 for the administrative pay roll, but that in 1931 only \$886,257.12 was expended in improvements but that the administrative cost was \$131,394.07.

"The decrease in activities which began in 1930 and continued in 1931 was due in large part to the exhaustion of the bond funds and should have been followed by a corresponding reduction in overhead," his report said.

"The reorganization plan, which has been worked out, if put into effect, will reduce the administration pay roll from \$131,394.07 as expended in 1931 to an annual basis of \$59,934.60, a reduction of \$71,459.47."

In commenting on elimination of the foremen, Chambers says "the top-heavy organization which has been shown to exist in the administrative branch of the department also is manifest in the actual construction work and is still maintained.

Too Many Foremen.

"Two companies, which do about the same kind of work as is done by the city, pay \$150 per month for general foremen or superintendents; \$135 for foremen and \$117 for subforemen. Practically all the work done by foremen for the city is done by subforemen of these companies. This indicates that the city has about 25 more of the 'higher-priced' foremen on its pay roll than is necessary to successfully carry on the work.

"If all the foremen's jobs paying more than \$36 per week and five of the \$36 ones were discontinued, the remaining ones, as foremen and subforemen, could easily carry on the work that is to be done.

"At the present time there are not more than five or six jobs being carried on of sufficient size to require the services of even regular foremen.

"This will reduce the pay roll \$996 per week, or a total of \$51,792 annually (based on the 1931 scale), and should not reduce the actual labor performed or the result accomplished.

"Subforemen with the companies mentioned work with the laborers as head-worker of the crew and take orders from the general foremen or superintendent. There is no reason why the city should not also follow this plan.

"A check of the wages paid city foremen shows that 10 of them have received increases in pay ranging from \$1 to \$10 per week since 1929."

Sewer Paving Losses Cited.

A loss to the city of \$14,907.20 was sustained in paving lateral sewers in 1931, he holds, and recommends that bids be asked for all such work, with the construction department filing a sealed bid along with other bidders. If the construction department is low, it should do the work, but a strict account of all expenditures should be kept, he pointed out.

The city prison farm netted Atlanta only about 30 cents out of every dollar expended last year, Chambers cited, although he held that since prisoners must be exercised, it should not be abandoned. It cost the city \$17,136.54 in 1931 and netted only \$12,038.25, his audit showed.

Temporary abandonment of the asphalt plant is recommended because of the high cost of operation, which

Gyrations and An Keep Colleague

BY DON J. KIRKLEY.

WASHINGTON, May 28.—(P)—Master of his own one-ring circus on the floor, Senator Huey P. Long, of Louisiana, keeps the galleries in guffaws and his colleagues wondering.

The phrase "rough and tumble debate" apparently was coined with the democrat from the Louisiana bayous in mind, because his debates are both rough and tumbling, on himself and his foes.

In a quaint admixture of figures and colorful phrasing and with eloquent gyrations, he presents the points for which he is arguing, noisily and vehemently. Sarcasm is his chief weapon in debate.

"Ain't" is one of his standby words—coupled with "gonna"—while "particular" becomes "pubtickuler" in his colloquial speech as he stomps this way and that, sways far back from the waist up, first one arm and then the other waving wildly. Occasionally both are flying, or both are tucked deep in his pockets while he listens to a question.

At times, Long takes command in the senate. His favorite position is in the back of the center aisle dividing the two parties' sections of seats. There he teeters and talks, while directing activities.

listed \$4.20 a ton for the product a price of from \$1.50 to \$2 a ton less than the present market. His recommendation was that because of the small amount of such work now being done, it should be abandoned for the time being. Cost of operation in 1931 was \$73,533.60, which meant an actual saving to the city but which, because of curtailed activity at this time, might become a liability.

Operation of the rock quarry last year cost citizens about \$49,628.16, according to Chambers' figures. In that figure, however, was added \$12,433 for prison labor for which the city did not actually pay.

Rock Quarry Loss.

"A total of 26,538 tons was quarried at a cost, including the crushing, of \$2.216 per ton," the report said. "Compared with a price of about \$1.60 or less, if purchased in the market. This was a net loss to the city of \$16,347.41. Stone produced at the quarry was hauled a distance, by actual measurement, of 4.8 miles further than would be required if it were purchased f. o. b. cars and placed for unloading at the various team tracks in different sections of the city. This extra haul adds at least 25 cents per ton more to the cost, which increases the loss to \$20,847.74.

"There is, however, one item to be considered in this connection—the convict labor which is used to get this stone. An average of 45 stockade prisoners were employed in the quarry and crushers in 1931. This labor was rated at \$1 per day, which totaled \$12,433.

"However, the quarry lost money in 1931 if no value at all had been placed on the convict labor."

He recommended that the city abandon the rock quarry and contract for the stone for delivery to jobs as needed.

Utilization of sludge from disposal plants as fertilizer on city golf courses and other municipal activities and its sale would turn from \$10,000 to \$15,000 a year into city coffers, the report showed, if it could be disposed of at a rate of \$1.50 a ton.

He showed that the city spent \$394,598.10 in 1929, 1930 and 1931 in laying free paving for certain sections, while it assessed \$348,815.20 against other property owners, who did not have "political pull enough to get it for nothing."