

draw unemployment benefits to exhaustion during 1958, when a total of \$4,901,908 in benefit checks was paid.

Last year, he pointed out, 1,073 persons exhausted their benefits, when a total of \$3,655,109 was paid out, a drop of \$1.3 million in benefits paid for the year.

Mr. Dorler said present law specifies 26 weeks of unemployment insurance, and there are no provisions at present for extension of the benefits. An extension presumably would have to be granted by action of the Legislature, he said.

Must Be Reemployed

The only way in which an individual could receive additional benefits, he said, would be to be employed for five months, after which he again would be eligible for benefits.

Mr. Dorler said that, during recent months, an average of 25 persons per week exhausted unemployment benefits. During the week of Jan. 15, a total of 207 persons received final benefit checks. The following week, final benefits were paid to 50 persons, the next week to 46, and the first week of this month, the figure was down to the average of 25 again.

From the first of the year through the first week of February, 328 persons exhausted unemployment benefits, the majority of whom presumably are former Art Metal employes.

The letter received by Claude E. Townsend, business agent for Lodge 1559, was from William J. Ronan, secretary to Governor Rockefeller.

Mr. Ronan pointed out that "there is a specific limitation on the amount of benefits which can be received in a benefit year.

"The problem of prolonged unemployment, such as affects your people, and its impact on the individual and on our economy is receiving careful study and consideration. A primary purpose of several of our major task forces is the enlargement of job opportunities throughout the State.

"The Governor appreciates your writing him about your situation and hopes that your people will return to their work even sooner than expected. As you know, the job-finding, counseling and other services of the State Employment Service are available to them to the fullest to help them in every way possible to find either temporary employment or other permanent jobs."

Assemblyman A. Bruce Manley said, in a telegram to the union, that the request for relief is receiving his "fullest consideration."

Rep. Charles E. Goodell (R-Jamestown), said "I will certainly investigate what the House Ways and Means Committee intends to do with reference to such legislation (to extend benefits — Ed.).

"It has, however, taken no action with reference to the extension of the 26 weeks period, nor does it seem to contemplate any action. I will continue to explore the matter."