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REGIONALIZATION IN THE UPPER MIDWEST— THE ABC's OF AN INCREMENTAL EVOLUTION

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(Alternatives - Boundaries - Consequences)

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INTRODUCTION

There is today, as all of us know, a crisis on the campus. There is, too, a crisis in the city. And there is a constant crisis in Vietnam and in most of the rest of our uneasy world. By and large, these are the crises upon which we concentrate our attentions, our actions, and our anxieties.

About each of these crises--in colleges, in ghettos, and on battlefields--I could legitimately claim to possess some first-hand knowledge and, perhaps less legitimately, some opinions with respect to feasible alternatives, if not answers. And we could, together, generate a dialog which would occupy not only my allotted time but the time of all of the rest of your speakers today.

There is another crisis however. It is one which does not receive the national attention of the three I have mentioned. It is one with which, I suspect, each of you is intimately familiar; vaguely uneasy; and--perhaps--unwillingly acknowledged. It is the crisis of the countryside.

For Minnesota and the Dakotas it is a crisis characterized by a demise of some small communities; by the terminal illness of others; by rising per capita taxes coupled with inadequate public services; by unemployment and underemployment; by an aging population structure; and by an unending flight to major metropolitan areas of the young, the able, and the mobile. Those remaining are increasingly the aged,

the untrained, and the immobile. This is the crisis of the countryside and this is the subject upon which I wish to dwell for my remaining comments.

I have subtitled my remarks as "The Case for an Incremental Evolution--Alternatives, Boundaries, and Consequences." I will treat these ABC's in turn. First, however, a brief discussion of the concept of regions is in order.

The concepts of regions, geographic areas within which people share common bonds, such as joint goals, aspirations, and objectives; similar assets, problems, and resources; and connective political and social ties is, perhaps, as old as organized society.

Regions* take on an almost infinite variety of patterns ranging from the political forms of international alliances to nations, states, counties, townships, municipalities. Similarly, physical regions--which may or may not follow political boundaries--vary from the Western Hemisphere to the Great Plains to a river basin or watershed or to a national forest. Social and economic regions are equally diverse--from ethnic areas through Nob Hill and city ghetto and from the Common Market through national tariff barriers to regional and local trend centers.

*It is interesting to note that Roget's Thesaurus identified 82 synonyms for "Region", and then suggests the reader see also Habitation, Enclosure, Limit, Place, and Space!

Currently, regionalization is construed as primarily concerned with economic considerations, but with recognition of administrative, political, social, and physical factors. Increasing attention is being directed to economic and social programs that are "problem oriented" and which, by this approach, cut across and overlay traditional boundaries.

Federal, state, and local programs more and more are finding that a "regional" focus is a prerequisite to effective action. A White House Executive Order requires that federal programs be built around "planning regions" designated by the state.

In a sense, it has been the combination of two institutional changes that has brought about this regional focus. One of these changes has been technological in nature. The development, in this century, of modern communications techniques together with the associated increase in data analysis capability of modern computer systems has resulted in comprehensive inter-area comparative knowledge--on a current, or near current, basis. Today it is relatively easy to compare attributes, either quantitative or qualitative, of either adjacent or widely separated "regions" or groups in terms of their relative ranking at a current, or at least recent past, period of time.

Thus, such measures as: "poverty" in Appalachia; attained educational levels of Indians in Minnesota; and levels of air pollution in Los Angeles are not only estimated and compared with other groups or other areas but the comparative estimates are stacked up against "norms" and quickly become common knowledge in Washington, D. C., in St. Paul, and in Sioux Falls via newspaper, radio, and television media.

The second of these two relevant institutional changes has occurred in a societal context. However one chooses to define and describe the change, it is clear that federal, state, and local governments are assuming an increasing responsibility for providing public service "systems" which will assure at least "minimum" standards of private, or personal, welfare for all individuals. They are assuming this increased responsibility in response to a heightened sense of social responsibility on the part of the American people. They are assuming it, too, because it is generally recognized that the inertia of private initiative and private investment in reaching these solutions is such that it will be "too little and too late" to prevent social chaos.

The welfare standards that are set as goals, whether economic, social, or physical in content, are often based on difficult qualitative and quantitative measures such as "real income," "opportunity," or "choice," "minimum levels of air or water pollution," "adequate housing sanitary facilities," etc. Thus, these public bodies find themselves in the position of determining standards of environmental quality, embarking on public policy programs designed to achieve minimum standards, and creating and enforcing statutes and regulations intended to insure private compliance with public goals.

In effect, then, they are attempting to rationalize measurement and control "systems" which will direct change in channels leading toward these larger goals.

The comments above raise the question of whether or not some of the evolving theories of regional science may be appropriately brought to bear on the concerns of the "real world" and thereby offer a means of more rapidly, more efficiently, and more rationally reaching at least some of the societal goals and objectives which are of such overriding current concern.

Before attempting to demonstrate the application of regional science to these problems, it seems useful to review and put in perspective some of the concepts and constructs of regional science as it has evolved in recent years.

Regional Science is one of the few, if not the only, multi-disciplinary sciences within the whole sphere of concern of the social sciences. It is also one of the few social sciences which attempts, although to date with only limited success, to integrate its concerns with the concerns of the physical sciences. It has evolved in recent years into two relatively distinct areas of specialization.

The first of these (and it matters little whether the discipline is economics, geography, sociology, or demography) is what might be labeled "Theoretical Regional Science." In this field the investigator is concerned primarily with hypothesizing theoretical models of the spatial inter-action and inter-relationships of people, places and organizations. The field has an attractive orderliness about it; more often than not the "models" are statistical in nature and more often than not they abstract from the real world in this attempt at order-liness and logic.

The second area, or field, of specialization might be labeled "Applied Regional Science." It has resulted from an attempt to apply--jointly--the analytical capabilities made possible by the development of conceptual tools in the theoretical areas of the various disciplines to the policy makers desire to seek more adequate and analytical answers to complex problems related to regional and urban growth and change.

Regional Science by its very name implies a consideration of, and a concern with, spatial inter-relationships. It is the fact that the complex of these relationships involves economic, topographic, demographic, social and psychological, natural resource, and political considerations that has provided the genesis of, and the tremendous growth in interest in, regional science.

Regional Science is then, in its fullest sense, a discipline which has truly emerged in the last decade or two as an interdisciplinary attempt to understand and to evaluate the spatial interrelationships of the human ecological system and to attempt to define, analyze, and recommend, public policy actions which will assist in achieving public policy objectives.

One final comment. Applied Regional Science has not yet reached a stage of full maturity wherein the theories of Regional Science have direct and precise real world counterparts. As a result the applied Regional scientist while drawing on the theoretical tools available, it is still forced to emphasize pragmatic considerations and to heavily flavor his conclusions with the best judgments that he can bring to bear on the problem under consideration.

With this as background, let us look at possible alternative mid-western futures.

A. The Postulation of Alternative Futures for the Upper Midwest

Small communities in the Upper Midwest face economic decline as a result of resource depletion or competition from other areas. Today, many small communities in the prosperous agricultural regions of the area also face an uncertain future because of the impact of agricultural technology and farm consolidation, improvements in transportation and communications, and the rising consumption expectations of rural people. Many people, however, still depend upon these communities for their livelihood and essential services, including residents who are stranded because they have no obvious way of disposing of their assets and finding new jobs elsewhere. The residents of small communities want to know what alternatives they face so they can make appropriate personal and business plans and adjustments.

Generally, towns and cities less than 30 miles from an area growth center or less than 100 miles from the Twin Cities face a more promising longrun economic future than places located farther away. Proximity to a growth center, particularly a regional growth center is, in fact, a critical determinant of one important option facing small communities; namely, becoming primarily a residential community for people commuting to work, for retirees or for weekend and seasonal residents.

What evidence supports the idea that the future of small communities depends upon their proximity to large cities? First,

of course, is the statistical record itself. Growing small communities in the Midwest generally have been of two types: trade centers that have taken over functions of smaller places and trade centers near large, growing cities. The first type has emerged as a result of improvements in transportation and communications, along with a declining farm population that traditionally has supported nearby general purpose service centers. The largest of the growing rural trade centers typically becomes the area growth center. The second type becomes part of the metropolitan suburban area or its counterpart in less densely populated areas, the rural residential community. A third type of rural community exists--the small town that finds a new industry manufacturing products for sale outside the area and uses this industry to replace a declining one. But there are few such success stories, certainly less than 10 percent of the total number of small communities. Among the communities of the third type, however, are the future satellite cities that will emerge as new growth centers within the extensive distribution region served by a metropolitan center.

Does being too far from a large city to become a residential area mean that a small community has little chance for growth? Or, alternatively, does proximity to a large city assure a promising future for all small communities? Though the potential for a community's future depends upon local conditions, such as roads, schools, housing, community attitudes, and resource bases, much also depends upon public policy relating to spatial-

economic decentralization. In other words, we must ask what sort of place we want to live and work in, how much we are willing to pay for what we want, and who must carry the public burden in taxes and other charges. Looking at small communities, Midwesterners face three alternatives: (1) continued concentration of population and industry in major metropolitan areas, (2) focused decentralization in outlying growth centers, and (3) new growth centers based on present and future rather than past technologies. Each alternative has different implications for small cities and towns.

1. Continuation of Historic Trends

Alternative 1 represents a continuation of historic trends in rural-to-urban migration.

For example, the Twin Cities Metropolitan Council staff has projected for the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan area an increase of 1,025,000 people during the 25-year period from 1960 to 1985 (from a 1960 population of 1,525,000 to a projected 1985 population of 2,777,000). Using a U. S. Bureau of the Census projected 1985 state population of 4,177,000, the seven-county metropolitan area portion of the total state population would increase from 45 to 66 percent. Accordingly, total population outside the metropolitan area would decline from 1,889,000 to 1,400,000 during the 25-year period. Thus, small communities outside the seven-county area, and especially those more than 50 miles from the Twin Cities, would face further drastic shifts in population and economic bases under alternative 1. These same futures, in an even more drastic sense are faced by small communities outside of Minot, Bismarck, Aberdeen, Rapid City, Pierre, and

Sioux Falls in the Dakotas.

2. Growth Center Intervention

Alternative 2 represents the outcome of combined public-private intervention in the urbanization process. Industrial, commercial, and residential inducements would be devised to attract rural-to-urban migrants to the growth centers roughly 100 miles from the Twin Cities (St. Cloud, Willmar, Mankato-St. Peter, Austin-Albert Lea, Rochester, and Winona, see figure 1). If the metropolitan area population were to increase from its estimated 1967 level of 4,177,000 to a projected 1985 level of only 2,277,000, roughly half of the projected increase under alternative 1, then an additional 500,000 people would be added to the projected populations of the growth centers and their commuting areas. The Mankato-St. Peter area, for example, would show an additional increase of 100,000 people, assuming that the projected increases were distributed according to present population levels for each of the growth centers. Of course, a substantial portion of these people would reside in small communities within the Mankato-St. Peter commuting area.

3. Regional Systems Intervention

Alternative 3 represents further intervention in the urbanization process with particular reference to the building of new regional communication cities, which serve primarily as information-producing centers such as university towns or office centers for multi-establishment businesses in a given region. Recognizing that in a fully participative

democracy people want control of their basic institutions, a high priority is placed on access to control, which implies proximity to communication centers.

Major communication centers for Midwestern residents also are major transportation and distribution centers (Minneapolis-St. Paul, Duluth-Superior, Fargo- Moorhead, and Sioux Falls). Thus, production-economic considerations dominate in present communication systems. However, to the extent that they provide opportunities for citizen participation and involvement, future communication centers and subcenters are as likely to be university towns as they are to be production centers.

With its location, Marshall, a university town, is a potential communication center that can serve residents in both the Sioux Falls and Twin Cities distribution area, linking group and community interests between the two major centers. If half of the projected 500,000 population increase for the outlying growth centers and commuting areas were concentrated in a new regional communication subcenter and its commuting area, alternative 3 projections for the area would diverge sharply from those of alternatives 1 and 2. If concentrated in one city, an additional 250,000 people would be the equivalent of a major metropolitan center, the second largest city in the state (approximately 100,000 workers and 75,000 households, with total public and private

capital expenditure requirements of $10-$15 billion). Alternatively, several new communication cities may emerge, including combinations of communication and trade centers.

The future of small communities thus depends greatly upon forces that remain outside the control of community residents. To the extent that a national urbanization policy is developed for attaining some sort of rural-urban balance, the last of the three alternatives or some variation of it emerges as a meaningful one. It poses the most favorable opportunities for small community growth by contributing to an economically balanced pattern of rural-urban development.

B. The Question of Boundaries

1. Regional Concepts

Regionalization---the sub-national and sub-state division of existing political-geographic entities into units which can be more appropriately considered in terms of specific problems is a major activity in the United States today. In order to provide an overview of some of these specific activities, we need to look behind some of these activities at some of the rationale which have established the need for such an approach and at some of the objectives that might be attained through the use of regionalization as a tool of public policy.

Urbanization, or the transformation of an economy from a primarily rural status to that of one dominated by nodes of urban population concentrations is a world-wide phenomenon. In Figure 1, two of the impacts of this process, as it has

occurred over the past 160-odd years are illustrated. As the total population of the world has increased the proportion of this population that is resident in the cities has also increased--and at a much more rapid rate. In 1800 the ratio of urban to rural residents in the world population was approximately 80 rural residents for each urban resident; by the mid-1960's the ratio had declined to about six rural residents for each urban resident. In addition, as the percentage of urbanization has increased, per capita income has increased dramatically.

In 1800 only about one percent of the world population was urban in character; today about 20 percent of the total world population is urban. As is well known, urbanization in the United States and in other industrialized nations has occurred at a pace far greater than the world-wide average. This increase has brought with it tremendous gains but has also had the result of creating severe problems. The social and economic problems attendant in urban ghettos and in areas of rapidly declining rural population are indicators of these kinds of social and economic problems. In terms of the kinds of migration patterns that have predominated in the north central United States many of the major urban areas have had population increases of 10-20 percent during the decade from 1950-1960 and many rural counties have suffered population declines as high as, or even higher than 20 percent.

Urban ghettos and their attendant problems are, in fact, regional problems. But they are intra-urban regional problems.

They are not unrelated to the larger problem of the rural-urban balance but the immediacy of need for at least partial solution of these problems is such that they are the direct concern of urban governments and urban residents. The needs of these particular social and economic intra-regional problems are not considered in this study.

On the other hand, in all parts of this nation, including the Upper Midwest, there are today whole communities that are depressed and bypassed by growth--poor. Many of these are rural communities caught in this swirl of our nation's growth and technical change. Some, more than others, have borne the brunt of these forces but have garnered few of the benefits. These are the depressed rural communities. Few of these communities have had any control over the forces buffeting them: they have been unable to unalter the forces for the better.

The problems of these rural commjnities include a lack of employment opportunities, inadequate public facilities and service, and fragmented planning, which is frequently of poor quality. It is held by this author, and by most regional scientists, that to varying degrees rural areas are now parts of larger economic communities with a dominant town or city as a center, the community encompassing several counties. The linking of rural to urban areas is continuing and, indeed, the rural-urban distinction is becoming meaningless. Rural poverty is concentrated in communities where the process is moving slowly and where the centers are weak and

under-developed. If these centers can be stimulated sufficiently and the rural periphery can be more closely linked to the center, jobs for the presently unemployed and underemployed may be developed. And the flow of people from poverty-stricken rural areas to the nation's metropolises can be replaced in good part by employment near their homes and in the nation's smaller cities and towns.

Both national and state regional programs are based, tacitly or otherwise, on the generally accepted overall assumptions that follow.

1. As a result of appropriate measures, the nation will consist of several hundred adjoining sub-regions, each with a "central city" (of some disputed size) and a series of satellite cities of varying lesser sizes;
2. Each such sub-region will be able to conduct its own needed programs for economic and social regeneration and perpetuation;
3. It will provide, on a "competitive" basis its needed share of goods and services so that all can have a comparable good life;
4. Farm families will share the same economic opportunities as non-farm families.

It is also generally agreed that the wholesale..."multiplication of differing regions for varying state and federal planning and program purposes within states has introduced an element of confusion, complexity, and lack of coordination

which can frequently thwart the whole concept of decentralized government. A number of different approaches to correcting this condition are possible, but the basic goal should be maximum conformance to state-designated regional borders and a minimum number of differing organizational structures." The preceding statement, taken from an Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations report, states one of the objectives of a program of regionalization for the Upper Midwest.

2. Federal Pressures

In late 1966 a Presidential Executive memorandum initiated the specific beginning of federal pressures designed to encourage state level regional delineation and planning. It was followed, in January 1967, with a Bureau of the Budget circular known as A-80.

Let's look briefly at that order and some of its highlights.

. . . in its basic aspects:

State and local development planning agencies should be encouraged to work together in using common or consistent planning bases (i.e., statistical and economic estimates), and in sharing facilities and resources.

Boundaries for planning and development districts assisted by the Federal Government should be the same and should be consistent with established state planning

districts and regions.

. . . in its purposes:

Specifically the President called for procedures which would encourage utilization of common boundaries for planning and development districts or regions assisted by the Federal Government and consistency of such districts with established State planning and development districts and regions.

. . . in its policies and objectives:

To encourage and facilitate State and local initiative and responsibility in developing organizational and procedural arrangements for coordinating comprehensive and functional planning activities.

To discourage overlap, duplication, and competition in State and local planning activities assisted or required under Federal programs and to maximize State and local resources available for development planning (leadership, manpower, and money).

To minimize inconsistency among Federal administrative and approval requirements placed on State, regional, and metropolitan development planning activities.

To encourage the States to exercise leadership in delineating and establishing a system of planning and development districts or regions in each State, which can provide a consistent geographic base for the coordination of Federal, State, and local development programs.

. . . and, in its procedures:

Prior to the designation (or approval of the designation) of any planning and development district or region, agency procedures will provide a period of thirty days for the Governor(s) of the State(s) in which the district or region will be located to review the boundaries thereof and comment upon its relationship to planning and development districts or regions established by the State. Where the State has established such planning and development districts, the boundaries of designated areas will conform to them unless there is clear justification for not doing so.

3. Local Response--The Minnesota Example

To illustrate by example the nature of one response to this issue, let us look at Minnesota.

In the summer of 1966, based on a concept of "Functional Economic Areas," developed by Karl Fox, a set of eleven "Economic Regions" for Minnesota were delineated and were used subsequently as the foundation of a gubernatorial Executive Order issued in November 1967. These eleven regions were used for over a year as the basis for state-wide comprehensive planning. A number of criteria were used to evaluate the adequacy of these delineations; both when originally delineated and in the course of follow-on study. They included such matters as:

- road patterns . . .
- population distribution . . .
- accessibility to centers . . .

and the present location of concentrations of state agency offices.

During the subsequent twelve months a number of issues with respect to these regions, or any set of regions, were raised.

These issues, as they relate to regional delineation, and as they have been articulated by the State Planning Agency are, in tabular form:

1. Should the prime criteria for regional delineation be acceptability for areawide local government cooperation or acceptability to state and federal agencies and programs?
2. Should regions be "center" oriented or "boundary" oriented?
3. Can one set of regions satisfy the needs of all or most federal programs?
4. Should counties be afforded the opportunity of selecting the region with which they desire to be affiliated?
5. Should counties be permitted to affiliate in different groupings for different purposes?
6. What is a reasonable size for a region?
7. Is it reasonable to expect state agencies to coordinate efforts within a region?
8. Can state agencies which deal with people, i.e. health, education, welfare, be expected to utilize the same set of regions as agencies which deal with resources, i.e. conservation and vice versa?

9. Will state services be improved if all state departments utilize a common set of regions and headquarters in the same building?

In order to respond to these issues and to other related questions, a comprehensive evaluation of the eleven "economic" regions was undertaken. Without dwelling upon details, essentially three major problem subsets were undertaken. They were:

- An examination of existing regional delineations;
- A survey of state and federal agency reactions to the eleven regions; and
- An examination of the development of rural Minnesota (and the rural Midwest, during this century).

a. Existing Delineations

Reasonable similarity in both demographic and employment characteristics; location and accessability of regional centers and sub-centers; relative homogeneity of agricultural and industrial composition; and present focus of state department and agency office locations were a major part of the set of criteria utilized in delineating the eleven economic regions of Minnesota. Subsequent to the delineation, it has been possible to bring to bear another form of criterion.

During the course of continued research and analysis into the question of regional delineation in Minnesota a great many maps of other delineations of the State became

available. Their numbers were too great and their differences too many--both differences as compared with the eleven "Economic Regions" and as compared with one another--to attempt any map-by-map comparison or reconciliation.

Means were sought, therefore, to aggregate the total of all of the delineations thus obtained in order to outline an unweighted "average" delineation for the state. This process was, in fact, undertaken at three points during the collection of these maps. The initial averaging was done when about 60 different regional delineations were available. It was redone when about 20 or more maps had been obtained and it was completed for the third time when the complete collection of some 150 individual maps was collated in early December. It is of interest to note that the results of each of the three aggregations were extremely close; the addition of roughly 90 more delineations after the first analysis was completed did not significantly change the conclusions reached.

The technique is relatively simple, although slow and painstaking. A 3' x 4' county outline map of Minnesota was used and each discrete interval of county boundary was indentified. Using the individual delineation maps that had been collected, a dot (·) was placed alongside each interval of boundary each time that particular interval was used as part of a sub-state regional delineation.

After all of the maps had been so entered on the master map, the number of "dots" on each boundary interval was counted. The net effect of the technique is to produce a map which indicates the frequency with which specific county boundary intervals are, in fact, used by state departments and agencies and by other organizations for regionalization purposes within the state. It is unweighted, in the sense that no single delineation used by one organization has any more impact on the frequency count than does any other. It is also unweighted in the sense that the method by which any one delineation was determined similarily does not have more effect than the method by which any other delineation was determined.

Thus, the regionalization of Minnesota using the county boundary "counts" from the collation is possible. Such regions are then identified solely on the basis of most frequent use of boundaries. The consistency with the "Economic Regions" is quite striking; only Martin, Koochiching, Itasca, and Rice Counties (4 out of 87 counties) are indeterminate in terms of regional specificity.

b. Agency Survey

In terms of the survey of state and federal agencies the response to the survey was excellent (eighty-eight percent returns on the questionnaire), and was generally very positive towards the concept of regionalization for Minnesota. Eight of the forty-four respondents indicated that the questionnaire was not applicable to their department, which in many cases was based on the fact

that their activity was wholly state-wide in nature. Of the remaining thirty-six agencies, eight indicated that they had adopted the regions of the Executive Order, or expressed intent to adopt them in some form in the very near future, at least for planning purposes. An additional eight agencies indicated that they could possible adopt these regions in the short run and another seven suggested they could possibly do so in the longer run. Upon closer review of the comments from the questionnaires and meetings with the agencies, another five indicated that theirs was a state-wide operation and hence they had no particular need for or interest in regionalization. This leaves only six out of the forty-four total responses who did not express an interest in or willingness to utilize the regionalization format of the Executive Order, of these four agencies suggested that they would be willing to adopt some modified form of the Executive Order, leaving only two that seemed unwilling to change from their existing regions.

It was interesting to note that of those who indicated utilization of their own set of regions which differ from the Executive Order (eighteen for administration, fifteen for planning), only four took a "no" position on the desirability of a common set of regions for all state agencies. The largest group responding to this question were undecided (nineteen).

Of those agencies that currently use their own sets of regions, ten out of eighteen indicated a willingness to change for administrative purposes, and six out of fifteen for planning purposes.

Substantial positive support for state regionalization came out of the discussions with and comments from the various agencies, to a much greater degree than was anticipated.

c. Midwestern Development

In terms of the development of the Midwest during the past century some other observations are pertinent.

The "Economic Regions" of Minnesota as developed and evaluated in the summer of 1966 clearly require refinement or, perhaps more appropriately put, require "loosening." Even though a rationally defined and delimited set of discrete regions has been established and, in general, accepted by many there still remains a problem which might be labeled "forcing." It is both a conceptual and a practical political and administrative problem.

From the conceptual point of view the difficulty is that such a discrete set of regional boundaries implies what might be termed economic closure. It tends to suggest, at best only subconsciously and at worst openly, that each region is relatively self-contained. Depending on the observers' major concerns this self-containment may be conceived of as economic, social, political, or administrative.

Such a conception, whether or not intended by the fact of regional delineation, is clearly inconsistent with reality. The people, the places, and the "things" in one region are of necessity interrelated with these factors in adjacent regions and in distant regions. Stated simply, just as the economic, social, and political posture of the nation is related to international events, and the posture of a State to national policies established by the federal government, so too are the postures of <u>any</u> set of sub-state regions related to state, federal, and international situations and events. These spatial interrelationships, of course, apply at the county, township, and community level as well.

From a state administrative point of view the suggestion of a discrete "set" of regions, presumably applicable for all purposes, raises similar concerns. Long-standing administrative and organizational structures are perhaps as difficult to alter, regardless of rationale, as suggesting that an overnight conversion to the metric system of weights and measures be made tomorrow. And this does not imply that these difficulties are, at least in every case, irrational.

From a practical, political point of view the difficulties are perhaps even more evident. Power, prestige, pride, and even autonomy all appear immediately to be at stake. Threaten one of these and a hue and cry is raised. Threaten a group of them and some of the real social and economic problems of today shrink to

mere child's play.

What is needed, then, for an acceptable and workable set of sub-state "regions" that can effectively form a basis for realistic economic, social, and political adjustment problems which face this state as well as other states is a framework which accommodates to these concerns but which, at the same time, provides a guide for both policy formulation and program implementation that is truly useful. The spatial interrelationships need both emphasis and clarity; the nodal points (or "growth" points) need justified identification; and the linkages between both areas and nodes needs to be established and recognized.

In order to structure the discussion in a logical fashion we must go back in time. In the 1920's (and earlier) employment and trade patterns were significantly different than they are today. Two observations are in order. First, employment outside of the few major metropolitan areas tended to be concentrated at the place of residence of the individual or, at least, immediately adjacent to it. Most of that employment in the rural areas of the Midwest was farming activity. There was a small amount of travel involved in terms of commuting to small town business and industrial employment locations but, generally speaking, transportation technology had not yet advanced to a point where extensive commuting was either physically or economically feasible.

In a similar manner consumer and, to a large extent commercial retail trade, was focussed at small rural trade centers which specialized in non-farm consumer goods and agricultural equipment sales. Trade between the small "hamlet" or county seat locations and larger regional centers was neither extensive nor frequent.

Moving on in time, by the 1960's changes in this pattern had become quite pronounced. Employment patterns have developed in the less densely populated portions of Minnesota and other states that show an increasing trend towards residence in one location and employment at another. It takes the form of both travel from outlying areas to a more urban-oriented industrial center and movement from the residential area of this industrial center out to farm-related employment locations. In addition, there is an increasing amount of employment travel from both of these types of locations to regional centers. In many cases these regional centers are the same municipalities which are seen on the 1920's diagram but they have experienced substantial growth in the intervening period.

Trade patterns also have been altered. There is an increasing focus of both consumer and commercial trade towards major trade centers. Most often, these major trade centers are also major centers of business, commerce, or industry. The sub-centers are still a focus of trade activity but they may not have experienced significant growth because of this shift towards the regional center.

In terms of estimating the "average" distance between centers with any degree of precision, the evidence suggests that the maximum practical distance, given the technology of present day automotive vehicles, is about 50-60 miles. Perhaps measured more appropriately we might indicate that maximum to be approximately 60 minutes.

It is relevant, indeed it is important, to note here that foreseeable breakthroughs in private transportation do not anticipate the expansion or enlargement of this distance to any significant degree. In other words, these regional "systems" appear to be constrained in terms of spatial size, by this limitation of accessibility technology.

If we now attempt to look ahead into the future we see some additional implications. Employment and trade patterns are undergoing some additional changes. Employment is becoming even more focussed at regional centers and sub-centers with the increasing highway network capability making it practical for an ever larger number of individuals to commute from their place of residence to their place of employment. In trade, the pattern of the '60's has not altered quite as much with the exception of the fact that the retail and commercial trade center has probably grown in terms of breadth of goods and services offered to the extent that trade at the smaller sub-centers and the outlying areas is limited largely to what can be termed as "convenience trade" and, perhaps, to certain types of specialized trade.

If we look at these developments in terms of a regional "system" then we can make some judgments about the likely impact of these developments on a variety of activities. Regional centers have become a focus of employment and trade activities and have begun to generate residential suburbs. The Centers provide a focus for employment and trade for outlying sub-centers, growth points, and areas of residence. It probably will not be unusual to see suburban, and we are using suburban in this context as indicating a place of residence which has some living quality features which make it attractive to individuals, come into being about some of these out-state (or rural) regional sub-centers.

In point of fact, it is not difficult to visualize these regional systems as being analogous to the metropolitan regional system which in fact exists today in the seven-county, Twin Cities, metropolitan area. Within this metropolitan area there is the Minneapolis-St.Paul central business district complex which serves as a regional center of employment and trade and we have a set of regional sub-centers which serve these same purposes but at a lesser scale. The Southdale Shopping, Medical, Business, and Light Industry Center is probably the most fully developed of these sub-centers and it is, generally speaking, surrounded by areas of residential excellence. Similar regional sub-centers are in varying stages of growth throughout the seven-county area.

Analogous urban-suburban development on an extensive rather than intensive basis is a logical and potentially obtainable goal for other Midwestern regional systems.

C. The Consequences of Rational Regionalization

A conscious development and implementation of national, state, and local government programs of coordination and cooperation is needed. Further, the decentralization of state government services in a focussed manner (that is, at carefully identified and selected regional centers, sub-centers and growth points coupled with an imaginative program of local government coordination and cooperation--again in a focussed sense, but in this case in a centralizing sense)-provides a framework within which economic development and social and individual welfare goals have their best chance of success.

It should be noted that such a set of systems is not a division of the state into independent, isolated, uniquely defined and designated spatial areas. They are inter-connected in a variety of ways. Regional boundaries thus become guidelines rather than fences and they enhance the prospects of success for a program of focussed decentralization of state services--or the focussed centralization, of local government services. Further, they also serve as rational vehicles for private investment decisions whether these are individual or business firm decisions. They provide a structure for federal programs, both direct grants and aids to identified regional systems and indirect, block grant, aids through appropriate state government departments and agencies.

They also provide a potential framework for local intergovernmental cooperation through the use of existing statutes such as the Joint Powers Act and the Regional Planning Act. Development Systems Regional Councils of Government and Planning Commissions are possible. Such cooperative actions would do much to provide the means of maintaining adequate levels of public services throughout the less densely populated areas of the state without necessarily continually raising the per capita costs of such services.

Regional cultural and recreational opportunities also could be enhanced. So too would the potentials for meeting the increasing problems of rural health care, welfare services, and law enforcement be enhanced. Each of these implications is treated in more detail in the concluding section of this chapter.

This concluding discussion is cast in four parts;

1. Potential for policy planning,
2. Potential for program implementation,
3. Potential for agency administration, and
4. Potential for governmental reorganization.

None of these areas of focus and discussion is independent of each of the other areas. State policy planning obviously must take into account the impact of alternative policies upon the implementation of public service programs, upon the administration of state agencies, and upon the organization of local, as well as state, government. Similarly obvious interconnections could be stated for each of the areas identified. The purpose of this section of the report is not to delimit potential in each area but rather to describe some of the salient potential advantages

of the adoption of a set of Regional Development Systems in Minnesota.

1. Policy Planning

The purpose of policy planning is to identify and establish general--and, generally, long-run--goals and objectives for state and local government which are consistent both with national goals and objectives and with the goals and objectives of the individual citizen of the state. National economic, social, and political goals are, of necessity, very general in nature and policies to be adopted that will lead to the achievement of these goals must, of necessity, be amended and modified according to the needs of each state. For example, it seems entirely possible that policies designed to achieve national educational standards might be amended to set goals which would be above a stated national goal.

By the same token, economic, social, and political potentials vary rather widely in the Midwest with its diverse patterns of economic activity, demographic characteristics, and multiple forms of both state and local government responsibility. The use of a set of Regional Development Systems, each of which is relatively homogeneous and each of which has identifiable problems, needs, and assets offers a potential for the analysis and identification of the impact of alternative policies on each respective region.

The use of such a set of systems make potentially possible the actual testing of selected policies within

predetermined systems on both a controlled basis and on a comparison basis. For example, alternative forms of local government cooperation might be attempted within different "Systems," tested and evaluated in terms of both economic and social--as well as political--efficiency and effectiveness, and the best elements of these alternatives then combined into overall state policy. Appointed Metropolitan Councils, Regional Planning Departments, elected Regional Councils of Government, and other forms of cooperative and voluntary local government modernization might be tested in the light of harsh political reality as well as in the sometimes dim glow of political theory.

So too, could the conceptual policies of decentralization of State government services be tested within such a framework. Economic development policies could be tailored to meet the identified needs--and resources--of individual regional systems. The impact and the effects of alternative tax policies on industrial location incentives might also be subject to more precise analysis through the explicit adoption of these systems. Short-run inequities might result but inequities exist now (witness the continuing discussion of "fiscal disparities" in the metropolitan area) and the careful use of these systems as devices for finding means to reduce existing inequities, it is argued, holds more potential for their solution than does the existing structure of state-wide policies.

If, as indeed it appears inevitable, there are to be both national and state policies and programs designed to alter the existing rural-urban balance then such a set of identified systems will provide a framework for cooperative federal-state-local government activities which are intended to effect such change (however one defines either rural-urban balance or the desired change!).

2. Program Implementation

In a like manner, adoption of a state-wide set of Regional Development Systems promises considerable potential for increased efficiencies in state-federal, state, and state-local program implementations. Of singular potential importance is the possibility of inter-agency and inter-governmental coordination of crime prevention, criminal apprehension, criminal detention, and corrections programs. As an example there is the possibility of central regional radio dispatching stations which link together, on a 24-hour basis, all of the law enforcement agencies of state and local government within a regional system (and between systems) and which ignores county or other political boundaries as readily as does the fleeing criminal. Such a system need do no violence to the presently strongly entrenched proclivities towards local autonomy.

Other state and local public service obligations which are, by their very nature, appropriately interrelated also stand to gain in terms of the services of both state and local governments commonly serve either the same clientele,

clientele from the same family groupings, or clientele from related racial, ethnic, or economic groups. The focussed decentralization of these public services would not only make the services accessible at a common point, or points, within the system but, perhaps potentially more important, would make both inter- and intra-agency coordination feasible at what could appear to be substantial economies in public costs.

Similarly, intr-state, state, and state-county highway programs could, potentially, be integrated and implemented in a coordinated fashion and in consonance with state policies related to industrial, agricultural, and recreational development. The mere articulation of such a set of policies and programs would enhance the chances of private investment decisions being made more rationally (probability of economic success is used here as synonomous with rational).

By the same token, there are presently a large number of Federal programs which involve grants to the states for specific development of public service activities. Despite Circular A-80 these programs still leave much to be desired in terms of inter-program coordination. The Upper Great Lakes Regional Development Commission programs, the Economic Development Administration programs, Resource Conservation and Development District programs, Technical Action Panel programs, Community Action Panel programs, Soil Conservation Service programs, Comprehensive Area Manpower Planning System programs, and a (nearly) endless list of other federal programs

are in various stages of action in the states. No two of them are coincident in their geographic areas of concern, and there is little or no evidence that there has been any concerted effort to coordinate their like concerns or to avoid or eliminate unwarranted duplication of effort. The adoption of a set of common, yet somewhat flexible, geographic guidelines together with an aggressively administered policy of program coordination should do much to insure that the private citizen is obtaining the maximum benefit of the public dollars expended on his behalf.

3. Agency Administration

The study did not concern itself specifically with the problems of internal state department and agency administration and the comments which follow must be considered as judgmental and preliminary in nature. Nevertheless, it appears self-evident that some reasonable degree of consistency in divisional and sectional geographic responsibility within the major state departments and agencies would be helpful in policy determination, in program implementation, and in agency administration.

It has been suggested by the Minnesota Office of the Department of Administration that the concept of providing governmental services in regional centers and/or sub-centers could result in economies of operation (for example, purchasing). In addition, it is argued that the application of such a set of systems could also result in a much more favorable administrative/management framework for the senior

officials of these organization. With or without the re-organization of the Executive Department of state government increased administrative ease and flexibility is potentially available through such a measure. Such a judgment is supported by the State Agency Evaluations which indicate support not only for the concept of a common set of regions but more particularly for their use administrative purposes.

4. Governmental Reorganization

Reorganization as used in this section does not imply either the abolishment of existing forms of government or the specific alteration of the present form of organization of the Executive Branch of State government.

The discussion, therefore, is cast in the context of the potential for the reorganization of the current activities of existing forms of local general government in order to adopt and utilize the advantages which are offered through a regional development systems form of approach towards meeting current, pressing, public needs. It appears that the existing acts permit multi-jurisdictional joint actions. It also is clear that counties are being called upon to perform public services (and are performing such services) that are traditionally of municipal character even though there is some legal question of their authority to provide such services. This discussion assumes that such services are legal, or will be made legal during the current session of the State Legislature.

Potentially, then, counties, municipalities, townships, and special districts may join together to perform, as a multi-unit organization, what they are entitled to perform independently. Although detailed research and analysis is needed in order to establish the actual magnitude of potential economies it seems clear that significant economies of scale in terms of public monies spending could be realized. Certainly, in terms of the total pool of leadership assets available in some of the less densely populated areas of the state a genuine and concerted focus on common problems and needs of regional concern augurs well for finding common solutions.

It is therefore argued that, combined with federal grant support for such actions (which exists and is growing), multi-jurisdictional development planning and program implementation has the potential for at least assisting in providing throughout the Midwest the quality of life standards for which the area as a whole is so well recognized.