AgEcon SEARCH
RESEARCH IN AGRICULTURAL & APPLIED ECONOMICS

The World's Largest Open Access Agricultural & Applied Economics Digital Library

This document is discoverable and free to researchers across the globe due to the work of AgEcon Search.

Help ensure our sustainability.

Give to AgEcon Search

AgEcon Search
http://ageconsearch.umn.edu
aesearch@umn.edu

*Papers downloaded from **AgEcon Search** may be used for non-commercial purposes and personal study only. No other use, including posting to another Internet site, is permitted without permission from the copyright owner (not AgEcon Search), or as allowed under the provisions of Fair Use, U.S. Copyright Act, Title 17 U.S.C.*

Land Problems and Policies. Edited by JOHN F. TIMMONS and WILLIAM G. MURRAY. The Iowa State College Press, Ames, Iowa. c1950. 298 pages.

OUTSTANDING STUDENTS of land problems gave this series of lectures before a Land Problems and Policies Seminar at Iowa State College during the summer of 1949. To round out the scope of the book, three lectures are included which were given in the Graduate School of the U. S. Department of Agriculture that year. The objectives of land policy, supply of and demand for land, principles of land use, kinds of land uses including multiple uses, land tenure, the public interest in planning land use, land programs, and the basis for building a land policy are covered.

Readers will not be surprised to find that the viewpoints of the authors are frequently at variance. That stimulates thought. The dismal views of Malthus on population growth in relation to means of subsistence are expressed, with the conclusion that we must "apply science to the control of their numbers." We would certainly prefer to agree with the more optimistic who hold that we have adequate natural resources to provide for an expanding population, and that the problem is primarily one of proper use.

The frank treatment of range land problems is enlightening. The conclusion that "the main problem in western public range land management is landlord-tenant relationships" simplifies matters.

Those who are associated with land programs should give more thought to the statement that a land use program involving public and private interests deals with questions in political economy. Judgments that are made in terms of intangibles cannot be given dollars-and-cents values. This gives rise to the conclusion that "a judgment as to which of the several alternatives will result in the greatest returns" is a public judgment. No one will disagree with the expressed need for planning and for a national land policy.

On the whole the papers are well written and contain thought-provoking material. Most readers, however, will not care to wade through several pages of chapter 8 to learn that "water is essential to all forms of life," or that "practically all municipalities of any size in the United States have a water system." The chapter on the family farm is largely a repetition of materials in previous publications.

The volume provides the latest thinking of leading workers in the field of natural-resource development which is not ordinarily possible in the usual textbook. It provides an excellent reference for land economics students as well as for workers in the field of resource development. The more energetic students will find the references at the end of each chapter of value in obtaining other materials on the same or a related subject. Timmons supplies an objective summarizing final chapter. The editors are justified in feeling that "the information and viewpoints presented in this book will contribute materially to a critical study of land problems and policy."

Buis T. Inman