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THE NEED FOR FULL INSTITUTIONAL OPERATION

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My job here, according to my interpretation, is to explain: (1) the need for the entire institution to direct its efforts to agricultural and rural adjustment or development, and (2) materials becoming available and needed for helping to do this job.

Agricultural colleges, experiment stations, extension services, agricultural education in public schools, and the United States Department of Agriculture are being pressed more now than ever before to adjust their programs to meet the present and future needs of agriculture and the entire society. I believe these institutions face the greatest transitional period in the next ten to fifteen years that they have ever experienced.

In most cases only a beginning has been made on adjustments in these institutions. The extension services have been working in this direction for the last few years and have probably gone the furthest, but they have only made a beginning. The experiment stations and resident teaching have barely started to cope with adjustment problems.

Unless the entire institution is involved, very little progress will be made, and the result may be a drastic decline in the importance and influence of these institutions in our society. In fact, this may be a struggle for life for these institutions.

The first place where the entire institution must be involved is with the administration. This means more than just an assignment of responsibility to a public affairs specialist, to a committee, or to a department. The administrators themselves need to: (1) articulate much more all facets of these problems, (2) develop understanding by the entire staff, (3) take the initiative in setting up a plan for organizing the institution to meet the needs, and (4) implement the plan or organization. The rapidity of change in the institutions will depend more than anything else on how much the administrators become involved in it.

This does not mean that an administrator can undertake this work himself. In implementing any program, responsibilities will have to be delegated to many individuals and groups. The point is that administrators cannot delegate responsibilities and resources

effectively unless they are involved enough that they have a broad concept of the trends and needed direction of programs.

The Center for Agricultural and Economic Adjustment was advised by our National Committee on Agricultural Policy and other advisory groups that working with top administrators was important if the land-grant colleges were to move on adjustments in the near future. Consequently, administrators of the land-grant colleges were consulted, and regional two-day conferences or seminars have been organized over the country. Each of these conferences includes in most cases four to six states. The pattern generally is for a core of about 12 staff persons from each state to attend, including mostly administrative staff members and leaders in the institutions. These conferences deal with the whole area of problems confronting agriculture and rural society with some indication of what this means to educational and research institutions. Most of the conferences will be held during the fall and winter of 1960-61.

Also, in cooperation with the National Committee on Agricultural Policy and the Farm Foundation, the Center has developed and published a booklet, "Agricultural Adjustment: A Challenge and Opportunity for Land-Grant Colleges." This publication was prepared mostly to help administrators of land-grant colleges get started in broadening the scope of their educational and research programs, reorienting these programs to include agricultural and rural adjustments and new subject matter, and using new approaches to meet present and future problems.

More than ever, if these educational and research institutions are to strengthen their program, the entire land-grant college—extension, research, and resident instruction—need to undergo this process of self study, organizing, and cooperating together.

Two important aspects of the newer trends in these institutions seem to be: (1) redefining agriculture more broadly to include not only the farm business but also: (a) the farm supply, processing and marketing industries and (b) the public affairs problems of people in agriculture and rural society; and (2) recognition of the social-economic problems which have become so dominant and acute with the rapid changes in agricultural technology.

The entire land-grant college staff needs to develop better understanding of these problems for two reasons: (1) to avoid sabotage of the whole effort by some staff members and (2) to make effective use of all the resources of the entire institution. Since many staff members have not dealt with these broadened

aspects of adjustment and the development process, they need to discuss and study these problems. I am not saying that all the staff need to get acquainted with all problems in detail. How far the entire staff is involved on each phase of the subject will need to be worked out by each institution. However, I am sure that in the beginning considerable effort should be made with the entire staff.

One of the first requirements even to start developing a staff understanding is materials and resources for studying and analyzing the broad scope of problems facing agriculture today. Resource material can be obtained from various departments within the college. Since a large portion of the needs are economic and social, quite likely the departments of agricultural economics and rural sociology will be drawn on heavily. However, many departments in the institution can likely make contributions. Although the departments of agricultural economics and rural sociology should be ready and willing to dig in to furnish as much resource material as possible and although they are in a position to play an important role, these departments should be careful not to attempt to take over the leadership in this whole project from the administrators. These departments will be asked to take important responsibilities later as the study is initiated and as programs are organized and carried out.

Perhaps the first type of resource material needed by the staffs of these institutions is an analysis of the changes taking place in agriculture and rural society in the United States. This again has been recognized by the National Committee on Agricultural Policy, the Farm Foundation, and the Center for Agricultural and Economic Adjustment. These groups are cooperating in the preparation of a book, which will probably be called "Trends and Needed Adjustments in U. S. Agriculture—A National Basebook." This book is tentatively scheduled for publication in November by the Iowa State University Press. To quote from the introduction, it "is for people concerned with U. S. agriculture and its future—for teachers, research workers, and extension workers in the Land-Grant College System; for farm leaders and farm organizations; for political leaders; for agricultural businessmen, for government agencies, and all others interested in the role of agriculture in the future development of this country."

Although this book will be valuable, it will be only a beginning. The next logical step would be the preparation and analysis of material on a state basis. This should treat the trends and adjustment needs in the state with full consideration of their relationship

to national trends and adjustments. Many of the staff can be involved in the preparation of state study materials, and they will gain understanding by working on it. Also, many resources may be used.

So far we have discussed only the phase of developing understanding by the staff. From here the same work needs to be done with other leaders in the state. Some groups might be used as advisory or consulting groups as the work proceeds. The difficult task is still ahead even at this stage. Decisions have to be made about how to develop the research and educational program of the institution in light of the understanding of trends and needed adjustments.

Extension seems to be the place where the problems press us first because it is close to the practical problems. Therefore, chances are that we will start developing the approach in extension first. As extension emphasizes more the broad program of education regarding adjustments, especially in public affairs, new resources and facts will be needed. This is where all areas of specialization within the entire university should be tapped—the psychologist, political scientist, taxation specialist, government specialist, engineer, lawyer, etc. Other colleges and universities in the state and any other resources should be used where appropriate. Our organizational structure needs to be improved so that all resources can be used.

The experiment station probably is next to feel the pressure to do research in the broad areas of adjustment. Criteria should be established for deciding on priority of research projects in line with the present and future trends. My observation is that the basis for selection of projects is in serious need of improvement. This applies to both physical and biological sciences and to social-economic sciences. This is not to say that technological research should be discontinued, but some of it might be reoriented, and an increase in adjustment research is needed if research is to take a broad approach to the present and future problems of agriculture and rural society.

Finally, resident instruction in agricultural colleges will receive more pressure to make changes. They will be attempting to organize curricula that prepare students to meet the requirements for working in the various phases of the future agricultural and rural society. We are a long way from meeting the prospective needs.

The changes needed in many of these institutions will be very

difficult and may seem impossible to make because of the traditions, organizational structure, resistance on the part of some staff people, and the different appraisal of the need and methods for dealing with the present and future broad problems. These changes will take time, and these institutions will be in a transitional stage all through the sixties. However, it is later now than many of our people in these institutions think.

Considerable experimenting will be done by some of the leading institutions. Separate phases of action programs will be tried. An example of this sort of experiment is being initiated by a consulting seminar sponsored by the Center for Agricultural and Economic Adjustment. This seminar will be held at Ohio State University with teams of extension personnel from five states. In every step such as this an effort should be made to obtain broad understanding within the institution and to use all resources from the entire university and related institutions.