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PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
SIXTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
OF
AGRICULTURAL ECONOMISTS

HELD AT
DARTINGTON HALL
ENGLAND
28 AUGUST TO 6 SEPTEMBER 1947

GEOFFREY CUMBERLEGE
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON NEW YORK TORONTO
1948

THE HUMAN SATISFACTIONS OF RURAL WORK AND RURAL LIVING

OPENING ADDRESS

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THERE are many aspects of human satisfactions and dissatisfactions in rural work and living. All that can be done in the opening of this discussion is to offer brief notes on some of them.

In the first instance it is necessary to draw attention to the terms used. In respect of population 'agricultural' and 'rural' may be taken as synonymous terms, but under some circumstances they are not. Many agriculturists live in 'open country', i.e. in scattered forms of settlement, others live in smaller and larger villages, and still others live in large concentrated villages which in some circumstances would be called towns, and a few live in towns. On the other hand, many members of rural communities, and in some cases a majority, are not directly engaged in agriculture.

So it appears that at some points we may discuss the levels of satisfactions of persons engaged in agriculture and at others those of people living in rural communities. As regards agriculturists, we may discuss levels of satisfactions arising directly from the occupation itself and its rewards, and those arising from the modes and conditions of social living associated with the occupation.

As regards satisfactions, it seems necessary to say that there are none, except possibly those of hunger and of the desire to live, which approach universal requirement. Looking round societies at large, it is possible to find individuals, families, and groups who do not express need of satisfactions which others think and feel are either indispensable or important. Beyond the bare physiological minima, needs are largely determined by social inheritance, by environment, by individual and group contacts, by education, and by some causes of personal development in individuals.

The most common needs are:

1. Satisfaction of hunger.
2. Nutrition for optimum physical development and expectation of life.
3. Shelter and provisions for hygiene, for health, physical capacity, and comfort.

4. Clothing for protection and comfort.
5. Opportunity for sex and family associations.
6. Material and opportunity for personal development, for aesthetic expression, and for display.

Another common need is of opportunity for development and expression of individuality. But it is said that a common psychological need of man in society is of a known and predictable environment in which he can function. This, however, can be expressed in another form, namely, the need of a *favourable* environment in which to function, in which case it becomes obvious that any one psychological and social environment will not be equally favourable to all individuals.

In respect of the listed needs, it should be said that although they indicate mainly supplies of materials they also include supplies of services. And in the later part of the list they require leisure, i.e. freedom from gainful occupation.

As regards the levels of satisfaction in agricultural occupation as such, perhaps one of the most important conditions is that of mode of recruitment to the industry. In general, over the world at large, recruitment occurs mainly by social inheritance—by son following father or other near relative and by daughters of agricultural families participating in the establishment of others. The proportion of farmers and of agricultural workers directly recruited by social inheritance varies with different countries, and often with localities, and sometimes with types of farming within countries, but everywhere it appears to be a majority and often it is a heavily preponderating majority.

In a changing world, with expanding occupational and social opportunities, it would not be expected that this condition of inheritance of occupation would tend in the direction of high levels of general satisfaction. But the frequency of dissatisfaction and the actual occurrence of misery arising from this condition are not sufficiently recognized. There are many 'round pegs in square holes' and many 'square pegs in round ones' in the industry, and they are not only personally uncomfortable, they create discomfort for families and communities.

In order to approach the optimum of human satisfactions in agricultural occupations it is necessary to remove the barriers which hinder mobility out of the industry on the part of some of those born into it and pressed to it at an early age, and those which hinder mobility into the industry on the part of persons born in association with other occupations, possibly in other environments, who wish

to enter it. Looking round agriculture at large it seems desirable to list some special types of recruits or settlers.

1. Recruits by more or less free choice of occupation—sometimes as wage-earners, sometimes as ‘apprentices’ or learners, and sometimes as farmers or occupying cultivators.
2. Recruits *returning* to agriculture from other occupations—largely middle-aged persons—with adolescent experience of agriculture and subsequent experience of another occupation.
3. Adult misfits from other occupations, often with some capital, seeking the small specialized farm, or the pursuit of a special interest; but also the same type merely seeking means of subsistence.
4. Recruits for a ‘fancy’, with other sources of income.
5. Casual workers of many types.

It is not proposed to deal here with the material rewards of agricultural occupations in relation to levels of satisfaction. Conditions are extremely varied, but the general impression from extensive study of records and literature is that on the whole the satisfaction given by economic rewards is low and frequently, of course, deplorably low.

There is, however, one point to which attention must be drawn. Under-employment is rampant in agriculture and rural communities in many parts of the world. In India and south-east Europe, for instance, there are millions of under-employed agriculturists suffering poverty, sometimes absolute, sometimes relative, but always suffering deprivations which better technologies, more adequate capital, fuller employment of human capacities, should remove. Waste of labour is characteristic of poor agricultural peoples, not only of backward countries but also of some communities in ‘advanced’ countries.

It is, unfortunately, necessary to admit that some of the deprived agricultural peoples suffer deprivation as the result of their own activities or choices; they suffer from high birth-rates with declining mortality rates causing increase in population relative to resources; they suffer from fixation of habit and custom in respect of food production and consumption; they suffer materially from some elements in their religions or superstitions; they suffer from some customs and traditions which inhibit or restrict economic effort, and they suffer from indolence and lack of enterprise.

As regards the levels of satisfactions in rural living, i.e. living in rural communities, conditions are somewhat different. Rural populations may be maintained, even increased, while agricultural populations, or the *proportions* of people engaged in agriculture, are declining. The satisfactions of living in rural communities for their

members in general may be rising while satisfactions with conditions or rewards of work in agriculture itself are static or possibly declining.

There is a tendency amongst some agriculturists, journalists, littérateurs, and politicians, to glorify rural living. On the contrary, it must be obvious that this appreciation has not been common in mankind. One or two quotations will show some points of view. Thomas Sharp (*Town and Countryside*, p. 135) says :

'Man first created towns that he might, through them, obtain the comforts of the society of his fellows, and the benefits of their co-operation in his struggle with the blind forces of nature. When he built his first town he was definitely emerging from barbarism, was on the road to civilisation. It is true to say that civilisation began with the city. And it is true to say that the city developed with civilisation. So that as man becomes more and more civilised he builds his towns more and more in the image of his increasing or decreasing power and dignity, until eventually they become the outward measure of his civilisation.'

W. E. Lecky said :

'The question which of the two spheres of existence (town or country) is most conducive to the happiness and the morality of mankind will, no doubt, always be contested; but the fact that they produce¹ entirely different intellectual tendencies, both in religion and politics, will scarcely be disputed.

'The country is always the representative of stability, immobility and reaction. The towns are the representatives of progress, innovation, and revolution. . . .

'The inhabitants of the country . . . are extremely tenacious of the customs of religions that have elsewhere passed away . . . and are specially addicted to that aspect of those religions which is most opposed to the spirit of rationalism. . . . Superstitions still linger with the poor; while even the educated are distinguished for the retrospective character of their minds and for their extreme antipathy to innovation.'

'The general character of great towns, especially of manufacturing towns, is entirely different. . . . There is intellectual stimulus of association.

'Certain it is that neither the virtues nor vices of great towns take the form of reaction in politics or of superstition in religion. The past rests lightly, often too lightly, upon them. Novelty is welcomed, progress is eagerly pursued. Vague traditions are keenly criticised, old doctrines are disintegrated and moulded afresh by individual judgement.'²

Unfortunately it is difficult to find a concise expression of the specific satisfactions of rural living or of living in rural communities.³

¹ We would now say 'have produced'. Read past tense throughout.

² Lecky, *Rise and Influence of Rationalism in Europe*, vol. ii, ch. 6, p. 339.

³ A useful analysis of differences between urban and rural groups and modes of living will be found in D. Glass, *The Town*.

But everyone is aware of many of the assumed satisfactions of living in rural communities; of their assumed virtues; and of a somewhat common fear of urbanization. There is, however, an element of contradiction in much of the thought on primary rural groups and their values. For instance, it is said that primary groups develop individuality, self-reliance, democracy, and that weakening the primary groups will weaken these qualities. But at the same time it is said that it is necessary to take action to strengthen these groups in order to conserve these qualities. Obviously if they were now capable of developing individuality and self-reliance it would not be necessary to take action to conserve the groups and their qualities. Or, if they were once capable of producing these qualities, they are no longer capable of doing so when external assistance is required. Similarly we are told that rural primary groups show high survival value in individuals; that their members show high vitality; yet we are told that it is necessary to take action to conserve the high survival values of these groups. Frequently we are told of the necessity of raising their nutritional and health status.

Perhaps it may be said that the general level of satisfaction of a *group* in rural living will depend largely on:

1. The sources of its members, with their influence on the desires and aims of individuals.
2. The general social and political environment and its degree of harmony with the needs, desires, and aims of the group.
3. The standard of technical success reached by the group, and the consequent potential economic success.
4. The establishment and maintenance of efficient commercial organization for marketing and for supply of group services.
5. The conversion of the technical, economic, and commercial success into social success by the establishment of harmonious and efficient social processes and agencies for education, entertainment, religion, &c.
6. The 'interferences' with the group needs, aims, standards by industrial developments, and the economic and social changes which they may bring.

While the 'interferences' mentioned imply that somewhat static conditions are necessary or acceptable, it must be said that some of them are often welcomed. In any case it is necessary to recognize that conditions of agricultural and rural living have undergone and are undergoing very rapid change in many parts of the world.

It has been said that 'to-morrow's rural life will be radically different from to-day's'.¹ Because of

1. Changes in facilities for transport and communications and desires of the rural population to make as full use of them as their economic resources allow.
2. The penetration of industries and their associated populations into rural areas, and the penetration of non-agricultural families for residential purposes.
3. Changes in agricultural techniques and equipment; the general rising level of requirement of technical knowledge and skill and increasing mechanization.

Again:

'On the social side the town is extending the range of influence of its culture and attitudes. Wireless broadcasts, national newspapers, even though they are modified to suit the special interests of rural population, and perhaps above all the cheaper and more rapid means of transport which enable country folk to visit the towns relatively frequently . . . are destroying the differences in attitudes and interests between town and country. The immediate effect may be to crush independent rural culture, but this is the result of the way they are used, or of the lack of counter-vailing action. . . . There is no fundamental reason why the rural parts of the world should not continue to make their special contributions to the cultural field even if those contributions are very different from what they have been in the past.'²

It should never be forgotten by agricultural economists and rural sociologists that changes in agricultural methods and equipment, and a rising standard of living in rural areas, themselves cause serious modifications in the structure of rural populations and societies. Without any specific penetration by groups of industrial producers or of residential non-agriculturists, each degree of change from subsistence to commercial farming; each degree of change and improvement in technical methods and equipment; each increase in the ratio of capital to manual labour in agricultural production, brings a greater proportion of local people not directly engaged in agriculture, i.e. not directly dealing with land, crops, and livestock. With these changes more traders, more mechanics, more workers in transport and communications, more workers in the 'service' occupations and professions become members of rural societies.

'Every increase in agricultural productivity helps to increase the possibility of urbanism, while at the same time the breakdown of the

¹ Anderson, *Rural Sociology*, vol. xi, No. 2, p. 120.

² D. Glass, *The Town*, pp. 128-9.

barriers against trade, whether those barriers are natural or artificial, helps in the same direction.¹

While it may not be possible to indicate exact proportions in the primary agricultural group and in the total of the secondary service groups at different stages of agricultural and rural civilization, it may be said that these proportions will fall from 90: 10 at a low stage to 40: 60 at a stage at which agriculture itself has been mainly commercialized and most of the 'home' services have been commercialized and where there is still no specific industrial or residential penetration.²

The general trend of changes in rural population due to transport and communications, and to modern methods and standards of education, is often described as 'urbanization'. Two social groups, two modes of living, one rural and the other urban, are distinguished. Sometimes one group and its mode of living have been idealized, glorified, sometimes the other. The general, though not universal, tendency amongst rural sociologists has been towards idealizing, glorifying, the rural groups and their modes of living. The process of 'urbanization' is often supposed to represent a decline, if not a degradation.

The process conveniently dubbed as 'urbanization' deserves more psychological and sociological analysis, accurate description, and measurement than it commonly receives. In some forms and degrees the process of mixing occupations, of mixing people from different occupational, geographical, and social environments is an inevitable result of agricultural progress and of economic change and progress in rural areas. Without any special, directly purposive penetrations by industrial or urban groups, the process of mixing people with different occupational experiences, different outlooks, different modes of living, will still occur. This natural process will always be somewhat gradual, never catastrophic or even radical.

With a gradual change in the structure of a population there is opportunity for cross-currents of social ideas, outlooks, and aims between the primary agricultural group and the secondary trading and service groups. If there are conflicts, they will be mainly regarding specific interests and issues. They will not usually be of radical

¹ D. Glass, *The Town*, p. 4.

² The proportion of agriculturists in the total of occupied persons in administrative counties in England and Wales varies from 2 to 40 per cent. The areas in which the highest proportions occur are materially poor. Administrative counties with high proportions of agriculturists have low rateable values (low values for local taxation), and low revenues, and consequently are unable to provide standard social services without external aid. The optimum proportion in England and Wales, so far as is ascertainable, runs round 22-5 per cent.

social character. The primary and the secondary groups will still be 'neighbours' with considerable measures of common interests and aims.

It appears that the concepts of rural and urban groups and modes of living have passed the era of utility in some national communities. Doubtless there are and will be differences between the two; doubtless there may be strains and even conflicts between them, but such strains and conflicts as occur may be of temporary and economic rather than of fundamental social character.

It would be useful if rural sociologists would begin to think in terms of a common cultural inheritance, common material standards of living (at least of minimum character), common minima of fundamental human satisfactions, as between those groups who must live in the primary agricultural and rural environments and those who are compelled or choose to live in the industrial or urban environments of their national communities.

Most agricultural economists will agree with the necessity or desirability of equalization of economic rewards of activities in agriculture and in other industries in general. Most of their efforts have been directed to assisting farmers to increase their incomes in productive processes or to securing adjustments in commercial operations which will ensure to them fair proportions of the final values of their products. Some agricultural economists have occasionally given up hope of success and have fallen back on the support of ideas of the non-material satisfactions in farm work and living.¹ But this is only a procedure of failure and despair. Many agriculturists, to say the least, and probably most, will not accept any suggestion that equalization of rewards is either impossible or undesirable. On the contrary, the general aim of farmers, and particularly of their economic organizations, is to secure it. On any approach to equalization of economic rewards and consumable income in agriculture and other industries there seems likely to be an approach to equal standards of living even if in somewhat different modes. But, in any case, approach to equalization of real incomes as between agricultural and industrial groups will increase the non-agricultural proportions of population in rural communities.

In a number of industrialized countries there seems little hope of permanent cultural and social segregation of rural and urban groups and of their social outlooks and standards. And everywhere the tendency of modern communications and their effects on thoughts,

¹ 'Most lovers of peasants think more highly of other people's poverty than do those most directly concerned.'

outlooks, and standards will be that of breaking down the barriers between the two groups. Those countries which endeavour to maintain such segregation as exists seem likely to suffer economically and politically as a result.¹

Agricultural scientists and agriculturists who promote changes in the techniques and equipment of agriculture, particularly those involving use of more purchased requisites and more sale and processing of products, themselves tend to promote mixtures of agricultural and non-agricultural families in rural communities. The success of their efforts often involves the development of mentalities more closely akin to the urban than to what have been regarded as the characteristic rural types. And, as already stated, agricultural economists have been involved in processes which lead, almost inevitably, to some degree of amalgamation of rural and urban modes and standards of living. Their work also leads to the development of types of mentality somewhat different from the characteristic rural and approaching an urban or at least a common type.

On these grounds it seems highly desirable that the agencies concerned with rural development, and particularly those concerned with the advancement of rural sociology and rural social services, should consider what is necessary to enable rural groups to enjoy the full benefits of common cultural inheritances and common achievements in material civilization in the various national communities. The processes of adaptation, of amalgamation, and of cultures need not be those of 'urbanization'. In a general build-up there should be cross-currents, cross-fertilizations of ideas, values, and standards. And modern methods of publicity and propaganda have been showing that it is at least possible to induce urban populations to attach higher values to agriculture and agricultural modes of living than they accorded them in the past.

But the processes of adaptation and amalgamation of cultures and modes of living and expression, frequently and under modern conditions somewhat incorrectly called urbanization, are often depicted as suppressive of rural cultures and values. They are so regarded by some rural sociologists, by a number of the thoughtful, though perhaps nostalgic, of the middle-aged persons in the societies affected. Obviously they are not so regarded by the individuals who follow and accept them. On the contrary many of these individuals welcome changes as offering releases and opportunities. And no one is entitled to say that *ipso facto* the aims and outlooks of those individuals are generally bad or socially undesirable.

¹ There is some evidence to this effect as regards France.

It is said that in these processes of adaptation and amalgamation the urban mentality will submerge the rural and push it into a position of subordination, particularly perhaps as regards education, religion, and rural government.

As regards education, it must be said that this should be the chief formal agency for laying down the foundations of a common culture and that the need of many rural societies is of a broader type and a higher standard of formal education than they have enjoyed in the past. While during this century many efforts have been directed to 'ruralizing' education for rural areas, a more recent tendency towards providing a broader type designed to provide opportunities for agricultural and general training may be discerned. When 'rural' populations are no more than 50 or at most 60 per cent. 'agricultural', as is frequently the case, and often the population of non-agricultural families constitutes more than half of the total, it is obvious that rural education must do more than prepare scholars for efficient work in agriculture. Indeed, it should begin the process of preparing scholars for a life in a general community and of co-ordinating agricultural and non-agricultural vocational needs, and take a full part in co-ordinating rural and urban cultures—or, better still, in laying the foundations of a sound culture in the general community.

If religious observance and appreciation be regarded as characteristic of rural societies (the assumption is often stronger than the evidence), it would appear to be a result of living in small communities and in some degree of isolation from the currents of thought in the general community. There is also a suggestion, for which there is little supporting evidence, that it is a result of living in close daily contact with natural forces. But it appears that general social forces are likely to weaken religious organizations and observances in rural societies, in spite of the strength of convention and custom therein, unless the roots of religion lie much deeper in personal education and conviction. If the future of religion and religious organizations depends on rural societies and their relative isolation alone, the outlook cannot be bright. But, indeed, if religious faith and observance are necessary to the welfare of a community no one can be satisfied with their continuation mainly in rural societies; they should become part of the common culture of the whole community. Practical conditions are extremely variable. In some areas religious organizations have fostered and assisted agricultural and rural progress. In others they have been concerned to maintain customary systems, and to 'ruralize' with effects which have been undesirable from the points of view of both the rural and general communities concerned. There

is no inevitable association between adaptation of rural communities to general cultures, and a weakening of religious faith and observances. The result will depend on the nature and the strength of religious faith in the rural population and on the faith and work of religious organizations in the community at large.

As regards rural government, it has been obvious that many rural communities could not provide themselves with adequate social services, e.g. in roads and communications, education, sanitation, and health, on the basis of merely local taxation. With changes in the bases of financial provisions for community services, some modification of organization for local government was almost inevitable. Unfortunately, rural citizens have not always shown efficient adaptation to newer forms or broader geographical organizations. Rural education did not advance as rapidly as some economic and social conditions changed. Transport and communications were not fully used for effective changes in rural citizenship. Undoubtedly there is now need for better education and practice in citizenship in many rural communities. But again, any suppression of rural by urban interests in local government is dependent largely on the responses of rural citizens to new conditions. In the meantime many rural groups are pleased to enjoy the financial support of industrial and urban populations in the supply of community services.

For the rational, or the integrated, agricultural economist there can be no option in respect of the desirability of equal economic rewards in agriculture and other industries. He must accept the norm of equal reward of capital investments even though in respect of farm values he takes into account relative security of capital and some returns or satisfactions which are not directly measured in rent or annual interest. Unless he accepts the norm of equal reward for equal quantity and quality of labour (or human service in production) he either accepts or advocates the principle of exploitation of agriculturists by the rest of the community. While we know the tendency towards low remuneration of capital and human services in agriculture, this is an incident of change in economic methods, processes, and organization and is not inevitable. Postulation of a supply (and suppliers) of capital permanently subject to relatively low remuneration is not justified by any known conditions. And postulation of a supply of human services also permanently subject to relatively low remuneration or reward does not appear to be justified by any known conditions outside a system of slavery. The agricultural economist can scarcely be justified in postulating a permanent or continuing supply of either slave capital or slave labour adequate to social needs

in agricultural production. He may recognize the need for adjustment of rewards in agriculture and other industries; indeed he must, for that was the main reason for the development of an applied science of agricultural economics.

The suggestion that it is necessary to maintain a high agricultural rural population at low rates of remuneration for the maintenance or increase of national population is repugnant to agricultural if not to economic principles and even to common sense. The intelligent farmer whose livestock suffers from disease does not continue to increase his breeding stock to overcome the disability without looking for means of avoiding or controlling the disease. He would not unnecessarily waste materials and efforts in that way, but would, himself or by external aid, seek methods of avoiding the disease or its effects. Modern industrial occupations or modern cities need not 'use-up' population or destroy its capacities for reproduction. When they do so, society should be called upon to seek and apply the necessary remedies: the burden should not be thrown back on agricultural communities. There is neither moral nor economic justification for throwing on to what in this case must be poor farm families and communities the economic and the human burden of raising and educating people for groups which could better afford to provide for their own replenishment. Indeed, the other groups should begin to produce people for agriculture and make provisions for effective cross-currents.

On any objective consideration of positions it would appear that agricultural economists and rural sociologists who left farms for professional careers and urban or semi-urban living should be careful in imputing to the folk left behind on farms needs or desires fundamentally different from their own. The forces which distinguished and separated the folk remaining on farms and those who left were largely, probably mainly, of social character and partly accidental. If we are to consider objectively human satisfactions in rural work and living, we have to regard the people engaged in agriculture and living in rural communities fundamentally of the same breeding, with the same characteristics as our own. If there are any differences, other than those caused by post-natal environments, they must be objectively described and measured. Up to the present any firm description or measurement is lacking. Environmental differences are to a large extent modifiable or remediable. In so far as they are unfavourable to the satisfaction of the groups concerned, it is the task of agricultural economics and rural sociology to provide the knowledge required to modify or remedy them.

DISCUSSION

E. C. YOUNG, *Purdue University, Indiana, U.S.A.*

Before I offer a few brief comments on Professor Ashby's paper I would like to make one observation in partial defence of the American delegation. You have noted, I am sure, that they have appeared a bit critical at times of the British agricultural efficiency. For myself, I would like to testify that my surprise has been rather at the efficiencies which I found and at the most obvious lack of apparent poverty amongst farmers and people living in rural districts in England.

Turning briefly to the paper, I wish to commend Professor Ashby on delivering, as he always does, a paper which strikes at the roots of the problem rather than at its superficial aspects. What I have to say is in support of points which he raised and covered admirably rather than in presenting a difference of opinion.

Technology is one of the important factors in creating or modifying economic and social institutions. We are at the mercy of the chemists and the physicists. Our institutions to a very large extent are those which we create to maximize the efficiencies which technology creates and makes available to us. In a completely rational society the impact of technology is felt and spread, and is adopted within a reasonable length of time. In such a society institutions tend to conform with a reasonable degree of facility to these changing technologies. An economist or a sociologist is taking a great deal on himself when he attempts to predict the development of institutions or, for that matter, to guide them with any expectation that his guidance will be effective. I will grant that those of us in the social sciences can do much to ameliorate conditions of economic and social life. We can modify institutions, but fundamentally the institutions themselves tend to conform to changing technology which is not predictable, and to which the chemist and the physicist and the biologist make the maximum contribution.

The other point which I wish to emphasize, and which Professor Ashby also makes, is related to the spread of urbanization in modern communities where technological advance has been most rapid. I agree with him that the boundary line between urban and rural cultures is fast disappearing in such communities. As this boundary disappears, many of the generalizations with respect to the backwardness of rural communities become invalid. Modern technology, modern inventions, modern communications, and, particularly, the research and educational facilities of our extension and research

organizations have tended to spread technology into the country-side in such a manner that in many areas the spread of technology does not lag far behind that in urban centres. As the boundaries of the urban community spread, many of the population characteristics of urban communities also begin to emerge. One of the characteristics of rural communities throughout history has been the development of surplus populations. As Notestein has so well pointed out, this is related to the problem of rural poverty and the differences in standards of living between urban and rural populations. He has also pointed out, as has Professor Ashby by inference, that with the spread of urban influences into the rural community one of the first effects is a decrease in rural populations. As the rural population comes into balance with resources in the rural community, a rise in living standards and an equalization in living standards between the rural community and the urban community results.

Many years ago I made a study of the movement of farm population. After a great deal of experimental trial and error I formulated a law with respect to the effect of cities on the movement of farm population. It was to the effect that the movement of farm population towards a city varied directly with the size of the city and inversely with the square of the distance from it. After a bit of review of my physics I discovered that I had rediscovered the law of universal gravitation! Around a modern city I would suspect that urban cultures penetrate the country-side approximately in proportion to the size of the city and inversely as the square of the distance from it.

One of the most obvious effects of the development of an urban population in the midst of an agricultural community is the apparent deterioration of agriculture in the immediate country-side. This, I think, is inevitable, since the effect of the city is probably to raise the whole living standard of the community, raise labour costs, increase opportunities, and, as a result, bring pressures on inferior grades of land. Oftentimes cities develop in territories where lower grades of land immediately become sub-marginal for uses in the new pattern created by the urban environment.

C. G. McBRIDE, *Ohio State University, U.S.A.*

I go along with Dean Young in my appreciation and admiration of this scholarly paper by Professor Ashby. However, it appears to me that in one area he might have placed more emphasis than he did, that is on the field of agricultural co-operation. He mentioned it as one of the factors of satisfaction in rural living, but it seems to me that

it deserves further consideration. I have been convinced since I have been connected with the International Conference that we have not given it the emphasis that it should have in our programmes. I think you will agree that during this Conference, with the exception of the paper by Dr. Coke, there has been scarcely any reference to the agricultural co-operative movement. I believe that it is one of the most effective of all influences, not only in the economic field but in the field of human satisfaction. In the economic field we have recognized it in the laws of the United States as a factor in the programme of setting up marketing mechanisms. The Agricultural Agreement Act of 1937 gives a definite place in the whole programme to the co-operative association. Without the approval of the co-operative association no marketing order has ever been established or marketing licence set up, and without its continued support no licence or marketing order has ever survived.

When it comes to the matter of pure human satisfaction outside of the economic field, I believe the co-operative movement is just as potent. I thought as I looked at that fine array of photographs over in the National Farmers' Union Hall at Exeter yesterday, what a great influence those men must have had on human satisfactions in that community.

In the larger field of international development that we are going through now, there has been given a greater recognition to the agricultural co-operative leaders than we have given here. For instance, when President Roosevelt was looking for a man to sit on the Hot Springs Food Conference he chose Murray D. Lincoln, an outstanding co-operative leader in the American Farm Bureau. He and other co-operative leaders have since built the organization—Co-operative for American Remittances to Europe, Inc., popularly known as C.A.R.E. This is the agency through which individuals send food and clothing to their needy friends in war-torn countries. Probably no agency has done more in the post-war years to promote human satisfactions.

It was interesting to learn from Mr. Porter at Exeter yesterday that the National Farmers' Union here in England is joining with agricultural organizations in other countries of the world to set up an International Federation of Agricultural Producers. Organized workers have been getting together on a world-wide basis for many years.

Several times this week I have been disturbed by the hard-boiled and cynical attitude towards international co-operation expressed by some of my colleagues. It looks as though there may be more

altruism and less cynicism in the international programmes of agricultural producers than of agricultural economists. As members of this International Conference I do not believe we can afford to build ourselves an ivory tower of classical economics. If organized workers and organized agricultural producers can join in a world-wide perspective, we should lend our support in the hope that the economic nationalism which Professor Ashby deplors may be whittled down to some extent and that both rural and urban people may enjoy greater human satisfactions and a higher standard of living.

C. SAMUEL, *Tel Aviv, Palestine.*

I should like to make a few remarks on the need for personal development raised by Professor Ashby as his last important point, and I should like to do so with particular reference to collective settlements. On the surface it seems to be rather contradictory, but in reality experience has shown in our country that it is in collective settlements that personal development has been most possible. The main reasons are these: in the first instance the hours of work are strictly limited. In the second place leave of absence can be granted and financed by the group in special cases where it is clear that a person has shown a special ability for a certain branch of agriculture. He is sent away for instruction, leading to specialist courses or to a university and even abroad. Further, the hours of leisure are used deliberately for cultural development in the most various forms, theatre, music, and recently revivals of very old festivals have taken place. Perhaps the most important reason is that in these settlements persons with qualities of leadership always have a chance to obtain sooner or later an executive post, for instance, the management of the cereal branch, or the vegetable gardening, or such-like. In all these cases personal freedom of movement is greater than average because it is absolutely necessary for the function of management. But there is no stimulus at all on the income side, because the standard of living of every member of such a settlement is strictly equal.

By contrast with all these possibilities in collective settlements we have had the experience—at least during the first decade, which is quite a lot of time—that individual farmers have such heavy work to do—and not only the farmer but even more so his wife—that they have scarcely any time left for leisure and of necessity they have to neglect personal needs in cultural matters. Of course, this is not true with regard to the education of children, which is very well

organized in both collective settlements and in the villages built up on individualist farming.

W. G. MURRAY, *Iowa State College, U.S.A.*

I am in general agreement with Professor Ashby's paper, but there are one or two points which it seems to me either may lead to an incorrect inference or may not have been emphasized sufficiently. The first had to do with the remarks that labour is not a virtue, or that work is not a virtue. I wonder if from that we might be in danger of getting the idea that there is not much satisfaction in farm labour or in operating a farm. I think that as mechanization comes in and as we remove much of the drudgery from farming, there is in the operation of a farm a great deal of satisfaction possible. I have noted, and maybe some of the rest of you have observed, that there are many farmers who, as we say in America, are getting a big 'kick' out of farming. They get a 'kick' out of the combination of farm enterprises which they put together into a successful farming business. I would suggest that Mr. Mathews and Mr. Cole, the two farmers we have visited, are men who are enjoying and getting a thrill out of the operation of a farm. I am reminded of a story in this connexion that we tell in our country of a farmer and his wife who tackled an abandoned farm, a derelict farm as you would call it over here. This couple over a period of about seven or eight years made a very fine farm out of what had been a very unpromising opportunity. After this accomplishment they decided one day to invite the pastor to come out for a Sunday dinner after church. He accepted the invitation and after a sumptuous chicken dinner the farmer took the pastor out to show him the different fields. He said to the pastor: 'You see over there on the hill; that was nothing but waste, and now look at that beautiful field of corn.' 'Yes,' the pastor said, 'you and the Lord have done a wonderful job on that field.' The farmer was a bit perplexed, so he said, 'But look at that side hill and that beautiful field of oats. When I came here that was nothing but an eroded hillside.' 'Yes,' the pastor said, 'you and the Lord have done a wonderful piece of work on that side hill.' Not to be outdone the farmer said, 'But look at that pasture down there in the bottom. When we first came here that had nothing but weeds on it.' 'Yes,' the pastor said, 'you and the Lord have done a wonderful job on that pasture.' The farmer finally somewhat overwrought said to the pastor: 'Yes, but you ought to have seen this farm when the Lord was running it by himself.'

There is one other point that I would like to make which will raise

an argument with our good friend Jock Currie. It is that we, in the United States at least, get a thrill, real-enjoyment, and satisfaction out of owning our own farms. It is one of those satisfactions which I believe is high up in the list. Maybe you own your own home. If you do you may have experienced the same type of satisfaction. We notice that farmers like to feel free to organize their farms according to their own desires. This satisfaction was represented in Professor Ashby's paper, in that comment he made regarding security, the feeling farmers have of independence, and of working out their own future. I think that is one of the important satisfactions, in addition to that of getting a 'kick' out of operating a farm. These two satisfactions, operating a farm and operating one that is his own, make up, in my estimation, a large part of the satisfactions which a farmer gets out of farming.

SHERMAN E. JOHNSON, *Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Washington, D.C., U.S.A.*

I enjoyed this paper very much and I do not want to make this first comment as a criticism of Professor Ashby's remark with respect to production efficiency in the United States, but merely in explanation. The census figures are a little deceptive, as I suppose they are everywhere. We do not have a good segregation of our part-time farms and rural homes, but if you took them out of our census enumeration of farms you would probably take out close to 1 million of our less than 6 million farms. And, of course, those people do have other sources of income. That is an extremely important consideration in our north-eastern states especially, where they are close to industrial areas, and where part-time farming is prevalent. The income from farm production, using the value of production as reported by the censuses, is low there, but by and large the incomes of the people on farms when you include non-farm income as well as farm income are quite satisfactory.

Now then, with that modification, I think we certainly have to admit that we have low farm-incomes in the United States. The largest concentration of low *per capita* farm incomes is in the southern states. You recall the map that we had here the other day that showed the Cotton Belt with cotton, tobacco, and self-sufficing farming. One-half of our farm population lives in those thirteen southern states. Those states have one-half of the farm population, and approximately two-fifths of the farm income. Measured in *per capita* value of production they also have an average agricultural efficiency which is about two-fifths of the national average. So we have there a

real problem. Now as I said the other day we have the same problem elsewhere. We have it in the northern cut-over areas of our Lake states, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Minnesota. We have it in the Spanish-American areas in the south-west, and we could mention some other smaller pockets in some other parts of the country.

I think that is our real agricultural problem from the standpoint of increasing incomes which can serve as a basis for greater satisfactions in farm life. I might tie it to the question mentioned by Professor Ashby of merging the cultures of the industrial areas, or cities, and the country. The areas where we have low farm-income are somewhat isolated from the industrial areas. They have not had the opportunity of escape into other occupations, at least in the early days of their development. And it seems that after a while a vicious circle develops from which it is very difficult to escape. Those low incomes persist in prosperity as well as in depression. I think that we are going to have to inject some outside assistance into some of those areas if the situation is to be remedied. I know enough people who come from some of those areas to know that some of them at least do not enjoy the low standard of income and the culture that goes with that environment.

I think it somewhat follows that in our country at least we are not very anxious to set up a separate cultural group in rural areas that has a different standard of income and culture from that which prevails in urban areas.

I want to mention one other thing. A real danger in our present situation is that farm people at the present time are not siphoning off enough of their increased income into better living. Too much of it, in my opinion at least, is going into higher capitalization of farm investment, higher land values, livestock, and equipment. Now there are some real reasons for that because the materials and the opportunities for translating that higher income into a higher level of living have not been available during the war. We did make considerable progress during the First World War and we have made some recently, but I have some real fears about capitalization of higher income which eventually is translated into higher costs. These costs eventually will absorb much of the gain from increased efficiency and much of the gain that farmers could retain for themselves from a period of relative prosperity.

R. HENDERSON, *University of Bristol, England.*

This is a much vaster subject than one can appreciate at first glance. I have listened to all the talks on the subject to-day, and I do not think

anyone has treated the subject as I personally would like to have heard it treated. At the outset let me say that I am not one of those who claim that human satisfactions in rural life, or rural occupations, or in any other sense of the rural community, are complete in themselves, but I do maintain—and this is the gist of what I have to say—that there are many human satisfactions peculiar to rural living and rural work, and such forms of satisfaction we do not find elsewhere. Here I may cross swords a little with Joe Duncan. Rural satisfactions seem to me to fall under four main headings: (1) the occupational satisfactions, and I think there are many of these; (2) the social satisfactions, although sometimes these may be few; (3) the recreational satisfactions which may or may not be part of the social satisfactions; and (4) the natural satisfactions. I would like to say 'nature-al' rather than 'natural' satisfactions. These four groups of satisfactions are not clear cut in themselves. No one is clear cut from the other, and they differ very considerably according to whether the individual concerned is a landlord, farmer, farm worker, or one of the many other kinds and classes of people who live, or earn their living, by the pursuit of some rural trade or occupation. I am concerned here only with the people who earn their living more or less directly from the land and am omitting the landlords from this category for my particular purpose.

For the farmer the occupational, social, recreational, and 'nature-al' aspects of his life are very closely integrated. The market has long played a very large part in the agricultural and rural life of this country. The market is the farmer's business centre. It is, and has been, largely his social centre; and it is frequently his recreational centre. I think everyone will agree with that. The market is the place where he meets at regular intervals his fellow farmers and has an opportunity of relieving somewhat the isolation of his day-to-day existence. It is the place where he can do his business, where he can gossip, where he can grumble, where he can curse the Government, where he can criticize all and sundry. The market is, therefore, as I see it, a place where the farmer's cup of human satisfaction can be well filled. The total of human satisfaction constituted by the local farmers' market must, indeed, be enormous; and sometimes one cannot help but regret, despite the criticisms by the economists, that the old-fashioned market has in recent years been considerably modified.

I do not think we can altogether measure human happiness and human satisfactions in terms of higher money incomes and higher degrees of efficiency in marketing and in production. Human beings

form a strange device, and no one has yet proved whether the sum of human satisfaction to farmers is greatest when they are striving hard to make ends meet on a low price level or sitting pretty on a high price level. Many satisfactions are not measurable in money; hence we get farmers carrying out processes of production which they themselves know to be uneconomic, but from which they get a very high degree of satisfaction. The reluctance of farmers to change their methods or forms of production in the face of adverse economic forces is often the result of the fear that the sum of satisfaction from a new venture will not be as great as that derived from current methods.

Apart from the market, the farmer's social and recreational life in the past has been very much confined to associations with his own fellow farmers. (That this may be now changing to some extent is substantially true.) Why should this be so in a world where the diversity of occupation is so great? We may try to explain it in terms of the physical isolation of farmers from other folks; but this is by no means the complete answer. Here again I am going to clash with Joe Duncan. Despite what he has said, farming is the most natural occupation, and its very naturalness digs deep into the hearts, souls, and minds of men. Men, beasts, plants, and land become one. There is no separateness of the man from his work as in other occupations, and that, I think, is the crucial point. There is no separateness of the farm, the farmer, his family, and those with whom he comes in daily contact. They form the farm. They are part of it. They are the whole of it, and I think that is probably why farming has been so often described as a way of life. The job is all-absorbing, and consequently the man and his environment become one. Socially the farmer talks farming because he is farming and because no other kind of talk can so much increase his total satisfactions. After all we are talking about satisfactions. I have already said that farming has often been described as a way of life. Economists and others in recent years have tried to dispute this and to confirm that farming is now a business. Indeed I have myself frequently used this argument, but when I go to farms and talk to farmers I find that this theory is still very much a theory with very little factual foundation, except where farms are large and business methods probably more applicable. When a farmer takes you into his fields and proudly displays his stock and crops, he is not thinking of incomes and economics, but of the pride, tradition, and fullness of his occupation. I wonder if any of you have watched farmers when you go on to their farms and have listened to them and just wondered what they have got in mind.

They are not thinking about economics, they are not thinking about price levels, but they are thinking about what they see in front of them and the satisfaction which it gives them. In terms of satisfaction the farmer gets more out of this than he does out of the prices he receives, and this, I would say, applies just as much, and probably more, to the progressive farmer than it does to what we term the average farmer.

Incidentally, when we in this country speak of farming as a business, I wonder what we really do mean. If we mean the technical processes of production then there is some justification for the term business, but if we mean business in the financial sense then there is precious little business left to the farmer. In the war period and the post-war period his sale prices have been very largely fixed by government order. The prices of what the farmer needs to buy are also fixed and, as far as the individual farmer is concerned apart from whatever say or influence his organizations may have, he has practically no say at all in the actual business of his enterprise. There are some who say this lack of business power is the result of war-time and socialistic controls, but was the farmer's position in this country—I am referring particularly to conditions in this country—vastly different under conditions of free enterprise? Were not the prices of all he had to sell and of all he wanted to buy very largely dictated to him then by outside sources? Was his business power any greater under free enterprise than it is under government control? Indeed, I think his combined business power is probably greater now than ever it has been. I am not talking about his individual business power, but his combined business power, the power of his organizations, which is quite a different thing from individual business power. In the inter-war (1919-39) years the business end of farming was largely carried out by the merchants and auctioneers, and the farmer's freedom of enterprise was then, as now, very largely confined to matters of technical efficiency, or inefficiency if you care to put it that way.

Now, I would just like to refer lightly to the worker in the general set-up. His occupational satisfactions are very closely connected with those of the farmer, but his social and recreational life may differ very considerably from that of the farmer. He does not usually go to market, nor does he enjoy, to any great extent, the social life provided by the market. He has nothing to sell and, in the past, he has had very little to buy. I know that from personal experience. It should be pointed out to people who are not resident in this country that there is some difference in social status, indeed there is a

great difference in social status, as between farmers and workers, and that this difference is widest in areas and counties where the farms are largest. In some areas, where small farms predominate, the difference of social status may be very slight. The social life of the workers on large farms, however, is often widely separated from that of farmers. The farmer often has a house too large for his modern requirements while the worker has a cottage too small for his needs and frequently without any domestic amenities. The worker does not hunt the fox, but I must say this that in my time he made up for this lack by doing a good deal of poaching. In this way he increased his recreational satisfactions and often added materially to his bodily requirements. I do not want to enlarge any further on the differences that exist, although there are many more differences between the social life of larger farmers and farm workers.

In the past forty or fifty years there has been, as some have already indicated, vast changes in the mode of life of farm workers. At the beginning of my time, previous to the First World War, almost the sum total of farm workers' satisfaction had to be obtained from the farm, from the work, and the immediate environment. The whole interest of the worker was undividedly in the farm and in its surroundings. That is far from being true to-day. The main social life of the farms in my time was largely that of the farm dance. This form of recreation was largely executed with grim determination and much perspiration, but enjoyed with such complete abandon as is never now seen on a dance floor. I would have liked to have enlarged on this a little more, but I have not time. In those earlier years, too, the only days or half-days spent away from the farm were those when we attended the local flower shows and sports and the local fair. I will just say this about the local fair. Most of the farm lads, in those days, used to save up for a whole year to have a little to spend at the annual fair, and, at the end of the year, they might have managed to accumulate as much as five bob and on that they used to get, for once in the year, gloriously and hopelessly drunk.

I often wonder, and I wonder if anybody is going to blame me for wondering, whether the total of human satisfaction achieved by farmers and workers in those days, despite what I have said, was not greater than it is now. I sometimes think that it was greater. Advances such as we have made (somebody said this already) are not necessarily making for greater happiness. The modern rush of life has caught up the farm worker and nowadays he is not content with the old forms of satisfactions. He now runs away in his spare time to see some pretty-pretty Hollywood dame making love to a sparkling

hero, who does not look as though he has done a decent day's work in his life. On the whole, while it may be debatable whether total satisfactions of all kinds have increased or otherwise, there has been a decline in the total satisfactions derived from country life, both occupational and recreational. Whether the sum has been made up from other sources I am not quite sure. As I have indicated, I do not believe that it really has, despite all that has been said by Professor Ashby and others.

I have got to condense considerably what I wanted to say, but I would like to run over some of the satisfactions I personally have had from rural work and rural living. These satisfactions, as I have said, are not to be found elsewhere. As a boy, living in the country, what satisfactions did I have? I had the freedom of the open country, the freedom to run wild, to see flowers, to pick flowers, to eat wild berries, to catch little fish in the little streams, to catch bigger fish in the bigger streams, to poach rabbits, to catch pheasants (I was never caught), to go birds'-nesting, to throw stones, to use a catapult, to use a sling, to pinch apples, to pick blackberries, to pick nuts, to dig up and eat the roots of yarrow, to climb trees, to wander through the woods in the shade and in the sunlight, to climb rocks, to wander up and down hills, to slip through valleys, to catch eels, to look at lizards and newts, to fall in streams, to get caught in the rain, to battle against the wind, to go after Easter eggs, to fill up the village pump with soap, to tie the handle of same, to throw snowballs, to catch birds in the snow, to collect and eat hens' eggs, water-hens' eggs, pigeons' eggs, pheasants' eggs, pewits' eggs, to slide on thin ice over deep water, to catch butterflies and moths, to catch roosting birds with a light, to attend the country school, to learn nothing, and, and, and, on as much as you like. Now all these things I have done, all these things I have enjoyed, and I might add many others beside. Now all these things are part and parcel of the rural satisfactions that life has given to me. I do not say there were no dissatisfactions. Of course, there was another side to this picture. There was the side which one can briefly sum up in one word, poverty. But in spite of this I would not have changed for all the negatives that masses of bricks and mortar could have brought. In other words I would not have changed this form of life for anything in the form of a town or city, because the things I am speaking of I am quite sure you cannot find in a town environment.

When I became 'a man' at the age of 12½, I went to work on a farm, and in spite of what has been said I did get much satisfaction out of farm work. What were the satisfactions that I got out of it? In the

first place the pride of being 'a child' no longer, of working amongst men, working with horses, tending horses, seeing young horses grow up from foals, working a team of horses for the first time, ploughing, harrowing, rolling, sowing seeds, watching the young shoots come through, watching the crops grow, cutting the weeds, making the hay, cutting and harvesting the corn, thrashing the corn, carting the roots. Many a time my back was nearly broken with these jobs, many a time I was hungry. All the same I enjoyed it, I got satisfaction out of it, a lot of satisfaction. That is why I say this subject is somewhat complex, because one can only illustrate the particular side that one sees, and one has not time to go into that completely. Then there was feeding the sheep, feeding the cattle, watching them fatten, watching them go off to market. Pride in this achievement as far as I was concerned was as great as that of the farmer who possessed them. That may seem a strange thing to say, but it is not a strange thing, and it is true. What greater satisfaction can an occupation offer than that of being an integral part of a whole process of production from beginning to end, of ploughing the fields and reaping the harvest of all those efforts? Men are fond of harvesting, they get a lot of satisfaction—a tremendous amount of satisfaction—out of harvesting, particularly corn harvest and hay harvest. Whether men be farmers or merely non-possessing workers, harvest is obvious achievement. It is the fruits of hard effort and toil. It is result, it is the end of the year and of the year's effort. When the corn stacks are packed in the yard and in the twilight and dusk the sparrows are nestling under the eaves, there is a feeling of great content, of great security, of complete satisfaction, of a job well done, of a reward well earned. As I have said, after that, to-morrow the year begins again. This is not sentiment because I have experienced all these things. I have experienced all these satisfactions, despite the fact that I never owned or occupied a farm, and never owned a sheaf of corn. Again I must say there is another side to all this. There is the mud, the muck, the sludge, and the poverty. But why should I spoil the picture by going into all that?

Some of you may be inclined to say: 'Well, if you were so fond of working on the farm, why didn't you stick to it?' As I said at the outset there are a number of satisfactions peculiar to rural work and rural living, but in the modern world these in themselves are not enough. During the years when I was a farm labourer, if a man had any desire for some of the other satisfactions of life, if he wanted to marry and bring up a family as he would like them to be brought up, probably differently from his own poverty-stricken upbringing, he

had no alternative but to try to find some other occupation offering an income sufficiently high to do so. I have changed my occupation from that of a farm labourer to that of, if I may use the term, a farm economist, but I doubt, after all, whether I am a better man or doing a better job.

EDGAR THOMAS, *University of Reading, England.*

I had not thought of taking part in this discussion this morning, but one or two things which have been said make me want to put to you one point which has been troubling me very much. Once more I am afraid that I am referring to developments in this country rather than to conditions generally. I am in complete agreement with everything that has been said this morning by Professor Ashby and by other speakers about the need for the improvement of the living conditions in rural districts and in rural communities. In this country there has, for some time, been a drive to revive and develop rural life. But the tendency is to concentrate that drive almost entirely on agriculture. I suggest that there is a real danger in this concentration. I suppose that we are all very fond of talking 'shop'. Farmers are very prone to it. So are agricultural economists! But there is a real danger that the modern development of agriculture with its tremendous fascination—the 'kick' which one speaker already referred to that farmers are now getting from developing their farms—can well monopolize their whole life. Indeed the up-to-date farmer to-day needs to be concerned with so many farming developments that he has little time for anything else. It may be that to-day the leisure of the farmer is being menaced by the task of keeping up with technological progress, whereas in the past it was the physical toil of performing farming operations which hindered the fuller development of his life.

I may perhaps illustrate the danger by referring to the development of the Young Farmers' Clubs Movement, a movement which has had a great influence on the furtherance of farming in this country during the last twenty years. I put it in that way, namely, that this influence has been in the furtherance of farming, rather than in the furtherance of rural life, because I feel that there is a real danger in certain circumstances for the whole life of the rural community to be increasingly based on the development of things like Young Farmers' Clubs. I suggest that is the wrong type of development. The life of the community should centre on something which is infinitely greater than the vocation which happens to be the predominant vocation of that community. I feel instinctively that the

pursuit of modern farming somehow constitutes a real danger to community life in the more advanced countries. It seems to me that we cannot have a rural community which is giving the best opportunity in every way for human development if the chief vocational interest of the majority of that community is allowed to monopolize its leisure as well as its working hours.

J. COKE, *Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, Canada.*

I would like to carry forward the discussion which Edgar Thomas has raised and perhaps bring to you something of the experience that we have had in Canada in developing junior farmers' organizations. There are various kinds of them, and perhaps all of them suffer from the fact that they tend to emphasize the problems of agriculture. It has been extremely difficult to get information to them that would bear upon urban problems, and therefore give a balanced point of view. Some of our junior farmers' organizations are under the auspices of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture; some of them are organized by the Provincial Federations of Agriculture; some of them, of course, are organized under the Provincial Departments of Agriculture; and, within the last five years or thereabouts, we have had what we call a Farm Forum, which is conducted through the auspices of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Local groups of adults and juniors meet in homes or in community halls to discuss topics which are being discussed at the same time by local groups all across the country. The procedure is to have about a fifteen-minute broadcast in which representatives of farmers and professional agriculturists take a part, although I must say that we had so many professional agriculturists one year that a decision was taken to reduce the number on future programmes. Effort is made, however, to have someone who understands the operation of farms and someone who is technically trained, and very often they bring in a representative of a labour union or of a business firm, if the topic lends itself to that type of discussion. This Farm Forum programme is developed under the auspices of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture with some financial assistance from the Provincial Departments of Agriculture, and, of course, the services of the Canadian Broadcasting Commission. The broadcast is arranged before it actually takes place. The people who are to participate meet with the technically trained broadcaster, and their scripts are prepared in advance. That obviously has to be done when you are dealing with people who do not have much experience in broadcasting. The broadcast is just like an opening paper here. It sets up the

problem; it endeavours in so far as it is possible in a short broadcast to pose the different aspects of the problem, and then they hope to set to work to discuss the broader aspects or, shall I say, the more detailed aspects of that particular problem.

This programme begins in late October and it goes on until the end of March. In other words it is a means of providing a ground for the meeting of rural groups. Those of us who have been associated with the actual development of the programmes have tried to introduce as much of a balanced point of view as is possible. We have not succeeded entirely, but we are making some progress. I think it is quite possible for farmers to spend so much time thinking about the technical aspects of agriculture that their horizons become limited.

S. C. LEE, *University of Nanking, China.*

In China rural people as a rule have been treated as second-class people while urban people always counted themselves as first-class. Of course, we know world civilization up to the present has been an urban civilization. It is true not only of China but of the whole world. We must admit that without urban cities we could not have attained such a high state of civilization as we have now, but on the other hand urban people have been very much privileged because of the interest in cities. The rural people have not been treated on an equal footing in all the things of life. So long as this gap between the urban and rural people exists, there will be no social, economic, or political equality in the nation. In order to attain the goal of freedom we must sweep away these differences.

At the beginning of this Conference the President announced that he had received a letter from Sir John Boyd Orr congratulating the gathering here. Everyone is aware of the work of the F.A.O. Conference which is now meeting at Geneva. Many workers for human satisfactions of not only the rural people but also the urban people are meeting there, and its objectives are worth repeating. It was established to help member nations first in raising levels of nutrition and the standards of living of their peoples; second, to secure improvement in the efficiency of the production and distribution of all food and agricultural products; third, to work for the betterment of the condition of rural populations; and, fourth, in these ways to contribute towards an expanding world economy. In the report made by Sir John Boyd Orr to the present Conference he puts forward two objectives to be achieved; first, that of developing and organizing production, distribution, and the utilization of basic foods to provide

diet on a health standard for the people of all countries, and, second, stabilizing agricultural prices at levels fair to producers and consumers alike. I think these objectives come within the field of our study. They are closely related to the work of agricultural economists, and we ought to show common cause with the Geneva Conference. In order to achieve our final goal of attaining the full satisfaction of human wants for the rural people we must have more sympathizers and more co-workers.

H. DEGRAFF, *Cornell University, New York, U.S.A.*

Like Professor Thomas, I had not intended to participate in this discussion. But I am stimulated to do so by the actual or tacit acceptance of the concept of income equality between farm and non-farm people. It was expressed in Professor Ashby's paper. I understood Mr. Holmes to say it is a policy of the dairy farmers of New Zealand. I have heard it many times among farm people in the States. And I have heard it expressed, may I add, on the Farm Forum radio programme from Toronto, Canada, about which Dr. Coke has spoken. It seems to be a widely held idea among farmers, and those who work closely with farmers, that an objective of agricultural development should be income equality among farm and non-farm people. I wish to enter a demurrer against the idea that it can be attained, or that it would be desirable if attained in any manner except as a natural economic development.

We are talking about developing and increasing the satisfactions of rural living. I take that to mean, in large part, an increase in the *per capita* supply of material things. Of course, immediately I say material things someone will object and point out that we are concerned with something broader than material satisfactions, and that there are many satisfactions in life other than those of a material nature. Yet it seems to me that only through material accomplishments do we attain the other somewhat less tangible satisfactions which certainly we all value highly.

In essence, then, we are talking about material accomplishment. And for farm people as for others it may be attained only in two ways: (1) by increasing productivity per unit of effort, or (2) by increasing price per unit of product.

In the United States, for example, I am confident we could not follow a policy of income equality (actual purchasing-power equality) for farm and non-farm people, and maintain a continuance of material progress and an average increase in living standards. My reasons are: first, the increasing efficiency of agricultural

production and, second, the differential birth-rate between the farm and non-farm segments of our population.

With a rising level of labour accomplishment on farms, a given volume of production requires a smaller total farm-labour force. Our agricultural expansion (area-wise) has slowed down practically to the point of stopping altogether. Some intensification of operations is taking place on existing farms, but not enough to prevent a net displacement of farm workers. In addition, the net reproduction rate among our farm population is about one and a half times the maintenance rate. Thus from these two sources we have a chronic condition of surplus population on the land.

If this surplus is not to pile up to serious proportions and reduce the average level of rural living, there must be a net flow of population from farm to non-farm employment. Such a flow can be expected to move only in relation to the magnetic pull of more attractive levels of living. And if we were, in the States, to follow a policy of equalizing income levels between farm and non-farm people, we would be offsetting the force which now serves to draw surplus population from the land.

The only time in many years when we pulled down the farm population in the States to something approximating the level at which it ought to be was during the war. I do not know just how to express the net change in terms of farm workers, but 5 millions of our farm population left farms for non-farm employment and military service. And still, as Dr. Johnson pointed out the other day, we greatly increased our agricultural production with the smaller numbers. The levels of living in rural America, and at least some of the satisfactions of farm living, have increased in part by reason of the smaller number of persons among whom the total farm production is divided.

Whatever we had of under-employment and over-population on our farms before the war, we have less now. Our farmers are talking about a shortage of help. A survey or two taken during the period coinciding with the end of the war indicated that many of our farmers thought they would hire more labour as soon as it is available. Of course, some will. But probably many more will not. A major reason why they feel short of labour at present is because they are finding it profitable to operate their farms at maximum capacity. They have not as much help available as they would like to have to do as much business as they would like to do. But that very pressure is further stepping up the overall production per man and fostering an increased degree of farm mechanization.

Though at the moment there is comparatively little of surplus

population on American farms, it is probable that a greater surplus will again develop—as production efficiency per worker on farms continues to move ahead and as the large crop of youngsters on farms comes along to productive age. Too many will stay on farms unless the magnet of better-paying jobs elsewhere is a strong magnet indeed. It surely will not be strong enough if we start off on a policy of equalizing *per capita* farm and non-farm incomes.

Equality of income between farm and non-farm groups, should it develop in a free economic environment, would reflect a balance and a stability between farm and non-farm populations. Certainly not in the United States, and certainly in few other countries, has any such stable balance developed. Nor can it as long as a marked rural-urban differential exists in net reproduction rates, or as long as workers are displaced from farming by an advancing agricultural technology.

Of course, equality of income can be forced even though farm and non-farm populations are unbalanced in the direction of over-population on the land. That is, it can be forced if the non-farm group is willing to surrender the required part of its production output to the necessary subsidy of the farm group. But such subsidy could have only unfortunate long-run effects. Equalized income, if so achieved, would weaken or eliminate the pull towards non-farm employment and the flow of surplus population from the land. With population piling up on farms, and (as would be the case) with total farm production not increasing proportionately, the equalized incomes would again become unequal. The old subsidy rate would have to be augmented by a new and greater subsidy—only at a later date to be augmented still further. Technical progress in farming methods would be impeded. And the programme if carried to the ridiculous ultimate would turn the trends of development backward from the tractor towards the spade.

Income equality for *how many* and *what kind* of farmers is a more fruitful field to investigate. Certainly not all the population of the States could be employed on the land and maintain the same average level of living as now prevails. What number of farm families, producing at what level of accomplishment, would be able to realize a healthy and much-to-be-desired equality of income?

The more productive 35-40 per cent. of U.S. farm families now have income equality with our non-farm population. It is among the less productive 3 millions plus of our farm families in the States that we have nothing like income equality. It is among those families also that we have the highest reproduction rate and the largest

over-supply of farm population. If a part of this low-producing group could be pulled out of farming (and assuming they wish to improve their lot in life), the land and other resources they now use could return a higher level of living—possibly even equality of income—for fewer. Certainly they cannot all have equality of income on present or prospective levels of production per person where they are. I certainly do not wish to sound heretical. I am merely talking about a proper adjustment of farm population to land resources at the prevailing level of technology. It is the only way I know that farm families can have income equality with non-farm families except through subsidy.

R. R. RENNE, *Montana State College, U.S.A.*

Professor Ashby has given us a very fine paper indeed, and I find myself in close agreement with his conclusions. Some points have been raised during the discussion of his paper upon which I would like to comment. The first concerns the point raised by my colleague Dr. DeGraff. Dr. DeGraff has advanced some excellent arguments for his point of view, but nevertheless I insist that it is a desirable goal, as Professor Ashby has stated, that we professional agricultural economists work towards trying to achieve equality of incomes for agriculture and industry. Emphasis upon the right types of education and research, improved skills, efficient management, and other practices are extremely desirable in making possible a rise in the level of living of our rural people.

I am not at all worried about where the necessary population to maintain our cities will be secured. As a matter of fact I believe that when our farm people have their living levels raised, their population trends follow precisely the population trends of urban areas. In other words, the differential birth-rate is not one between rural and urban; it is a differential between poverty and wealth. In our wealthiest agricultural areas our birth-rate has gone down rapidly. In city slums and in rural slums we find the heaviest birth-rates. If it were possible to bring up the level of production and attainment of our farm people so that farm incomes were much higher compared with those of other groups than they are now, our rural population would decline through a declining birth-rate. If economic opportunities were greater in cities there would be movement from farms to urban areas. If economic opportunities were greater in rural areas, cities would have to make adjustments to get along with fewer workers, or bid up their offerings to a point where they could attract population from other areas.

The result would undoubtedly be a different distribution of population between rural and urban areas. Perhaps cities would not become so large; perhaps adjustments within urban areas would reduce the numbers needed in the city, or result in action that would draw people from other countries and not necessarily from rural areas within the nation.

Returning to the bigger question which Professor Ashby has raised, namely, the concern over the decline of primary or rural groups, I suppose that concern over this problem is more general in the United States than in some other nations, because we have such a brief and limited historical and cultural background. That is, we have developed so rapidly as a nation that we associate our instability or rapid advance with the fact that we do not have a continuing stable farm population. I believe the relationship is not one of cause and effect, but rather of coincidence.

About four years ago one of the great foundations of the United States made a grant to one of our state institutions. The purpose was to try to develop an experimental project which would determine the conditions essential for the preservation of small rural communities. Among the many significant statements made by Professor Ashby was one that gave me much satisfaction, namely, that if primary rural groups are capable of, or there is something fundamental about them which develops, individualism, vigour, and vitality, and a democratic way of living, then they should be able to survive on their own merits in competition with other social forms of organization. Yet, as Professor Ashby says, we are told it is necessary to take action to preserve these groups. When the foundation grant was made, the rural extension people that were called together to discuss the proposal felt that the whole approach was scientifically unsound and that the agricultural extension service, our land grant colleges, and our educational institutions could be more helpful to rural people and to society as a whole if we continued to emphasize the research and educational programmes and techniques which would improve production efficiency and satisfactory living of our farm people, so that they could more nearly approach the incomes which the more successful people in other lines of endeavour were able to achieve. They also concluded that with the exception of a few approaches such as special provision for health facilities in sparsely settled communities, we should work along these lines rather than with any preconceived notion that we should preserve as such a rural community of a particular size merely because it was that size when we came upon the scene.

A community selected by the foundation study for special consideration was a community that is partly agricultural and partly a forest community. The attempt apparently was to preserve this small community by bringing into it a cultural pattern which it was felt that community should have, but which apparently it was not able to afford and which it would never be able to secure competitively over the long pull, isolated as a small community. Farm folks in general in the community felt that the approach was unsound, and in the discussion of their problems soon got off on to topics such as how to improve the tax system to make it more just and equal in terms of assessment based on quality of soil and productivity, how to improve the organization of the schools so that the children would have good educational opportunities more nearly comparable with the urban, &c. It was the city folks not so far distant from the little community that thought the whole idea was an excellent one. It leads me again to think of Professor Ashby's statement that those who did not necessarily participate in the poverty were the ones who seemed to be most enthusiastic about it.

It seems to me that with many of our problems, such as education, transportation, and health, as Professor Ashby has pointed out, we are more likely to get the pattern of settlement and utilization of resources which will lead to higher general standards of living and more satisfactory living if we insist upon mobility among all groups in our society and emphasize those fundamental efficiency factors which will increase our output. In a small community where one confused child may be the only one in school or in his grade, there may be too much opportunity for development of individualism. Under these conditions we do not develop a very effective individual. On the other hand, where we have too large a population, the individual may be submerged. Yet I believe there are more opportunities of redividing the group and providing the kind of environment and the facilities for the development of strong individuals where we have more of the essentials, such as communities with considerable numbers of people, rather than sparse rural areas that are not able to survive or thrive with existing economic conditions.

A. CURLE, *Tavistock Institute of Human Relations, London, England.*

I feel extremely diffident in addressing this Conference at all, but from the point of view of my own discipline I felt at the end of this morning's discussion that some of the basic problems of human satisfaction had rather been left in the air. There was a tendency to stress the material adjuncts of satisfaction, while avoiding the fact

that satisfaction is a psychological state, and as such is affected by many factors less concrete than working hours, wage levels, housing conditions, and so on. Coupled with this was the implied neglect of the fact that human beings are contrary creatures, into whose laps you may pour all the blessings of the world without increasing their quota of happiness.

Of course, external conditions are vital, and it is important to remember that they are particularly significant in the subtle undertones they give to the relationships of man with man. I believe that it is in these inter-personal relationships that we can locate the well-spring of human satisfaction. What then, is satisfaction? It is hard to substantiate any answer in terms of openly expressed pleasure and enjoyment, but it may be negatively assessed by the absence of emotional disturbance. Modern psychological techniques have not only provided better tools for the diagnosis and treatment of this, but also for relating emotional stress to specific conditions in the social environment.

A survey recently published¹ shows the great extent of neurosis in industry. From my own experience I would say it was less considerable in rural areas, and this in very general terms is supported by analysis of the different degrees of tension imposed by the structures of town and country society, and by the relation of them to what is known of the aetiology of neurosis.

Psychiatry shows that to retain psychological health a man needs to feel that he matters in the social group to which he belongs; to feel that he can depend for friendship and help and sympathy on the people whom he meets in the commerce of everyday life; and to know that he himself is ready to give these things to other people. A community in which this type of satisfaction can best exist needs a stable culture—that is, one which perpetuates a series of accepted behaviour patterns grouped round significant social roles.

This type of community is found predominantly among some primitive, isolated peasant groups in which all aspects of life—legal, religious, social, economic, &c.—are woven into one coherent fabric. By contrast, life in an industrial city has very little emotional security for the individual. He is often rootless, because the street, in which he knows a couple of neighbours, is not the village where he knows everyone—even although he may dislike many of them. Nor can he relate his manifold activities within a single consistent framework, and is thus subjected to many disturbing conflicts. The resultant anxiety has a very negative function, for the individual develops a

¹ R. Fraser, *The Incidence of Neurosis among Factory Workers*, H.M.S.O., 1947.

fear of the society causing these tensions; and this fear frequently impedes him in using those social institutions which do exist and which might help him to integrate himself with his community. His dissatisfaction then increases.

An example, which is significant if we accept these criteria of satisfaction, illustrates one difference between modern industrial and primitive peasant life :

A woman who had worked for years in an office in London fell ill and died in the single room where she lived. No one knew or suspected anything until the milk bottles began to pile up outside her door. When she was discovered it proved impossible to trace a single friend or relative. She had no social relationships save those incidental to the earning and spending of money.

This happens almost daily in our large cities. It can hardly ever happen in a rural community—there may be isolates, but at least something is known about them.

Of course, a rural community in western Europe cannot be compared to a primitive society. It is not and cannot be incapsulated, nor would this be desirable. Nevertheless, save where external conditions are extremely adverse, I believe that the rural dweller has some psychological advantages over his town-dwelling brother.

Firstly, there is often some survival of traditional co-operative behaviour. Secondly, the groups may be sufficiently small for some sense of common identity, of belonging, to survive in normal times, whereas in the cities this exists ordinarily only at periods of crisis. Thirdly, the home and the place of work are frequently near enough for the individual to lead a unified life, all of which is comprehensive within the same social framework : that this may lead to some friction does not negate the underlying structural stability it imposes. A variety of circumstances may prevent these things from operating effectively, but at least the country in this way has potentialities denied, at any rate until our sociological skills are greater, to the towns.

Faced with the need for planning it seems vital to discover a *via media* between economic size, dispersal, and organization, and the psychological needs of the individual. The example of industry shows that the traditional incentives of increased wages, shorter working hours, &c., do not make for increased production if the individual cannot feel that he has a participant role in his work-group. This means that if there is no adequate harmonizing culture, the morale of the individual—his psychological satisfaction—is so reduced that he cannot give of his best. As I have said, it is very hard to maintain a strong and valid culture in segmented city life,

and although the town has so much to offer to the country-side it has also profoundly disturbing psychological effects.

Being neither an economist nor an agriculturist I cannot presume to suggest how the inevitable and necessary but disrupting impacts of the large groups upon the small can be modified—that is a matter for technical knowledge. I am only trying to pose some problems which, I feel, must be answered if the material advantages of technical and social innovation are to counterbalance the disturbing effects they have on an existing pattern of social integration. For social integration is an essential prerequisite of human satisfaction.

J. F. DUNCAN, *late of the Scottish Farm Servants' Union.*

I do not know the language of the psychologist and the anthropologist, and therefore I hope it is without offence that I say that the speech we have just heard is quite incomprehensible to me. But when I heard the speaker talking about the integration of the rural society I could not help feeling that my experiences have been entirely in a rural society which has been steadily disintegrating for the past fifty years and probably before that time. It is a rural society with agriculture as its commercial undertaking employing wage-earners in groups which may vary, taking the norm, from 3 or 4 people employed up to a dozen. I would suggest to the social psychologists that it might be worth their while to study these groups. I think they will find that there is just as much difficulty in the individual adjusting himself to a group on a farm as in an industrial group, that there are more points of friction, and they are complicated by the fact that the very small agricultural group is not merely working together but living together, which again provides more points of friction. One of the difficulties in commercial farming, working with groups of wage-earners, is this difficulty of making the individual worker feel at home in his group. In my own particular experience in agriculture there has been more migration of labour, more changing of jobs, than in any of the industrial fields we have in this country, and time and again I have found that the changes have taken place because of the difficulty of the individual adjusting himself to the small group in which he was working.

This subject that we are discussing, whatever we include in the term satisfaction of the rural work and rural living, is a difficult one because we have to ask ourselves: Is there a distinctively rural work and rural living? I am rather surprised that no one yet has been talking about 'farming as a way of life'. It is the usual phrase that we hear in the attempt to distinguish agriculture from other occupations.

I have never been able to understand that phrase, because it has always seemed to me that one could in the same way talk about a way of life even of agricultural economists. In every civilized community where there is growing industrialization and a rising standard of living, there is the effort of the workers to escape from agriculture. We talk about it as the flight from the land, rural depopulation, and all that kind of thing. You find it also even in areas where settlement is still developing. Take America, where they went in for mechanization much earlier than any other country because of the difficulty of getting labour. That was not in an old settled community, but in a community that was still developing. But take the evidence of settled communities. It is the case that agricultural work and the rural life have been looked upon as something to escape from, and the effort has always been to escape.

There are various causes for it apart from the actual nature of farm work. There is the fact that civilization has been inclined to treat the rural people as though they were second-class people. Legislatively we have treated them as second-class people. They have always been later in being admitted to any of the social provisions made by the community. Even now Great Britain, the Scandinavian countries, Holland, and Czechoslovakia are the only countries that I know of where the same social provision, the same social protection, is made for the agricultural worker as for other workers in the community. Even in New Zealand—I think it is true, though I may be corrected—the very widely developed social services do not apply to the rural community in the same way as they do to the urban community. That fact tells on the men who are living and working in rural areas. It is in our common literature. The word in America is ‘hick’ or ‘hayseed’; in England it used to be ‘Hodge’.

Ashby referred to the sentimental slush that has been poured out on rural life and on rural people. I have seen samples of it from America, and we have had a perfect spate of it in this country. The theme is that there is something fine about working on the land, mother earth, the wind on the heath, and all those phrases; that farming is a natural life as distinguished from the industrial life. But what is there natural about a modern milk-cow? I cannot conceive anything more unnatural than what we have done to milk-cows. Is there anything natural about these miserable hens sitting on the wire netting in their boxes, being scientifically fed to produce the maximum number of eggs? Is there any particular joy in working on a farm? Taking farms, by and large, in any country—and I have seen a good many countries now—is there anything about the layout of a

farm, and the wading about in muck and dirt, that is attractive to a human being, to make it a more desirable way of living than any other? It is the conditions under which farm work has to be done which make it so disagreeable and undesirable. I have never felt that it was wages so much. In our country it used to be partly the working hours, but that has very largely been remedied now. There is also the engrossing nature of farm work, the seven-day week, the cow that must be milked at regular times, and all those other jobs that must be done and cannot be postponed at all. We talk about man being a slave to the machine, but at least you can stop the machine. You can go away and forget about it. But you cannot stop that cow, and you cannot stop the other things from going on. The weeds will not refrain from growing because you want to take a holiday. The human being is much more of a slave to the animals and to farm work than he is in industrial work. There is the story of the American who, when asked why he had given up farm work, said he got tired of being chambermaid to a mule. That does express one side of the farm work, and why it fails to give satisfactions.

What brought me into this discussion was what DeGraff said. A breath of fresh air came in with DeGraff's participation in the discussion. We talk about equal pay and that kind of thing. I think we sometimes use unfortunate words about it. It is not a matter of equal pay, but it is a matter of equivalent standards of living, something approaching equality of standards of living, between rural people and urban people. I think we are bound, those of us who are interested in trying to improve the conditions of rural people, to make that claim. We are bound to push it through, as Ashby said, frankly on economic lines. But when we start to pursue it on economic lines we come up against the economic dilemma that DeGraff presents to us. What is going to happen when you make that plain? As DeGraff puts it, unless there is something to attract rural population away, you only find yourselves in the position of having far too many people for your land resources, and therefore equality is a wrong aim even to have before you. What is the alternative? Consider the economic implications of having two standards in your community, a definitely lower standard for your rural community and a definitely higher standard for your urban community. We had reached that stage in Great Britain and in Scandinavia. I think our Dutch friends would agree that they have reached it as well. We see the effect of the dual standard, which is to depopulate the rural areas. The attraction has been selective, and the longer it goes on the more selective it becomes, because it is the more enterprising, those with

some initiative and ambition, that are attracted away. I do not agree with those who say that the effect of that selection is that there is degeneracy in the rural community. I do not think it affects the breed, and I doubt if geneticists would agree that there is any good reason for saying that it does. But it does affect the calibre of the rural population at any given time because the type of parents you have left to rear the children are less desirable parents, the type who are prepared to allow the world to run over them rather than to pit themselves against the forces which they ought to master. If you attempt to maintain that dual standard, the result will be a steadily deteriorating older population, the kind of thing that you find in the southern states of the U.S.A., or in certain districts in the highlands of Scotland, and in one or two of the outlying agricultural counties of England, and some of your hill country in the States.

If we are serious about equating the standards of living of the rural and urban communities, we have got to face quite seriously the reorganization of our agriculture and the stepping-up of efficiency to a much greater extent than we have done before. It cannot be done permanently by wangling the price level. That is what we have been attempting to do for the last twenty-five years. The American price parity is their particular aspect of it. Our particular aspect is the policy we have been following for some years of fixing wages and then handing out increased prices to the farmers to meet those wages, without any consideration of whether we are producing it from the industry at all. With the very small proportion of rural and agricultural population we have in this country, that kind of thing can go on for a long time without any very serious disturbance, because it is such a small section of our economic life. But if the rural population is considerable, one cannot go on maintaining it by pouring back into the rural districts subsidized wages, subsidized prices, or anything else of that kind out of the taxes or levies. Agriculture has got to be reorganized to provide these standards, and if that is to be done it does mean a very considerable disturbance in the whole structure of the agricultural population. We have either to accept DeGraff's position, and allow for the dual standard, or if we honestly and sincerely mean to close the gap between the rural and the urban standards, then we must set about the reorganization of agriculture in such a way as to enable us to produce the standards from the agricultural industry itself.

I would just like to say a word on this question of rural culture. I happen to be one of those people who like to live in the country, but if I had to live *on* the country and I had to find all my associations

in my own rural community, then in view of the restricted nature of that rural community I should find country life a very dull thing indeed. After all, what do we mean by urban culture? We mean that the community is large enough for the people who have common interests in particular directions to get together and pursue their interests because they can build up their groups. But if you think of culture as something to take out to the rural districts, you have to remember what a very small proportion of the urban population any one of these groups is. A lot of very well-meaning people have made up their mind that they are going to take music out to the country; to take the drama to the country; to take arts and crafts out to the country. They are all busily engaged doing something for rural life by stimulating what they call culture—their own particular brand of it—in the rural districts. And they wonder why they fail. They fail because in a sparse rural community the people who have like interests find it extremely difficult if not impossible to build up a sufficient group with the same interest accessible to one another. The community is too small to do it, and that will always be one of the difficulties. I was very glad to hear Ashby say that what we have to do in our thinking is to get away from this idea that there are two separate communities, the rural and the urban. I have had experience of three types of single communities. Our fisher people live very much by themselves. Our mining communities used to be very much segregated, living in their own villages, and our farming community, in Scotland at any rate, has been very much a separate single-occupation community with very little infiltration of other interests and of people with other occupations. I do not know any form of community life that is less desirable, that is more cramping, that offers less possibilities for development than the single-occupation community. Part of the difficulty that we are suffering from to-day in the mining industry is due to that long tradition of the miners being separated from the rest of the community, until everything presents itself to them as a miner's question. We are likely to suffer for a good long time to come in attempting to adjust relations in the mining industry until that idea has worn out of their system. It is wearing out now because the miners are becoming more diffused throughout the community. The same thing is true of the fishing communities, and I feel that the same thing is true to a very large extent of our agricultural communities. We have to get away from the idea that people pursuing the same line of occupation should live together, because that does so largely define the type of life that they are leading.

Mr. Duncan, *in reply to a question*:

The question, I understand, is: Have I any evidence to support the statement I made that the people who leave the land are the more enterprising, more ambitious, and, on the whole, better types of workers? I cannot give any statistical evidence of it, and it would be very difficult to express in statistics. We have to rely on general experience. I can only give my experience during a lifetime spent amongst them, and of discussing it with people who are in a similar position to myself, giving their experiences in their countries. The general consensus of opinion is that there has been a selective influence at work adverse to agriculture, so that it is not able to keep the sort of men that it would want to keep. The other evidence I can adduce is to the effort now being made in those countries where the labour problem has become serious, where the supply of labour is falling very short, to try to raise the standards of living of the agricultural worker so that we may be able to retain the type of worker that we wish to retain in agriculture and whom we found has been going away.

E. M. OJALA, *Department of Agriculture for New Zealand.*

I would like to thank Mr. Curle for making what I think was a valuable contribution to this discussion. I particularly appreciated his definition of human satisfaction as involving a sense of social integration. The two points which I have in mind to make arose when I was listening to Professor DeGraff this morning. They are both questions of attitude and very difficult to make, so I must ask you to bear with me. What I have to say has some relation to what Professor Thomas said this morning.

Perhaps I could usefully preface my remarks by telling you of a farmer whom I met recently in Finland. He employs eleven men. He said that through all his life he had regarded his farm workers merely as impersonal labour units, and only recently he had suddenly seen them as men and women. When he had made this discovery—new to him—it had not only made his farm business and his labour management much more interesting, but he found that his work-people were happier and their work responded to his new attitude. He said he had found that people mattered more than things. That is by way of introduction.

Professor DeGraff mentioned the movement of population away from agriculture into industry. In connexion with that movement and the need for it he doubted if it was desirable for agricul-

tourists to work for equality of income on the farm as compared with industry. Dr. Renne dealt adequately, I think, with that question of desirability. The question that arose in my mind was: What is the attitude that gave rise to that statement? Maybe I am misinterpreting Professor DeGraff, but I wondered whether there is anything so valuable in the mere working of an economic system (which exists perfectly only in our minds) that we should be content to pay the price of having a section of the community living with low incomes. Certainly the movement of people out of agriculture into industry is a very necessary thing in many communities, and I think I have had sufficient experience with primitive societies in the Pacific to realize how basic that need is as a preliminary to economic advance. But should we rely upon a relatively low standard of living on farms as the means of bringing about this movement? If I say that I doubt it, then that would be, I think, a very moderate statement of how I feel.

Several speakers this morning mentioned the fact that farmers get a kick out of farming. I think that is true, and it is one aspect of the human satisfaction to be found in agriculture. But I think (and this ties up with something Dr. Duncan has just said) that what we do need in agriculture is some spirit or some method of organization whereby farm workers and farmers together can get a kick out of farming.

One other point Professor DeGraff made was that he felt the only way to achieve these human satisfactions was to concentrate on material advance. Now that seems to me a doubtful proposition. Again I do not want to be misunderstood, because I have a very clear picture of many communities—and I am thinking again of some primitive communities—where the need for material advance is very great indeed, and the lack of it is seriously limiting the possibility of achieving a higher level of human satisfaction.

But I am not certain that, if we concentrate on achieving a high level of purely material advance as our aim, we will necessarily achieve as a result a high level of human satisfaction. Dr. Coke referred this morning to the situation in Canada where concentration on technical progress on individual farms was sometimes being carried to the point where the agricultural community was suffering from a lack of civic leadership. And we all have many illustrations in our countries and communities of the strife and confusion that result from undue concentration on material advance as the goal to be pursued. It is very often hard to resolve conflicting claims based on material demands.

It is possible that if we accept as the aim of social progress the highest development and expression of human possibilities and personality then we may find that material welfare will emerge as a by-product. Perhaps we should not forget the uniqueness of the activity at this institution where we have our Conference. From what I have been able to observe and discover it seems to me that a prime objective here is the building of individual character as the basis of progressive living and working together. It is conceivable that from this sort of emphasis we will develop the material welfare that eludes so much of mankind to-day.

I leave these questions with you, feeling that they are sufficiently important to attempt to deal with, and yet very much aware of my inadequacy in trying to elucidate them.

M. EL SAID, *Fuad I University, Egypt.*

I shall be very brief, because I am afraid if I try to go too deeply into the matter I shall get too much involved. I have been very much impressed by the instructive paper of Professor Ashby. To my mind it gives enough enlightenment and suggestions in laying down the basis of a workable programme designed for the amelioration of peasant life in a country like Egypt. In Egypt we mean by a farmer one who owns and operates his own farm. Those are the only people, and they are very few, who get a kick out of farming. But the majority of the people who are directly attached to the land toil all the year round on irrigated farms and are getting very little. The largest share of their labour goes to the landowner in terms of high land-rent. This is to be expected in over-populated countries dependent mainly on agriculture. I might have gone on to discuss the economic and social characteristics of the Egyptian peasant, but that would be contrary to my own view of the essential purpose of this discussion. I believe that we are concerned more with the betterment of man as an individual than with the conditions of any particular nation. By this means we shall protect ourselves from getting too far into politics and the nationalistic consequences which would hinder, if not destroy, our effort.

I do not think I am being irrelevant to our discussion here if I say it is time now to take the individual, rather than the nation, as the unit of thought in social and economic planning. Only if we do that shall we see patriotism replacing, in large part, nationalism, and people of different nationalities having a great deal in common. This condition will make a better world in which effective measures can be seriously planned for the satisfaction of rural as well as urban life.

R. W. BARTLETT, *University of Illinois, U.S.A.*

In reference to the discussion of the day it seems to me that we have to realize one important fact. That is that each of the twenty nations represented here represents a peculiar type of economy. As I see it we should not try to map out a pattern which can be fitted to all economies, but rather should raise the question: What are the most important problems retarding realization of human satisfactions in rural work and in rural living in *my* economy?

Specifically, we can take Mr. Shenoy's discussion yesterday about some of the problems in India. People there, apparently many of them, frequently are on the verge of starvation. That represents one of the important problems for India. I was very much pleased at Mr. Shenoy's suggestions for a balanced approach to their problem; first with mechanized farming and then, with the release of workers, the development of urban industry which could absorb these workers. That reasoning is a realistic approach to the real problem of improving satisfactions in India.

Mr. Murray discussed this morning some of the problems of Iowa. He is thinking of Iowa farmers. Every farmer in Iowa has an automobile. Every farmer there has an opportunity to travel in a wide area and enjoy a lot of the satisfactions that are impossible for an Indian farmer who does not have an automobile.

Mr. El Said has been discussing some of the problems of Egypt. To me it seems only good sense for each of us to start from where we are and to attempt to work out improvements in the conditions of farmers in each of our economies. As we think through these problems, some of the suggestions that are found to be workable in India may also be workable in Palestine, or workable in some other economy. It is confusing the issue to expect an English type of farming to be quickly adapted to an American type of farming, or an Egyptian type of farming to be adapted to farming methods used in Hungary.

Now there is one other point that I should like to make in regard to agricultural economists. We have four types of economists in a country. One is labour economists, who deal mostly with the problems of labour. We have business economists who teach in our colleges of commerce and deal with the problems of the business man. Agricultural economists constitute a third group whose main objective is to deal primarily with the field of agriculture. It seems to me that possibly we have done too little to develop the 'statesmen economists', towards which each of these types should rise. In other

words, it seems to me that we have got to rise a little above the well-being of our own particular group and ask the question: Is this in the public interest? As university men it seems to me we are not doing our duty unless we look at each question of farm policy from the viewpoint of public interest.

During the past few years it has been my privilege to work on problems which were controversial. In attempting to find sound solutions to these problems it is absolutely necessary that one should develop a social philosophy which will help one to keep in the middle of the road. In any question dealing with policy, whether it be price policy or whether it be the policy of a new governmental institution, I ask myself three questions: First, *Is this policy in line with public interest?* Is it something that will help to improve the standards of living of the people whom I, as a university representative, am serving? Is it something that will improve health? Will it help people to arrive at sound decisions? The question of interpretation of public interest, of course, has to be a concept of one's own, but there are certain things which are generally accepted as being in the public interest.

The second question: *Is this policy fair?* Is it fair to workers? Is it fair to farmers? Is it fair to urban business? Is it something for which I can go out and be hit at from both sides and still stand up?

The third question which I raise is: *Is this policy workable?* This is very important, since we can have a lot of things that are of public interest and that are fair, but which are simply unworkable. For every thousand of the most altruistic schemes in the world, 999 of them will not be workable. You have to think every proposed policy through. Can the policy be applied to everyday practice?

As an example of the application of this method of analysis may I refer to our Rural Electrification Administration which came into being in the 1930s? The purpose of the R.E.A. is to provide funds so that electric power can be made available to farmers who do not have power. Under the set-up the Government loans money to agricultural co-operatives, consisting of a group of farmers—maybe 300 in a community—who organize the co-operative and who, under government procedure, build electric lines. Several years ago the R.E.A. programme was submitted to the three tests.

First: Was such a programme in the public interest? The facts showed that we had 3 or 4 million farms without electricity. The thing that raises mankind from the level of a beast to one who has the privilege of enjoying life is power in place of muscle. Hence the answer to the question of improving the standard of living of our farm household was a healthy 'Yes.'

The second question: Is a system of loaning public funds for this purpose fair to other groups in the society? To do this it would be necessary to take certain funds from the public treasury and loan them to a particular group. Study showed that according to the proposals, the loans would be made on a basis which could be amortized in a period of twenty-five years. At the end of the twenty-five years the funds would be repaid to the Government, and the electric lines would become the property of those using them. It seemed to me that in this case the answer to the question 'Is it fair?' was 'Yes.'

The third question was: Is the policy workable? At the time this question was raised we had farmers' purchasing co-operatives in the United States extending from coast to coast which had already proven their ability to operate successfully. So this proposal was one of applying the same principles to the electric co-operative which had been applied to the farm purchasing co-operative. And so the answer to the question: 'Is the policy workable?' was also 'Yes.'

From 1930 to 1940, 90,000 farms in Illinois alone were electrified out of a total of about 200,000. Over a million farms in the United States were electrified between 1930 and 1940.

Repeating what I stated at the beginning it seems to me that to attain our objectives in the realization of human satisfaction we have first to raise the question: What are the most important problems retarding the realization of satisfactions from rural work and rural living for people in my own economy? After getting answers to this, then we should attempt to start from where we are and head towards our goal of improving standards of living for the people living in this economy.

A. W. ASHBY.

I am very glad indeed that we have had the lyrical statement from Dick Henderson. Perhaps all I need to add is that I knew him more than twenty years ago, when he was fairly fresh from a Northumberland farm, and in those days I used to listen to statements equally lyrical with a totally different tone and content.

In the little time which is available I would like to refer to Mr. Curle's statement and to say this, that before I started to prepare my notes for this paper I did look up as many of the psychologists' and anthropologists' statements about the psychological needs of man in society as I and a colleague could find. But when the definitions were on paper in front of me I found them so involved, so difficult to understand, that I thought it would be useless to open this paper

with them. Indeed, one or two of them are wrapped up in words which are almost meaningless. However, I am afraid that Mr. Curle was to a certain extent analysing a picture which he had already built in his own mind rather than analysing the objective world. It is true, of course, as I think I stated in my own paper, that one of the psychological needs of man in society is that of feeling that he matters to the group to which he belongs. But I would now add, not necessarily to the group to which he belongs by birth; rather that he should matter to the group to which he has the interest and capacity to belong. Those are totally different things. He also said, I think, that one of the virtues of a small society was that the individual actions should or would be consistent with the structure of society as a whole or of his own society as a whole. But it was, I believe, exactly that expectation which drove many of my generation out of those small rural societies. Exactly that situation: that if you wanted to think for yourself and to express your thoughts, if you wanted as a man under 35 to make an innovation in farming practice, in social, political, or religious affiliation, you just had to get out of your small society in order to be able to do so. Then I think Mr. Curle was also drawing a distinction between urban society and rural society with reference to the association of work and living. I know that these distinctions have been drawn and comparisons have been made on many occasions. I know, for instance, the suggestion that the separation of work and living in urban societies, for instance in the case of the man who goes from home to a lock-up shop during day-time and leaves his wife at home, is responsible for a lot of marital breakdowns, or at least marital discomfort. But the fact that we have less of open and obvious marital breaches, less divorces or separations, in rural society is not evidence that we do not have the same psychological breakdowns, or that the same breakdowns of affection have not occurred. The property or income interest holds many rural marriages together. The fact is that the woman does not know another source of income, another method of maintaining her children, or way of avoiding the sacrifice of their prospects of support or inheritance if she leaves her husband. Conversely, the husband loses important economic services if he parts with a wife. From the moral point of view, or from the point of view of psychological satisfaction, I am not at all sure it is not better under adverse circumstances to have the breakdown than to have the continued discomfort and occasionally the continued misery. But we are sometimes told in the same way that the rural family is a better family than the urban. Again, many rural families are held together by property

interests, even if it is only the movable capital on the farm. If your standards of comparison are personal loyalty, affection and its power, there is no comparison whatever between an urban family, in which a father and two sons or a son and a daughter, and perhaps more children, have separate occupations, go after breakfast to these separate occupations, come back at night to the family, and pursue certain individual interests as well as certain common interests, thereby holding together as a family for many years, and a rural family held together by economic or other compulsion. The affection and the moral position in a family of that character is the higher; perhaps not higher than in all rural families or even the majority, but certainly higher than you will find in a minority of these rural families. But, definitely, when Mr. Curle was telling us of the isolated individual who died unknown to her neighbours and that this thing could not occur in the country-side, he was just making a picture in his own mind. Actually these are the conditions: that there is scarcely a large village in this country in which, if you know it well, you will not find an isolated group of two or three houses, sometimes two houses separately, in which the village prostitute lives, in which the poacher lives, in which somebody lives who has spent six months in jail; people who are on the fringe of society and sometimes who are definitely outcasts. And actually the case of the outcast child or the child from the outcast family or the fringe family is one of the real problems in rural schools and in rural education. Then we can find cases exactly like his own of old men and old women who either died or were discovered to be ill and taken to the workhouse or, as we call it nowadays, to the County Hospital. We do have outcasts, we do have isolated individuals and fringe families in rural society, and I would not be surprised if when we traced them we would not have as high a proportion in rural as in urban societies. Again when he tries to draw a contrast between an urban community and a rural community and tells us in terse words that 'a street is not a village', I must say that my experience of urban communities is somewhat different. I think I could take him to streets, little groups of streets, which have many of the characteristics of a village—like personal knowledge of all the 'accepted' people, personal interest and gossip, the same attitudes to new-comers or 'outsiders', in general much the same 'sense of community'. And we should never forget that this 'sense of community' involves or carries with it certain attitudes to outsiders.

But that is not the whole story. The main thing about the urban group, especially about the urban group of somewhere between

25,000 and 40,000 people, is that in that sort of group it is possible for the individual with almost any type of interest to find a similar group, to find an interest association, and very often on the interest association to build a community life. The individual also makes his community attachments in other ways.

Then consider two other of the virtues of the small social group chosen by Mr. Curle that I made a note of. One was the survival of the traditional modes of behaviour, of which I have already said something with reference to the expectation of behaviour in society. Here I would say that in this world of changing technology, of changing economic forces and institutions, it is just that survival of the traditional modes of behaviour which makes adjustment so very difficult and which causes in many instances grave discomfort. The other is that of a common identity or identity of interest. If you begin to say that one of the virtues of a small rural society in this country is that it exhibits a common identity of people or interest, it is just all rubbish! One of the strangest things I know is that we in this country never began to talk about the breakdown of the rural community until the working classes of the country-side began to go into the towns for their shopping and their entertainment. The facts are that the landowning group in this country always built its community either on a county or on a national basis, and that the main group of farming families in any locality always built its community on the basis of a market town.