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#### SOCIOLOGICAL PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN

## LAND-USE PLANNING(1)

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City and rural zoning as heretofore practiced has been confined almost exclusively to prohibiting expansion of certain land uses
in designated areas or more postively it has restricted the development
of this land to a list of specific purposes. In recent months much
public interest has been aroused in the possibility of making zoning
lans retroactive. This would mean extensive modification or discontinlance of the present use of the land.

The economic legal and social problems involved in the latter type of zoning are quite different from those of the former. The uprooting of established populations is involved. This paper will attempt to cover some of the more important aspects of the problems which will drise from these population shifts.

Even though much information on land use planning is now on hand ready for use, there are still large segrents lacking. At best only a scant foundation has been laid for retroactive zoning. Economic land classification as a method is well advanced and it is an impleent which can now be put to use. It is relatively easy to point out the submarginal areas for agricultural and other industrial uses. hat to do next, however, after several hundred farmers and their families are found to be located on these poor lands is by no means apparent nor easy to answer. If they are not to remain on this land, there are they to go and that are they to do to make a living? Some answers to these questions may be found in closer settlement on the better land and in subsistence homesteads, but other alternatives will doubt be needed. Apparently land use planning must go hand in hand With industrial planning because new jobs must be found for workers released by agriculture through natural increase, from consolidation of small farms, and from the elimination of submarginal farming areas.

Even if attractive economic alternatives are found for these people, a second social problem still presents itself. It is the problem of inducing men and romen to leave local associations, friends, and habits of life which are dear to them. A disproportionate number of these people are old and the pull of better economic opportunities has become feeble and rather ineffective. Others prefer solitude and freedom from direction by others to a higher standard of living. A small number of these people are social misfits and cannot endure close association with other people. Fortunately most of these people are dominated by the common American standard of values and a more attractive income and an easier existence will cause them to distrate. The residue will probably call for special treatment. What this special treatment should be, remains wet to be discovered. An illustration of special treatment is found in Vest Virginia, where one

large lumber company made a practice of purchasing the farms of eldelly people and leasing these farms back to them for \$1.00 a year as long as
these people lived. Then they died, the improvements were burned to
prevent squatters from occupying the site. The shift from farm to
forest use may take twenty years for completion by this route, but the
social peace and security is maintained. During the transitory period
these people are often employed as fire guards, and for other forest
protection purposes.

In the pre-planning era, it was popular to believe and to assert that economic forces would cause people to leave submarginal areas for better opportunities. This view still has some champions and it must be admitted that economic forces really do function in time. But, as Doctor Hibbard of Visconsin used to say: "things will adjust in the long run, but the trouble is that we all live in the short run." Similarly, C.F. Dayton said in a recent article in the Journal of Farm Economics: "The justification of this type of research..... must be found in the validity of the premise, namely that if the farmers the occupy submarginal farms can only be supplied with the figures to shot that their farms really are submarginal, they till make responses appropriate to this revelation. The circumstances of our economic life lend scant support to the validity of this premise." The statement by an old pioneer that he became so soon that he could not leave the country was not merely an excuse. It has been, and is, stark reality.

The lag in the response to economic pressure in agriculture constitutes a serious national problem at this time, and as a matter of fact, this problem has existed throughout our history. Titness the painful decay of agriculture on the poor land of New England. In the countries during the past two hundred years this lag in adjustment of the land problem has caused social and political revolutions to epoch making proportions. Maybe we have in America learned to take those shifts constructively and peaceably.

No one need travel far to see plenty of evidence of lagging adjustments to better economic opportunities. The mountain settlements of the Applachian highlands have been enamples in purest form for a Aundred years. Every state has some poverty sections where people continue to live under income standards far below the surrounding territory. A colossal example is the area where much of the cotton crop is grown. This land use may be classed as submarginal with Respect to economic opportunities of the people. The present depression has midened and deepened these noverty areas by a forced march each to the land. Technological unemployment, in one sense at least, is not ner. It is only more acute in the present generation because of the lack of expanding markets and good land to which people may Tovo and thereby gradually rork themselves out of submarginal standands of living. Correctal, industrial and agricultural production Thich actually pays good rages has never been sufficient to employ all employable persons. In spite of attractive economic theories wholding unplanned competition this same unplanned economy is apparently drifting us to the control and enjoyment of the best land and Capital resources by a fer, while the many and meek will by progressive accelleration inherit the cast off capital goods and the submarhal lands of the earth. The sociological problems of this drift are lajor concern to those the value liberty, peace, and prosperity. Leady there have been numblings in Congress and in the press concerns backward states having a voice in controlling the "really important" lates (industrial states). A nation might emist half free and half lave for a while, but it is hardly probable that a nation with our present attainments in education and intelligence to exist for very long small part affluent and in large part relatively poverty stricken. Spite of our limited knowledge, and in spite of the apparent difficulties, land use planning as a method for moving upward the standard living of all the people may well be tried. Perhaps the traditional chirery governing distribution of wealth needs technical perfection rational direction to fit in with this movement.

Concretely that has been proposed as a planned rural land program? Dr. L.C. Gray has submitted the following:

- 1. Gradual permanent retirement of lean acres.
- 2. Elimination of rural slum areas.
- 3. Elimination of nuisance areas.
- 4. Grouping of rural populations.

Those steps all call for some other location for the people the land. President Roosevelt has suggested that as new supermarginland is brought into use that a corresponding area of submarginal land eliminated from agricultural use. This plan has the advantage of proding a place to which the displaced farmers way go. Since most of the land yet available must be either irrigated or drained, and since kind of land calls for highly skilled and disciplined farmers, some tiction will be encountered in transferring the farm populations. ens rust be found to move the better farmers over to the newly developlend and the relatively incommetent farmers from the submarginal teas to other farms above the margin. Mearly every new irrigation prohas had its exop of inexperienced farmers who have been forced out. Seews that the best prospects for new reclamation projects would be sons of experienced farmers on land with closely related types of wiculture. It would handly be practical to wove general farmers from Nor land in the Mississippi Valley to immigated lands in the Columbia The land in the Columbia Basin mould have an overhead cash orgo of from \$5 to \$20 per acre per year, and a value then developed from \$100 to \$500 per acre. High quality vegetables, fruits, and ther intensive cash crops are the only ones able to bear such a burden, special skill and discipline are required in their production.

Perhaps the most immediate obstacle to shifting rural population will be local pride, local business houses, and business institutions. They will not be eliminated or reduced without objections. To be people out of a county, not to mention voving people from one state to another, rould at present be courting political opposition. It seems that some provision will need to be made to compensate local business and professional people for their loss on to move them and their business along with the rural population. A very dominating public purpose, lending overwhelming public sentiment for such shifts, will need to exist to be procedure local opposition. However, as stated by Jacob Crane, of the

Prican City Planning Institute, for the present at least, "We must lere to a basic social philosophy." If examples are needed as to the Position of local people to removing local industry, review the detes in state legislatures then efforts the made to move state institions.

It has been pointed out that much local and political oppotion can be overcome by some "focal point" in rural land planning. Port of centers of population must also be enlisted. In Wisconsin resent this focal point is relief from a burden of taxation made cessary by scattered settlements. Taking land by the rather painless and of tax delinquency and then exchanging lands owned by the county Ith scattered settlers within the county has evidently been successful meeting popular support. Similarly, elsemere, frontal attacks in Wing people from the land had better give way to flank movements to old the pitfalls reviewed above. In the semiarid west, where most of submarginal land is dry prairie land, the problem is quite different conditions in cutover areas. A shift in population in the rest ans very often a shift out of rheat production to cattle and sheep anching, unless the land is to be entirely abandoned. Such shifts to extensive agriculture usually means more scattered rather than scattered settlement. With modern transportation, some village of communities might be planned as a solution. The high costs Foads, schools, churches, doctors, and retail establishments and he necessarily low quality of these services needs to be remedied if %sible.

A quotation from F.M. Tylie, State Attorney for Visconsin, Mustrates a concrete situation there land use planning is required. cutover areas of Morthern Tisconsin sheak as eloquently against a sany city condition. The spotting of these ands with remote or abandoned farms resulting in sparsely settled disinicts with insufficient population or value to support roads and schools to afford the comforts of living that this day should give all, the dedirected efforts to farm lands not rell suited to agriculture with Coulting personal grief and social loss; the far-reaching economic effects of stripping the state of timber, the fire hazard of the totover lands, and the fire hazard of human habitation in their midst, ery out for planning for social direction of individual effort." dis describes only one type of condition. Others quite different in setting are at hand. Can the agricultural, industrial, and social deric of the country give ray enough to permit needed adjustments respecting the land?

In conclusion it may be said that the economic need for land use planning is plain. The rewards in social well being are clearly discernible. The dangers of delay are apparent. The huge maste of luman and financial resources on submarginal land is immense. Are the difficulties in the may a barrier which me may not scale?