The cost of their education, averaging $6,000 to $8,000, is borne in large part by the farm community. But that community does not necessarily get the benefit of their productive years. The farm population dropped from 23 million in 1950 to 12.4 million in 1965. That's a contribution of nearly 11 million people to the city in just 15 years.

Farm products have become the leading commodity exported from the United States. Exports for fiscal 1966 totaled $6.7 billion. Nearly three-fourths of this total was sold for hard dollars. The remainder was exported under various programs developed to help hungry peoples or to further U.S. foreign policy. Farm product exports make up 25 per cent of all of the products sold abroad.

One of our country's greatest problems is the balance of trade. We spend more overseas than we get back. To correct the difference, foreign countries are demanding gold. U.S. gold reserves now are at the lowest level in this generation, and the value of the dollar is under pressure.

Farm exports earned more than $5 billion worth of dollar exchange and greatly helped the nation's balance of payments.

The U.S. is the world's leading exporter of farm products, with 20 per cent of the trade. Since 1954, we have shipped 145 million tons of food abroad. We now export half of the wheat and rice crops and one-third of our soybean and grain sorghum crops. One-fifth of the cotton crop also goes to foreign markets. One out of every four acres is harvested for people living in a foreign country.

MORE FOR PUBLIC THAN FARMER

The U.S. Department of Agriculture budget provides more for the public than for the farmers who are supposedly the recipients of the money expended by the Department. The Department of Agriculture budget doesn't automatically flow into farmers' pockets.

In recent years, about $2 has been spent for programs that primarily benefit consumers, businessmen, and the general public for each $1 spent to support farm income. The 1966 budget included $4.5 billion for programs of general benefit.

Direct payments to farmers were only $1.9 billion. Foreign relations and defense objectives were backed up with $2 billion from the USDA budget last year, including wheat to keep India going and other food donations.

The school lunch program and distribution to the needy took $737 million. Rural electrification and FHA loans required $279 million. These are repayable loans that help many besides farmers.

Another category that aids the public is $1.5 billion of improvement of agriculture and natural resouces. This includes preservation and operation of national forests. Land conservation protects that vital resource for the future benefit of all.

Research, food inspection, and many other programs have broad benefits for all. Price support programs are requiring less money each year. Emptying of the surplus bins is returning money to the Treasury. The CCC's investment was reduced $445 million in 1966 and is expected to drop $903 million in 1967.

Out of the $1.9 billion for stabilization programs, $270 million goes for storage, handling, and transportation. Railroads, truckers, storage firms, and the grain trade get most of this sum. While much of the remainder goes directly to farmers, it still is an investment in the national interest.

Consumers have a long-term interest in providing farmers with a fair income so that adequate food supplies will be maintained.

The weed of urban poverty, slums, ghettos, overcrowding and crime has its roots in a rural America lacking enough jobs and health and education services—the essentials needed to halt the out-migration of people from country to city.

Since 1959, nearly 200,000 farm families have moved from the $5,000 to $9,999 annual *gross* income class to the $10,000 and over class. This is the highest rate of "graduation" in agricultural history.

In terms of net income, this means they have moved from the $1,500 to the $3,333 net income class. Nearly half of the U.S. poor live in rural areas. Rural citizens lag almost two years behind urban residents in educational facilities. Rural children receive one-third less medical attention than urban children.

Both the ABCD "Abundance, Balance, Conservation, Development" program and the CCC "Commodities, Conservation, Communities" program recognized the problem and the folly of failing to halt a trend that has crowded 70 per cent of