

There is a tendency now to somehow reverse this, somehow to slow it down. One of the ways to slow it down is to make sure people stay in the rural areas, but they are not going to stay there unless they are given something to stay there for.

I can't help but feel as I sat in the back and was worrying, as some of you were, about corporate farming. After all, you don't have to sell, if somebody gives you an effective reason for staying you wouldn't sell your land to these companies and that is what we really need, an effective means of having the farmer stay there.

If we anticipate the nonfarm population growth, many small towns and cities will increase, not decrease. We will have an increase in the small towns and cities in America, and I look for this really to happen because these large complexes have just gotten too large with their mass problems. The open country will continue to lose population probably to the small town around it; that is, at least if it is a long distance from a city. However, if it is near a city of, say, 25,000 to 50,000, it might even gain population because of the rural nonfarm population coming back in the open country.

Incidentally, in Wisconsin about 35 percent of the farm operators work off the farm a hundred days or more. So let's not assume that everybody just stays on the farm and does nothing else. Farmers are the greatest "moonlighters" in the world; they do other things. They don't just farm. Their wives work off the farm, too. The husband works off the farm. He is doing everything; he is a carpenter, working in General Motors, American Motors, et cetera. We have this trend, we have this trend towards multiple occupational outlets, which are very important. I am not against it. This is one way to see they stay in open country. Give them opportunities. They have had to do it economically and socially.

The effects on the farm population will be felt more strongly on the moderately to the fairly productive farms. I don't look for much change. We will take the two ends, that is the very efficient farmer is going to stay put; he will be able to make it. The other end is a subsistence farmer; he will probably stay because he can't get out. He needs help, however, to give him opportunities economically to get him up the agricultural ladder.

What are the political implications? There is a strong tendency toward local political apathy on the part of the new farm population. For example, if they are not farm owners they don't take an interest in the community. Goldsmith found this out. This is one of the problems we are faced with. They don't care what happens to the church and school and family and so on. They have very little interest in it. They have primarily profit motives. With a small population to contend with, many of them employed by the farm companies, there will be little need to assume fiscal and other responsibilities for local areas. Local politicians might be influenced by this. They will get to the point where they don't care about the family farm or farmer out there. They are more influenced by the large operator. Thus the prospects are for a decline in the viability of local democracy.

I am sure you remember, Senator Nelson, that J. H. Kolb once said when we lose our viability at the local level, then democracy fails and tyranny will ensue. We are not going to have what we call local democracy if we keep disappearing as a group.