

AFTER FIVE YEARS, WHAT?

Those preparing the program for today have asked me to talk on the provocative subject "After Five Years, What?". I could handle this subject in two ways: First, on the basis of what we have learned in the past five years in Rural Development; and second, after five years of pilot county operation and study, how do we proceed? Perhaps I will need a little of both approaches. I can think of at least ten important things that we have learned during the pilot approach period in Rural Development:

1. That federal and state agencies, private organizations and individuals can work together.
2. That people at any level can be motivated to better their situation.
3. That a NEED must be converted to a WANT before interest can be aroused in taking steps toward progress.
4. That the steps to take can be grouped as: (a) need; (b) want; (c) plan; (d) action.
5. That the nation will buy the type of program we call Rural Development.
6. That there is latent leadership everywhere.
7. That people will follow true leaders.
8. That every community has many valuable resources (some of these are not always apparent).
9. That in group action at the community, county or area level, we can stimulate and motivate people to a degree that cannot be done by any other device.
10. That geographical areas can be identified for a logical approach in solving problems such as we are working with in Rural Development.

Although the title refers to five years, it is necessary that I go back just a little further, say ten years, to take a look at the changes that have taken place to set the stage for the changes that are to come. For a few moments, let's look at the past ten years in America, "The Fabulous Fifties". In these ten brief years

there has been sensational change unmatched in all history. The surging, boundless vitality of America with its vast resources has brought a decade of phenomenal growth that has altered the fact of our country. Science and industry have ushered in the jet age, the nuclear age, and the space age. A real revolution has taken place in the American home, in the means of travel, in shopping, in services and in recreation, and at the same time practically every production record has been shattered in America's desire to meet the needs and the wants of its increasing population.

Vast suburban areas sprang up to receive millions of Americans pushing out from the cities. The ribbons of super highways laid across this county have permitted a movement to suburbia, the like of which has never been experienced before. Paved roads, electricity, the automobile have spurred the imagination until it seems every American family wants a country estate, no matter how small. Station wagons, power lawn mowers, and power pleasure boats are visible tokens of this urge.

Although over thirty million people were added to the population, there was a steadily rising standard of living for everyone. Huge expansion of air facilities helped tie the nation together and power was harnessed to a stupendous degree to reduce man's drudgery. Deserts were turned into boom areas, TV sets came to nearly every home, there was a chicken either packaged and frozen for every pot with plenty to spare and a car for every garage -- in fact two cars in many garages, especially if you count the foreign and the sports models. Never before have so many people had it so good!

During this period we had to wind up our war in Korea and almost singlehandedly the United States marshalled the power to check the spread of communism. At the same time, we invested billions upon billions of dollars in new machines and new plants as a way of producing more of the goods and the services that go to make ours the most prosperous nation in the world. After giving our foreign friends more than

fifty billion dollars, we helped set them up in business again after the terrible devastation of World War II, by financing industries and power plants, and farm improvements for peoples in all parts of the world. We gave millions of tons of food to the hungry of the world and now are giving them the benefit of the technology accumulated by research and education. Never before has such generosity been seen. The close of 1957 saw the edge of progress dulled a little and America was resting in 1958. At the moment, however, jobs are plentiful, machines are fully used, and we are experiencing a resurgence in our country's forward drive. But let's not forget what lies immediately ahead. Undoubtedly, the prospect is even more amazing than the accomplishments of the decade of miracles. The jet is just about ready to take the place of the piston engine in civilian air travel. Atomic power is being applied to submarines and surface whips, and no one can say where it will end. The exploration of space is opening up a whole new field of science with unlimited possibilities. Atomic power is being brought into practical form to supplement the power from the carbon fuels. Apparently we are on the verge of conquering the problems of the dream of the centuries by taking the salt out of sea water. New metals and other new materials, new products, new inventions, and new methods point the way to revolutionary changes in the near future, and the investment of nearly seven billion dollars per year for each of the past few years for research is beginning to pay off.

Let's look a little more closely at some of our achievements during the amazing ten years ending in 1959. There were 160 million people in America in 1959 or over 30 more than there were in 1950. Very few civilian air lines had four-engine planes and no jets which are now common. The super highway was little more than a drawing on the planning sheet. The landscape was being dotted with supermarkets and the ranch type and split-level house were not common in 1950, but are now found in every area of the country. The modern kitchen, lacked many of the appliances that are found in the new homes of today. The packaging of foods was crude as compared to modern standards. There were no "heat and serve" dinners. Automatic transmissions, power

steering, power brakes and tubless tires all made widespread appearance during the amazing ten years, closing in 1959. Air conditioning in automobiles was unheard of. The air conditioning of homes began; stores, public buildings, churches and even factories have been equipped with air conditioning. Antibiotics and hormones were known but not available. The great corporations have added pensions for employees, some have hospital insurance, and most have long-paid vacations. Even though families have increased by ten million, home ownership is enjoyed by half of all the families -- more than any time in history. There are more children per family and the physical comforts of family homes has increased to a level never before approached. Automatic dishwashers, freezers, garbage disposals and hundreds of electrical gadgets were developed and bought in vast numbers for performing household chores with speed and ease and great efficiency. TV sets, have been acquired by most American families and high fidelity phonographs are sold in huge numbers as are filter cigarettes, detergents, fm radios, power lawn mowers, tape recorders, fiberglass boats, instant foods, long-playing records. The hazards of illness and old age were greatly reduced. Social security and pensions have become common place. Disease has been greatly reduced as advances were made in science and medicine. That greatcripler of children -- polio -- was licked during this decade, and the miracle drugs revolutionized the treatment of tuberculosis, pneumonia. New treatments were developed for cancer, for arthritis, and for heart disease; tranquilizers have come into wide use in the treatment of mental diseases and even for busy people to relax in this fast moving era. We spent amazing sums on travel and recreation with over 10 million civilians traveling abroad, and we built resorts, summer cottages, dude ranches, private swimming pools, took up fishing to the extent of a hundred and thirteen billion dollars. Recreation is a big business, with more than fifteen million hunters buying guns and hunting licenses, four million power pleasure boats and half a million sail boats were purchased. Eighteen million would-be fishermen spent millions of dollars for tackle and licenses while four million followed the President's lead and turned to golf as a means of relaxation and pleasure.

In addition to products, people have demanded more and better services resulting in drive-in restaurants, drive-in banks, drive-in movies; vast shopping centers and modern motels are found everywhere. Recreation centers, community houses, churches and schools all increased in number, in utility and add to the wonderful way of life we enjoy.

Something happened in 1950 that sort of sums what I have been trying to say. For the first time, a nation -- our nation -- found more of its employed people working on services than in production. I do not know what breaking the sound barrier meant scientifically, but I am sure it has no more significance than this matter of having over half your labor force working in the services rather in the production of commodities.

Education is more appreciated than ever before and ten million more jobs being found during the ten-year period; thirteen million people received high school diplomas, and four million boys and girls got college degrees. It is true that some of this was with GI help, but the impetus is there and the trend will continue.

To meet these vast evidences of progress, American industry outdid itself. Already easily the world's leader in turning out industrial products, the past ten years have seen the production of a billion tons of steel, five billion tons of coal, several billion tons of aluminum, ten billion tons of copper, twenty-two billion tons of petroleum products.

American farmers were doing their bit too, and turned out two hundred and fifty billion pounds of meat, eleven billion bushels of wheat, and thirty-one billion bushels of corn. People made and saved money during the period. Personal earnings amounted to 2.6 trillion dollars with personal savings of one hundred and sixty billion. During this same time, the cost of government at all levels arose and the citizens of this country paid three hundred billion dollars in tax money to the federal, state and local governmental agencies. From our earnings and our savings, we spent either

privately or through government channels 33 billion dollars for new schools, hospitals, and government buildings, 23 billion dollars for new highways, 55 billion dollars for new office buildings, stores and factories, forty billion dollars for expanding public utilities, and a hundred and fifty billion dollars for homes, apartments, and equipment.

All of the foregoing was to give you in a very condensed way the picture of our amazing accomplishments of the "Fabulous Fifties". A brief summary of my idea of what we may look for in the next ten years as a nation can be summed up like this. A vast network of super highways already begun will criss-cross the United States, increasing travel. New clothing materials that will not wear out, catch fire or need to be pressed. Great medical advances in the techniques of controlling heart disease, high blood pressure, heart disease, cancer, etc.

More leisure time with a shorter work week for almost everybody, resulting in more travel for pleasure by air, sea, car, train, and bus. More real income for the average family meaning families with two cars and even two houses, airplanes, pleasure boats and swimming pools. More education at the college level for more people, big jet airliners able to cross the continent in four hours. Atomic power plants bringing us unbelievably cheap power for further advance of industry in the development of new products. Diesel powered automobiles, smaller, cheaper to run, easier to park and at less first cost. The development of space vehicles of many kinds, possibly including rockets to the moon. Solar batteries using energy from the sun to run appliances. Almost limitless water supplies by low cost conversion of sea water and cheap atomic power to pump it. Pocket radios, about the size of a watch, TV sets so thin they can be hung on the wall, air conditioning so low in price we can have one in every room or a master one added to every furnace.

We can also expect more government spending, more social security -- all costing us more in the form of higher taxes.

Now I am supposed to be talking about Rural Development. Rural Development is more intimately connected with agriculture than with many of the things I have mentioned previously. However, the relationship of a prosperous agriculture and an expanding industrial nation is more and more appreciated. The July 24th issue of the New York Times carried a feature article on the release of agricultural workers to the increasing prosperity of the United States. All of us, including farmers, buy the products of industry and all industrial workers are dependent upon agriculture for food, clothing, etc. Each farmer fed four people in 1800; 25 now; 35, 50 tomorrow. Each farmer is therefore more important to more people.

Whenever we talk about the farmer we seem to especially bear down upon the situation in which he finds himself. It seems that his plight is always bad. It is true that the farmer has had a rough road to travel, through price squeezes, through surpluses, and with a slipping net income. But there is another side to the story. Even though all farmers have had the squeeze in prices or overburdened with surpluses, there are hundreds of thousands of them who have applied technology and business-like management to their acres and their herds and flocks, and they have found that they can make a go of it. The drive of these farmers to increase production by creating a more mechanized, specialized and highly capitalized farm economy shows their resourcefulness and gives a bright promise to the young man properly equipped, both mentally and physically, to enter the most challenging of all professions. How does it happen that net farm income dropped fifteen per cent during the past decade and total farm purchasing from industries went up forty per cent? The answers to these figures represent two different degrees of farm efficiency or maybe I should say the lack of it. On the one hand, there are two million farms, a little less than half of the nation's total number of farms, which are making agriculture a going business, and they account for about ninety per cent of the cash farm sales and represent about eighty-five per cent of the farm purchasing power from industry. It is this type of farmer that a recent national magazine had in mind when it said, "Many a United States farmer is also a brilliant businessman. Expert in the uses of chemistry and the internal combustion engine, willing to make capital commitments relative to his

own individual resources that would stagger General Motors." Now what about the other two and a half million farms which account for only ten per cent of cash farm sales and fifteen per cent of farm purchases from industry? These are the people who have been unable to make farming yield more than a marginal return. Their incomes keep slipping and pulling the general average down. It is farmers like these that have been leaving agriculture for employment elsewhere. Unfortunately, we are today in the very center of an area of the United States where agricultural conditions are bad; where rural development can do its greatest good. The June 4th 1960 issue of the Saturday Evening Post carried an article entitled, "The Plight of the Hill People". Even though it was dressed up for popular consumption, it pointed out the elements of the situation all too common throughout the Southland. Here today we represent five states, Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia. Unfortunately, the 1959 census figures are not available, but certainly the 1954 figures are indicative of our situation. These five states have 18 per cent of all the farms in the United States, yet they produce only 8 per cent of the dollar value of agricultural products. In these states, the average farm has only 30 per cent of the acres in cropland that the average farm in the United States has. We have only 42 per cent of the acres in farms as compared to the rest of the country. Our investment in land and buildings is only one-third of that of the average farm in the United States and we produce only 41 per cent in value of products sold on a per farm basis.

The above conditions point up some of our problems. Can these problems and many others like them ever be solved? The answer is distinctly "yes". If it were "no", then you and I who live and struggle to improve the minds of men, women, and children had better quit. And I submit that if we are educators and leaders and if our job is education and service and if we are to render essential services in health, welfare, employment, etc., we must get busy. It is people and not pigs, children and not chickens we must deal with. You CANNOT EDUCATE and serve a PIG or a PULLET. You can only educate and serve PEOPLE.

If we cannot do this, then we should throw out our files, close our books, lock our desk drawers, and like the Arab "fold our tents and slip silently away into the night." We should sneak quietly out the back door of our offices into the darkness and tomorrow morning apply for unemployment compensation until we can get jobs as clerks, waitresses, salesmen, or carpenters. No, we cannot and we will not take the easy road. We are not of the stuff that stands idly by when so much is to be done. Before we can do anything, we must have the facts, and equally important we must be willing to face them.

I am now going to make a statement that is harsh, yes, even cruel, but I want to make a point and will risk the criticism I'm sure I'll get by saying this in simple, crude words. Over-simplified it is this -- for this discussion, farmers fall into three groups:

1. Commercial farmers - those who produce enough to make a substantial contribution to our supply of food and fiber. I'm not referring to so-called corporation farms--but good, practical family-operated farms for the most part. These people feed the nation.
2. Part-time farmers - these are partly commercial but their human and physical resources are too limited to permit a satisfactory living standard to be maintained by farming alone, hence their income must be supplemented by off-farm employment. This is satisfactory, especially for the short run -- a sort of stop-gap, during a transition period.
3. The in-Between farmers - neither commercial or part-time. These are our problem farmers -- these are those who create that elusive bug-a-boo "the average low income," traditionally, but wrongly associated with all farmers.

If you will, for the moment, accept this classification, let's concentrate on this in-between group. What can they do? What alternatives do they have to do better? Here comes the tough part! They have four choices, four alternatives, four ways to get out of this bad and impossible situation. They Can, get commercial, get part-time, get off the farms, or get on the welfare rolls.

A farm family with no capital resources, no technical training, and above all, no decision-making ability or aggressive, progressive attitudes is more out of place in

trying to stay in the terrific race for efficiency that characterizes the farming of our time, and which will be greatly intensified in the future than is the so-called "square peg in the round hole." At least the square peg has four contacts with its environment which assures some stability; but I, for one, do not see a single point of opportunity for these farmers to live satisfactorily on the farm unless they can get commercial or get part-time.

Here is Rural Development's challenge: Through complete individual, family-by-family, field by field, opportunity by opportunity analysis, we as trained workers must guide these people into the best choice of the first three possibilities -- get commercial, get part-time, or get off the farm into the jobs for which they are qualified - any way, any way whatsoever to keep them from sinking to that ghastly choice of getting on welfare rolls.

What is our job? It is to provide the information and services based on research and experience that will enable the farmer to do just two things: One - to feed and clothe the nation with a sufficient quantity of high-quality food at a price satisfactory to both consumer and producer. Two - to raise his own standard of living to a level comparable to other segments of society.

I want to stress that the above should be stated in the order given: First, the service we must render for all the people and second, helping farmers. This is awfully important. We can no more justify the vast sums of money being spent for agricultural programs if we imply that that money is for the benefit of the farmer alone than the military people could justify their billions being spent for the benefit of soldiers. As the army and navy protect the nation with the world's best trained fighters, so agricultural research, education, and essential services must protect the nation with the world's best trained farmers.

Both are essential, but let's never forget that in the final analysis, bread is more essential than bullets. But our poor public relations have let the people, the taxpayer, forget this and as farm people become more and more a smaller and smaller minority, the greater the effort must be to get our customers (who incidentally pay most of the cost of the agricultural research, educational and action programs) to consider their tax

donations to agriculture in the same light that they willingly tax themselves to support the military programs. Unless we do this, agriculture will continue to exist on low wages and subsidies. And the vast sums needed to do the job will be classed as charity and doles and the people who till the soil will be looked upon as wards of the government unable to meet the fierce competition of modern civilization.

Now let's look at the farmer's real job, the job he must do to fulfill his obligation, to render his service. It's unique, it's complex, it's still based more on an "art" than a science in spite of our great progress; yet is it the most essential job in the world? People existed for countless centuries without automobiles, televisions, bathrooms - yes, without clothes or houses, but never for a week without food. And food is the farmer's business!

Our job is not finished until: Every acre is put to its best use in line with demand for production of human food, animal food, fibers and forestry products. Until every acre is: Protected against erosion, receptive to water infiltration and drained for maximum production, and there is adequate water for each farm. Until - there is a year-round job for every worker.

Our job is not complete until every community has: Roads, schools, churches, recreational facilities, electricity and telephones, cultural opportunities - (libraries, little theatres, art exhibits, concerts and dramas). And every county has: intelligent population, interested in politics, education, jails, welfare, health, safety. Education for every person in line with his capacity; health--sanitation, comfort, food, clothing; security - old age, accident insurance, housing - comfort, health, beautification.

These needs, and the vast world-shaking changes bring us to our problems here this week. Rural Development! Progress and time march on. But progress has by-passed many and agricultural incomes are low. Where do we go from here? I don't know and probably you don't know, but I do know this: if each of us, in our own way, will study and think and try, we can lick this thing. But if each individual and each agency sits back and says, "I'm too busy, let those other fellows or those other agencies do it," then we will not lick this problem. If this is our attitude, we might as well give up and say it can't be done. I now want to ask you -- in his own time, WHAT SHOULD A MAN DO? What can he do? If it is easy to do, is it worth doing? Why should, in our time,

Tensing and Hillary climb Mt. Everest? Why? Why should Roger Bannister spend his life training to run the four-minute mile? Why should Einstein spend his life developing the simple formula $E = M \times C^2$ which is changing the world? Why did Jonas Salk search for a vaccine that would conquer polio? Any why did John Foster Dulles drive himself, force himself, smilingly to the verge of death, giving his all, giving his last bit of strength traveling to the ends of the earth to protect the weak, to retard the strong in his wrong-doing. Why are the seven "Astro-nauts" giving their lives for the opportunity to be the first space man? And why did Sam Woodson in his do or die effort to rescue little Bonnie from the well as the last cave-in started say, "It wasn't Bonnie's voice I heard, it was God's"? What difference to them personally, 20 years from now? The sun comes up and the sun goes down, doesn't it? Who cares if somebody did something or somebody else didn't? After five years, what? Is the title of this talk - alright - WHAT?

Man is an animal, isn't he? Why should he go to a lot of trouble about the kind of animal he is? What is he trying to prove? Who is he trying to impress? Yes, man is an animal but he is an animal Plus - and the plus is what counts. Plus a mind! Plus a memory! Plus a heart and love! and the heart and love are the greatest of all. "For as ye do unto the least of these, so also ye do unto me!"

Yes, these are our challenges and our responsibilities -- this is our work. But what of ourselves - each of us, a creature and with a mind and a soul? What is our personal challenge? Mine is this. And I think it is yours. Just a little prayer: "Oh Lord, let me help someone each day. Let me do what I can for others. Let me do it now, for I shall not pass this way again." And so let me close with a little poem that has helped me, and I know will help you as you go about your never-ending effort to help people:

"It is my joy in life to find,
At every turning of the road
The strong arm of the comrade kind
To help me onward with my load.
And since I have no gold to give,
And love alone must make amends
My only prayer is, while I live - God make me worthy of my friends!"