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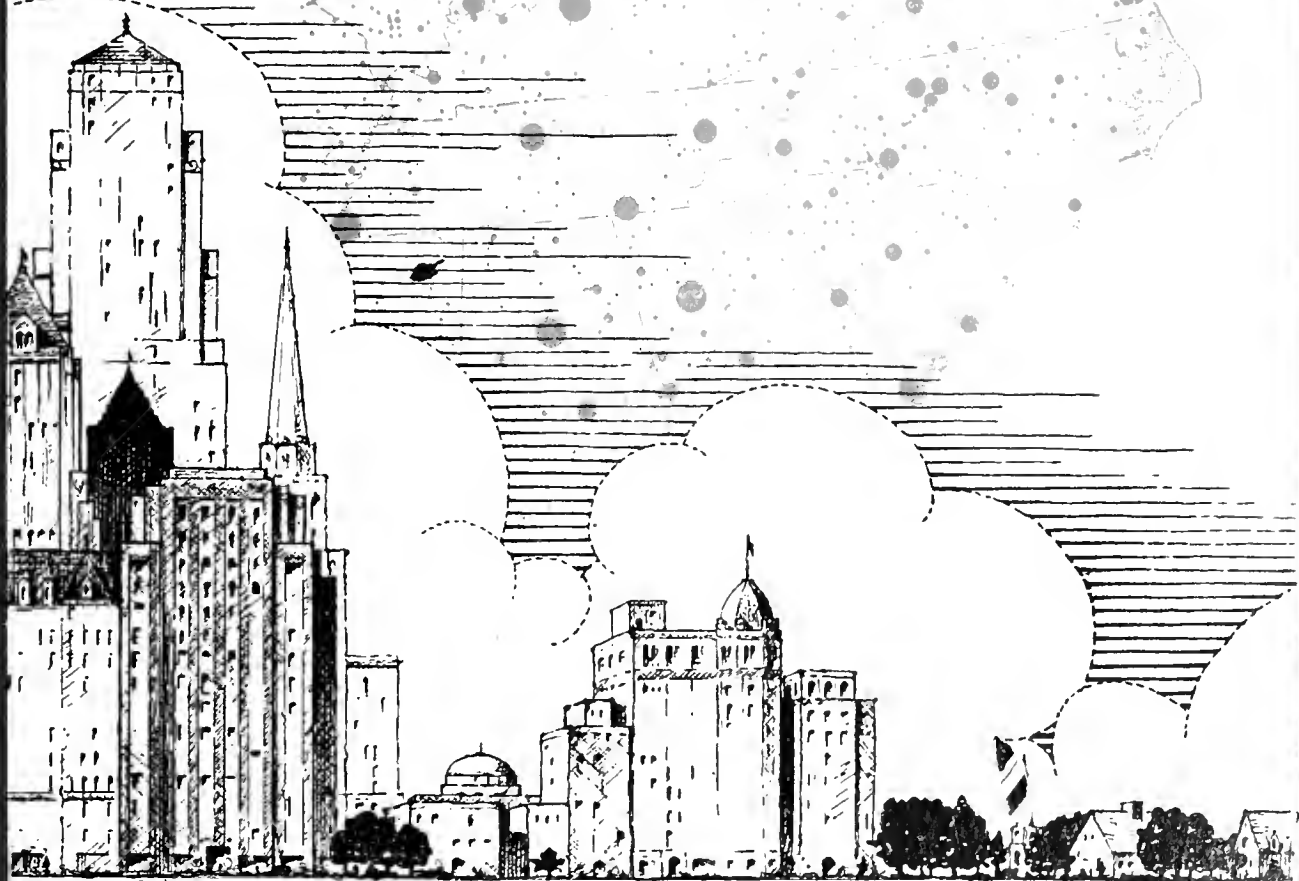
OUR CITIES

THEIR ROLE IN THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

NATIONAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

JUNE

1937





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OUR CITIES

THEIR ROLE IN THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

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JUNE 1937

REPORT OF THE
URBANISM COMMITTEE
TO THE
NATIONAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

NATIONAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

INTERIOR BUILDING

WASHINGTON

August 24, 1957

THE PRESIDENT,
The White House,
Washington, D. C.

MY DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:

We have the honor to transmit herewith a report on "Our Cities—Their Role in the National Economy." In the foreword of this report we have reviewed the extensive materials gathered by our Urbanism Committee and selected from their recommendations those suggestions for action which we approve in principle.

In previous reports of the National Resources Committee, much attention has been given to the problems of rural America. The report of the Urbanism Committee is the first major national study of cities in the United States where over half of our people live and where a large proportion of the Nation's wealth and the Nation's problems are concentrated. The Urbanism Committee is headed by Clarence Dykstra, formerly City Manager of Cincinnati, and includes Louis Brownlow, of the Public Administration Clearing House, Arthur C. Comey, of Harvard University, Charles W. Eliot, 2d, Harold D. Smith, of the Michigan Municipal League, Dr. M. L. Wilson, Under Secretary of Agriculture, and Louis Wirth, of the University of Chicago. Mr. L. Segoe served as Director for the study.

Sincerely yours,

HAROLD L. ICKES,
Secretary of the Interior, Chairman

HARRY H. WOODBRING,
Secretary of War.
HENRY A. WALLACE,
Secretary of Agriculture.
DANIEL C. ROPER,
Secretary of Commerce.
FRANCES PERKINS,
Secretary of Labor.

HARRY L. HOPKINS,
Works Progress Administrator.
FREDERIC A. DELANO,
CHARLES L. MERRIAM.
•
HENRY S. DENNISON,
BEARDSLEY RUMEL.

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FOREWORD

By the National Resources Committee

This report, made for the President, following the request of a number of national organizations,¹ is the first major national study of cities in the United States. The Country Life Commission reporting to President Theodore Roosevelt in 1909 explored the problems of rural living for the first time in systematic fashion, but until now there has been no similar examination of urban conditions. There have been many special studies in particular cities, but none of the place of cities in our national scheme of things.

Our Nation is based upon a community of interest in the midst of diversity of occupations. The striking thing in America is not the clash of economic interests but the unity of political objectives. It is the function of the Government to consider maladjustments, whether rural or urban, in the light of the national goal and to aid where possible in the solution of these problems, but not primarily as rural or urban problems, but first and foremost as American problems, as limitations on the attainment of American ideals.

The truth is, of course, the town and country each covers a wide range of different and conflicting interests. A rural dweller may be a farm laborer, a tenant, a small owner of acres, clear or encumbered, or the possessor of a great estate. There are also holders of great blocks of mortgages upon farm lands. The city dweller may be a worker, white-collar or not, a small-business man, a large-business man, or an industrial giant. In this sense, the interests of the farmers as farmers are not always the same any more than the interests of city dwellers as city dwellers are always the same. It is this very fact, of course, that tends to strengthen the bonds of national cohesion and build up a solid national interest, aided by loyalty and pride, in the whole Republic.

The modern nation finds in its cities the focal point of much that is threatening and much that is promising in the life of its people. Scanning the troubled horizons of the past few years for these symptoms of national strength and national strain, we find first of all that the city has become not only one of the fundamental supports but also one of the primary problems of the Nation's economy.

As America pitches back and forth between alternate depression and recurrent prosperity, it is in the Nation's cities that the shadow of economic insecurity

is darkest. For in the city will be found the workshop of our industrial society and the nerve center of our vast and delicate commercial mechanism. In 1935 one-fifth of all the employable persons on relief in the country were to be found in our 10 largest cities. Subject to continuing unemployment, lacking the rural reserves of shelter and subsistence, the city worker is seriously handicapped in the struggle for existence.

In time of national stress the task of relief and recovery falls not merely upon a single community or segment of the Nation, but upon the Nation as a whole. It is the Federal Government that has had to assume the major burdens of providing emergency relief for the city as well as the farm, of stimulating public works in the Nation's urban centers, and even of reviving insolvent municipal finances. Of the billions of dollars devoted to public emergency relief during the period 1933 to 1936, a large percent was contributed by the Federal Government.

The Nation's task has now become not only one of relief and recovery but of reconstruction, and this also has been recognized as in part the Federal Government's responsibility. Confirmed by the regulations and decisions of the highest tribunals in the land, there has been launched, along with an agricultural and fiscal plan, a Nation-wide program of social security and rational labor relations, principally designed to reduce the insecurities of the mass of city workers and thereby of the system of national production and consumption which rests in large part upon their welfare and their prosperity.

The Nation has wisely begun to concern itself with the conservation of its human and social resources as well as the conservation of its physical resources of water, land, and minerals. These human and social resources are affected not only by the conditions of rural life, which dominated the national country life movement 30 years ago, but they now include the conditions of urban life.

In looking at the urban problem, therefore, we consider it not as the concern of the city alone, but as a problem of the farmer as well, in that it is a problem of all the American Nation. From the point of view of the highest and best use of our national resources, our urban communities are potential assets of great value, and we must consider from the point of view of the national welfare how they may be most effectively aided in their development. In the short-time run, there may be clashes of interest between urban and rural populations, competing types of pro-

¹ Including the United States Conference of Mayors, American Municipal Association, American Planning and Civic Association, American Society of Planning Officials.

duction, differing demands in consumption, different hours and wages, differing standards of living, and different ways of life. But in the long run and from the over-all point of view, their interests are mutual, reciprocal, interdependent.

They both face with the same bewilderment the enormous complexity of modern life and the whirl of change that surrounds us. They both face the struggle with the grim problems precipitated by modern technology, not merely mechanical in nature but reaching into social and political phases of wide-ranging significance. Modern civilization forces new ways of life—alike in the city and in the country. It releases new forces and produces new forms that affect in many important ways the family, the school, the market place, the church, and the government. The impact of new forces and the necessary introduction of new ways of life are at once the opportunity and the burden both of city and country. The broadening and organization of educational facilities, the readjustment in recreation and leisure time activities, the organization of cultural and spiritual as well as economic forces—all these present problems which are common to the city dweller and those who live on the farm. The endless types of readjustment required under modern conditions present more points of likeness than of difference between urban and rural communities. Their common problem is not merely one of differing degrees of population density, or manner of occupation as appears superficially, but that of orderly and wholesome life. It is indeed this community of interest, this common struggle for enduring satisfaction and security under modern conditions, this common adventure in pioneering on the frontiers of a new social world, that makes the bonds that unite the American people in an indissoluble union.

Urban and rural communities have many economic problems in common. They have in common a decline in general ownership of or equity in land and dwellings. In our farming communities, farm ownership or equity in the hands of those who till the soil is declining, and in the larger cities especially the percentage of home ownership has reached its peak or is going down. In some of the more congested areas ownership of homes has almost disappeared. Both have the problem of inadequate living conditions. Cities have the problem of the slum, while in the rural communities there are wide ranges of habitations less picturesquely named, but far below any reasonable minimum standard of human living. Both have the problem of order, health, welfare, education, and the maintenance of democratic participation in the communal life.

Mechanization has produced great factories, and technology has greatly aided the output of the soil,

But an indirect consequence has been the dominance of the machine over the ways of life in cities, while the machine in the country has increased the yield of farms yet diminished in many respects the value of its produce. In consequence, the man on the farm and the man in the city alike look with mingled admiration and fear at the machine which at the same time has increased their power and diminished their security.

The farm and the city have in common the problem of dealing successfully with large units of industrial organization. The farmer encounters this problem whether he buys or sells—in buying effectively what he consumes and in selling effectively what he produces for the consumption of others. Whichever way he turns, the farmer faces the industrial giants of modern America—producers and sellers of machines and merchandise, against whom he must match his wits and his economic power. The laborer in the city likewise confronts, in his struggle for wages, hours and working conditions, and parity of purchasing power, organized units of vast strength. The small business man is likewise embattled. The farmer has often learned the value of associations adapted to his way of life, and the laborer and small businessman the value of associations adapted to their way of life. Through these organizations they maintain themselves against other organizations, and often glean some gains, sometimes by one group at the expense of another, without advantage to the national welfare.

Yet, viewing the whole field, it is clear that there are large numbers of farmers and large numbers of city workers whose share in our magical civilization is spelled out in terms of daily life that is drab in color and sad in tone. The crowded poverty of the one may match the lonely poverty of the other—alike cut off from the rich inheritance of the richest of modern nations.

The city has seemed at times the despair of America, but at others to be the Nation's hope, the battleground of democracy. Surely in the long run, the Nation's destiny will be profoundly affected by the cities which have two-thirds of its population and its wealth. There is liberty of development in isolation and wide spaces, but there is also freedom in the many-sided life of the city where each may find his own kind. There is democracy in the scattered few, but there is also democracy in the thick crowd with its vital impulse and its insistent demand for a just participation in the gains of our civilization. There is fertility and creation in the rich soil of the broad countryside, but there is also fertility and creativeness in forms of industry, art, personality, emerging even from the city streets and reaching toward the sky.

The faults of our cities are not those of decadence and impending decline, but of exuberant vitality crowding its way forward under tremendous pressure—the flood rather than the drought. The city is both the great playground and the great battleground of the Nation—at once the vibrant center of a world of hectic amusement lovers and also the dusty and sometimes smoldering and reddened arena of industrial conflict. It is the cities that must meander the ambiguous and shifting boundaries between recreation and vice, not only for their own citizens but for some of their visitors as well. It is the cities that must deal with the tragic border lines of order and justice in bitter industrial struggles. On these two problems alone many a “good government” has been wrecked.

If the assets of an urban-industrial civilization are not always set forth here as fully as its liabilities, this does not mean that there are not substantial gains to the Nation in the highly specialized activities of the cities, in the advantages of association, in the vast expansion of productive power, in the growth of centers of science, medicine, education, invention, religion, in high levels of attainment in artistic and cultural achievement.

It may be questioned, however, whether the National Government has given sufficient attention to some of the specific and common problems of urban dwellers as it has for farmers through the Department of Agriculture, and it is the purpose of this inquiry to indicate some of the emerging city problems in which the Nation as a whole has an interest and in which the National Government may be helpful. It is not the business of the United States Government to assume responsibility for the solution of purely local problems any more than it is the business of local governments to assume primary responsibility for the settlement of national problems. Yet, the United States Government cannot properly remain indifferent to the common life of American citizens simply because they happen to be found in what we call “cities.” The sanitation, the education, the housing, the working and living conditions, the economic security—in brief, the general welfare of all its citizens—are American concerns, insofar as they are within the range of Federal power and responsibility under the Constitution. In the report which follows, the National Resources Committee, following the report of its committee on urbanism, takes stock of these urban conditions and calls the Nation’s attention to a wide range of relevant subjects, including urban population trends, urban and rural ways of life, industrial centralization and decentralization, model cities, urban planning and housing, urban growth, transport facilities, land policies, urban government, unions of cities, and Federal city relations.

Surveying these phases of urban life we note that the national trends of the past few decades have produced unplanned and unexpected changes affecting the entire pattern of national life. Among these are the following:

1. There has been a distinct shift in the Nation’s status from a predominantly rural to an urban people, a development so swift as to be without precedent in the history of the world. The number of cities or urban places in the United States has increased from a mere half dozen in 1790 to 3,165 in 1930. The Nation’s urban population has risen from only 3 percent of the total population in 1790, 7 percent in 1830, 26 percent in 1880 to 56 percent in 1930. The family has grown smaller and the older-age group larger. American cities instead of maintaining a birth rate sufficient to reproduce themselves must recruit from the country. The conditions of rural life today are therefore the preconditions of urban living tomorrow. Low standards of rural life are of concern not merely to our agricultural regions but to our cities as well and to the Nation as a whole. Unless steps are taken to avert it, farm tenancy and sharecropping, now the lot of one-half of our rural inhabitants, will set up a dependent economic class suffering from the same type of economic disfranchisement suffered by the city artisan when the factory first succeeded the household unit of production and when the machine supplanted the hand tool.

2. An unprecedented mobility arising from the harnessing of steam, electricity, and the internal-combustion engine to men and materials is responsible for this phenomenal urban development. Swifter forms of urban and interurban transportation have further led to suburban migration and caused the emergence of metropolitan districts instead of individual cities as the actual areas of urban life. In 1930 almost one-half of the Nation’s population—that is, 51,753,000 persons or 45 percent of the total—resided in the 96 metropolitan districts with at least 100,000 inhabitants each. These 96 metropolitan districts contain within their large central cities 37,814,000 urbanites; while 17,000,000 of our people have become suburbanites.

3. Urbanization and suburbanization have meant not only a concentration of the Nation’s population, but a centralization of enterprise in the Nation’s cities, metropolitan districts, urban satellites, and industrial areas. Of more than 3,000 counties of the country, the 155 which contain the larger industrial cities embraced, in the year 1929, 74 percent of all industrial wage earners, 81 percent of all salaried employees, 79 percent of all wages paid, 83 percent of all salaries paid, 65 percent of all the industrial establishments, and 80 percent of the value added to manufactured products. Forty percent of all the mail in the coun-

try originates in the 12 largest metropolitan cities. The counties containing the 11 largest cities in the country accounted for over half of the total wholesale trade, while the 93 cities over 100,000 reported over three-fourths of the total.

4. These preponderantly urban activities vitally affect the life and livelihood of the Nation, and it is inevitable that urban institutions, associations, and instruments of social guidance should grow up in an attempt to facilitate and regulate urban life, if only to keep the seething millions from trampling one another down in the workaday urban world. Taking government alone as one of these instruments of urban society, we find that while the number of cities has doubled and the size of our urban population has trebled since 1890, the budgets and pay rolls of urban governments have increased at an even faster rate, with expenditures trebling since the year 1915. Today, urban governments, in performing those essential public services without which our cities could not continue to exist, employ 11½ million persons who constitute one-third of all the public employees. They spent, in 1932,

41½ billions of dollars annually, which was one-third of all the governmental expenditures in the country and about one-twelfth of the total national income. In like measure the States and also the Federal Government have engaged in public activities dealing with urban problems. In Washington some 70 Federal agencies, bureaus, and divisions are now engaged in various urban services. The Federal Government has officially recognized its responsibility in the field of urban problems by causing to be made the present survey on the role of the urban community in the national economy.

It is to be noted and deplored that with the growth of cities in population and in complexity of problems, the available information regarding them grows less and less. There has been a sharp decline in the reporting of urban information since 1890, and in consequence we know comparatively little about cities at a time when the need for accurate, complete, and fully analyzed data is most urgent. Not only is this true of elementary financial data but in marked degree there is a dearth of essential facts regarding many other urban questions.

EMERGING PROBLEMS

It is important to look at some of the emerging problems of urban communities and to consider such forms of guidance and support as may seem feasible and appropriate under all the circumstances.

1. The most drastic inequalities of income and wealth are found within the urban community. Relatively to their rich fellow citizens, the poor are poorer in the city than they are elsewhere despite an increasing standard of living for the city worker. Widespread poverty and cyclical unemployment and insecurity threaten purchasing power, and without continuous mass purchasing power our urban industry and mass-production economy cannot continue to function properly.

2. One of our specific economic problems is the lack of articulation among the various industries within our urban communities. Frequently the decision to locate an industry in one city or another is based upon the immediate opportunities of a particular enterprise or the desire of a community to increase the total amount of industrial activity, regardless of its effect upon the local industrial structure. Localities, by means of subsidies, tax exemption, and free sites, have indiscriminately attracted enterprises which did not mesh with the rest of the community's industries and which sooner or later helped to throw the entire industrial pattern out of gear. Under such unbalanced

conditions, it is impossible to achieve a maximum employment for the available labor supply and a minimum of seasonal and cyclical fluctuations in the total pay roll of the community. Instead, the results may be migrant labor, increased unemployment load, lower wages, shrunken purchasing power, loss of business, high cost of relief, untenanted property, tax arrears, and curtailed municipal services.

3. Rapid obsolescence of physical plan and plant is another problem which the American city has had to face. Villages, in all too short a period of time, have become towns, towns have become cities, and cities have turned into metropolitan centers, where brick houses replaced frame, apartment hotels succeeded residences, office buildings replaced shops and lofts, inns became grand hotels, and the early skyscrapers were converted into colossal cloud-scratchers. Some cities on the other hand have become deserted mill sites and dreary ghost towns. America was growing, but it was also wasting away, and traces of this deterioration are with us today in the form of many blighted neighborhoods.

4. Competing forms of transportation have left their disrupting imprint upon the national urban pattern. Located originally on natural waterways, American cities found their sister towns rising up during the canal era on new water routes. With the

coming of the railroads these canal cities met in their turn a similarly disastrous fate. Then came competing railroads, and cities again began to rival one another with excessive subsidies and cut-throat competition for rate reduction. Nor have we yet reached the end of this process. The motor truck and the passenger bus have long since entered the field of competition, and now the airplane begins to affect the national distribution of our urban centers and even the local pattern and the plan of our cities.

5. The unparalleled growth of cities has been accompanied by uncontrolled subdivision and speculative practices and by the most fantastic real estate booms which have meant dramatic profits to a few, but tragic personal losses to others and burdensome delinquent properties to the community; and this on a scale affecting the economic situation of the entire Nation. The history of the recent industrial depression cannot be written without an account of the role of unsound financing and of speculation in real estate which at times became mere gambling. We are now faced with the problem of arriving at a rational urban land policy which, while affording private owners and developers adequate opportunity for wise and profitable land uses, will curb the forms of speculation that prove calamitous to the investing and the tax-paying public.

6. Urban housing is one of the most burdensome problems the country now has to face and it calls for the Nation's most serious consideration. A real property inventory of 61 cities made in 1934 by the Department of Commerce and the Civil Works Administration showed that more than one-sixth of 1,500,000 residential dwellings were substandard, about four-fifths of the dwelling units are made of wood, about one-third are over 30 years old, a large proportion are in a state of serious dis-repair. Even at their most reasonable figures rentals are so high that they exclude vast blocs of urban families from housing facilities of minimum standard.

7. Urban public health is endangered particularly in blighted areas and among low income groups. Morbidity and mortality rates in infants' diseases and tuberculosis are higher here than elsewhere, in spite of an admirable development of urban public health services. Dirt, smoke, waste, soot, grime, and the reckless pollution of water are still among the noxious enemies of city life despite valiant official attempts to regulate these evils.

8. The city with its diversity of ethnic, religious, and cultural strains is the haven par excellence of many widely varying types of personalities whose names loom large in the history of America, but in this heterogeneity the city also finds some of its weightiest problems. The various parts and participants of the urban economy are very highly specialized and the

urban way of life is often socially disconnected though economically interdependent. Allegiances may become group, class, or sectional rather than community or city-wide. How to prevent these strains of separation from disrupting the whole city or its civic groups or even its families, how to weave these vivid and variegated cultures into a positive civic program of intercommunication and cooperation is one of the challenging problems of the coming decades.

9. While free primary and secondary education is now widely available in urban areas, city youths in all too many cases are still barred from higher educational opportunities they might well utilize because they must all too frequently supplement the family income by going to work. Vocational education and adaptation still limp and lag behind their possibilities although much work has already been started. Adult education after so many years of enthusiasm for this form of civic enlightenment in cities is an inadequately supported service and is still an experiment instead of an accepted responsibility of the community. Much has been accomplished through Federal aid, but much more needs to be done.

10. Juvenile delinquency, organized crime, and commercial rackets are among the vexations of the city. None of our reforms in the field of criminal justice has successfully come to grips with these persistent urban problems.

11. Urban public finance is another emerging problem of vast proportions. In the recent depression, urban areas pouring millions into the national treasury were forced to pass the hat, begging for financial support. The anomaly of the situation is the fact that the 48 State governments which determine the local systems of taxation are from the standpoint of total expenditures only one-half as important as all the local governments they must control. Our largest cities alone, New York, Chicago, Boston, and Detroit, have larger budgets than the States which contain them. The problem of municipal finance is becoming even more complicated with the extension of Federal and State taxation to support the newer services of government such as social security and extensive public works.

12. Another of the city's wealthiest tasks is the adjustment of the traditional scope of urban powers. In spite of its vital and growing significance as the principal instrument of public service and community control, the American city is still the legal creature of higher authorities, subject to their fiat for the most minor of powers and procedures, reaching down in one State to legislation to permit the peddling of peanuts on a municipal pier. The city is in many ways the ward of a guardian who refuses to function.

13. Our overlapping medley of independent governmental units was intended for a rural and a manorial society but never for the sprawling metropolitan regions of America and the satellite suburbs. The concrete facts of our urban and administrative life frequently defy State lines and local control. Twenty-two of our 96 metropolitan districts containing 26,000,000 or one-fifth of all our inhabitants, straddle State lines and call for a larger measure of interstate, and Federal cooperation in certain fields than is now found.

14. We have made striking technical advances in municipal government and for years now we have developed, contrary to opinions widely held, skill and talent and expert knowledge among our municipal

career officers, but we are still faced in some cities with systematic evasions of civil service laws, irresponsible political leadership, and official tolerance of discriminatory or questionable administrative practices.

All in all there has been more widespread national neglect of our cities than of any other major segment of our national existence. Whether this is to be attributed to the absorption of our best efforts by the demands of our commercial and industrial system, or by other pressing claims of national policy, it is evident that America must now set out to overcome the continual and cumulative disregard of urban policies and administration and to take into account the place of the urban community in the national economy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As possible solutions for these problems, the National Resources Committee reproduces here and approves in principle the following major suggestions of the Urbanism Committee:

One:

Because many of the most acute and persistent problems of the city cannot be solved until the fundamental issue of adequate and secure income is met, the Committee urges that the efforts already made by Government, industry, and labor toward raising the level of family income and increasing economic security be continued and intensified. Further, that the United States both study and act upon the problems of chronically depressed urban areas.

Two:

The Federal Government should continue its policy of cooperation with and assistance to the social-welfare programs of urban communities, including public assistance, crime prevention and control, use of urban leisure time and cultural activities. Since unemployment problems carry national significance, Federal assistance for prevention and relief of unemployment should be continued in cooperation with State and local agencies. Better to equip the future urban citizen reared in the country, and to satisfy the just claims of rural areas, the Committee recommends the equalization between country and city of as many material and cultural opportunities as possible.

Three:

A section for urban research should be set up in some suitable Federal agency which should perform

for urban communities functions comparable to those now performed for rural communities by the Department of Agriculture.

A clearing house of urban information should be created in the Bureau of the Census which would serve as a central depository and clearing house of all information about urban communities collected by all governmental agencies on all levels and by authoritative private organizations.

The Central Statistical Board should give special consideration to the inadequacies in the existing urban data and the shortcomings in the methods of collecting them, and the possibilities of a program for collecting such important census data as place of work or place of daily activity as well as place of residence, and such important current information as employment and unemployment.

Immediate consideration should be given to the urgent necessity of coordinating both at Washington and in the field the related services and activities performed by the various Federal agencies operating in urban areas. A prompt and thorough study should, therefore, be undertaken by a division of administrative research in the Bureau of the Budget of the best methods and administrative techniques for bringing about the closer coordination of Federal activities in urban communities and for improving and facilitating collaboration between the cities and the Federal Government.

Four:

The Committee recommends the consideration of legislation primarily for periods of economic distress

creating a Federal credit agency authorized to make loans and grants under adequate legislative safeguards to local governments for the purposes of public works construction (including housing), acquisition or construction of public utilities, land purchases, and similar outlays. On the other hand, in times of prosperity the Committee believes that Federal expenditures in cities should be reduced to a minimum.

Five:

The Committee recommends that the Congress establish a permanent Federal public works authority which should be directly responsible for the formulation and execution of a specific and detailed Nation-wide program of public works, and for the encouragement and cooperation in public works planning, between national, State, and local agencies.

Six:

The Committee urges that a national policy be adopted for rehousing the low-income groups at acceptable minimum standards, as a cooperative undertaking among Federal, State, and local Governments, and private enterprise. The Federal and State Governments should extend, in accordance with local needs, financial assistance to local authorities conditioned on the existence of a comprehensive city plan and a housing program meeting satisfactory standards. This policy should be designed to stimulate local initiative, recognize differences in local circumstances, and vest the control, save in exceptional cases, in the local authorities—to the end that the urban slum may be outlawed.

Seven:

Any permanent national planning board should engage, among other things, in the following activities of benefit to urban communities:

(a) To continue and extend encouragement, cooperation, and support to State, regional, and local planning agencies.

(b) To continue, systematize, and improve the long-range programming of public works in cooperation with State, regional, and local planning agencies.

(c) To lend encouragement and cooperation to industrial communities and regions in their efforts to review systematically and plan constructively to improve the soundness and stability of their industrial structures.

(d) To prepare, in collaboration with State planning boards and appropriate Federal agencies, the broad general plan of a coordinated transportation system directed toward an economically more effective

and socially more desirable urban pattern and distribution of economic activities.

(e) To make further inquiry into the probable effect on urbanization of the wider distribution of electric power.

Eight:

To clear up the confusion and inconvenience in the allocation of governmental revenue, a comprehensive and thorough-going inquiry should be made by the present tax revision council or other suitable agency of the entire subject of conflicting fiscal policies and taxation in local, State, and Federal Governments.

Nine:

The Congress should pass legislation giving advance consent and laying down the conditions under which there may be adopted interstate compacts enabling the several communities within the same metropolitan region, but in separate States, to deal jointly with the regional aspects of health, sanitation, industrial-waste regulation, the control of public utilities, planning, public safety and welfare, education, recreation, and other governmental functions of regional scope.

Ten:

The Federal Government should continue to cooperate in the enactment and administration of uniform criminal laws and interstate crime compacts and regional cooperation among police systems. Federal, State, and local, and other law enforcing agencies, including the judicial branch, should be encouraged and fostered. The Federal Government should cooperate in programs directed toward crime prevention.

Eleven:

The serious need of raising the competence and prestige of the urban public service in various communities leads the Committee to recommend that:

(a) States and urban communities availing themselves of Federal grants-in-aid should be expected by the Federal Government to conform to minimum personnel standards under the merit system in the area in which the grant is made.

(b) The Federal Government should extend its present efforts in vocational training for public-service occupations. Pending the submission of the report of the President's Committee on Vocational Education, no definite recommendations are made here.

(c) The United States Civil Service Commission should furnish eligible lists to local authorities at their request and prepare model personnel standards appli-

cable to the same classes of positions on all levels of government with a view to encouraging the interchange of public personnel among the various levels of government.

Attention is also directed to a series of important recommendations requiring action by authorities or associations other than the National Government. These recommendations deal with such important

topics as urban land policies, urban housing, urban planning and zoning—modernization of city government, reorganization of metropolitan areas, closer cooperation among municipalities, reshaping of local taxation and special assessments. Their consideration is commended to the various State and local authorities vested with power to deal adequately with the serious problems presented.

POSSIBLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

It is perfectly plain that it is no more possible to solve the national problem by looking at the city alone than by looking at the country alone, for the economic and political basis of America lies in the balance between the two elements in our national life, in their harmonious adjustment and happy interrelation. Neither the city nor the rural areas can say of the other—"Am I my brother's keeper?", for if ethics cannot supply the answer to this question, then economics will.

It is not our purpose or within our power to decide which way of life is better—the urban or the rural; but to develop a better mutual understanding through a clearer view of the underlying problems. Nor is it our present task to say whether we should encourage large cities, or strive for smaller ones, but rather to indicate how varying sets of areas may be brought into the best possible relations under the general auspices of the Nation.

If the level of living conditions and the base of mass purchasing power are raised, as modern technology and modern organizing power permit, many of what were long thought to be exclusive advantages of city dwellers and country dwellers will tend to be accessible to all. The development of rapid transit and communication has destroyed the isolation and loneliness of many rural communities, while on the other hand, the growth of city planning and zoning, and the rise of modern sanitation have made possible in our day the abolition of the urban areas of congestion commonly called slums. Not only is this true, but the advantages both of rural and of urban life may now be shared by many persons moving from one area to the other more freely under modern conditions. With better organization and a more determined drive in this direction, vastly greater interchange of rural-urban facilities might now be brought about. For some, these double advantages have long been commonplace. For the many they are just now beginning, but they are headed toward a broad and rapid sweep of advance. The delayed proddings of conscience and the urge for mass consumption of commodities and

services unite to thrust us forward toward sounder national policies.

The program above indicated would accomplish the following:

1. Improvement of the standards of urban life and raising of the level of living conditions. It cannot be forgotten, however, that an essential part of a sound national program is the improvement of living conditions in the rural areas from which so large a proportion of the urban population springs.

2. Elimination of urban blight and erosion; and, above all, abolition of the slum; revising our bill of rights to include the right to light, air, and recreation; making the formal phrases of the police-power doctrine "health, safety, comfort, and convenience" richer in meaning as measured by standards of daily life; restating conservation in urban terms of human values.

3. Better knowledge about the conditions of the cities in which over half our people now live would be achieved by means of a nationally organized system of urban reporting and research—most lacking now when it is most needed.

4. Better planned urban industrial location and development, made possible by a more intimate study of land use, industrial organization, fiscal policy, transportation policy, power policy. Planning or other like agencies, national, State and local, public and private, may help in the establishment of a sounder local industrial pattern and a better national economic balance.

5. National-urban preparedness to meet insecurity and unemployment. A policy of urban national preparedness would place city and Nation in better position to deal swiftly with industrial emergencies, and prevent the serious delays lately caused by new and sticky problems of public works projects, tardy relief measures, and irritating legal and financial conflicts about systems of taxation and finance. The cost of delays in such crises is not adequately measured by dollars of expenditure alone, but it is felt in the crippled consuming power of the city, the consequent reaction on the whole Nation, and in the distress of millions of men, women, and children in the city and

on the farm as well. The parallel of the "ever normal granary" in the agricultural zone is the reserve of public credit, public works, and relief ready for use in the urban-industrial area when the drought comes. Ways to set up such national-urban preparedness are indicated here in the main report.

We agree with the conclusions of our Committee, which does not anticipate the decline of urban population or the wholesale dispersion of great centers of population. The city expands but does not often disintegrate. Provided the urban community possesses a fundamentally sound economic base and has a site whose disadvantages are not too costly to overcome, the Committee is of the opinion that the realistic answer to the question of a desirable urban environment lies not in wholesale dispersion, but in the judicious reshaping of the urban community and region by systematic development and redevelopment in accordance with forward looking and intelligent plans. In this, advantage should be taken of the natural trends in the shifting of industry between established industrial areas and its diffusion within such areas, of the drift of population from congested central districts to outlying sections, of the improved means of transit and the general fluidity of the population—in order to loosen up the central areas of congestion and to create a more decentralized metropolitan pattern. Such a moderately decentralized and yet integrated urban structure should have greater stability and should offer economies in production, larger public facilities and services, and should make possible the attainment of higher living standards. Urban environment has no meaning except as it is worked out in terms of the daily life of the human beings who make the city what it is.

A reasonable set of conditions for the attainment of a desirable urban community sketched in these broad terms would usually include a sound, well-balanced industrial structure; a rather compact community pattern with ample light and air and adequate streets, recreational and other public spaces available in all sections; a balanced development free of congestion in building, population, or traffic; a relatively stable and reasonable level of land values with all the land in efficient and socially desirable use. Such an

arrangement may be expected to extend the material and cultural advantages of urban life to a far greater number of the population; to give them the benefits of a more healthful environment and a richer personal and communal life.

Urban planning is, of course, set in a framework of county and State governmental arrangements, and is closely tied up with the social programs and policies of the Nation. The city may contribute to the improvement and development of its own physical structure, and to some extent of its political-economic structure and process. But the city cannot of itself solve the great national problems of contemporary industrial organization in a political democracy. The settlement of these larger questions requires the friendly cooperation of city and country alike; of national, State, and local governments, and of many other non-governmental associations as well.

Certainly, no one, looking at American cities, can say that the dawn is here. But there are many signs in the sky that may be construed to forecast a day of hope, in which our sprawling cities may find better patterns of community structure, wiser plans and programs of action, and higher levels of material and spiritual prosperity. The municipal history of the past generation, if scared and terrifying here and there, is not without its triumphs in human achievement. The city has its own forms of magnificence, its own broad sweep of grandeur, its own shrines and temples of science and art, its own life ways—many of them priceless in value to personality and to society. "I am a citizen of no mean city" is an ancient, yet modern phrase, echoed by many who love their town.

The prosperity and happiness of the teeming millions who dwell there are closely bound up with that of America, for if the city fails, America fails. The Nation cannot flourish without its urban-industrial centers, or without its countryside; or without a sound balance between them. City planning, county planning, rural planning, State planning, regional planning, must be linked together in the higher strategy of American national planning and policy, to the end that our national and local resources may best be conserved and developed for our human use.

URBANISM COMMITTEE
1125 CAREW TOWER
CINCINNATI, OHIO

February 13, 1937.

HON. HAROLD L. ICKES,
Chairman, National Resources Committee,
Washington, D. C.

MY DEAR MR. ICKES:

We have the honor to submit herewith our report on "The Role of the Urban Community in the National Economy."

The report presents the findings and recommendations of our Committee, based on a series of studies which together constitute the initial exploration on a comprehensive scale of the conditions and problems of urbanization and urban life. It marshals the facts about the role of the urban community in the national scene and the urban way of life, discusses the underlying forces and trends of urbanization, summarizes the more significant problems arising from the extremely rapid and intensive urbanization of our country, and advances recommendations for meeting or alleviating some of the problems of the American city.

Very respectfully yours,

C. A. DYESTRA, *Chairman.*

LOUIS BROWNLOW.
ARTHUR C. COMEY.
CHARLES W. ELIOT 2ND.
HAROLD D. SMITH.

M. L. WILSON.
LOUIS WIRTH.
L. SEGOE, *Director.*

OUR CITIES—THEIR ROLE IN THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

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PART I—SECTION 1

THE FACTS ABOUT URBAN AMERICA

The Urban Community in the National Scene

Of all our national resources—natural and man-made—the most important, and the one in terms of which all the others have to be judged, is human life. The safety, welfare, and happiness of the men, women, and children who compose the American people constitute the only justification of government. They are the ends for which all our resources—land, water, minerals, plants, animals, technology, institutions, and laws—are merely instruments.

The manner of life of our people, the problems they face, and the hopes and desires they cherish for improvement in their existence and the advance of their civilization should be the supreme concern of government. Since the Nation was founded, the mode of life, the problems and the aims of our people have undergone many significant changes. Of these, probably none is more important than the transition from a crude and simple handicraft economy to an advanced type of modern industrialism, and from a rural to a predominantly urban¹ mode of living.

Size and Growth of American Cities

When the United States embarked upon its career as an independent nation it had not a single town with as many as 50,000 inhabitants. Not until 1820 could it

NUMBER OF CITIES BY SIZE GROUPS

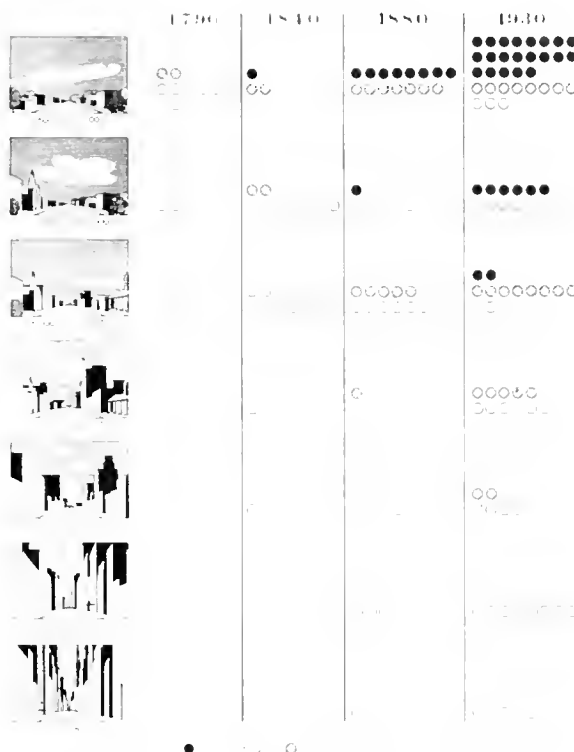


Figure 2

PROPORTION OF RURAL AND URBAN POPULATION

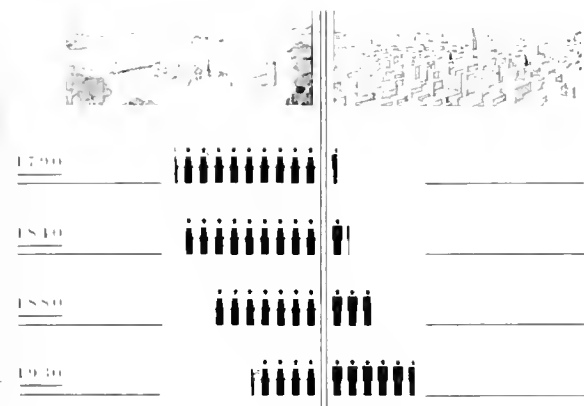


Figure 1

¹ For contrast between "urban" and "rural" as used in this report see footnote, p. 9.

boast of a single city with over 100,000 and not until 1880 did it have a city of a million. Today the majority of Americans are city dwellers. They live in 3,165 urban places of which five have a population of over a million and 93 over 100,000. Our urban settlements have increased from a stage where they held little more than 5 percent of the Nation's total population to one where they now contain 56.2 percent. Nearly 30 percent of the people of the United States live in cities of over 100,000. Even these figures do not give an adequate concept of the urban concentration, for almost half of the nation's people are to be found living either in, or so close to cities of over 100,000, that for all practical purposes their life is essentially urban.

By 1930 there were nearly 15 times as many rural people in the United States as there were in 1790, but there were more than 300 times as many urban people:



COMPARISON BETWEEN THE LAND AREA AND THE POPULATION OF THE 96 METROPOLITAN DISTRICTS AND THE REST OF THE UNITED STATES - 1930

Figure 3

and, of the rural population, the proportion of farmers has been decreasing very rapidly during this period. This shift of the population to urban areas carries with it a fundamental change in the occupational structure of the Nation, as is evidenced by the fact that in 1870, 52.8 percent of American workers were gainfully employed in agriculture, while in 1930 the percentage had fallen to 21.3. This suggests that in little more than a century our country has profoundly altered its mode of life and has been transformed from a rural frontier settlement into a full-fledged, urban industrial society.

This development is not peculiar to the United States, for other countries of the world, especially those of Western Europe that have been touched by the machine technology, have undergone similar changes. But while the Old World grew by degrees over a period of many centuries from a town economy into its present urban cast, this country started as a wilderness on the outskirts of civilization and took the leap from primitive agriculturalism to mature urbanism in little more than a single century.

The figures on the extent and rapidity of urbanization in the United States, dramatic as they are, fail to convey the full significance of what the rise of cities has done to our civilization. The crowding of an increasing number and proportion of our people into relatively restricted areas has meant for them a revolution both in the way of living and in the ways of making a living, and has in turn been reflected in the changed character of our national life. The degree of concentration of a large part of the urban popula-

tion into a few great metropolitan areas is indicated by the fact that the 96 leading metropolitan centers of the United States, occupying only 1.2 percent of the land area of the Nation, contained in 1930 nearly 45 percent of its total population and 68 percent of its urban inhabitants.

Cities as Centers of Industry

But the city is not merely the characteristic place of residence, it is also the workshop of American civilization. In 1929 there were concentrated in 155 counties, containing the larger industrial cities, 64.7 percent of all of the industrial establishments, 74 percent of all industrial wage earners, 80.7 percent of all salaried officers and employees. Moreover, 78.8 percent of all wages and 82.9 percent of all salaries in the country were paid in these counties. The value of the products these establishments produced was 79 percent of the country's total. They had installed 64.2 percent of the total horsepower classed as "prime movers" and 72.5 percent of the electric motors. They were credited with 80.2 percent of all the value added to products by manufacturing. Eighty-three percent of all of the wholesale trade in the United States was carried on in 127 counties, and the counties containing the 11 largest cities alone accounted for over one-half

MANUFACTURES AND TRADE - 1929

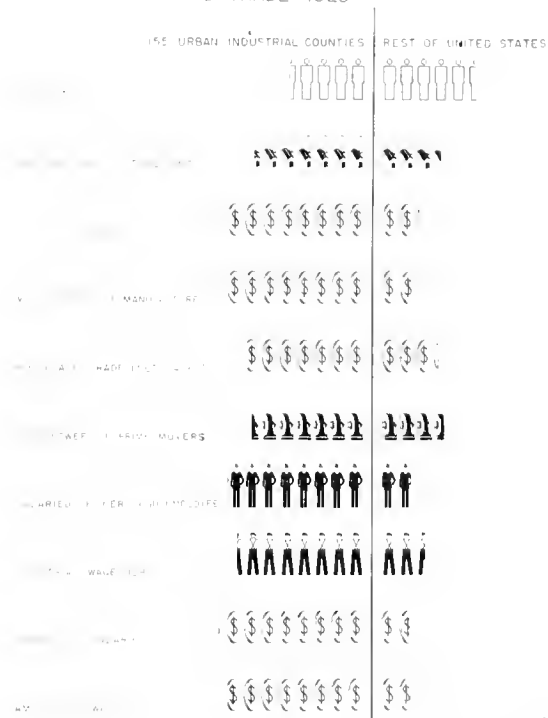
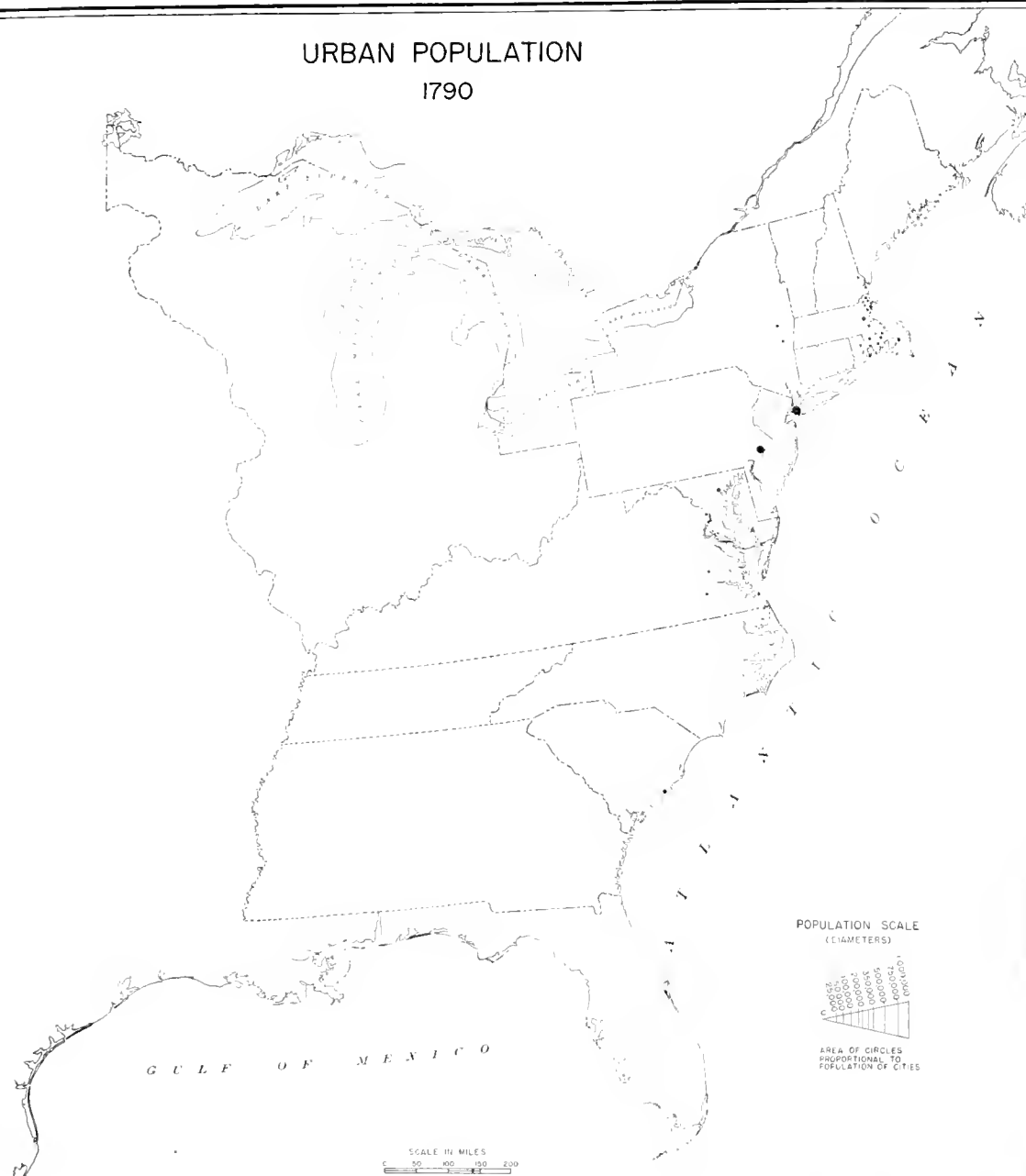


Figure 4

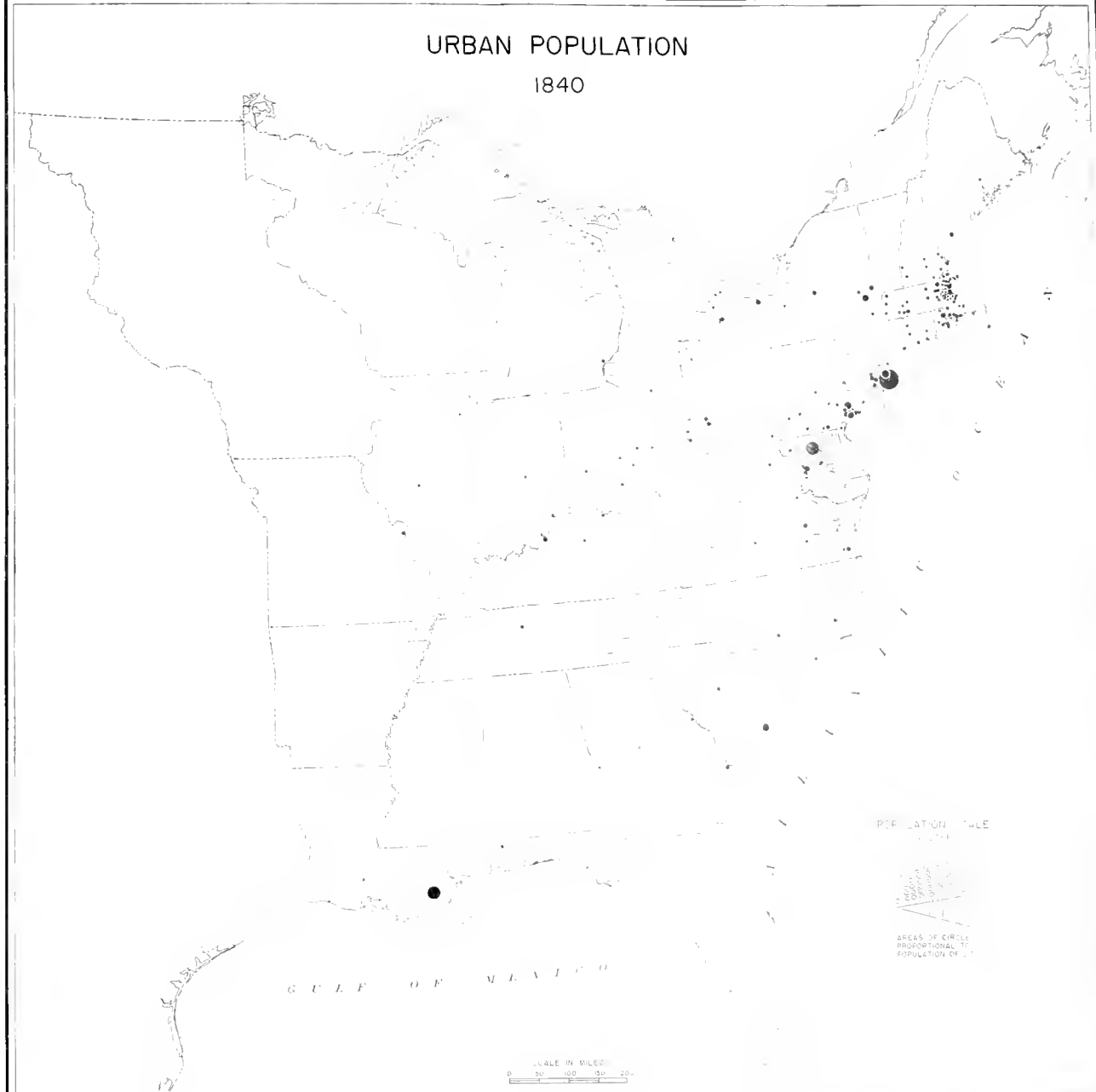
URBAN POPULATION 1790



PREPARED IN OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

FIGURE 5

URBAN POPULATION 1840

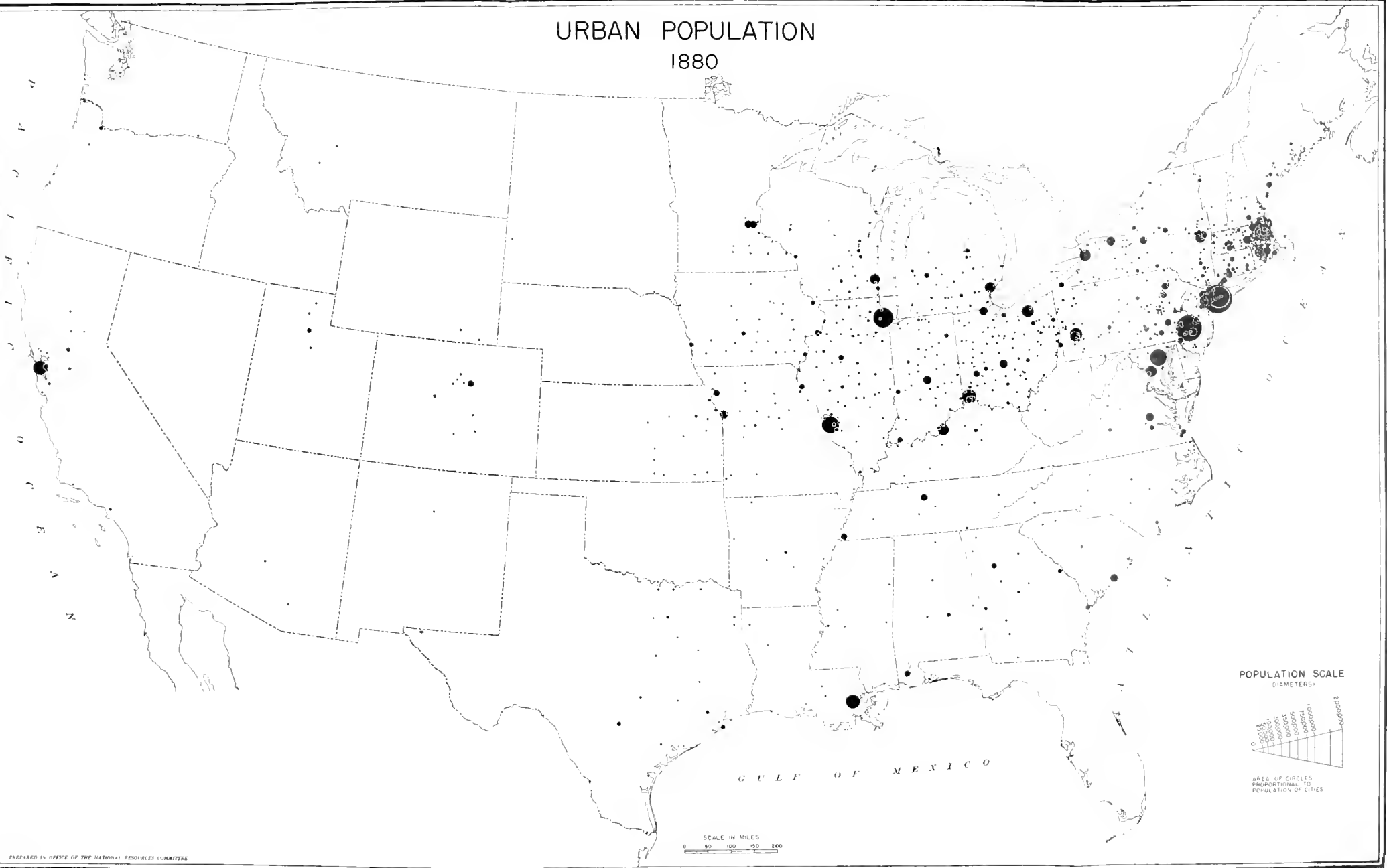


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FIGURE 6

URBAN POPULATION

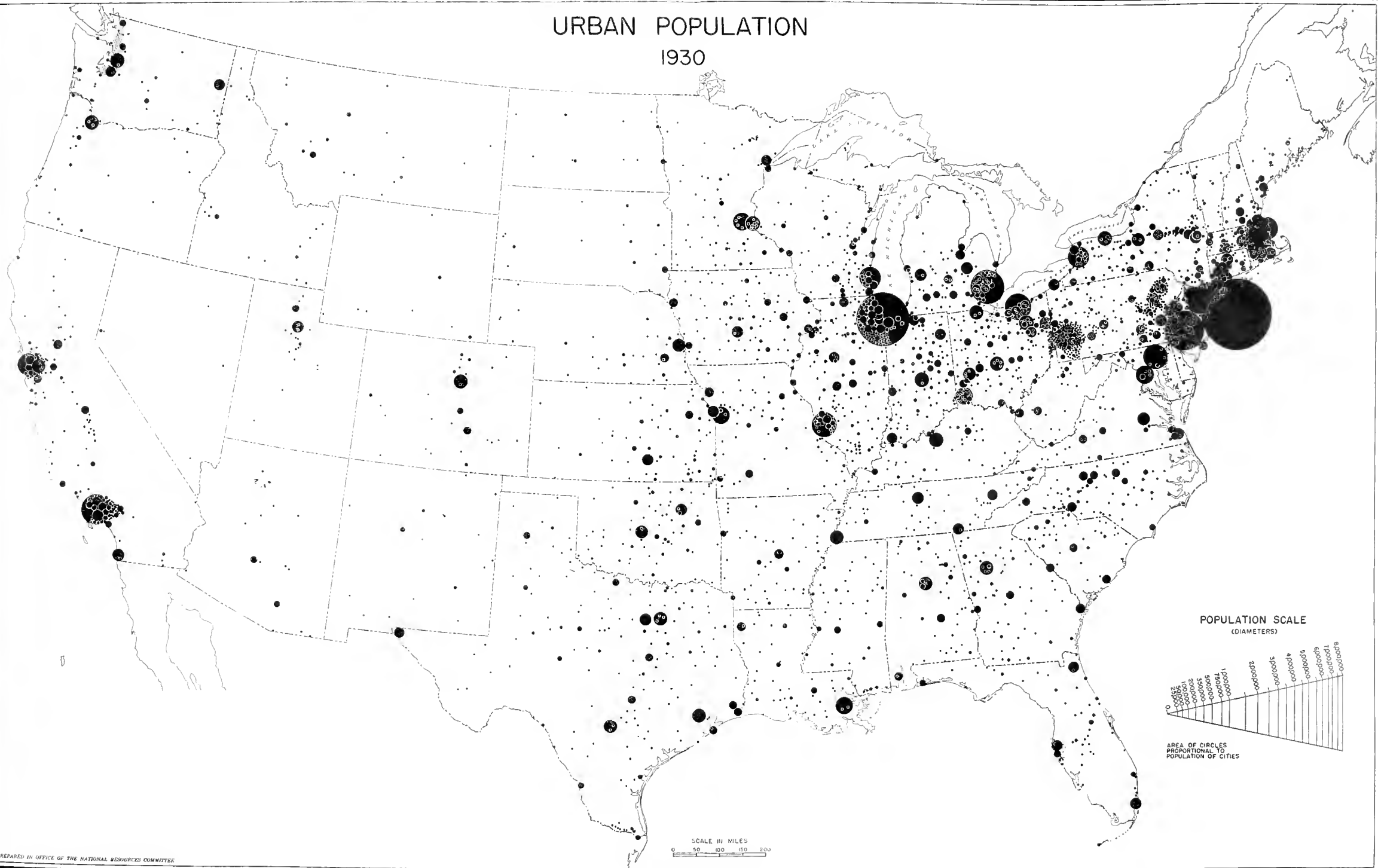
1880



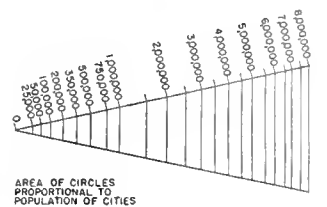
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FIGURE 7

URBAN POPULATION 1930



POPULATION SCALE
(DIAMETERS)



AREA OF CIRCLES
PROPORTIONAL TO
POPULATION OF CITIES

SCALE IN MILES
0 50 100 150 200

URBAN POPULATION
1900

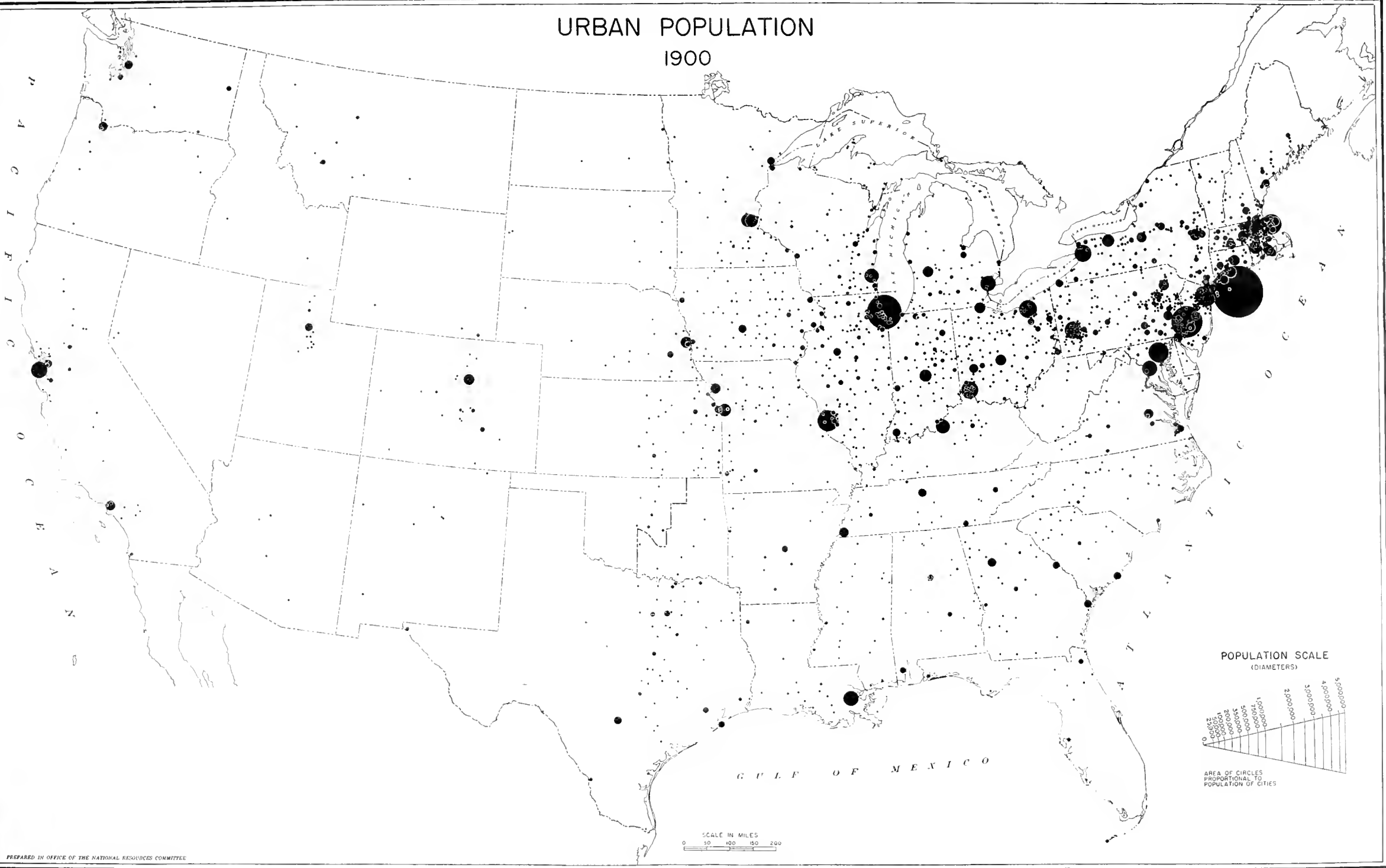


FIGURE 8

of the total, while the 93 cities over 100,000 reported over three-fourths of the total. Not only are the cities, and especially the great cities, the industrial workshops of the Nation that produce the bulk of its manufactured products and employ and support the majority of its working population, but they are also the managerial, service, and commercial distributing centers.

Cities as Transportation Centers

It is in the cities, furthermore, that the transportation and communication lines converge, and it is from the cities, which are the traditional home of invention, that the technical facilities characteristic of modern civilization are diffused to other areas. Thus, 73 percent of all railway traffic terminates in urban areas; the single metropolis of New York contains over 500 freight stations within a radius of 35 miles of the city. Half of all railroad passengers either begin or end their journeys in 12 metropolitan cities. The use of electric energy is confined almost entirely to cities, since 86 percent of the population for whom electric energy is available live in urban communities. The urban areas make the most use of aviation, of rapid transit, of telephones, and the telegraph. Nearly 40 percent of all the mail in the United States originates in 12 metropolitan cities.

Cities as Cultural Centers

Similarly, it is in the cities that we must seek the heart of contemporary cultural activity, for it is predominantly there that the institutions, the facilities, the personnel, the atmosphere and the conditions prevail from which a rich intellectual and cultural life can spring and through which it can be promoted and

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES, DEBT AND PERSONNEL - 1932

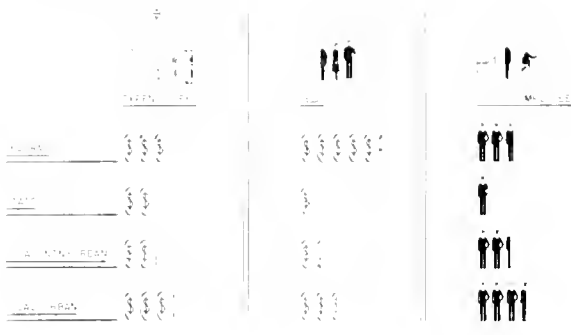


Figure 11

diffused. The newspaper, the motion picture, the radio broadcasting station, the theater, the library, the museum, the concert hall, the opera, the hospital and the clinic, the higher educational institutions, the research and publishing centers, the professional organizations, and the religious and welfare institutions—these and others of the same type which compose the cultural apparatus of modern civilized living are to be found exclusively or predominantly in the city, and it is from there that the influences which they generate radiate to mold the character of life throughout the country.

Cities and Government

Finally, the multiplication and growth of cities and their importance have brought in their wake an enormously enhanced significance of urban government. Urban governments have come to play a major role in the national economy. Municipalities of the United States employ 11½ million persons, or 1 out of every 3 public servants and 1 out of every 30 gainfully employed persons in the United States. Correspondingly, the expenditures of urban government loom large in the economy of the Nation. In 1932 urban governments spent 41½ billion dollars or one-third of the total Government expenditures of the country, a sum greater than the Federal, the State, or the local nonurban expenditures during that year. Manifestly, a preponderant share of the public services formerly non-existent has fallen upon the shoulders of the city government which, unfortunately, did not at the same time acquire corresponding resources and powers.

Urbanism as a Symptom of National Maturity

Clearly, it is through the changes symbolized by and associated with urbanization that the lives of our people and the character of our Nation have been revolutionized in the course of less than half a century.

RAILROAD TRAFFIC

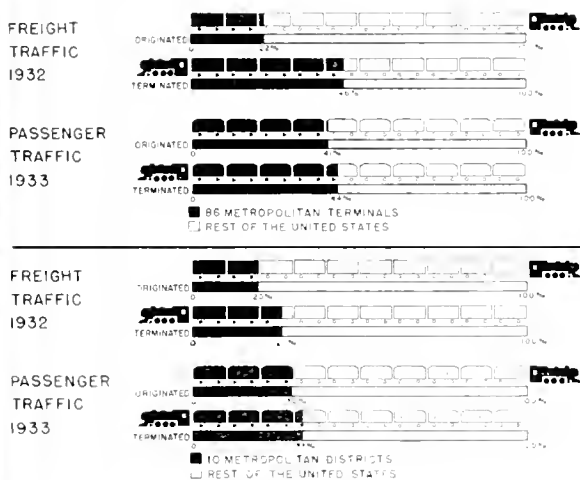


Figure 10

PER CAPITA EXPENDITURES FOR VARIOUS SERVICES
BY DIFFERENT LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT - 1930

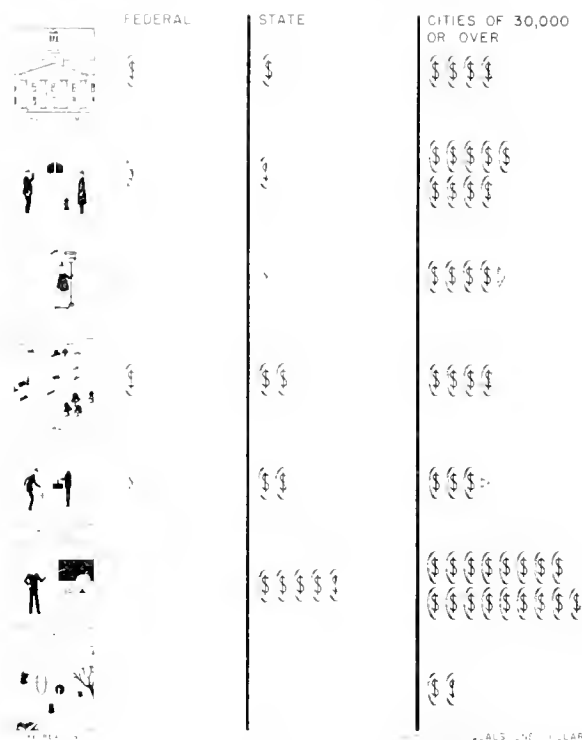


Figure 12

For while in 1880 we were still predominantly rural with less than 30 percent of our population in places of 2,500 and over, by 1930 our urban population was well over half of the total. The United States can no longer be regarded as an undeveloped rural frontier country dependent upon the Old World for its industrial products, its technical skill, and its cultural guidance. If urbanization is a measure of the maturity of a country, then the United States may be said to have come of age.

Cities and Public Policy

Strange as it may seem, however, this dramatic change in our national life and the product that has emerged—namely, the city—have not been adequately recognized by Government, nor has the citizenry become fully aware that the urbanization of the Nation calls for explicit consideration of the city as an entity. Compared to the attention that has been devoted to agriculture and the rural phase of American life, that part of America which is symbolized by the city has been almost completely neglected and has never fully emerged into our national consciousness. Recognizing this neglect and its predictable consequences

and aware of the significance of the city in and of itself as a force that shapes and directs our national life and destiny, the National Resources Committee assigned to the Urbanism Committee the task of inquiring into the facts, the processes, the problems, and the prospects of urban America as they are related to national life and policies.

As long as the United States was principally a rural and agricultural country, as long as our economy was relatively primitive, local, and self-sufficient, as long as our rich natural resources were scarcely known or exploited, and as long as a relatively secure and expanding life was within the reach of even a rapidly increasing population, it was to be expected that our outlook and policies should have been largely rural. But since the city has come to play such a preponderant role in our national existence, it becomes imperative that it acquire a central position in the formulation of national policy.

Perspectives of the City

It seems appropriate before presenting the modes of life characteristic of the present day American urbanite to sketch the typical features of the environment in which he lives and has acquired his distinctive traits of personality and behavior. Much as the rural and the urban ways of life may tend to approximate each other, the rural landscape and the urban landscape, from whatever angle they may be viewed, are visibly distinct. The view one gets of the city depends of course upon the position of the observer. No city of any size can be envisaged as a whole except from some distance and elevation, and while the topography, the size, and type of city will make a marked difference in the impression it creates, the American urban panorama has a number of general points of uniformity.

The City Viewed From the Air

If the observer views it from an airplane, the typical American city will appear as a sprawling mass of structures of varying size, shape and construction, criss-crossed by a checkerboard street pattern which here and there assumes irregularities. The cells or blocks into which the city is divided seem to lack any organic grouping into units, even though the variations of the terrain may suggest the articulation of series of blocks with one another. The general impression to be derived from the arrangement is that of unimaginative, stereotyped, mechanical monotony. Only rarely will one find even a partially organic pattern throughout. Upon closer inspection it will

appear that portions of the area are devoid of structures, and consist of green open spaces or parks. Other vacant space will turn out to be public squares, railroad yards, or merely unutilized land areas of varying shapes and sizes. The observer will note that the rectangles or other shapes that make up the horizontal pattern of the city are generally built up around the edges and are hollow in the middle, indicating that the structures line up along the streets.

More intensive examination of the city of medium or large size will show that the city is more densely built up at the core, where, even if it is only a few square miles in area, one or more tall structures will loom up grotesquely, marking the location of the central business district. If the city is large the number of these skyscrapers will be correspondingly multiplied and they will reappear irregularly at places somewhat

distant from the city center, indicating the location of subcenters. The central business district will flatten out abruptly toward the edges where the city's light manufacturing and warehouse areas may be recognized, interspersed by ramshackle structures constituting the blighted areas and slums. Adjacent to this belt are to be found the tenements and workingmen's homes, and beyond are the more densely built apartment house sections tapering off rather unsymmetrically and stretching fingerlike along the main traffic streets into areas of single homes with small yards and open spaces. Along these radials that follow the main transportation lines and, like a web between them, will cluster other less intensively built up settlements. The city will thus approximate a circular or semicircular pattern at the edges of which tentacles will protrude, tending to stretch the circle into a star-shaped outline. The symmetry of the total configuration is sometimes



Figure 11

warped by waterfronts, rivers, elevations and depressions in the topography, and by the proximity of other cities.

Beyond the built-up parts of the city, there are to be found great open spaces, on which the occasional structures reveal the location of truck farms, nurseries and gardens, country clubs, and abandoned or unsuccessful subdivisions, marked by pavements and sidewalks and other improvements, but showing no, or only a few, scattered buildings. At the most favorable sites, partly obscured by woods, nestle imposing mansions with large fenced-in grounds resembling the feudal estates of the European countryside. At intervals along the railroad lines and through-highways, often as uninterrupted extensions of the city proper, more densely settled areas are distributed. These are the suburbs and satellite towns. Some of these immature cities will be clearly recognizable as industrial sites and others, but for the abundance of yards and trees and the absence of building concentration, might be mistaken for residential sections of the city itself.

A Lateral View of the City

Another perspective of the outlines of the American city, its profile, may be obtained by viewing it from a distance. This vertical, cross sectional view makes the intense development at the center seem even more grotesque and reveals how really precipitous is the drop from the towering peaks of the skyscrapers, which mark the business center, to the encircling belt of much lower, often obsolescent and decaying buildings. The taller the skyscrapers at the center, the more abrupt, it seems, is the decline to the building heights of the surrounding area. Apparently in the small city a single skyscraper can, so to speak, suck up all or most of the demand for office space and create a vacuum of blight all around. The more imposing the skyscrapers at the center, the wider is the area over which they exert a blighting and depressing influence. This is reflected in actual physical deterioration, in accelerated obsolescence, vacant building sites, and in decaying commercial areas and residential shums.

The Inner View of the City

Quite another set of pictures of the urban scene is revealed to the observer who views it from the inside, whether he is a traveler getting a glimpse of it as he enters by boat, railroad, or automobile or views its structures from the streets. Most American cities have a facade which often turns out to be a false front. They are adorned at the center as if for public display. But behind this front are hidden the shambles, the shums and the scenes of decay, filth and disorder. To the visitor accustomed to wide expanses of fields, meadows, and woods, the stone, brick, concrete, steel, and glass out of which the physical city is built must appear as very unnatural. In the heart of the city, huge box-like buildings rise abruptly on both sides of the street forming canyons that shut out light and air. Buildings of assorted design, size, and construction are huddled together wall on wall without following any perceivable pattern of arrangement except that outlined by the narrow strips of land that are the streets. The smoke, the grime, and the din, the maddening tempo of movement of men and vehicles, the surge of crowds, especially when the city center fills and empties in the course of the daily pendular movement of its people—all these appear to the uninitiated as a fantastic, meaningless, and buzzing confusion. Aside from the scenes that meet the eye on the surface, there is the city underground, its sewers, water mains, light, gas, and telephone lines, its basements, tunnels and subways.

Land Use Pattern

It is in the center of the city that most of the white-collar inhabitants work. Here are the government administrative buildings, the offices of commercial and industrial firms and of the professional and technical services, the department stores and specialty shops, the transient hotels, the restaurants, and theaters. In fact, here center all those activities that transcend the neighborhood and function for the city and its region as a whole. Here land values are high and real estate is sold by the square foot at fantastic prices, sometimes, as in New York City,

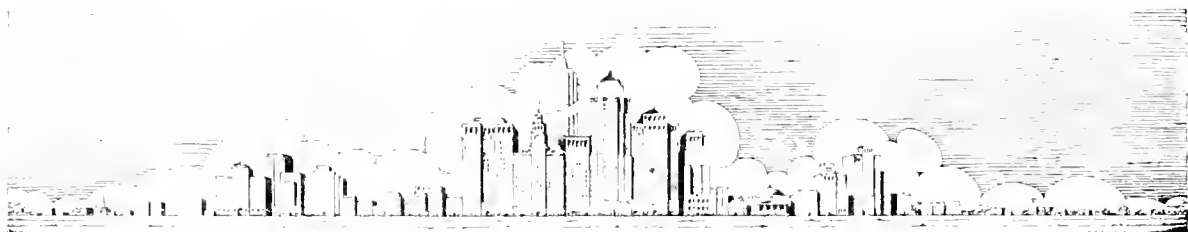


Figure 11

reaching a figure equal to what a square mile of ordinary farm land would bring in a typical western State.

Beyond the city center are wholesale houses and warehouses, railroad yards, freight and passenger terminals, junk yards, and light manufacturing establishments, interspersed by dilapidated residences, rooming houses, and tenements. This area which contains the slums is the forgotten section of most American cities. Inquiry will disclose that much of the land in the area is in the hands of absentee owners who hold it for speculative reasons, hoping that as the city grows, the business district will expand and skyscrapers will be erected on these lots. Consequently, land values are inflated, but rents in comparison are low. Buildings are crowded and in disrepair, and sanitary facilities are inadequate or utterly lacking. The people who must live in them are deprived of the minimum requisites of healthful and decent housing. It is in this belt that the newest migrants to the city, including the Negro and the homeless, find refuge, and where reside the recently recruited unattached young country persons who wish to live within walking distance of the stores and offices of the central business district and of the focal points of the transit facilities.

At its periphery this area merges with the zone of workingmen's homes, often multiple dwellings which command relatively low rent, but are in a better state of repair than the slums. This area, in turn, shades into the middle-class apartment house area with its own local business center. The residents of this section of the city have a higher level of income, pay higher rent, and command better facilities than those nearer the center. The last zone of the city proper is the single-family residence area where land is considerably cheaper and where, consequently, more spacious individual family dwellings with garages, yards, and larger open spaces can be bought or rented. Beyond this area is the suburban zone with scattered estates, golf courses, residential communities, and industrial areas, interspersed with truck gardens, farm lands, and embryonic residential subdivisions.

As the city grows it empties its population at the center and these successive zones of land utilization are progressively pushed outward. In this way one zone eats its way into the next and in the process of conversion from one type of land use to another, considerable junking takes place. Thus the city has an internal structure and a typical cycle of growth which are significantly conditioned by the existing rights of ownership and speculation in land and by the competitive economic regime characteristic of contemporary American society.

The Urban Way of Life

Urbanization

Just as the United States of America of the 1930's is a different country from that of the 1790's by virtue of the phenomenal rise of the city, so the nature and the mode of life of the modern city dweller is different in many ways from his early American ancestors, from his contemporary rural neighbors, and even from the city dwellers of a generation ago. Even those who do not actually live in cities have, to a large extent, imbibed its atmosphere and have been molded by its overpowering influence. Were it not for the magnetic and suggestive influence that the city exerts upon the routines of living of all of the people, the differences between the rural and the urban person would be even more striking than they are. On the other hand, since the city is largely a product of migration, a considerable proportion of the urban inhabitants are but recent recruits from the rural areas, either of the United States or of Europe, and hence have not as yet been completely assimilated into the



Courtesy of Regional Plan Association, Inc., of New York.

Figure 15

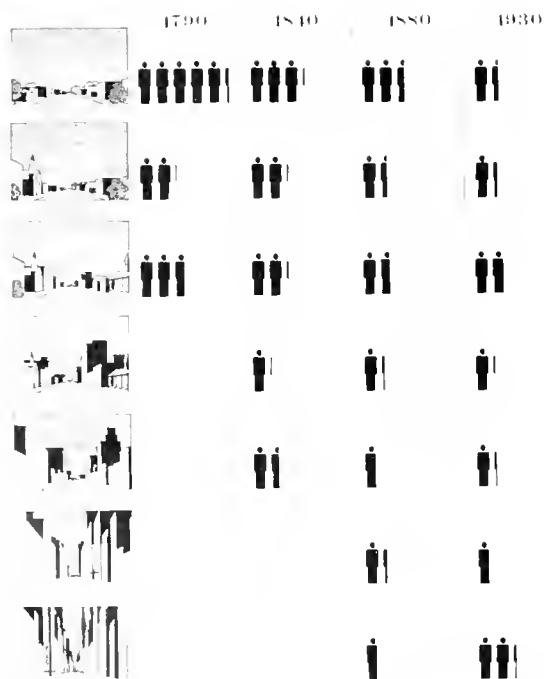
urban pattern of existence. Many of our institutions, moreover, particularly our familial, religious, and governmental customs, beliefs, and prejudices, carry the marks of their origin and early crystallization in a simple, isolated, self-sufficient rural society.

In depicting the characteristics of city dwellers, therefore, and in distinguishing them from their rural fellow citizens, it is essential to recognize that they are by no means of uniform type, but that both interurban and intraurban variations are observable. The first fact to be remembered is that living as they are, in cities of greatly varying sizes, locations, and types, they cannot be expected to conform to a uniform description.

Variations Between Cities

The average American city consists of 21,800 inhabitants, but 12.3 percent of our people and 21.8 percent of our urban population live in cities of over 1 million, 29.6 percent and 52.7 percent, respectively, in cities of over 100,000, and, at the other extreme, 16.1 percent of our total population and 28.6 percent of our urban people in urban places under 25,000 and greater than 2,500. Moreover, the degree to which various sections of the country are urbanized differs greatly.

PROPORTION OF URBAN POPULATION
IN CITIES OF DIFFERENT SIZE GROUPS



U. S. DEPT. OF COMMERCE

In terms of urban population it ranges from over three-fourths in New England and the Middle Atlantic States, to little more than one-fourth in the East South Central States.

Our cities differ, furthermore, in age. There were only 30 urban places in existence in 1790; over 1,000 attained such status between then and 1880, and during the last 50 years we have added over 2,000 more. Most of our cities, therefore, are relatively new and characterized by rapid growth. On the other hand, we have begun to witness the arrival of some cities at a point of numerical stability and even decline. Seventy-six urban places had less population in 1930 than in 1900, all of them in the size category of less than a quarter of a million and most of them in the less than 5,000 size group and lying outside of metropolitan areas. In the decade 1920 to 1930, however, 532 cities declined in population, all of them again in the less than a quarter of a million class and most of them in the less than 5,000 size group and outside of metropolitan areas.

One of the most significant differences between cities, however, is that arising from their relationship to the surrounding area. In this respect the differences in the nature of the city and the life of its inhabitants are influenced to a great extent by the proximity of other cities, and especially by the integration of a number of communities into a great metropolitan conurbation, or by isolated location in an area where the city is more directly dependent upon and dominates the surrounding rural settlements.

Finally, cities must be distinguished according to the principal function they serve. Whatever uniformities there may be found in the life of urbanites, it will make some difference whether the city in which they live is an industrial, a commercial, or residential city; a capital, an educational center, or a resort; whether it depends upon mines, oil wells, timber, a port, a river, or railroad; and whether its economic base is unitary or multiple, balanced or unbalanced. The most significant industrial cities of the United States are concentrated in a belt extending from New England as far south as New Jersey and as far west as Illinois. It is in this area, therefore, that in general we may expect to find the most characteristic manifestations of urban life in the United States.

Variations Between Sections of the City

Aside from the difficulties in generalizing about cities, because of their great variety, there is an additional difficulty arising out of the striking internal differences among the various sections of the same city. The central business district of a city differs visibly from such other areas as the warehouse, freight yard,

NEW CITIES DID NOT APPEAR IN 1900 U.S. CENSUS

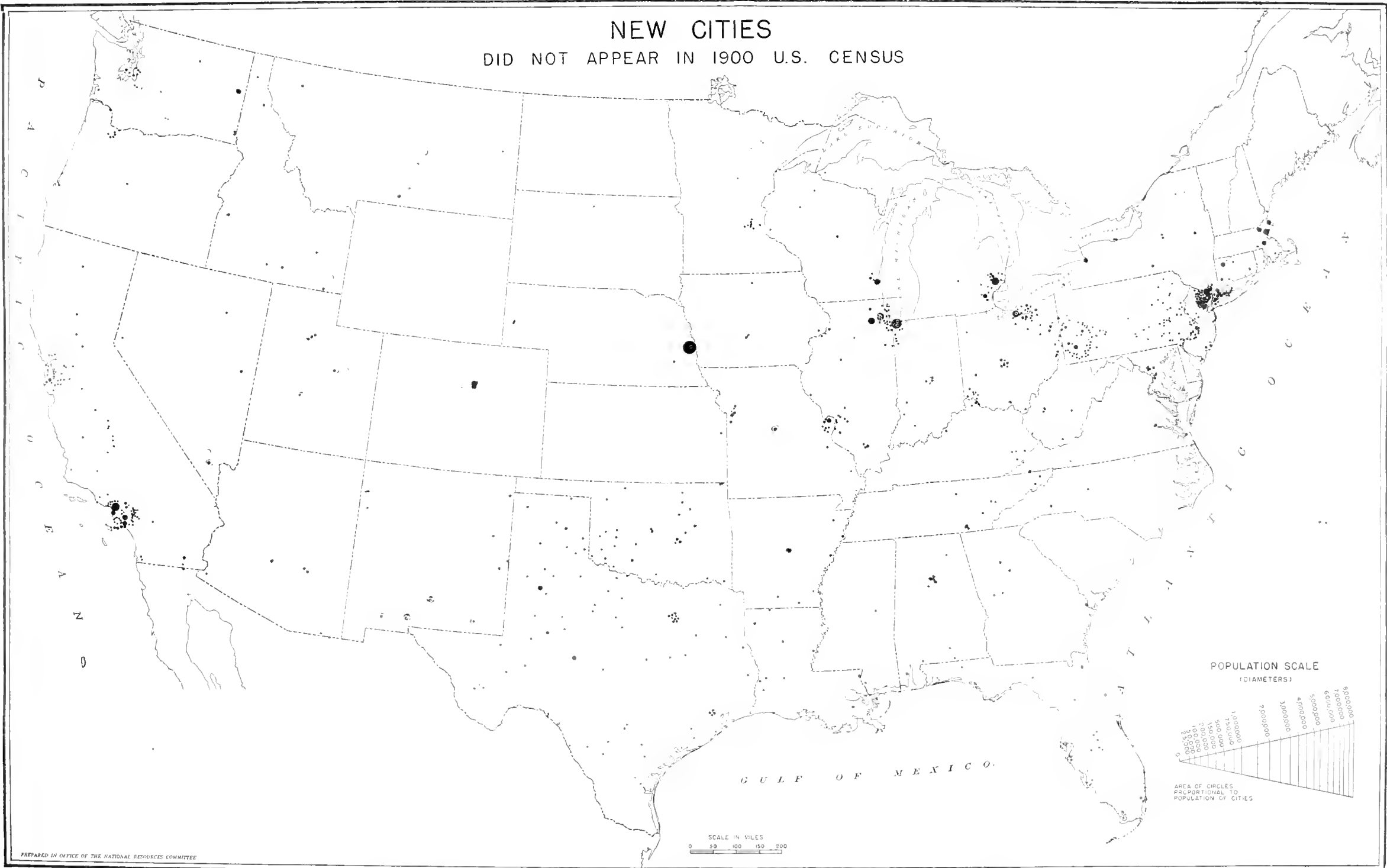


FIGURE 19

MEDIUM AGED CITIES APPEARED IN 1900 AND NOT IN 1850 U.S. CENSUS

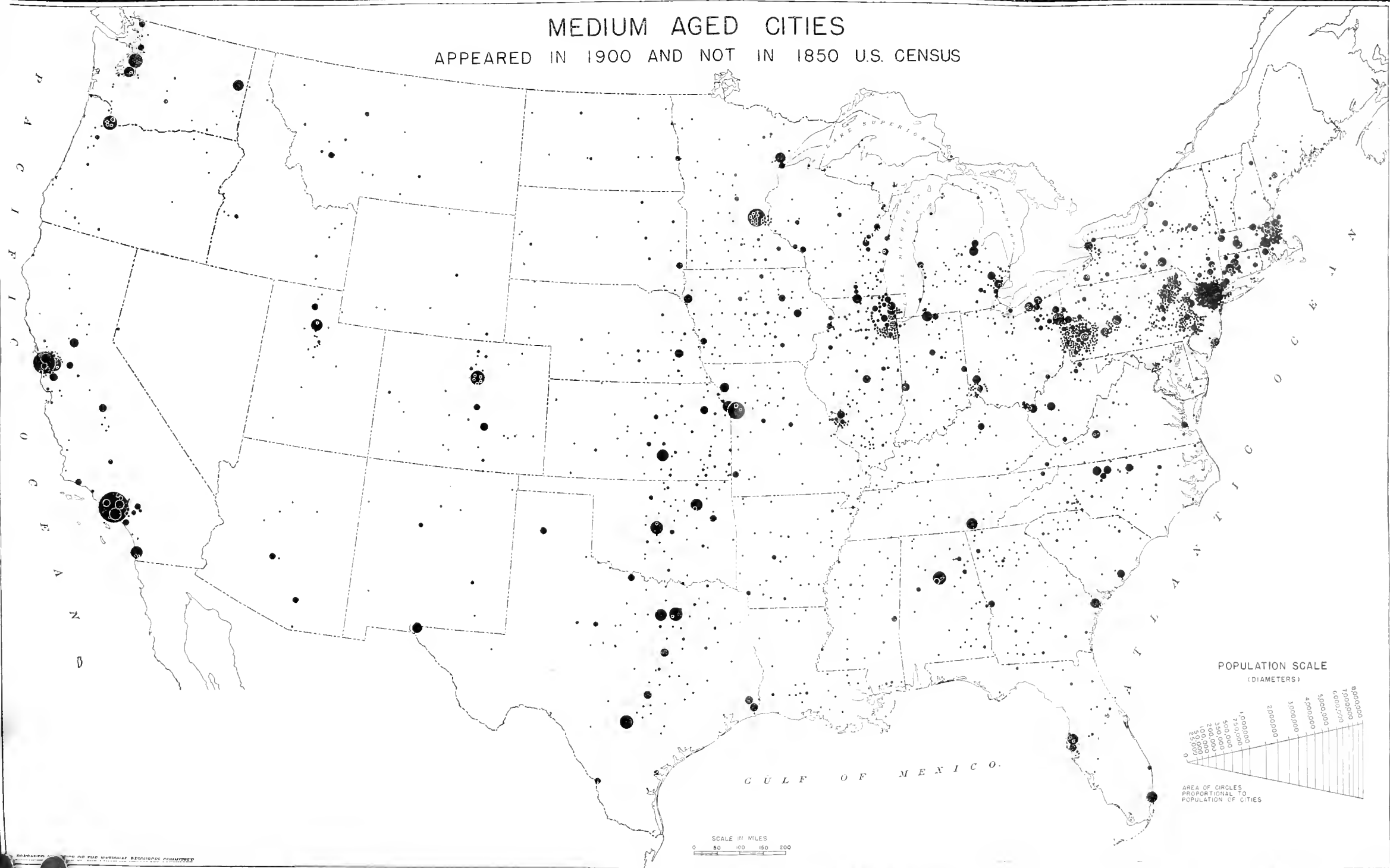


FIGURE 18

OLD CITIES

APPEARED IN 1850 U.S. CENSUS

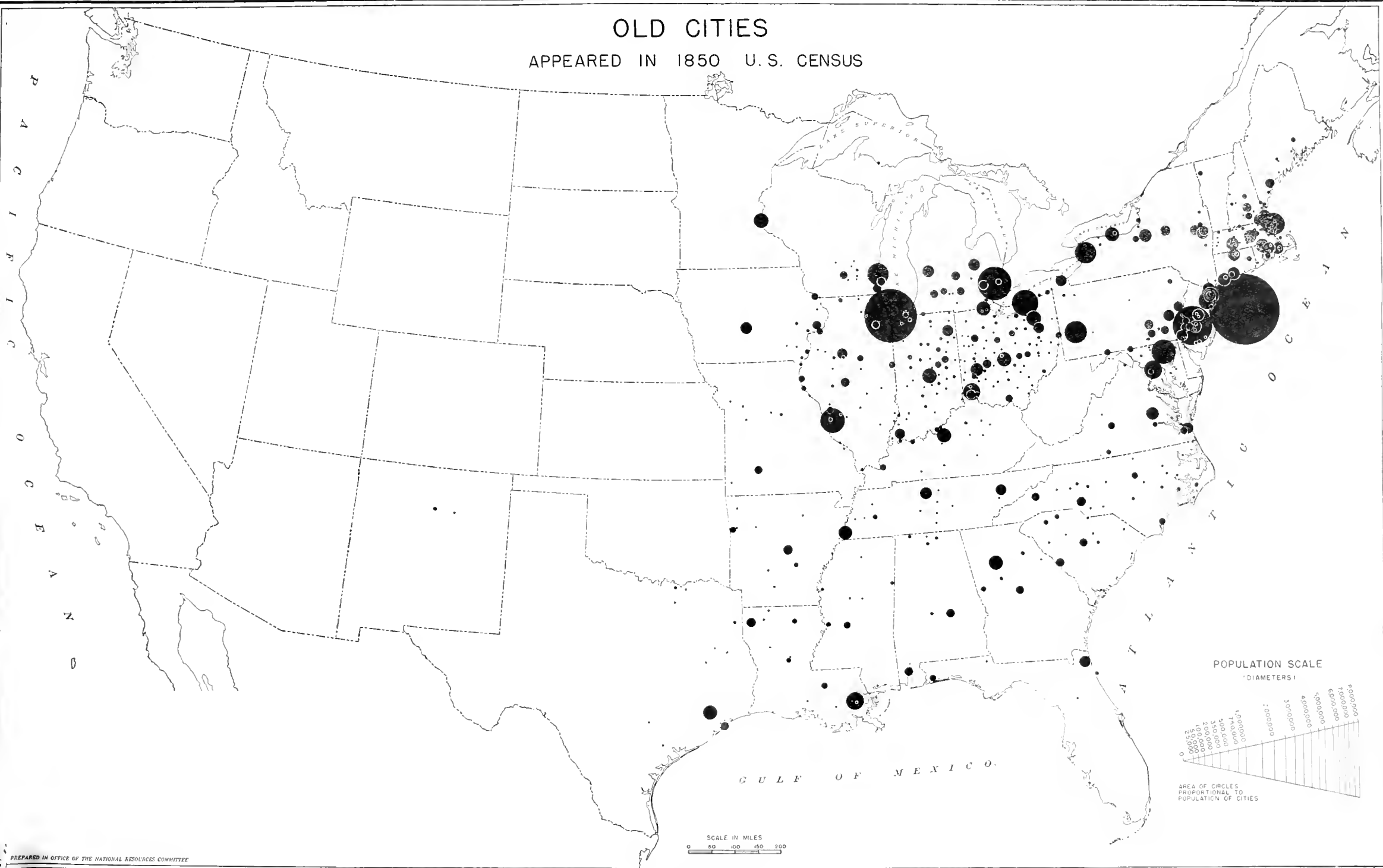


FIGURE 17

and industrial areas, and these in turn differ in the manner of life which they offer to their inhabitants from the slum, the tenement, the apartment house, the single residence, and suburban sections.

Urban-Rural Differences

Despite these differences among and within cities, the urban and rural ways of life represent clearly distinguishable poles. These differences between city and country extend even to the typical modes of behavior, thought, and personality characteristic of the rural, village, and city dweller.²

Population

Outstanding in these differences between country and city is the marked contrast between their population composition. The distinguishing characteristics between rural and urban population may first be viewed as a group of biological factors of which age, sex, vitality, and fertility are the most significant.

Age Differences

Cities contain a larger proportion of persons who are either in the prime of life or middle aged than do rural areas, while the country has both more old persons

(those over 65) and more children and youths (under 20). There are here some striking differences among the cities in various sections of the country. Comparatively, the Pacific coast cities have the fewest young people, and the most aged persons, while the cities of the South show the reverse. Cities lying outside of metropolitan areas are more akin to rural regions than cities within the range of influence of a metropolis.

Sex Differences

Cities contain more women than men with the exception of the largest cities to which many foreign-born males have migrated, and cities representing special types such as those in which heavy industry plays a preponderant role. The cities of the West seem to have the largest proportion of men, while those of the South have the largest proportion of women. Cities within metropolitan areas have, in general, a larger proportion of men than those outside.

Racial and Ethnic Differences

Throughout history cities have been known as the melting pots of races and cultures and American cities exhibit this function in a most striking fashion. In the United States the foreign-born and their offspring are concentrated almost wholly in urban areas, and particularly in the largest cities. The foreign-born and their children constitute nearly two-thirds of all of the inhabitants of cities of 1 million and over. Their proportion of the urban population declines as the size of the city decreases until in the rural areas they comprise only about one-sixth of the total population. Their preponderance is less pronounced today than it was in past decades, for in 1870 only 23.4 percent of the native white population was urban, while by 1930 this proportion had risen to 54.6 percent. The proportion of foreign stock has never been quite as high in the smaller as in the larger cities, but it was not until 1930 that the native whites of native parentage constituted as much as half of the population of even the middle-sized cities (25,000-50,000). The rural population, on the other hand, has always been predominantly native white of native parentage.

In addition to the foreign immigrants and their children, American cities derive their racial and ethnic heterogeneity from the migration of the Negro from the southern rural areas to the large cities. The largest cities have increased the number of their Negro population since 1890 at the expense of the smaller cities and rural areas. In the rural areas, for instance, the proportion of Negroes declined from 14.8 percent of the total rural population in 1870 to 12.1 percent in 1930. Since most of this decline has taken place since 1910 it may be assumed that the cityward migration

² *Definition of "urban"*—At this point it may be well to define urban in contrast to rural areas. Common opinion defines a city as a place in which large numbers of persons live in relatively compact space as contrasted with a rural area or one in which the population tends to be widely scattered. Such a definition is, of course, relative. A community consisting of a small number of persons very widely scattered may regard itself as urban, while the inhabitants of another more densely settled area would credit the same community with being little more than a village.

For the sake of statistical analysis a fairly stable, even though arbitrary definition, must be imposed. This has been set by the United States Census which regards all incorporated places of over 2,500 population as urban. In 1930 this was modified somewhat. The Census (abstract, 1930, p. 5) reports: "In New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island, towns (townships) are classified as urban if they have more than 2,500 inhabitants and certain urban characteristics, and a few large townships in other States are likewise classified as urban under a special rule; these townships and the New England towns constituting the exceptions to the general definition of urban population" as given in the text. The balance of the country has been considered rural.

Although this definition of a city is statistically usable, and although some such definition is necessary, it is not without serious defects. It seems more reasonable to expect the small isolated places of not much over 2,500 in population to be more akin to the rural areas than to larger cities in their external characteristics and in the manner of life of their inhabitants. Similarly, places of less than 2,500 people adjacent to large cities are much more likely to evidence the characteristics of city life than of country life. In view of the fact that it is difficult to handle much Census material when another definition of "urban" (other than that employed by the Census) is applied, this analysis must proceed upon the Census definition. However, in examining and interpreting specific population characteristics when presented by size of city, as will subsequently be done, it is worth while to bear in mind this criticism. In other words we should not find a sudden marked differential between the rural areas and the very smallest sized cities just because the Census drew the urban-rural line of demarcation at the arbitrary figure of 2,500. What we should and generally will find is that the very largest metropolitan centers and the rural regions are significantly different, and that the cities of other sizes tend to fit in between so that a more or less regular gradation appears between the two extremes.

RACE, NATIVITY AND PARENTAGE
SEX AND AGE COMPOSITION - 1930

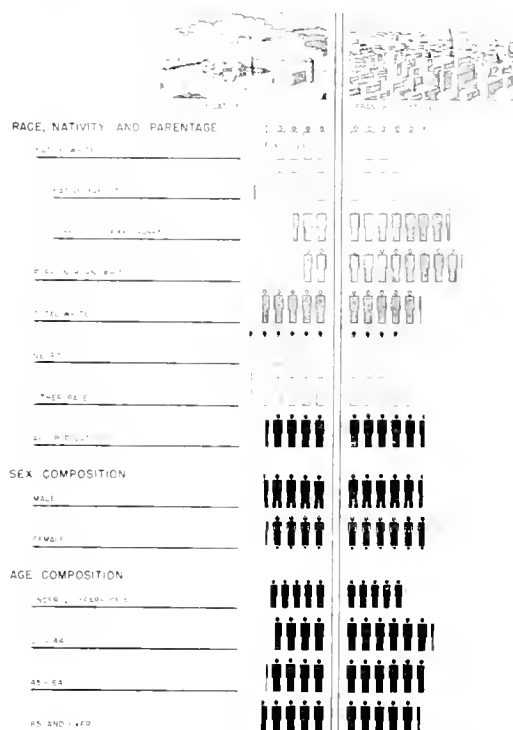


Figure 20

of Negroes has probably not yet reached its full stride. Aside from the European immigrants and the Negro, our city population contains a sprinkling of other racial groups. When in addition we consider the fact that the European immigrants and their children who constitute so large a portion of the city dwellers, are by no means homogeneous, but comprise a wide variety of ethnic, linguistic, and nationalistic groups, the great diversity of mankind that makes up the American urban world becomes apparent. Cities of different sizes and types in different parts of the country show, of course, great variation in their racial and ethnic makeup. But the facts cited will suffice to show that one major characteristic of the urban dweller is his dissimilarity to this fellow townsman.

Never before in the history of the world have great groups of people so diverse in social backgrounds been thrown together into such close contacts as in the cities of America. The typical American city, therefore, does not consist of a homogeneous body of citizens, but of human beings with the most diverse cultural backgrounds, often speaking different languages, following a great variety of customs, habituated to dif-

ferent modes and standards of living, and sharing only in varying degrees the tastes, the beliefs, and the ideals of their native fellow city dwellers. In short, far from presenting a picture of a single unified body of human beings, the American city is a motley of peoples and cultures forming a mosaic of little worlds which in part blend with one another, but, in part and for a time, remain segregated or come into conflict with one another.

Births and Deaths

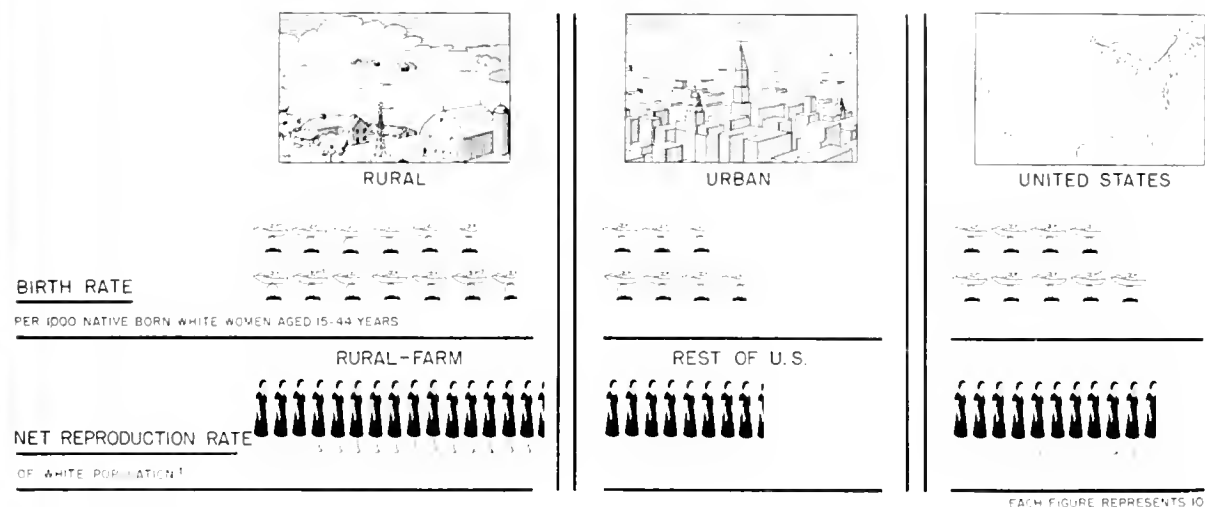
One of the most extraordinary and, in the long run, perhaps the most decisive of the facts about the urban population is its failure to reproduce itself. Throughout history cities have been the consumers of the manpower produced in the country. Up to the time of the "industrial revolution" urban deaths seem regularly to have exceeded births, and even since the urban death rate has been reduced, the rapid growth of cities has been due largely to migration from the rural areas, supplemented in the United States by immigration from abroad.

The difference in natural increase between country and city has two aspects: (1) The urban population produces considerably fewer children in proportion to its numbers, and (2) the proportion of deaths in cities is slightly greater than in the country. Of these two by far the more important long-run factor is the former. Urban women, whether native, foreign born, or Negro, uniformly have fewer children on the average than rural women and the larger the city the lower is the rate of reproduction. The present rate of urban reproduction is below that required to maintain even a stationary population if the transitory favorable urban age composition (a large proportion of women of child-bearing age) is taken into account, and it is lower as the size of the city increases. Thus, with unity (1.0) indicating that a community had enough children in 1930 to maintain its present numbers, it is found that the index for cities of over 100,000 is 0.76, that for cities of 25,000-100,000 is 0.88, that for cities of 10,000-25,000 is 0.97, and for the smallest cities, 2,500-10,000, it is 1.04. For the rural communities, on the other hand, the index is 1.54. The outstanding difference between the failure of present-day cities to maintain their population and that of cities of the past is that in former times it seems to have been due to the exceedingly high death rates in cities, whereas today, since cities have become healthier places, it is due to very low birth rates.

Suicide

Every year in the United States approximately 22,000 persons take their own lives. For the past 30 years the rate of suicide in urban places of 10,000

BIRTHS - 1930



THE NET REPRODUCTION RATE IS A MEASURE OF FERTILITY FREE FROM THE DISTURBING AGE FACTORS OF THE POPULATION. A NET REPRODUCTION RATE OF 200, FOR INSTANCE, MEANS THAT A POPULATION OF SUCH FERTILITY WOULD DOUBLE ITS NUMBERS IN A GENERATION, IN APPROXIMATELY 30 YEARS. A NET REPRODUCTION RATE OF 100 SIGNIFIES A STATIONARY POPULATION. NET REPRODUCTION RATES BELOW 100 DENOTE DECLINING POPULATIONS.

Figure 21

population and over has been about 50 percent higher than in the smaller cities and rural areas. The incidence of suicide for the country as a whole increases directly with the increase in the size of the city, from a rate of 15.9 per 100,000 population in cities 10,000 to 25,000 population to 19.9 in cities of 250,000 to 500,000 population. There is a noticeable decline in the suicide rate for cities over 500,000 population. A tendency has been noted for fast-growing cities to have a higher suicide rate, which might account for the fact, in part, that the highest suicide rates are on the Pacific coast. The lowest suicide rates are in the New England and East South Central regions.

Urban areas with the highest percentage of adults, old people, males, and particularly elderly males, tend to have a higher incidence of suicide than other urban or rural places. Similarly, communities with large percentages of foreign born, Japanese, Chinese, and Mexican, tend to have higher rates. However, the incidence of suicide among Negroes is extremely low; in 1930 their suicide rate was 5.1 per 100,000 population as compared with 15.6 for the total population. Suicides are more frequent at the extremes of the economic scale than in the middle, which might in part account for the rural and urban differences in suicides, since extremes in wealth and poverty are found more often in the city.

Suicides increase markedly with business depressions. The suicide rate in urban areas, and for that matter in the country as a whole, is likely to decline as the economic and social security of the population increases, as mental and physical health is improved, as wholesome recreational facilities are provided, as the population becomes more stable, and as family and community solidarity are furthered.

The Urban Family

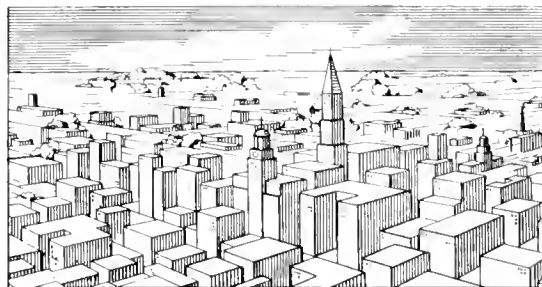
The low and declining urban reproduction rates suggest that the city is not conducive to the type of family life to which our civilization has been accustomed. Perhaps birth control is more widely and more effectively employed in the city than in the rural areas. In the city marriage tends to be postponed and involves greater economic burdens. The physical conditions of living in crowded quarters are unfavorable to wholesome family life and the rearing of children. This has put a premium upon suburban residence as the most favorable means of enjoying the advantages of the city while escaping some of its disadvantages. The insecurity to which large masses of the population are subject in an unstable industrial society, the atomization of communal life, the rationalization of outlook and a declining sense of social solidarity and individual responsibility—these and many more fac-

SUICIDE

RATE PER 100,000 POPULATION, 1929



RURAL



URBAN



EACH FIGURE EQUALS 2 PERSONS

Figure 22

tors, including the emancipation of women and possibly even biological changes in the human species due to the impact of urbanization, have been thought to account for the differences between the rural and the urban family.

At any rate, it is a fact that in the city single life is more prevalent and families are smaller and more frequently without children than in the country. The conditions of living and working characteristic of large cities seem to discourage marriage and the formation of families, while they encourage separation and divorce. Mothers are more likely to be employed outside the home, and the family, as a household, is restricted to the immediate relatives emancipated from the larger kinship group characteristic of the country. The traditional household functions, such as sewing, laundering, and the preparation of food, are more frequently transferred to commercial agencies and are no longer a necessary function of family life. While the individual members of the family tend to pursue their own diverging courses in their vocational, religious, educational, political, and recreational life, strangers, particularly lodgers, enter into the household, especially in industrial communities, and adversely affect the unity of family life. Suburban residential communities tend to resemble rural areas more in these respects than areas within large cities, and the differences between regions and cities of different sizes and types are significant.

Public Health

Although the expectation of life has been greater for rural residents than for urban, it is significant that since 1929 the urban infant mortality rate has fallen below the rural. The effectiveness of urban health controls is also evidenced by lower mortality rates in cities from influenza, smallpox, malaria, and dysentery. On the other hand, cities have higher rates for venereal diseases, tuberculosis, epidemic diseases, alcoholism, drug addiction, general paralysis, insanity, heart diseases, and cancer. The differences between urban and rural death rates, however, are less than the variations within cities.

Large cities are better equipped with physicians, dentists, nurses, and with medical facilities in general than are smaller and rural communities. Municipalities spend about twice as much per capita for public-health services as do counties in rural areas. Privately supported health organizations in cities offer nursing, health education, and other preventive services not readily available in rural communities.

Until the recent depression, however, there was a steady growth of county health departments staffed by full-time professional personnel. This represents an extension to rural areas of public health services which in some cases approach urban organizations in efficiency, although it must be recognized that many county health officers are inadequately trained and poorly paid. The total personnel in rural depart-

HEALTH

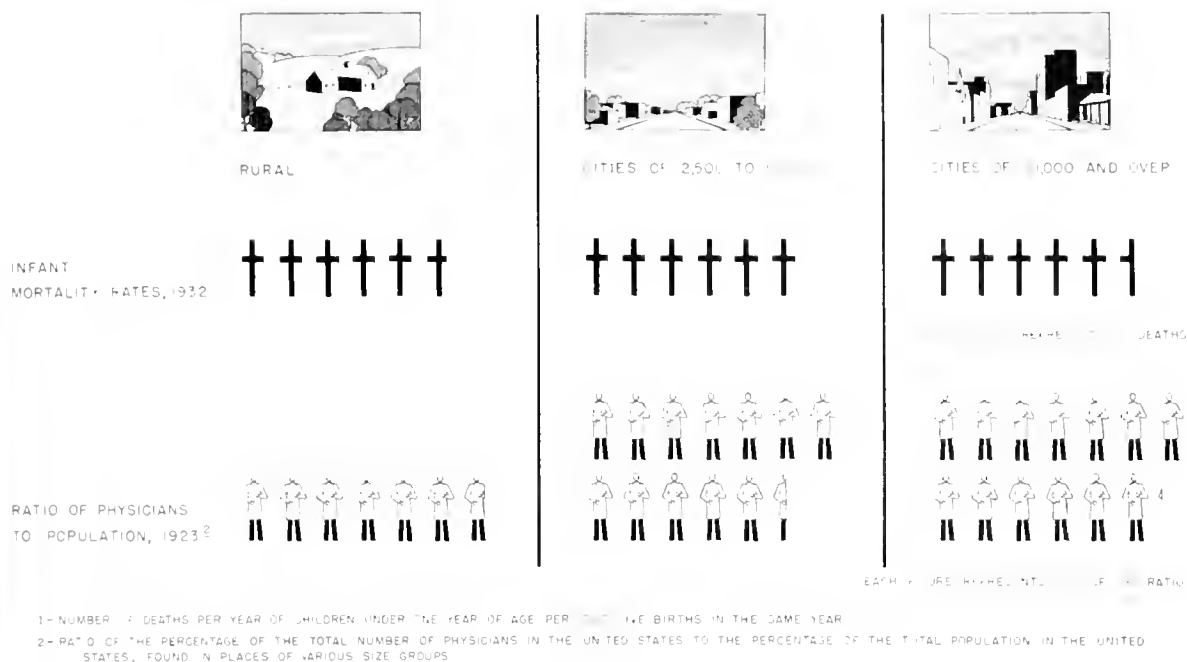


Figure 23

ments is inadequate, especially for maternity, infant, and preschool hygiene services.

Cities, because of their relatively greater wealth, population, and technical and institutional resources, are better able to supply their residents with the more complex and specialized types of medical service than are rural communities. Accordingly, even though the benefits derived from such facilities are accessible only to limited strata of the urban population, except as they are provided by public and philanthropic agencies, they are not at all accessible to persons who reside in rural areas unless they come to the city for them and have sufficiently large incomes to purchase them. Under the present distribution of income, the vast majority of the population, both urban and rural, is incapable of meeting the financial burden of illness individually.

To this should be added the fact that the physical conditions under which urban dwellers—especially those with low incomes—are forced to live, are such as to be very conducive to the spread of disease, both through predisposing the individuals and through the spread of various disease-bearing agencies. There is also among the urban population—even if in less degree than among rural inhabitants—an ignorance of elementary and well-established principles of hygienic practice which, coupled with their inability to

purchase medical care, represents a definite liability to the health of the modern city. Certain tendencies toward the reorganization of the medical profession and of medical services are under way, however, which will make the financial burden of illness easier to bear and which, since it will make medical attention more accessible, will contribute towards the widespread assurance of good health.

Social Welfare

As a result of the steady deprivation of its original functions which the family has undergone, as well as of the extensive breakup in the cities of the neighborhood and local community, the burden of social risk has tended to be shifted more and more, especially in the past few years, from the family and local community to the State. While an exact parallel cannot be drawn, there is a close connection between urbanization and the need for and emergence of both public and private social welfare work.

In accordance with the Old World traditions, poor relief became a local responsibility in the New England colonies. In other parts of the country the county became the administrative unit, except where settlers from New England introduced the township system. The States performed some welfare functions almost from the first, but only in the present century have

there been coordinated and comprehensive State programs. In 1932 one-third of the States had modern welfare departments; the trend since then has been toward further coordination and centralization of welfare functions. The Federal Government had until recently left poor relief entirely in the hands of the State and local governments. Since 1932, for the first time in American history, cities have become eligible for direct Federal grants and loans.

There has been a continuously decreasing ratio of almshouse inmates to population since 1880, and a correspondingly rapid development of institutions for the insane, the feeble-minded and the blind, and home relief. Private relief-giving agencies have developed their scope of activity especially to care for exceptional cases of need and service.

In child care the most significant development of the last half century has been the removal of dependent children from almshouses and the gradual substitution of foster homes and mothers' pensions for institutional care. The emergence of the juvenile court has paralleled the recognition of child care as a community responsibility.

Among other special groups receiving the benefit of public-welfare activities, including Federal aid, are veterans and the blind. Old age assistance is becoming an increasingly significant aspect of public welfare. Workmen's compensation, providing benefits through insurance or otherwise for industrial injuries and in some States for occupational diseases has been widely adopted. Unemployment insurance, except as a voluntary arrangement, was virtually untried in this country until recently.

Government public welfare activities have been supplemented by numerous private welfare functions, especially in cities, and frequently the former have given subsidies to the latter. Most voluntary efforts at philanthropy are organized on a community-wide basis. Community chests and councils and welfare federations have assumed leadership in financing and controlling private welfare activities. Chests have grown in number from 49 in 1922 with a budget of less than 24 millions to 397 in 1933 with a budget of over 77 millions. The community chest appears most acceptable to cities over 100,000 and in the West and Middle West. The contributions to community welfare activities have been affected adversely by the depression, the per capita contributions being uniformly less in 1935 than in 1932. Contributions vary considerably by region and city size. The percentage of the total raised made up by large gifts is greater as the size of the city increases. The inability of private relief-giving agencies to meet the problems of chronic and mass unemployment has made it necessary for the public agencies to assume this responsibility.

Municipal welfare activities are beginning to include preventive and constructive services. Per capita expenditures for public welfare in cities over 100,000 increased more than four-fold between 1928 and 1933, indicating the difficulty local governments, relying upon the general property tax, have in meeting the situation created by the recent depression.

Unemployment relief has overshadowed all other problems of public welfare, especially in cities. The percent of the urban population on relief in October 1933 was greater than the rural in all geographic divisions except the Middle Atlantic and East South Central, where the rural rate was higher. Administrative differences between regions and localities make it necessary to use caution in interpreting these data.

The percentage of the total population on relief (October 1933) increases with the size of the city except for the size group 1,000,000 and over, which had a lower percentage than any of the cities over 25,000. However, one-fifth of the total relief load was concentrated in the 10 largest cities. Between 1933 and 1935 about three-fifths to three-quarters of the total relief population was urban, which is in excess of the urban proportion of the total population. The per capita expenditures for relief were almost twice as great in 1934 in the most urbanized States as in the least urbanized. The percent of Federal funds in the total expenditures, however, was much greater in the rural States, signifying that the use of Federal money was not associated with high per capita expenditures. The average monthly relief benefits were considerably higher in the principal cities as compared to the rest of the State. With regard to the source of relief funds there is, except for 1929, a positive correlation between size of city and percentage of private funds.

The amounts of relief are higher in urban areas, figured either as the average benefits per family or in terms of the per capita expenditures. There are, however, great variations between sections of the country, the South being conspicuously low and the urban centers of the Northeast high in the amounts of assistance. The relief population contains a disproportionately large number of unskilled workers. In 1935 relief in urban areas was supplied almost entirely out of public funds, whereas in 1929 approximately three-quarters of the money was from tax sources.

Mother's aid, day nursery care, foster home placement, the reduction of child labor, old age assistance, care of the mentally defective, the blind, deaf, the handicapped, the transient, and legal aid, are other features of modern social service programs which vary widely between cities and States.

The stability of personality and social organization generally is adversely affected by the mixture of people

PERSONS ON RELIEF
OCTOBER, 1933

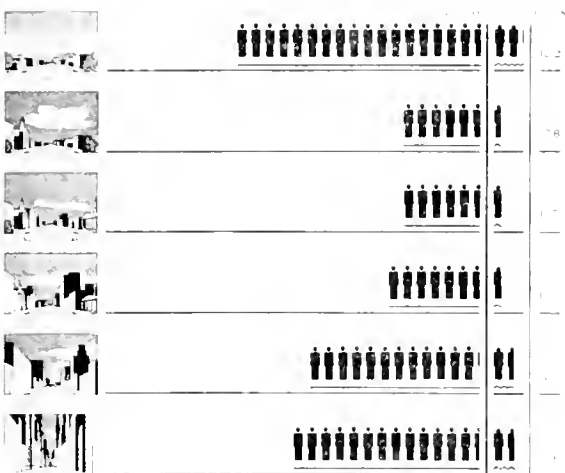
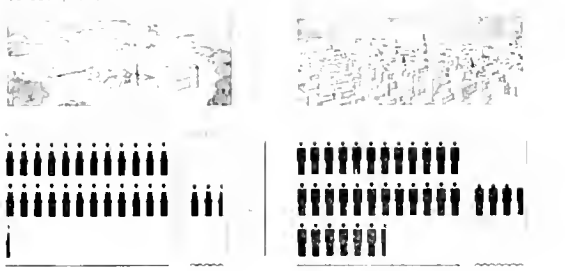


Figure 21

and customs in cities. A mobile population of diverse elements does not develop habits of community responsibility and concern about welfare needs, and more reliance is necessarily placed on formally organized institutions providing social services. Many of the problems being met by urban welfare agencies arise from the bewilderment of people from rural areas and foreign countries in facing the conditions and problems of urban life.

Public Safety

Cities have in the course of their development acquired the reputation as centers of crime, disorder, and corruption, but since the facts about crime and disorder in the United States are notoriously fragmentary and inadequate, it is difficult to make comparisons between the urban and rural world in this respect. Such data as do exist indicate that crime occurs more frequently in proportion to population in urban areas than in rural areas. This applies particularly to minor offenses or misdemeanors arising out of the

growing number of laws incident to urban living which is more minutely regulated by law.

Mortality statistics show that since 1910 the homicide rate in urban communities is uniformly higher by at least one-third and more frequently by two-thirds than in rural areas. In 1923, the only year for which data are available, urban places furnished three times as many prisoners for Federal and State penal institutions in proportion to their population as did the rural areas. However, while urban crime rates are higher than rural, the urban rates are inflated by the preponderance in cities of certain types of crimes. Crimes against property, such as burglary, robbery, larceny, and auto theft, are a much larger part of urban crime than of rural crime. Conversely, while homicide occurs more frequently in city than in country, it forms a larger proportion of rural crime than of urban. In the case of rape, not only is the proportion in relation to other crime greater in rural areas, but the number of cases in proportion to population is almost equal in city and country.

Crime rates vary not only as between sections of the same city, but between zones in the same metropolitan area, between types of cities and between regions. Criminality in large cities is heaviest in the areas of physical and social deterioration in the central part of the city and tends generally to decline as the dis-

CRIME

PER 1,000
POPULATION

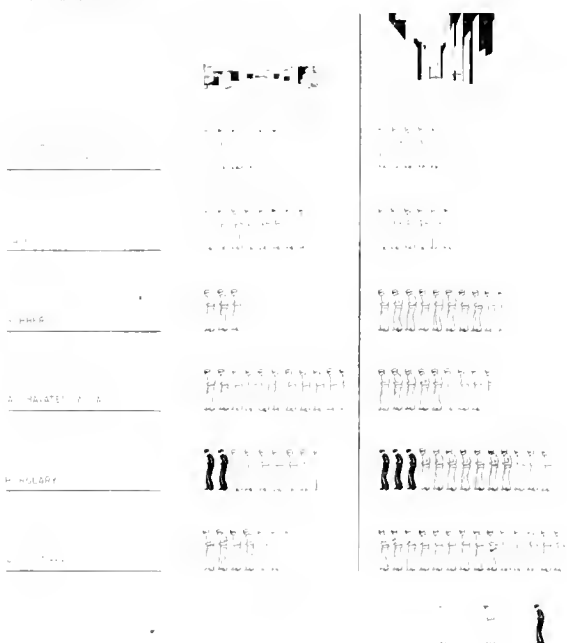


Figure 25

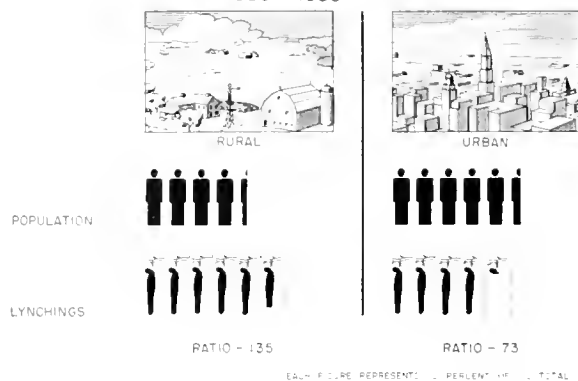
COMPARISON BETWEEN LYNCHINGS
AND POPULATION 1930 - 1935

Figure 24

tance from the center increases. A major part of the criminality in the outlying areas is committed by persons who reside in the central area. Intercity criminal mobility in metropolitan areas corresponds roughly to that of the noncriminal groups. The crime rate of a major city influences the crime rate of nearby cities, decreasing as the distance from the major city increases.

Urban crime rates on the whole are highest in the southern and far western areas and lowest in the north-eastern part of the United States. While in general a region high in one major crime is high in most other crimes also, there are great differences between the regional crime rates. In contrasting the regions that have the highest urban crime rates with those that have the lowest in the case of the major crimes, it is found that murder is 15 times as frequent in the East South Central region as in New England; robbery is over 5 times as frequent in the East North Central region as in New England; and burglary is over 3 times as frequent in the Mountain region as in the Middle Atlantic States.

Next to regional location, city size is the most significant factor associated with differences in urban crime rates. There is a greater incidence of minor violations of law, such as drunkenness and disorderly conduct, in large cities. In the case of all major crimes, other than rape, the rate rises generally as the size of the city increases up to cities of 500,000. Cities of between 250,000 and 500,000 population have the highest rates in the United States for the major crimes of murder, burglary, larceny, and auto theft, but there is a noticeably lower crime rate in cities over one-half million in the case of all crimes except robbery. High crime rates are not confined, however, to large cities. Many small cities, particularly in the South, are among the highest crime rate cities in the country.

Bank robbery varies inversely with the increase in city size, nearly three-fourths of them occurring in cities of less than 10,000.

There is an almost complete absence of knowledge on riots and other forms of public disorder in the United States, with the exception of lynching, which is a form of public disorder typical of rural and small town communities. During the past 54 years, 4,662 persons, 1,292 white and 3,370 Negroes, were put to death by mobs. There has been a steady and marked decline in the average annual number of persons lynched, from 187 a generation ago to 16 persons today. The relation between adequate police protection and the incidence of lynchings is seen in the fact that law enforcement agencies during the period 1930-34 prevented approximately three times as many attempted lynchings as there were actual lynchings. Inasmuch as the proportion of lynchings to population declines with the increase in the size of the population of the county, and since most lynchings take place in counties below the State average economically, financially, and educationally, it may be assumed that lynchings decline as urbanization proceeds and as isolated backward areas are brought within the orbit of urban influence.

To meet the hazards to which persons and property are subject, elaborate mechanisms for crime control have been developed. Nearly 300,000 persons are employed in municipal, county, Federal, and private police agencies in the United States. The complexity of modern life, particularly in urban areas, has added many duties other than crime control to police work. The improvements in urban police equipment, such as the radio and teletype, made possible by modern technological advances, have facilitated the effort of law enforcement agencies to keep pace with the changing nature of their task. The problem of policing is more acute in urban than in rural areas, not only because there is more crime but also because of the large number of regulations to be enforced and the greater difficulty in crime detection in areas of dense population.

There is some evidence to show that those large cities having a greater proportion of police to population have proportionately less crime. On the other hand, although small cities spend less on police protection they have, as a rule, less crime than do large cities. Northern cities, particularly those of New England, spend more per capita on police protection than do southern cities and have less crime than southern cities. But since numerous other factors aside from policing are involved in crime prevention and control, no conclusive inference can be drawn from these facts.

Since criminals have become mobile, crime has become a problem of a wider and wider area—of the city, of the metropolitan area, of the State, and of the Nation. The necessity for centralized law enforce-

ment has in some instances led to the consolidation of police forces into metropolitan, county, and State units. In some measure even Federal control has been achieved. There are a few instances of close regional cooperation between police departments of constituent administrative units in telephone, radio, and teletype hookups, arrest and investigation, interchange of policemen, in police training and emergency work.

Since the turn of the century there have been developing in the United States practices with reference to delinquency and crime which have progressively tended toward the introduction of investigational procedures. Social work practices have become part of police, prosecutor, and court activities. In the more advanced cities, psychiatric services are already being regarded as necessary and integral phases of the judicial machinery. The introduction of the juvenile court has led to the increased emphasis upon the prevention of delinquency and its social treatment rather than reliance upon crime detection and punishment.

Fire and Traffic Accidents

As in the case of crime and disorder, so in the case of the hazards of fire and traffic accidents, the available data do not permit an adequate comparison between urban and rural conditions and between cities of different sizes and types. Although the disastrous fires in the cities dramatically call attention to the loss of life and property that repeatedly occurs in urban communities, approximately 60 percent of the national loss of property by fire actually is sustained by rural areas, and the per capita fire losses in cities are less than half those of rural communities. The larger the city, the less the per capita fire loss. It would seem, then, that from the standpoint of property the problem of fires is largely rural, although loss of life from fire is far greater in urban communities which suffered 70 percent of the national total of 3,500 lives lost in 1933. Advances in building construction and maintenance, in fire-prevention activities, and in fire-fighting services, have become generally accepted means for dealing with a great potential fire hazard of densely built-up and crowded urban centers.

The enormous development of motor vehicle transportation in the United States has been accompanied by a corresponding increase in deaths, injuries, and property losses. For the last 12 years, however, motor fatalities occurring in rural areas have been consistently higher than those in urban areas. The rate of increase in rural areas from 1924 to 1935 has been 150 percent, contrasted with an urban increase of only 27 percent. In the last few years the urban areas have actually decreased their auto fatality rates, whereas the rates for rural areas have continued to increase.

It is a notable fact that pedestrian fatalities are higher in urban areas than in rural areas, although the trend in pedestrian deaths seems to be downward in urban areas and upward in rural areas. The smaller cities have had the greatest increase in motor fatality rates, whereas cities over one-half million have had the lowest increase. In order to cope with this situation many cities have utilized such safety devices as the preparation of accident records, traffic planning, modern traffic codes, accident investigation, traffic-signal systems, elimination of grade crossings, auto inspection, drivers' licenses, compulsory insurance, street widening and improvement, and education. The wide variation in the accident rates between cities which have become conscious of this problem and those that are apathetic furnishes ample proof that the hazards of traffic can be effectively reduced.

Occupations

Generally, a larger proportion of the adult urban population is gainfully employed than is the case with the rural adult population. The same is true of women, but the reverse of children. That these are specific characteristics of contemporary urban life is indicated by the fact that the larger the city the more prominent these are found to be.

The cities differ from the country and the large cities from the small, moreover, by the types of occupations in which the inhabitants engage. The white-collar workers, i. e., those employed in trade and in clerical and professional work, are proportionally more numerous in large cities. Of 12 professions—authors and journalists, artists, architects, actors, musicians, lawyers, dentists, clergymen, trained nurses, teachers and physicians—only two, teachers and clergymen, have a lower ratio in large cities than in small ones. Even more pronounced is the difference in these respects between cities lying within and cities lying outside the metropolitan regions. The large cities and metropolitan centers not only have the largest proportion of white-collar workers and of certain professions, but they also appear to be less favorable to self-employment, especially in trade and probably also in the professions. Workers in rural areas are more evenly distributed throughout the various age groups, whereas urban workers, particularly those in clerical and professional service, trade, transportation, and communication, are more concentrated in the age class from 15 to 39 years. The span of the working life of the person is considerably shorter in the city than in the country. Thus while the city offers a greater range of vocational opportunities than does the country, it also introduces elements which undermine economic security.

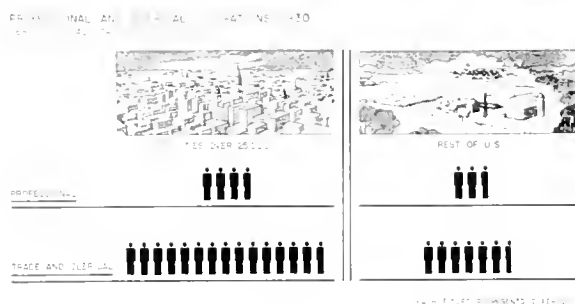


Figure 27

Income

The incomes of urban dwellers are on the average higher than those of rural persons and very large incomes, especially characteristic of certain limited strata of the urban population, are scarcely ever found in rural areas. Very large incomes from rural enterprises are almost always diverted to urban residents. Similarly, the larger the city the higher the per-capita income, and the more industrialized the city the lower the income. The median amount of rent paid and the median value of homes owned (and consequently of carrying charges) increase with the size of the city as does the percentage of family income which goes to provide shelter. City families spend a larger share of their income for clothing, advancement, and recreation, and a smaller portion for food than do rural families of corresponding income levels. The diet of urban families seems to be less nutritive than that of rural people.

Living Conditions

Unlike the rural people, many urban dwellers maintain no households of their own but live in rooming houses and hotels and eat in restaurants. In general, it is characteristic of the urban mode of life that the individual household depends for its most fundamental services, such as sanitary services and the supply of water, food, light, and fuel, upon a vast apparatus of men and machines whose continuous and efficient functioning requires the most delicate articulation. In the rural areas, in contradistinction, these services are usually performed by each household for itself.

About 10 percent of the urban dwellers have no electricity for lighting, and about 5 percent have neither gas nor electricity.²⁴ About a third of a very large sample of urban homes is without gas for cooking and only a negligible proportion uses electricity for this purpose. Antiquated heating stoves are still the predominant source of heat supply; 20 percent of the dwelling units are without hot and

cold water and 5 percent even lack plumbing. Fifteen percent of the urban homes have no indoor toilets and 20 percent are without tubs or showers. Large cities show a somewhat greater advance in supplying their inhabitants with modern conveniences of life although these cities, too, leave much to be desired.

These figures are indicative of the fact that there are still large sections of the urban population which are deprived of the conveniences of life regarded as essential to urban existence. This is all the more striking if it is remembered that these facilities are available at a lower income level in the city than they are in the country, due to the ease with which the individual household can be connected with the existing utilities. It is to be recognized, of course, that far as the urban dwellers are from fully sharing in the comforts and conveniences of life which modern technology affords, the rural people are much farther from the realization of their goal.

Housing

The concentration of a large number of persons into a small area, characteristic of the city, finds visible expression in the housing conditions of its inhabitants. About four-fifths of the dwelling units of urban America are made of wood and about one-third are over 30 years old. A large proportion is in a condition of aggravated obsolescence and serious disrepair. A considerable section of the urban population of the United States lives in substandard dwellings. Urban

INCOME, HOME OWNERSHIP AND RENT - 1930

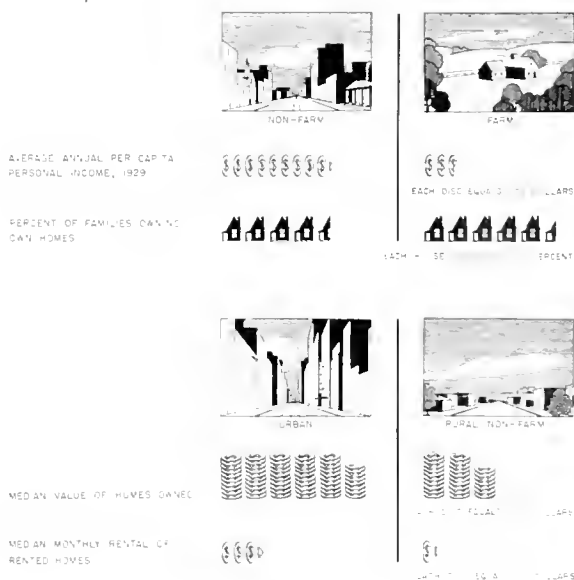


Figure 28

²⁴ According to data secured through real property inventory

dwelling units have less space available for family needs than rural ones and there is evidence to show that the proportion of overcrowded homes has been increasing of late. Even if one takes account of the economies produced by strict conservation of space within each household, according to moderate housing standards about one-fifth of all urban dwelling units are overcrowded.

Large cities are unfavorable to single-family dwellings. In cities over 1 million the proportion living in multiple dwellings rises to about 45 percent, whereas it is only 20 percent in all urban communities and occurs only to a negligible degree in rural areas. Home ownership in urban areas is rarer than in the rural districts and its burdens and costs increase with the size of the city. Especially in the city, home ownership frequently turns out to be nominal rather than actual, for the home owner is often so heavily burdened with debt that the title to his home is highly conditional. In 1931, for instance, various private agencies held approximately 21 billion dollars of urban residential mortgages.

Transportation and Communication

The life of the urban dweller derives some of its most characteristic features from the intricate system of transportation and communication upon which the very existence of the urban community depends. The concentration of large masses of humanity into relatively dense settlements, in which place of residence and place of work are seldom the same, rests upon efficient devices of communication and transportation. Furthermore, because the urban population is removed from the sources of supply of food, fuel, and raw materials, because it is highly specialized and interdependent both within a single city and among cities, and because urbanites are linked together by little more than the tenuous ties of a competitive economy, which tends to be world-wide in scope, the daily routines of urban life require a complex network of devices through which commodities and men can be transported and information can be transmitted speedily and economically. Indeed, so essential have these facilities become in the daily life activities of the city man and the collective functioning of the urban community that their existence, accessibility, and use may be regarded as a barometer of the degree of urbanization.

The availability and use of the railroad, the automobile, electric transit, the postal services, the telephone, telegraph and cable, the newspaper, periodical and book, the cinema, and the radio have become virtually indispensable media of urban life and have developed with the enormous growth of cities. With-

out the aid of these devices, the delicate equilibrium of supply and demand of goods and services upon which life in the city depends could not be maintained. Without them, in view of the transient, formal, and superficial impersonal contacts to which human association in the city is largely reduced, urban life would be amorphous and without the necessary minimum of common understanding and purpose among large masses of heterogeneous, specialized, individual human beings. The extent to which the great city can generate public opinion and expand community life beyond the limits of the family or the neighborhood is conditioned by the presence and efficient functioning of these media of communication and mobility. Their incidence and use increase in general with the size of the city. In some instances, it is greater in the rural communities of the urban regions than in the cities of the less highly urbanized areas, and it is greatest in the residential suburbs of metropolitan centers.

Such intraurban public transportation facilities as the street railway, the subway, and the elevated railway are confined, by virtue of the large patronage they require for their maintenance, to cities and their immediately surrounding suburban communities. But the use of the automobile, although it has become the modern individualized transportation device par excellence and is widely used for business and, among certain urban strata, for personal transportation, is no longer a distinctively urban feature. Since the automobile is of maximum utility in sparsely settled communities, since it is less accessible to the lower income groups in the city, and since its value in the large metropolitan centers is often counterbalanced by the availability of other rapid and cheap transport and by the liabilities its ownership involves under congested urban conditions, it is understandable that per capita automobile ownership in the United States should be slightly lower among the urban than the nonurban population. While automobile ownership increases with the size of the city up to 250,000, it declines in the larger cities. In relation to their urban population the New England and Middle Atlantic regions rank notably low in automobile ownership. Urban residents have better highways at their disposal than rural inhabitants, and the percentage of paved street mileage increases with the size of the city.

Urban communication facilities are both supplementary to transportation and, in certain respects, a substitute for them. Much of the mobility and contact so typical of urban life is thus facilitated without involving direct meeting and physical movement in space. The postal service, the telegraph and tele-

phone, newspapers and other publications, motion pictures, and the radio are the chief media. As communication facilities they perform significant labor-saving functions and reduce enormously the physical moving about that would otherwise be necessary to carry on the industrial, commercial, and control operations of large, complex, and interdependent urban communities. They not merely extend the range of centralized administration in public and private enterprise, but they facilitate a more intensive and wider-ranging social life among the geographically scattered inhabitants of the city.

Although the postal services are now fairly widely diffused to the rural population as well, the largest cities still possess a differential advantage through more frequent collection and delivery of mail. Per-capita postal receipts, which furnish an index to the volume of mail, increase as the degree of urbanization of the area increases, and the more urbanized a region is, the less is the difference between the rural and urban areas in it with respect to volume of mail. Moreover, the larger the city the longer is the average haul of mail sent out from it, indicating the greater range of outside contact of the urban community.

The per-capita number of telephones, both residential and business, is highest in the most urbanized areas. The larger the city, the larger, in general, the ratio of telephones to population, with the exception of the industrial cities of the South and East. This urban influence extends to the rural areas as well, as is shown by the fact that a higher percentage of farms have telephones, if located in urban regions, than in non-urban regions. The frequency of use of the telephone in urban and rural areas corresponds roughly to the ratio of telephones to people. Whereas, the telephone is primarily an instrument for intraurban communication, as is shown by the fact that 96 percent of all calls are local calls, the telegraph is important in intercity communication. The latter furnishes the technological base upon which not only a limited set of functions within the metropolitan economy depend but through which the almost instantaneous transmission of news throughout the world is effected.

Through the metropolitan press the rapid communication of news is thus transmitted not only to the immediate inhabitants of the city but to the outlying and rural population as well. Although the metropolitan press forms the important link in world communication, the smaller communities seem to need newspapers of their own to carry local news. With the development of the metropolis and of mechanization, the newspaper itself tends to become standardized, and its control centralized, as is indicated by the growth of chain newspapers and syndicates. News-

paper circulation rates are higher in urban than in rural areas and increase directly with the size of the city. But the per-capita newspaper circulation differs widely in different sections of the city. The more urbanized the region is, the less difference there tends to be in the reading of newspapers between its rural and its urban population. This again shows the urbanizing influence of the city upon the surrounding rural territory. While the daily and Sunday newspapers are characteristic of the metropolis, the semi-weekly and triweekly papers tend to thrive in smaller communities. But those less frequently published papers have an almost exclusively local and rural circulation. In contrast with them, the dominance of the daily and Sunday metropolitan papers which circulate extensively outside their city of publication is marked. There are a number of metropolitan dailies which circulate in every State of the Union and 1 out of 12 metropolitan dailies is read by nearly one out of every five men, women, and children in the United States. As with newspapers, the circulation of periodicals in urbanized territories exceeds that in rural areas in the country as a whole. The same holds for books.

The smaller cities and the less urbanized regions possess a larger number of motion-picture theaters per capita than the metropolitan centers and the more urbanized areas. This signifies that the large and magnificently equipped theaters furnishing spectacular entertainment are predominantly found in the large cities and tend to crowd out the numerous smaller neighborhood establishments. Hence, although the average number of seats per theater increases with the size of the city, the number of seats per capita does not increase with city size. Available data indicate, however, that per-capita motion-picture attendance increases directly as one passes from the smaller to the larger communities. Produced largely for an urban audience, the motion picture, by portraying the urban way of life, provides still another instance of the manner in which the urban center sets the pattern for rural consumption and rural living.

As in the case of the motion picture, radio ownership rates increase by city size. Whereas 50 percent of the urban families owned radios in 1930, only 21 percent of the families living on farms had them. But subsequent figures indicate that the differences in radio ownership rates between urban and rural areas and between large and small cities have been decreasing. Since the radio is instrumental not only in breaking down the isolation of rural life, but also in bringing the urban and rural populations nearer one to another by subjecting them to similar influences, radio ownership by over one-fifth of the farm families, even in 1930 in the face of the relative inaccessibility

COMMUNICATION

PER 100 POPULATION

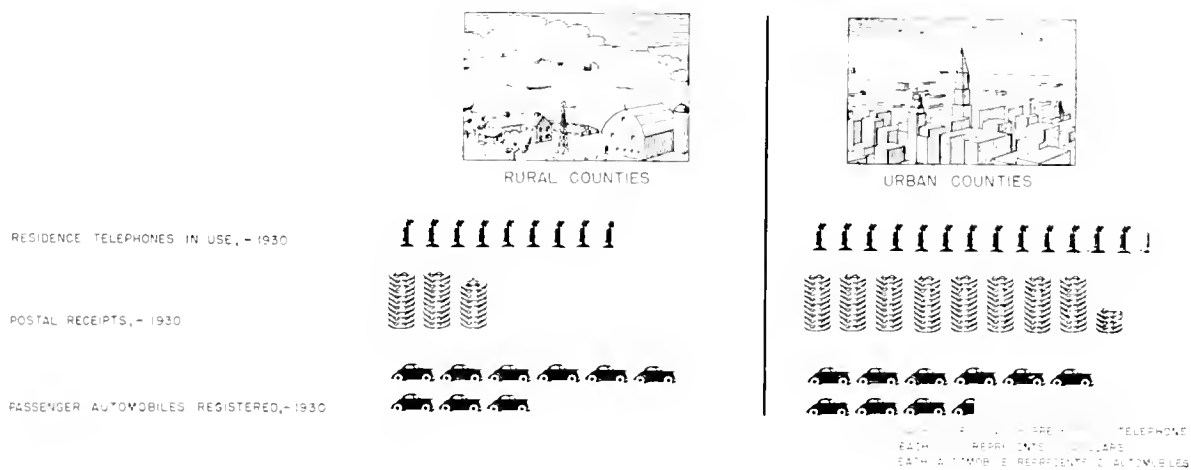
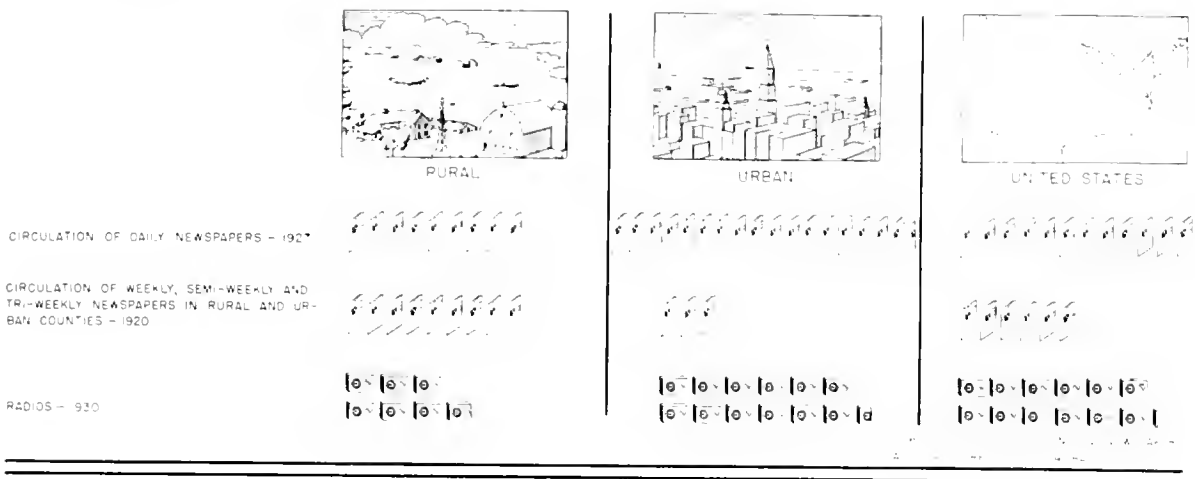


Figure 29

*Comparison is by counties, not population

of electricity and other handicaps in the country, is a significant symptom of the enlarged influence of the urban centers over rural areas.

Education

The city has traditionally been regarded as the home of rationality. It is therefore not surprising to find most of the educational institutions, especially technical and higher educational facilities in the cities. There are, however, serious obstacles which prevent many people from taking full advantage of the existing facilities. These are primarily economic,

since children of families in the low-income groups often must leave school as soon as legally possible to support themselves or to contribute to the support of their families. There is no immediate relationship between school attendance and size of city, but the residential suburbs and major metropolitan centers have higher rates than the smaller industrialized cities. The urban areas have higher attendance rates than the rural, except in the case of girls over 16 years, probably because the city offers greater opportunities for employment to adolescent girls than does the country. The lowest attendance rates, both urban

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND ILLITERACY - 1930

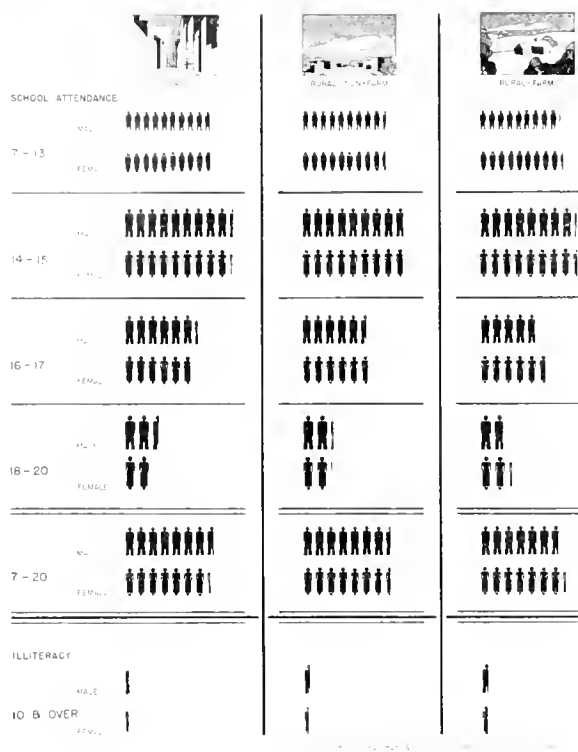


Figure 30

and rural, are found in the Southern States. The higher the occupational status of the parents, the higher the educational level attained by their children.

Per capita expenditures for schools and school property values, as well as school-tax rates, are greater in large cities and residential suburbs than in small and highly industrialized cities. Similarly, large cities lead in innovations in educational curricula, vocational schools, professional schools, night and summer schools, Americanization programs, and special schools or classes for defective, handicapped and problem children, and in adult education. Small towns, with some exceptions, lag behind in all of these respects, and rural areas are far behind urban communities both in quantity and quality of educational opportunities. Not only is the need for special types of educational activities and facilities, such as Americanization classes, greater in the city than in the country, but the urban community is generally also in a better position to finance a superior educational program and hence to attract a superior type of teacher.

The inequality in educational opportunity between city and country may be regarded as a manifestation of a general tendency in urban life to encourage and

accept innovation, experimentation, specialization, and professionalization. But in part it may be attributable also to the greater financial resources of the city, to the greater division of labor which the large numbers in great cities make possible, and to the greater influence of organized publicity and pressure groups in breaking down the resistance of vested interests and the prestige of established institutions and antiquated practices. Teachers in large city schools are the best paid and the best trained. In both elementary and high-school grades, although less in the latter, there is a larger number of pupils per teacher in the larger cities than in smaller ones. On the whole, therefore, with the above-mentioned exceptions, the urban centers offer educational opportunities far in advance of small and rural communities, although they do not always provide the conditions of life for their inhabitants which might enable them to make the fullest use of these facilities.

Recreation

Recreational activities tend to become an important and distinct segment of life in the city. Urban recreation is particularly distinguished from recreation in rural areas by a greater degree of specialization and commercialization. Opportunities for informal recreation in the city, especially where the cooperation of others is concerned, are restricted by the limited extent of intimate and personal social contacts. No accurate account of this type of recreation is now obtainable. Expenditures for commercial recreation, which constitute 25 percent of the total recreational expenditures, increase directly with city size. Less than 2 percent of the total is accounted for by the recreational expenditures of all governmental agencies—local, State, and Federal. Commercial recreational establishments tend to provide largely passive recreational pursuits, whereas the forms of recreation involving some measure of active participation are largely supported by public and private noncommercial agencies. Public expenditures for recreation by cities over 30,000 population increase with the size of the city. The average public expenditure for such cities was \$1.63 per capita in 1931, or 3.5 percent of the total municipal budget, in addition to an average expenditure of \$0.61 per capita devoted to libraries.

Aside from the support they contribute to libraries, municipalities expend little of public funds for cultural activities such as concerts, museums, artistic and educational exhibits, the opera, and the theatre. Although the number, variety, and quality of recreational facilities increase with city size, their ratio to population is highest in the smaller or medium-sized cities. Utilization of recreational facilities is also greater in these cities. The medium-sized cities have

the highest ratio of park acreage to population, and the rural areas have, of course, the natural recreational facilities of the open country. The large urban centers, however, have their advantage in the more highly institutionalized forms of recreation such as the art gallery and the symphony orchestra.

Religion

Religion, it has been generally assumed, does not thrive in cities, which have been described by their critics as hotbeds of materialism, rationalism, and skepticism. But insofar as the facts about churches give us a clue to religious life, this view must be modified. There are apparently great differences among city dwellers in their relation to the church. Although the church, more than most of our institutions, has resisted urbanization, the urban and the rural church display significant differences. Approximately 60 percent of urban adults are church members, as compared with only 50 percent of the nonurban adult population. The older cities have consistently high church membership rates; the more rapidly growing cities and those with a high proportion of males relatively low rates. Denominational distribution varies considerably according to the size of the city. Protestant church membership decreases with city size, whereas Roman Catholic and Jewish membership increases with city size. This seems to reflect the preponderant trend to the city of immigrants, who belong for the most part to the latter denominations. The natives and older immigrants, whose ratio is greater in the country, belong predom-

inantly to the Protestant groups whose church affiliation is more voluntary and consequently tends to give them a lower ratio. Besides, the farm and the village people, finding no church of their denomination in their own community, often attend church in towns and cities, and thus swell the urban church membership.

Although only one-seventh of the 211,000 church edifices in the United States are located in urban places, they represent more than half of the 4 billion dollars invested in church buildings. But since membership per congregation varies with city size, the average investment per adult member is only about one-third greater in the city than in the rural areas. As in the case of the motion-picture theater, the urban church tends to be an imposing edifice, accommodating a relatively large congregation. The average church debt in cities is \$20,000 but the average debt per adult member is almost the same in city and country. The average annual expenditure per city church (\$14,000) is four times greater than the total United States average. However, the average expenditure per adult member in city churches is only slightly more than the national average. Although rural communities produce more than their proportion of the total ministers, two-thirds of the rural churches lacked resident ministers, something which is not typical of the city church. Urban ministers also possess a superior training, but almost nine-tenths of all ministers have their first pastorate in a rural church, which, it may be inferred, is used by ministers to serve their apprenticeship.

RELIGION

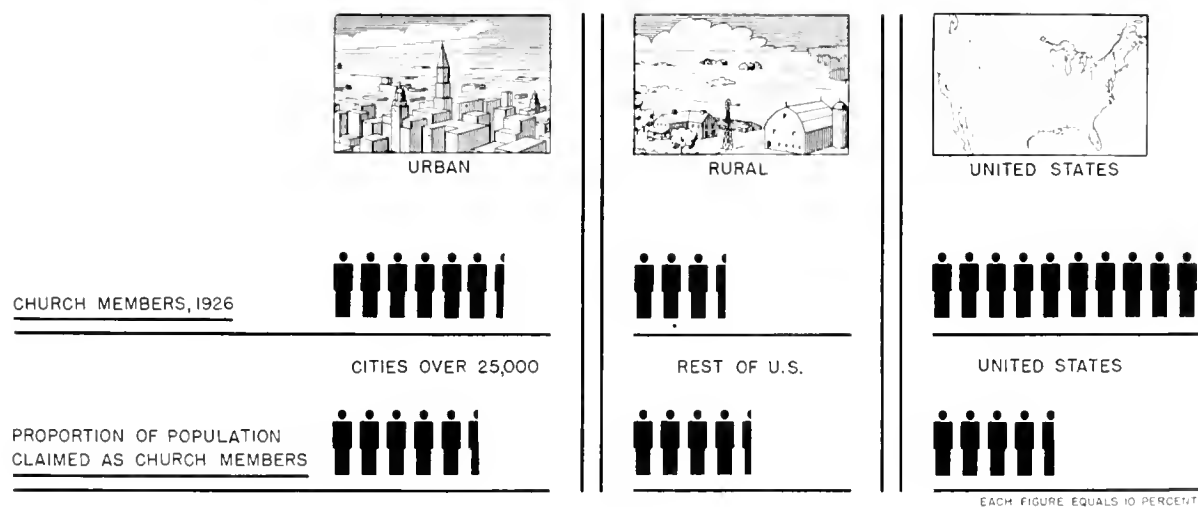


Figure 31

Voluntary Associations¹

The imposing numbers of the urban population, the close physical proximity of their living quarters, the congestion of traffic, and the bustle and maddening tempo of city crowds are likely to obscure the great social isolation which is so characteristic a feature of urban life. The city person whose family ties are less binding, who seldom, because of his mobility, has more than a tenuous connection with a neighborhood, who inhabits a nondescript local community that has no common life to speak of, lives in a relative social void when compared to the villager whose family and community are integrating, stabilizing, and controlling factors in his existence and conduct. But if a frame of social organization serving all or most of the needs of social life is lacking in the city, the urban dweller typically substitutes for, or supplements, his intimate social contacts, which in the country are subsumed under the family and the neighborhood, by associating himself with a number of segmental groups formally organized to pursue a given purpose. Thus the city is the primary locus of a large number of voluntary associations whose recreational, cultural, welfare, protective, economic and civic services have become, for the individual communities and for the nation as a whole, almost as indispensable as those provided by public governmental agencies on the one hand and private commercial enterprise on the other.

The larger urban centers not only possess by far the greatest number of highly diversified and specialized associations, but they have also managed to extend the associational movement to the smaller communities and the rural areas, thus providing them with a pattern of activity largely proceeding from the nature of urban existence. Nevertheless, associations which have a fairly inclusive membership and which are not highly specialized show on the whole a higher per capita membership rate in the smaller communities than in the large metropolitan areas. The reverse is true for the more specialized and less inclusive associations. Within the urban community itself the degree to which individuals affiliate themselves with associations varies directly with their income level. This is particularly true for the recreational associations.

The activities of these voluntary groups—be they recreational, religious, political, economic, or cultural

in their objectives—become the organizational framework through which in large measure the city man expresses and develops his personality, acquires status, and is enabled to carry on the round of vital activities that constitute his life career. It is through these organizations that public opinion and collective action in the urban community are typically moulded and directed. Because for most group purposes one cannot appeal to the manifold discrete individuals, it is only through the organizations to which men belong that their interest and resources can be enlisted for a collective cause. Consequently, these organizations, in which the city man truly comes to live as a social being, tend to become the interest and pressure groups through which the individual's needs and wishes are generally articulated and brought to bear upon social policy.

Talent and Achievement

The privileges and opportunities as well as the handicaps and hazards of life in the city as compared to the country may be thought of from many and varied points of view. They range from the biological and physical advantages of either mode of life—including the chances of maintaining health and prolonging life, access to decent housing, finding satisfying work, sufficient income to assure security and to maintain an adequate and expanding standard of living, and the enjoyment of wholesome leisure—to the less obvious but highly important social and psychological influences which include opportunity for stimulating and fruitful associations with people and for personal self-development and achievement.

Without entering into the question of the relative importance of inherited capacity as contrasted with opportunity for self-development, it is of interest to discover whether significant differences in achievement exist between urban and rural groups and whether they can be attributed to differences in inherited qualities in the population. If these differences should be found to be due to inherited capacity, then the possibilities of balanced progress in the sense of raising one group to the level of the other is, of course, less than it would be if the differences were due to environmental factors.

Some of the advantages of urban life seem to be indispensable to men who would achieve the goals that modern society values. It may well be that the criteria of success which our contemporary society cherishes are predominantly those of urban civilization, and that the rural inhabitant must be judged according to other standards of achievement which are relevant to the world in which he lives. But for good or for ill that world seems to bear the imprint of urbanism in an ever-increasing degree.

¹ The term "voluntary association" is used in this report to denote those groups which are private (as distinguished from public or governmental bodies) and entrance into which rests on the choice of the individual (as distinguished from nonvoluntary formations such as family, church, and nation into which the individual is born). The term "voluntary association" is also restricted in this report to non-profit voluntary associations (as distinguished from profit making corporations, partnerships, etc.). More specifically, then, this section deals with such groups as fraternal orders, civic and reform societies, cooperatives, trade unions, trade associations, youth associations, and recreational and leisure-time groups.

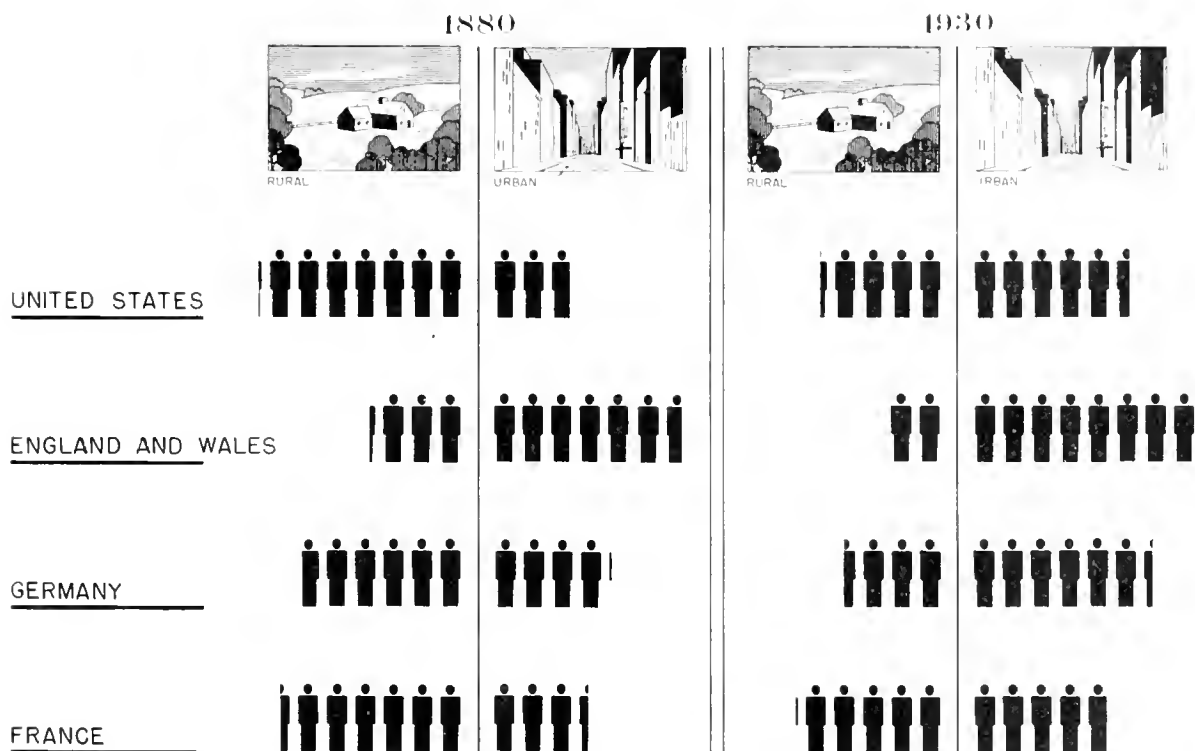
Comparison Between American and European Urbanism

The urbanization of the United States is, as has already been pointed out, merely an aspect of a world-wide movement which has particularly affected the countries touched by industrialism. For a number of reasons no exact comparison between the United States and Europe is possible in respect to some of the major phases of urbanization. On some of the most important points comparable data cannot be found for different countries. It is especially to be noted that it is the United States which is most backward in the information collected about cities. Where data on the same points are available they are frequently rendered incomparable through the use of different units, different methods of collection, and differences in dates of collection. This applies even to population data and to the facts about the most obvious physical characteristics of cities. Nevertheless a few general comparisons may be drawn in a qualified manner. Such comparisons will, of course, fail to take account

of the striking differences that exist between different countries of Europe, as well as the enormous differences within each country.

If, in order to arrive at a rough basis of comparison, we calculate the percentage of population living in different sized communities in different countries, we find that in England and Wales 45.2 percent of the population lives in municipalities with 100,000 or more inhabitants; in Austria, which ranks next, it is 32.5 percent; in Germany 30.2 percent; the United States stands fourth, with 29.6 percent, to be followed by the Netherlands, Denmark, Italy, and France, in the order mentioned, the latter having 15.7 percent. This comparison establishes the relative rank of these countries in terms of the proportion of their population living in great cities. Some of the other industrialized countries of Europe, such as Belgium, have the largest proportion of their urban population in cities smaller than 100,000 as is indicated by the small proportion of the population living in communities with populations of 10,000 and less. According to this

PROPORTION OF RURAL AND URBAN POPULATION IN UNITED STATES, GREAT BRITAIN, GERMANY AND FRANCE



EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS 10 PER CENT OF TOTAL POPULATION

Figure 32

broader criterion of urbanization, England and Wales rank first, with only 25.7 percent of their population in such communities; the Netherlands second, with 36.4 percent; Italy third, with 49.6 percent; Germany fourth, with 50.7 percent; the United States fifth, with 52.5 percent; and Belgium sixth, with 54.1 percent.

In general it may be said that the European cities have assumed their urban character and proportions more gradually than have those of the United States. Whereas the modern urban civilization of Europe emerged by slow stages out of the town economy and culture of the Middle Ages, the United States acquired its urban cast relatively suddenly upon a background of primitive agriculturalism. Many of the European cities still bear the marks of their medieval origins, as can be seen in the town plans, the vestiges of walls which once were fortifications, the nature of the streets and of the buildings. In some of the larger cities of Europe great efforts have been made to preserve what remains of the medieval atmosphere. The center of the European city is almost invariably devoted exclusively to administrative buildings and given over to those structures which have survived from ancient times. With the advent of modern technology the city wall became obsolete and indeed a hindrance to growth and national development. As a result we find many of the European cities divided into two major parts: the ancient city at the center and the new or modern city outside the line of former walls which enclosed the inner core. The difference in the atmosphere of these two parts is generally striking. The European cities, moreover, were in existence before the railroad era and are therefore not so significantly affected as are the American cities by the pattern which the railroad imposed. To be sure, many of them have had to adapt their structure in the course of the nineteenth century to accommodate and obtain the benefits of the new system of transportation and communication which the age of steam and electricity made possible. In most instances, however, the new transportation system was subordinated to the already existing pattern of the city rather than allowed to dominate it.

Many of the European cities were planned from the beginning, and in comparison to American urban communities show a degree of order, symmetry, and integration only rarely found in the United States. While many of them are more densely and solidly built up than our American cities, they do not show the abrupt contrast between the skyscrapers at the center and the low, scattered structures at the periphery that is so characteristic of the American city. Consequently, despite the fact that many of their streets at the core of the city are narrow and ancient, they do not suffer from the degree of congestion found in the United

NUMBER OF GREAT CITIES OF 100,000 OR OVER AND PROPORTION OF TOTAL POPULATION IN SUCH CITIES IN THE UNITED STATES, GREAT BRITAIN, GERMANY AND FRANCE.



States. The relative scarcity of automobiles contributes, of course, to this freedom from congestion. The European cities, moreover, owe some of their beauty, orderliness, and spaciousness to the relative absence, or at least effective control, of land speculation and to the greater degree of land ownership by the municipality or the national government. Great open spaces, which render the city habitable as well as aesthetically satisfying, monumental buildings made possible by the different system of land ownership and assemblage, and greater control over building construction extending over long periods of time combine to avoid some of the most obvious defects of American urban structure.

European cities as a rule have municipalized their public utilities to a much greater extent than have American cities. As a result public utilities have been developed in European cities in a more integrated, orderly and noncompetitive fashion than is the case in the United States. Because they own and manage these services, the European municipalities have consequently been able to exercise greater control over the rate and direction of growth of the city. Similarly because European governments as a rule exercise greater social control over private enterprise, they have been able through their building regulations, their zoning and other regulatory activities, to control the growth, the development and adaptation of their cities to new conditions more effectively in the interests of the common welfare than has been the case in the United States. The paucity of resources and the scarcity of capital have forced the Europeans to prevent or restrain speculative orgies and to be more

cautions and thoughtful in the construction of buildings and the initiation of new enterprises. European cities seem to show ample evidence that they were not built merely for today and tomorrow. They breathe an atmosphere of permanence which stands in sharp contrast to the temporary and provisional character of great parts of American cities, especially the outlying portions of the jerry-built slums. Through a larger measure of social control, European municipalities, furthermore, have been able in some measure to mitigate the blighting influences of rapid growth and of the unsound conversion of land from one use to another.

The conception of government in European countries and the conditions of life prevailing there have led, at least in the advanced industrial countries, to greater concern on the part of government for the welfare of the individuals and communities. Health and hygiene measures, public welfare practices including social insurance, public recreation, housing, and even banking have obviously given to the community a greater range of instrumentalities through which to guide and direct urban life than has been the case in the United States, where the tradition still persists that the least government is the best government. European countries have a long-standing tradition of public personnel practices which has resulted in the management of municipal affairs by experts who are relatively free from the vicissitudes of party politics. Some European countries, moreover, have found that there is no necessary incompatibility between democratic control and expert services where expertness is needed.

The fact that, in general, European countries have more centralized government than the United States has led to the emergence of a national policy and a greater concern in these countries about reconciling local needs and interests with those of the nation as a whole. There is, consequently, a relative absence of the conflict between local and national interests, and there is less objection and difficulty than there is in the United States about intervention by the national government in local affairs. European cities can deal directly with their national governments and the national governments can deal directly with the cities without the intermediation of states and counties.

As a rule there are many more matters in European cities which are definitely outside the realm of politics and exclusively in the realm of administration than is the case in the United States. As a result, policies

that have been adopted can be carried out by responsible officials without interference by political pressure groups. Since the resources of the European countries are less susceptible to expansion than are our own, their social classes are more rigidly fixed and mobility of population is considerably less. This makes for greater stability of life. Moreover, the European countries as a rule have more homogeneous populations and a more integrated and settled culture, which may account for the absence of some of the problems which seem to be chronic in American cities.

Throughout their history, and especially in recent times, European countries have been profoundly affected by their relations with their neighbors in much greater degree than has the United States, which is virtually a continent by itself. This has made European countries more alert to the formulation of national policies with respect to their resources, their population, their taxation systems, and their military power. This has left its impress upon their cities—their location, function, structure, and control. Particularly significant in this respect is the threat of war, which of late has called forth numerous devices to insure the cities against their vulnerability to the new methods of warfare, especially aerial attack.

The cities of Europe, therefore, in contrast to the cities of America, are much more closely connected with the national government, exercise a great deal more control over the lives of the citizens, regulate individual enterprise more strictly, are more settled in their structure, have been slower in their growth, are more homogeneous culturally, practice greater economies, and resort to more comprehensive and continuous planning, but are at the same time confronted by greater threats of destruction, have less reserves of resources, and allow less exercise of popular control. It would be difficult to decide where life is better, all things considered, for it is probably true that we would be unwilling to exchange some of our opportunities, traditions, and values for any possible gain in the way of stability and efficiency to be derived from alternative systems of government and social life. But even without restricting unduly our freedom we should be able to profit from the long experience in urban community life of the European cities about which a great deal of valuable information has been accumulated. Their experience should be particularly valuable to us as we, too, enter a more mature stage of national and urban existence.

PART I—SECTION 2

THE PROCESS OF URBANIZATION

UNDERLYING FORCES AND EMERGING TRENDS

Preconditions of Urbanization

Having delineated some of the most characteristic features of urbanism in the United States, both as it operates in the national scene and as it molds the way of life of the people that comprise the varied kinds of urban communities, there remain to be considered the underlying forces that have brought about the decisive differences between country and city and among different types of cities and that are even now at work in transforming our cities and our national life. If the cities are as significant a phase of civilized existence as they appear to have been throughout history, then we must regard the determining factors in urbanization as more or less identical with those that have shaped civilization itself.

Agricultural Surplus

A precondition for the emergence and growth of cities is a level of agricultural production sufficiently high to release a substantial part of the population from agricultural labor, and to permit the concentration in cities of people engaged in nonagricultural enterprises formerly performed on the farm and in the village. But since in all but the industrialized parts of the world it still requires approximately three agricultural workers to support each person engaged in nonagricultural pursuits, urbanization has proceeded slowly in most regions outside the Western World. Except for a few large port and capital cities, these regions have developed only a low degree of urbanization when contrasted with Western Europe and the United States.

The general conclusion that urbanization rests upon a surplus of agricultural products beyond the bare subsistence requirements of the rural population itself does not, however, justify the inference that only those countries can evolve an urban type of civilization which produce an agricultural surplus within their own national boundaries. This may well have been true in more primitive cultures when the technology of transportation and storage was technologically crude; but it is no longer true in a country that has access to the products of the whole world and has mastered the mechanical problems of transportation and preservation of the necessities of life. This is well illustrated in the case of highly urbanized and industrialized Eng-

land, which supports a relatively enormous population on a disproportionately small territory by exchanging its industrial products and services for the agricultural produce of its overseas colonies and the other countries of the world.

It would be even more misleading to assume that cities are dependent upon the agricultural surpluses of the immediate hinterlands which they dominate. Under conditions made possible by modern technology and the intricate web of commercial interrelations, the basis of subsistence of the urban center is often far-flung, indirect, and world-wide rather than local. It is not so much the state of agriculture in its immediate vicinity as the degree of agricultural efficiency reached by the larger world with which it is interconnected that conditions the existence and growth of the city. In the United States, which until recently was virtually a virgin territory, even an extensive agriculture was able to provide a vast surplus. This great disproportion between men and resources is a significant factor in the unprecedented rapidity of the urbanization of the nation. Through the application of the technology produced in the city, agricultural productivity has been enhanced and rural conditions of living have been lifted to a higher level.

Centripetal Influence of Steam

The growth of cities since about the beginning of the 19th century in Western Europe and in the United States in particular is attributable, secondly, to the scientific discoveries and mechanical inventions which facilitated the development of power-driven machinery. Of these revolutionizing innovations none was probably more fundamental than the application of steam as a source of power for industry and transportation to supplement and replace the previously available sources of power, especially water. Prior to the steam era, few cities exceeded 100,000 and it is doubtful whether any city, even such renowned centers as Rome, Peking, or Nanking, ever exceeded 1 million in population. Not until the great economic and social changes that we identify as the Industrial Revolution had been set in motion did the modern great city become possible. The emergence of the great city, however, itself in turn became a major force in revolutionizing man's existence.

Steam not only made possible a vast increase in man's potential means of subsistence and, consequently, in his numbers but indirectly by releasing a rapidly increasing proportion of the population from the actual tilling of the soil, it became an overwhelming force in the cityward migration and played a major role in determining the internal structure of the city and of the economic organization of which it became the nucleus. In the pre-steam era, because of the crude, inefficient, and expensive means of transportation which man had at his disposal, the provisioning of large cities was difficult, as was the supplying of raw materials and the distribution of finished products over a wide area. Consequently most manufacturing was local.

Apart from the military necessity of concentrating the largest number of inhabitants and structures within the smallest possible walled area, the city before the age of steam had no need for marked concentration into a "down town" or central-business district which is a distinguishing mark of the modern city. Steam has operated as a concentrative force through its direct use as power. Since steam is most cheaply produced in large quantities and must be used close to where it is produced, from which point the power it generates can be extended only over limited distances by means of shafting, belts, and pulleys, it fostered the concentration of manufacturing processes and large units of production. But since it could not be used economically for local transportation, its use as power in manufacturing tended also to concentrate managerial and wholesale distributing activities and above all, population, near the factory. Moreover, the great economies in long-distance transportation, which steam made possible, further accentuated the concentration of industry and population into large urban centers which, because of their favorable situation from the standpoint of production and markets, continued to attract ever more industries, commerce, and population. The large, densely built up and rapidly growing city with a single center where transportation lines and hence traffic converge, derives its principal structural features in large measure from the centripetal influence of steam.

Electricity and the Automobile

In recent years, and while steam was molding the pattern of urbanization, a new force has come upon the scene. Whereas steam has had a concentrative effect, electricity and the internal-combustion engine, which became available after the pattern of American cities had already become fixed, have tended to have precisely the opposite effect. The dispersive influence of electricity is due to the fact that it can be transmitted economically even now over distances up to about 300

miles and that it can be used as power with almost equal efficiency in large or small units. It also has decided advantages over steam for rapid local transportation. It has at least the potentiality of exercising a centrifugal influence upon cities as contrasted with the centripetal force exerted by steam. Up to the present, however, electricity, through its use as power for the fast electric elevator and for urban and suburban transit, has mainly accentuated concentration as in the skyscraper and in the overdeveloped, congested, central business district.

In addition to its use as power, electricity, as distinguished from steam, has a quality which has to be reckoned with as a reconstructive element in urban life, the urban structure and our entire social order, namely its use in communication. This use in the form of the telegraph, the telephone, and the radio has only recently been felt and appreciated. It gives promise of having at least as great an influence in reshaping our cities and our civilization during the twentieth century as steam did during the nineteenth.

If to the influences of electricity we add the flexibility, the speed and the individualization of transportation effected by the internal-combustion engine as embodied in the automobile and the airplane, we may say that these new technological devices are likely to alter the structure of the urban community and national life profoundly whether or not we consciously use them as instruments to improve our mode of living.

The Technological Revolution¹

One of the most striking consequences of modern transportation, commerce, and communication is the fact that despite physical distances, national boundaries, and sectional differences, the world, at least from a technological standpoint, has become more uniform and interdependent. Hence the advances made in one part of the world are readily and rapidly diffused to all the rest. With reference to cities this means that their size, rate of growth, structure, and function depend less upon local circumstances than upon the general level of knowledge and civilization that has been achieved anywhere at a given point in time.

Indeed so far has mechanization progressed that nowadays a good share of what may properly be called agricultural production and the work of the farmer is actually carried on in urban communities. The farmer no longer, generally speaking, produces his own agricultural tools and implements, but procures them from urban factories and through urban mail-order houses. Our grain is transformed into

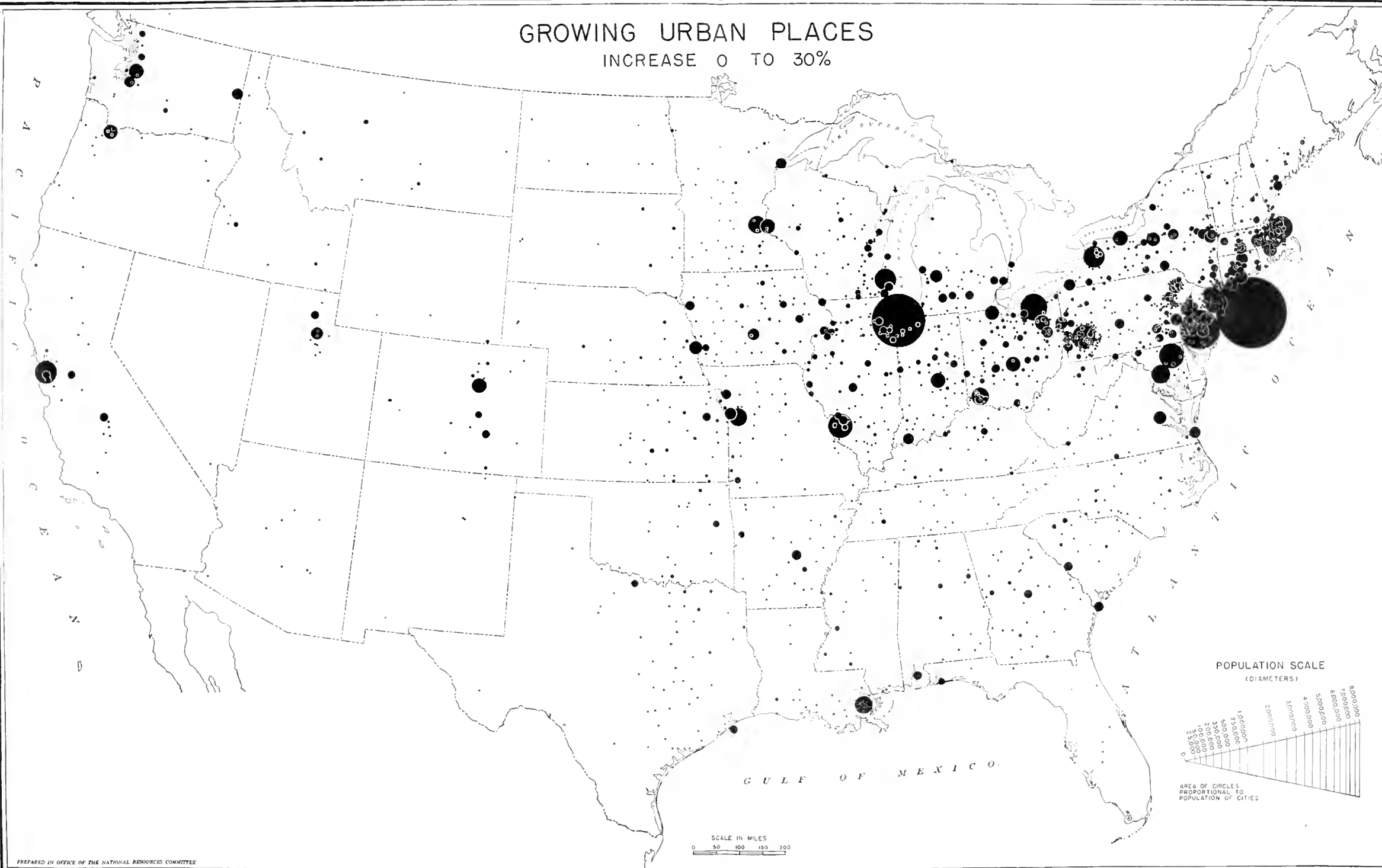
¹ Cf. *Technological Trends and National Policy*, National Resources Committee.



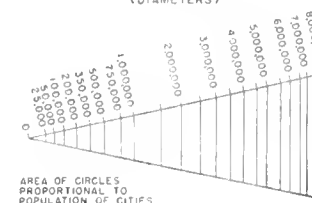
UNIV
OF

GROWING URBAN PLACES

INCREASE 0 TO 30%



POPULATION SCALE
(DIAMETERS)



AREA OF CIRCLES
PROPORTIONAL TO
POPULATION OF CITIES

SCALE IN MILES
0 50 100 150 200

GROWING URBAN PLACES

INCREASE 30% OR MORE

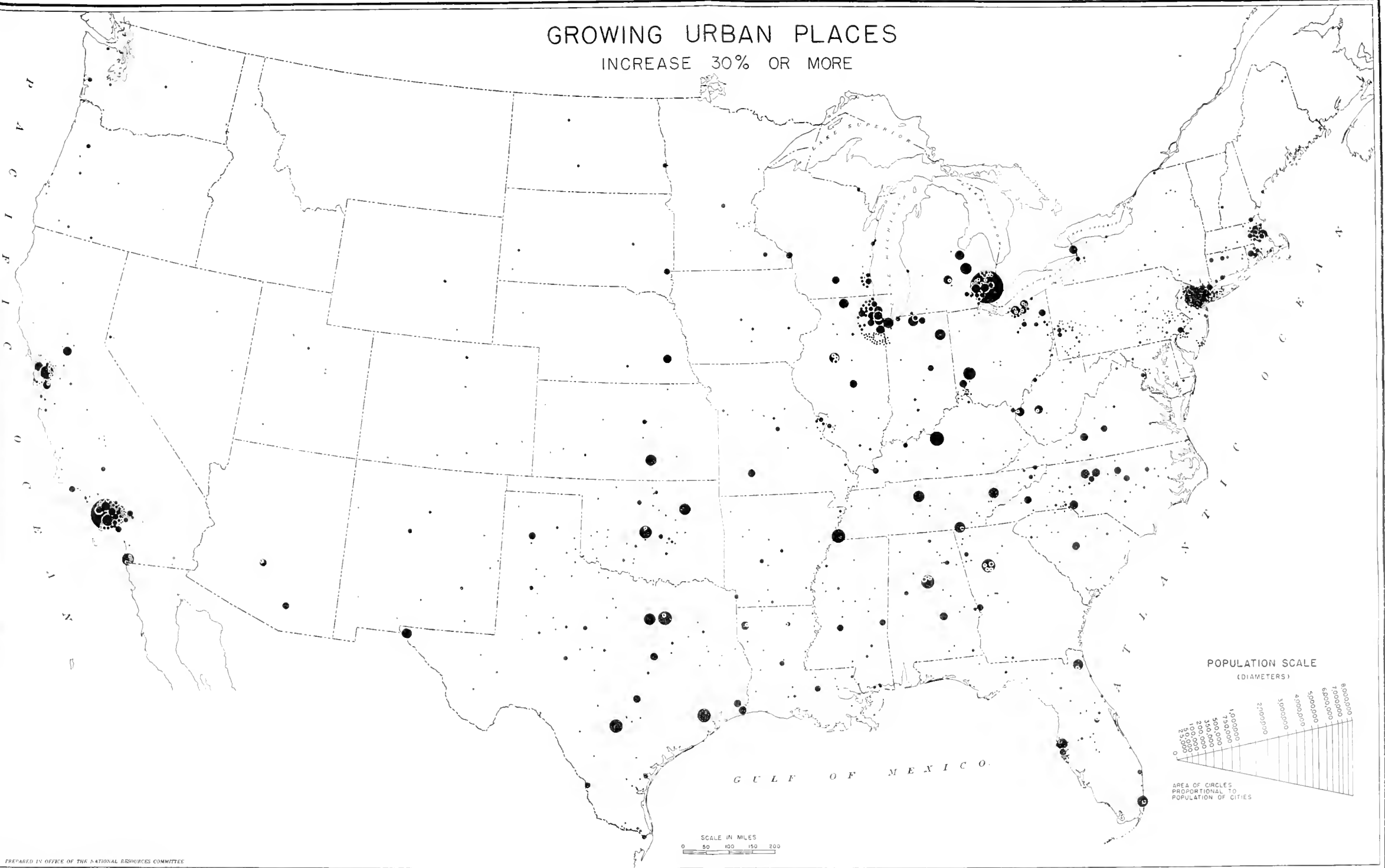
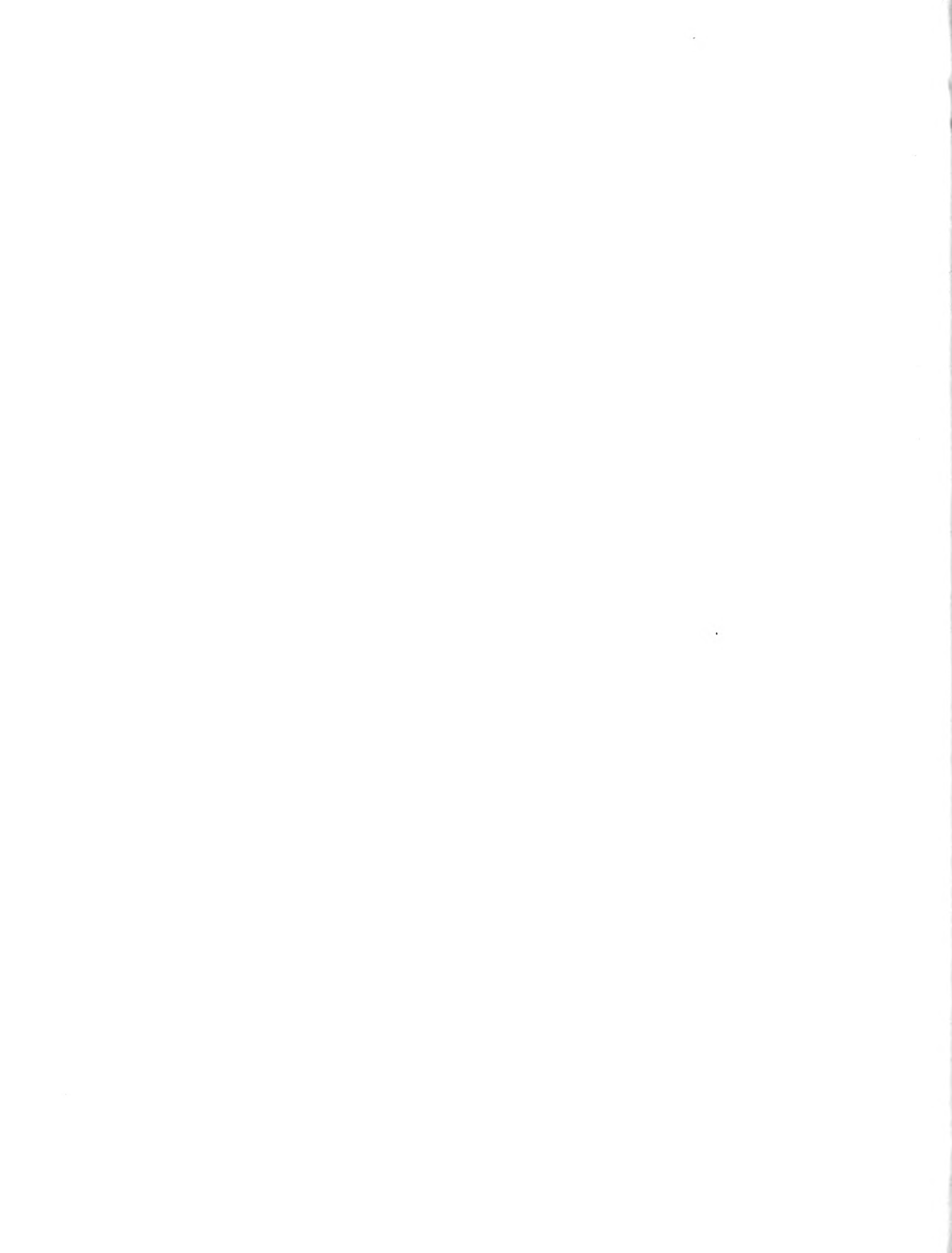


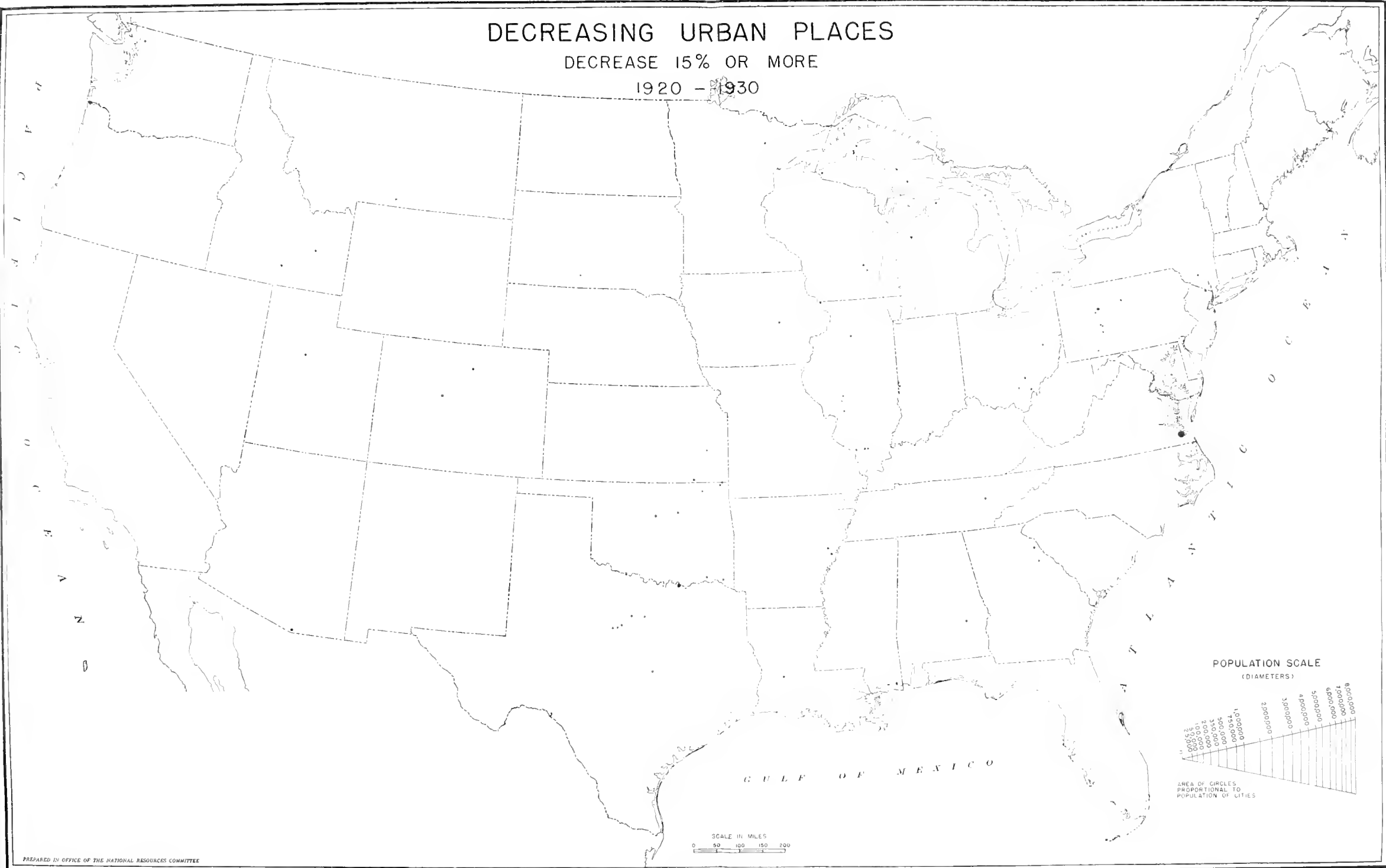
FIGURE 34



DECREASING URBAN PLACES

DECREASE 15% OR MORE

1920 - 1930

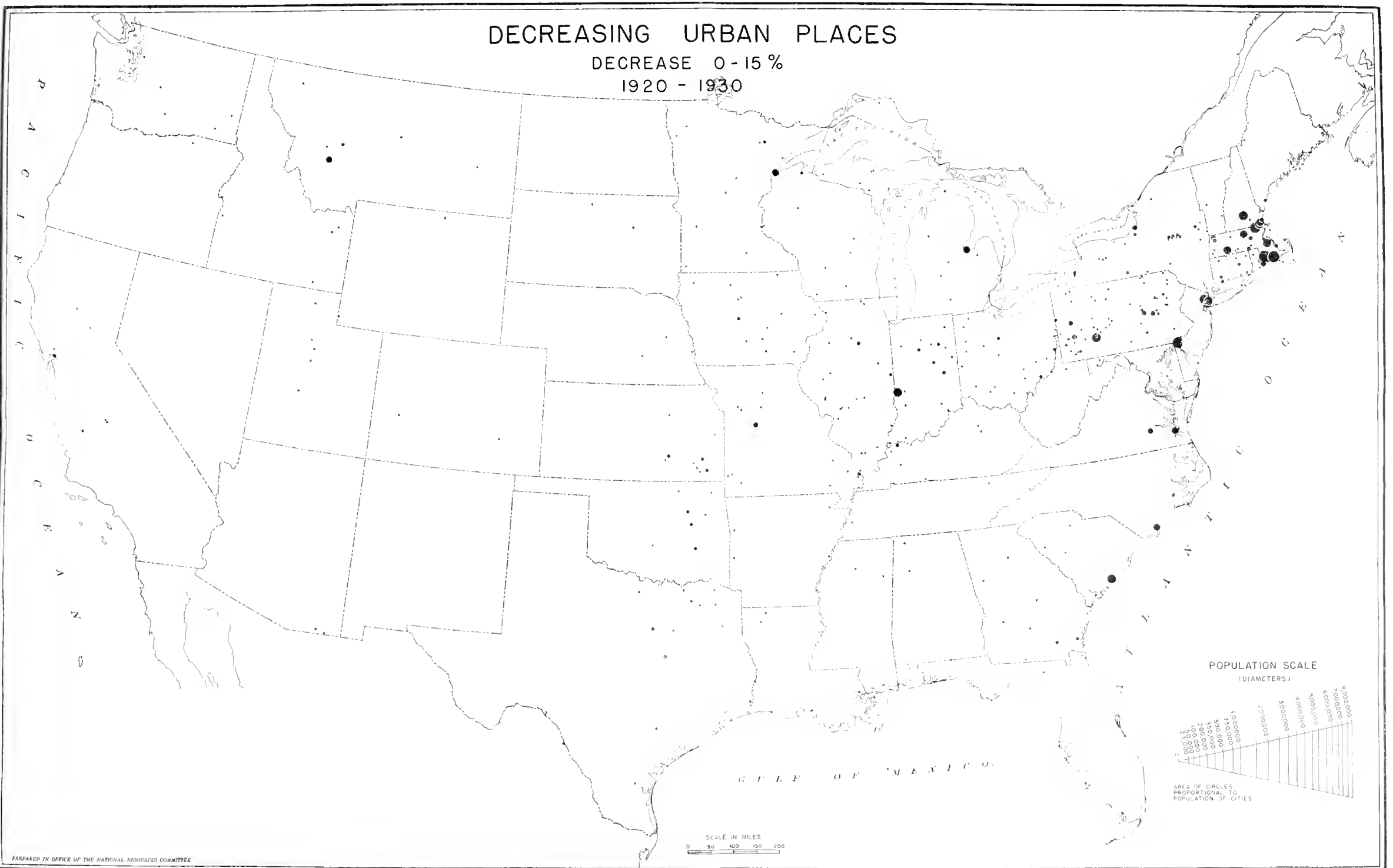


PREPARED IN OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

FIGURE 37

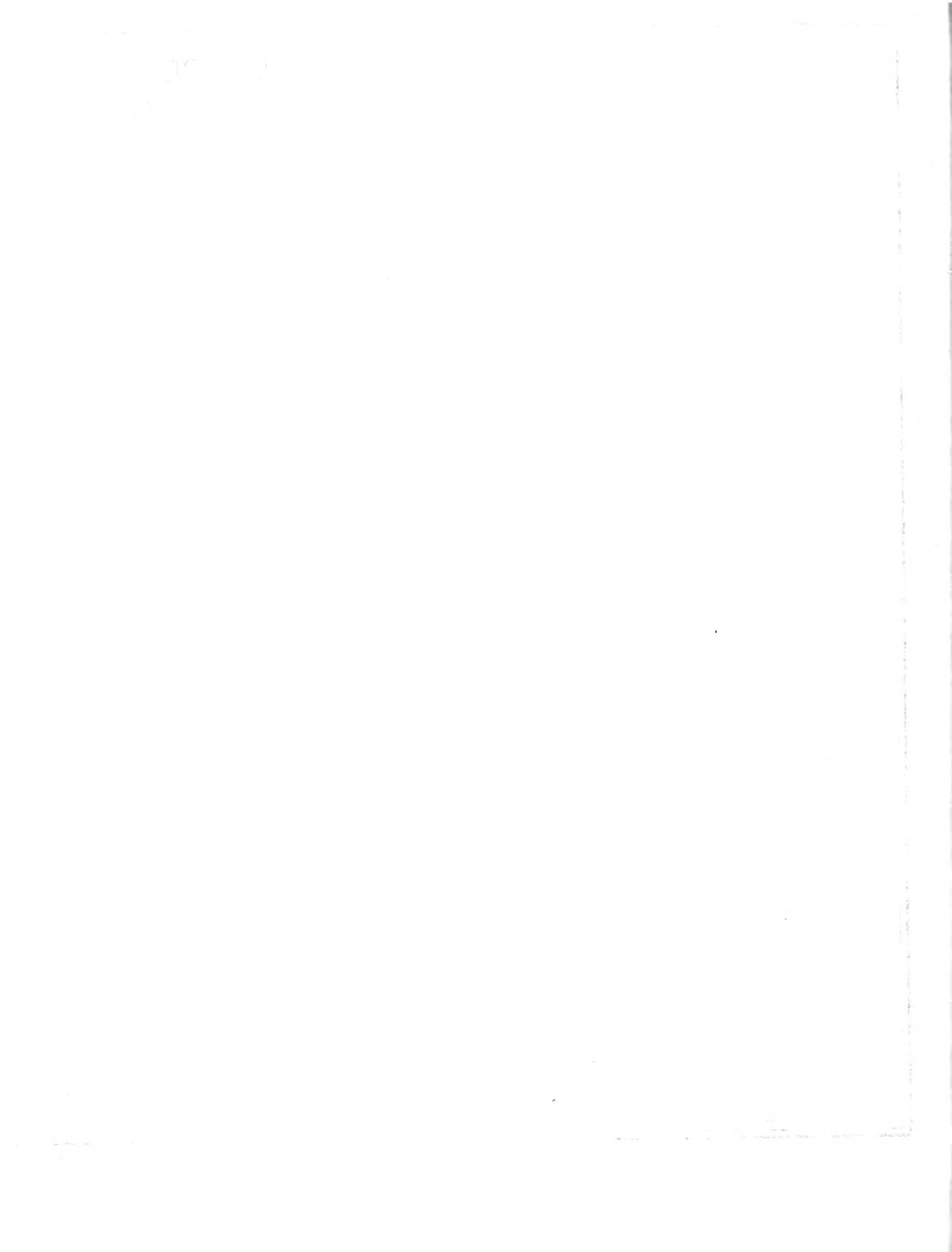
DECREASING URBAN PLACES

DECREASE 0 - 15 %
1920 - 1930



PREPARED IN OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Figure 36



flour and other food products for man and animals in huge urban factories and shipped back, in large part, to the farmer as a finished product. The same is true of meat and fibers. There is ample evidence that whatever its traditional repute may be, the city is no longer a predatory parasite content with consuming the products that the country has produced and giving nothing in return. A new division of labor between country and city has emerged which neither can afford to undermine without sinking to a lower level of security and well-being.

Sanitation

The development of modern sanitation is another significant precondition to the existence of the modern city. Life for large masses of people spatially removed from and yet closely dependent upon a constant supply of water, food, fuel, and raw materials is in itself conditioned by a high degree of technological development and the perfection of administrative organization. But the task of conquering the hazards of life among a vast congested population, such as inhabits a great city, in the face of disease, can be appreciated better if we consider that before the advent of modern sanitation the deaths in cities of the Western World regularly exceeded the births by a considerable margin. If in addition we recall that the population of the western countries was frequently afflicted by epidemics that swept away a large portion of their inhabitants and that this is still in a measure true of backward countries, we can realize the significance of modern sanitation for urban existence. The ample provision of pure water, the perfection of centralized sewerage and waste disposal systems, the insurance of a safe food supply, and the prevention and control of contagious diseases are the chief measures that for more than a century have made it possible for most western cities to maintain population by lowering the death rate. This was accomplished in spite of the adverse effects of heavy migration upon the health of the urban population.

Specific Urbanizing Forces and Emerging Urban Trends

Having considered the principal preconditions for urbanization, we may now turn to examine some of the factors that are shaping this process today, and paying particular attention to recent urban trends, note the future prospects of urban America.

The basic factors that operate to produce the city, determine its character and growth and generate its problems and indirectly those of our Nation, have two major aspects: (1) National or interurban, (2) internal or intraurban. Cities come into existence as products of and as focal points in the social and

economic life of a people that has reached a certain stage of development. The resulting division of labor presupposes and furthers urbanization. When a civilization arrives at such a stage of maturity that its life is no longer local and self-sufficient but is intertwined in a nexus of national and world commerce, technology, population movement, social, and intellectual intercourse and cultural and political contact, cities emerge because they discharge certain vital functions. The very existence and the growth of cities in turn sets into operation forces that create problems both within the city and in the Nation at large.

Extent and Speed of Urbanization

The outstanding factor in the urbanization of the United States is the speed with which it has progressed. In addition, the urbanization of the United States has continued apace even after the major western industrial countries have already reached an approximately stable rural urban equilibrium. This may be attributed to our enormous reserves of unexploited resources which stimulated domestic population growth and attracted immigrants from the economically hard pressed countries of Europe.

Within a single generation, 1900 to 1930, the urban population of the United States grew from 30 million to nearly 69 million, or by about 130 percent. During the most recent of these census decades (1920-30), urban population growth had slowed down to 26 percent, and in the period from 1930 to 1935 it was still further reduced to an estimated 3 percent. While this indicates a considerable retardation in the pace of urban growth, it is still significant because it exceeds the rate of growth of the population as a whole and contrasts with the relative stabilization of rural America.

The large cities of the country as a whole have grown more rapidly than the small cities, indicating that the national urban pattern is becoming fixed. Most of the larger cities which have lost population in recent decades are located in New England. The cities along the Atlantic seaboard which in general had their most rapid growth at an earlier period of national development, grew in the decade 1920-30 by about 25 percent, those in the Great Lakes region by 36 percent, those in the South by about 53 percent, and those of the West coast by 65 percent. The settlement of the western frontier and the accompanying agricultural expansion, the attraction of the climate in Florida, California, and the Southwest, both because of specialized agriculture and the growing class of people who can afford to live or retire where they please, the phenomenal expansion of the oil industry, the development of heavy industry in the Great Lakes

region, symbolized by the rise of the Detroit region in connection with the automobile industry, and Gary in the Chicago district in connection with steel—these account for the recent shifts of urban development into newer regions or into areas offering greater economic opportunity and other special advantages.

In view of the relatively limited quantity of agricultural products which the national and world market can absorb, and of the relatively unlimited human capacity to consume the products of industry, and in the light of the perceivable reflux from the frontier as well as the probable increase in the mechanization of agriculture, it is to be expected that regions of intensive manufacturing and commercial activity will attract an increasing share of the population, particularly of the urban portion. Consequently, the conditions of living, which are characteristic of the largest cities and which have affected an ever-increasing proportion of the population, may be expected to become even more widely diffused throughout the Nation.

Reproduction of Population

In view of the fact, already alluded to, that the city is apparently not conducive to family life and the rearing of children, it is significant to present the factors that underlie the growth of urban population. The proof for the failure of the cities to maintain themselves is found in their reproductive indexes, or the ratios of children under 5 to women of 20 to 44 years of age. In 1930 only three cities of over 100,000 had a reproduction index above 1.0. The still existing surplus of births over deaths in other cities is due only to the fact that for the time being their age composition is favorable to a low death rate and a high birth rate, which will be of less significance in the coming years. The postponement of marriage because of the prolongation of the period of educational preparation and economic handicaps, the greater probability of broken families, the emancipation of women and their entry into the vocations and professions, the spread of birth control, the diminution of child labor and the consequent depreciation of children as economic assets, the premium put upon small families by virtue of economic insecurity coupled with the craving for status and a high standard of living, and the rapidly declining proportion of immigrant families—are among the forces reducing the urban birthrate, especially in the largest cities, to a point insufficient to reproduce the population.

This fact is of greater national significance today than formerly, since it applies now to the majority of the American population. It follows, therefore, that if the larger cities are to grow or even to maintain

themselves, their population must be recruited in the future to an increasing extent from other communities. With foreign immigration practically cut off, the domestic rural areas are the only possible sources of recruitment. But since the rural population constitutes considerably less than half of the total and since the rural birth rate is also declining rapidly, a marked slowing down of city growth is impending. Our urban growth in the present decade will probably not exceed half that of the previous one. Furthermore, our urban population probably will be recruited increasingly from the economically and culturally least favorable rural areas where the reproduction rates for the time being remain high. This may affect the quality of the urban stock adversely, may put added burdens upon urban institutions and may involve personal and social costs of readjustment.

The prospects of a marked slowing down of population growth, especially that of cities, presages a number of important changes in the economic and social life of cities and of the Nation as a whole. Those enterprises, both public and private, the growth of which depends upon and responds to increase in population, should become more stable. Thus we may look forward to a lessened need for the expansion and to an increased need and opportunity for improving the quality of public utilities, of welfare and educational institutions, and to much more gradual changes in land values. With slower growth and lessened migration the urban population will tend to be older, and consequently the power and interests of older people will probably bulk larger in the future. It will be easier to provide education for the young, a fact already evident in many cities through the lessened enrollment in the elementary schools; and there will be increasing need for adult education. Industry and business will have to adjust themselves to using older workers or the community will have to assume greater responsibility for the support of its aged. The scarcity of children and youths will correspondingly call for greater concern about the conservation of these potential human resources.

If our present immigration policy is continued, our white urban population will tend toward greater cultural homogeneity. At the same time we may expect our cities to contain a greater proportion of Negroes recruited from the rural South. If the low-reproduction rate should turn out to be inherent in city life, we must ultimately face the prospect of declining population not only in the city but in the Nation as well, or we must attempt to reverse the trend toward urbanization. If, on the other hand, the lowered urban reproduction rate is due either to conditions merely incidental to city life, a social policy seeking to create

region, symbolized by the rise of the Detroit region in connection with the automobile industry, and Gary in the Chicago district in connection with steel—these account for the recent shifts of urban development into newer regions or into areas offering greater economic opportunity and other special advantages.

In view of the relatively limited quantity of agricultural products which the national and world market can absorb, and of the relatively unlimited human capacity to consume the products of industry, and in the light of the perceivable reflux from the frontier as well as the probable increase in the mechanization of agriculture, it is to be expected that regions of intensive manufacturing and commercial activity will attract an increasing share of the population, particularly of the urban portion. Consequently, the conditions of living, which are characteristic of the largest cities and which have affected an ever-increasing proportion of the population, may be expected to become even more widely diffused throughout the Nation.

Reproduction of Population

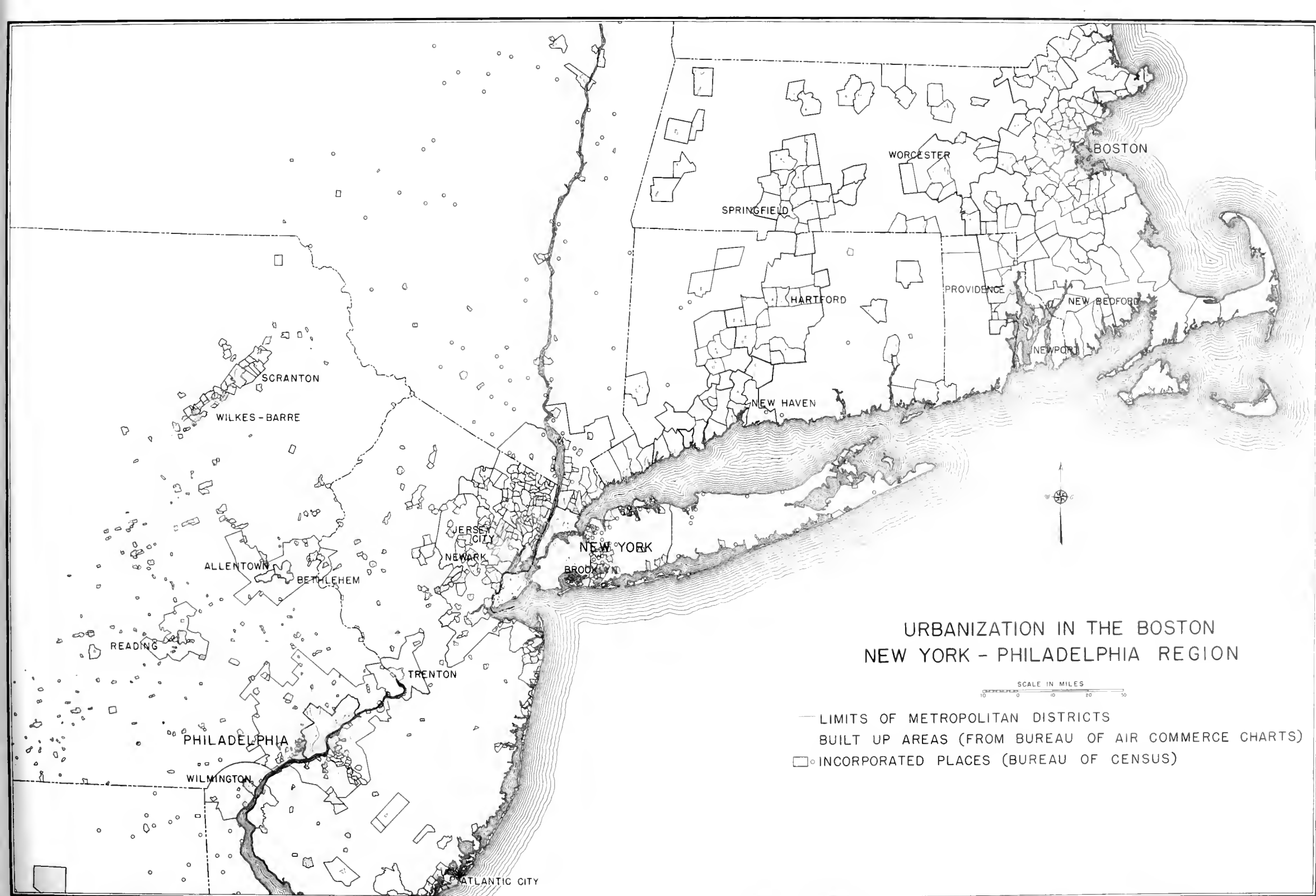
In view of the fact, already alluded to, that the city is apparently not conducive to family life and the rearing of children, it is significant to present the factors that underlie the growth of urban population. The proof for the failure of the cities to maintain themselves is found in their reproductive indexes, or the ratios of children under 5 to women of 20 to 44 years of age. In 1930 only three cities of over 100,000 had a reproduction index above 1.0. The still existing surplus of births over deaths in other cities is due only to the fact that for the time being their age composition is favorable to a low death rate and a high birth rate, which will be of less significance in the coming years. The postponement of marriage because of the prolongation of the period of educational preparation and economic handicaps, the greater probability of broken families, the emancipation of women and their entry into the vocations and professions, the spread of birth control, the diminution of child labor and the consequent depreciation of children as economic assets, the premium put upon small families by virtue of economic insecurity coupled with the craving for status and a high standard of living, and the rapidly declining proportion of immigrant families—are among the forces reducing the urban birthrate, especially in the largest cities, to a point insufficient to reproduce the population.

This fact is of greater national significance today than formerly, since it applies now to the majority of the American population. It follows, therefore, that if the larger cities are to grow or even to maintain

themselves, their population must be recruited in the future to an increasing extent from other communities. With foreign immigration practically cut off, the domestic rural areas are the only possible sources of recruitment. But since the rural population constitutes considerably less than half of the total and since the rural birth rate is also declining rapidly, a marked slowing down of city growth is impending. Our urban growth in the present decade will probably not exceed half that of the previous one. Furthermore, our urban population probably will be recruited increasingly from the economically and culturally least favorable rural areas where the reproduction rates for the time being remain high. This may affect the quality of the urban stock adversely, may put added burdens upon urban institutions and may involve personal and social costs of readjustment.

The prospects of a marked slowing down of population growth, especially that of cities, presages a number of important changes in the economic and social life of cities and of the Nation as a whole. Those enterprises, both public and private, the growth of which depends upon and responds to increase in population, should become more stable. Thus we may look forward to a lessened need for the expansion and to an increased need and opportunity for improving the quality of public utilities, of welfare and educational institutions, and to much more gradual changes in land values. With slower growth and lessened migration the urban population will tend to be older, and consequently the power and interests of older people will probably bulk larger in the future. It will be easier to provide education for the young, a fact already evident in many cities through the lessened enrollment in the elementary schools; and there will be increasing need for adult education. Industry and business will have to adjust themselves to using older workers or the community will have to assume greater responsibility for the support of its aged. The scarcity of children and youths will correspondingly call for greater concern about the conservation of these potential human resources.

If our present immigration policy is continued, our white urban population will tend toward greater cultural homogeneity. At the same time we may expect our cities to contain a greater proportion of Negroes recruited from the rural South. If the low-reproduction rate should turn out to be inherent in city life, we must ultimately face the prospect of declining population not only in the city but in the Nation as well, or we must attempt to reverse the trend toward urbanization. If, on the other hand, the lowered urban reproduction rate is due either to conditions merely incidental to city life, a social policy seeking to create



URBANIZATION IN THE BOSTON NEW YORK - PHILADELPHIA REGION

SCALE IN MILES
10 0 10 20 30

- LIMITS OF METROPOLITAN DISTRICTS
- BUILT UP AREAS (FROM BUREAU OF AIR COMMERCE CHARTS)
- INCORPORATED PLACES (BUREAU OF CENSUS)



POPULATION GROWTH IN THE 96 METROPOLITAN DISTRICTS

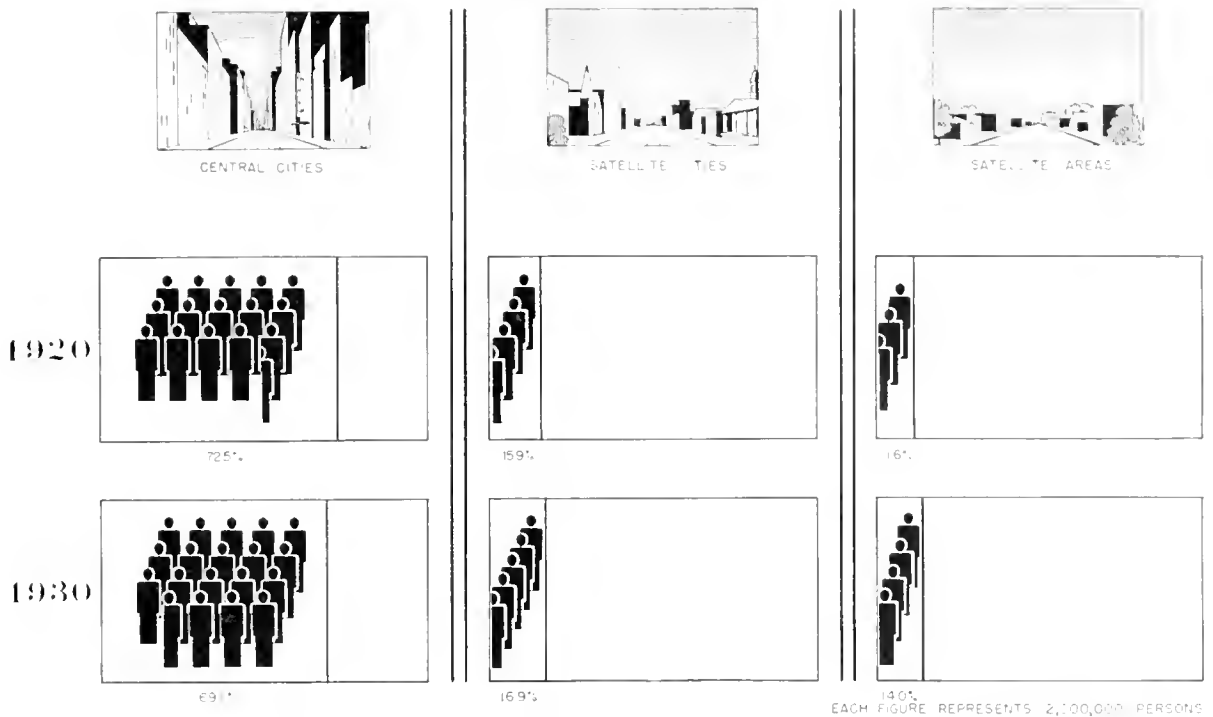


Figure 29

conditions more favorable to reproduction is to be envisaged. The declining rural-reproduction rate, which is coming to characterize modern industrial countries generally, suggests the possibility, however, that the rural-urban differential in reproduction is a result of the impact of industrial civilization upon the manner of life and the attitudes of modern man generally. Naturally, this impact would manifest itself first in cities but not confine itself to them. It should not be assumed that a stationary or even a declining population is undesirable either from a personal or from a social standpoint. Nor need we assume that a trend toward lowered reproduction rates is irreversible once it has begun. The quantity and the quality of population of the country at large and of the cities is, however, of utmost concern to the cities of the future and must be considered in shaping national policies.

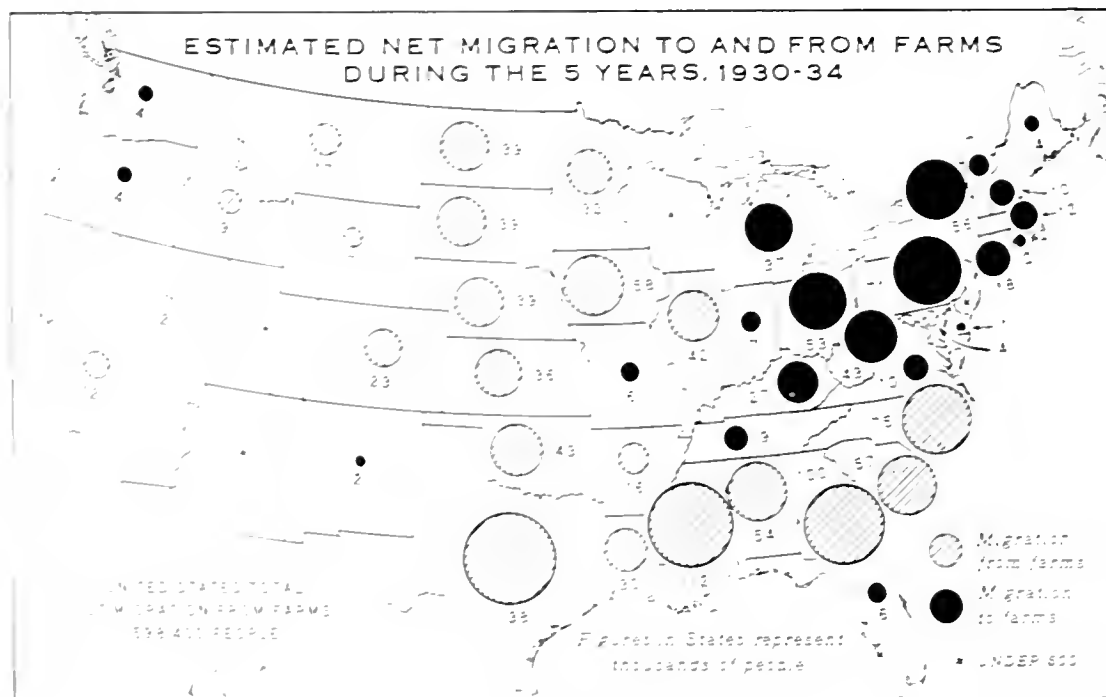
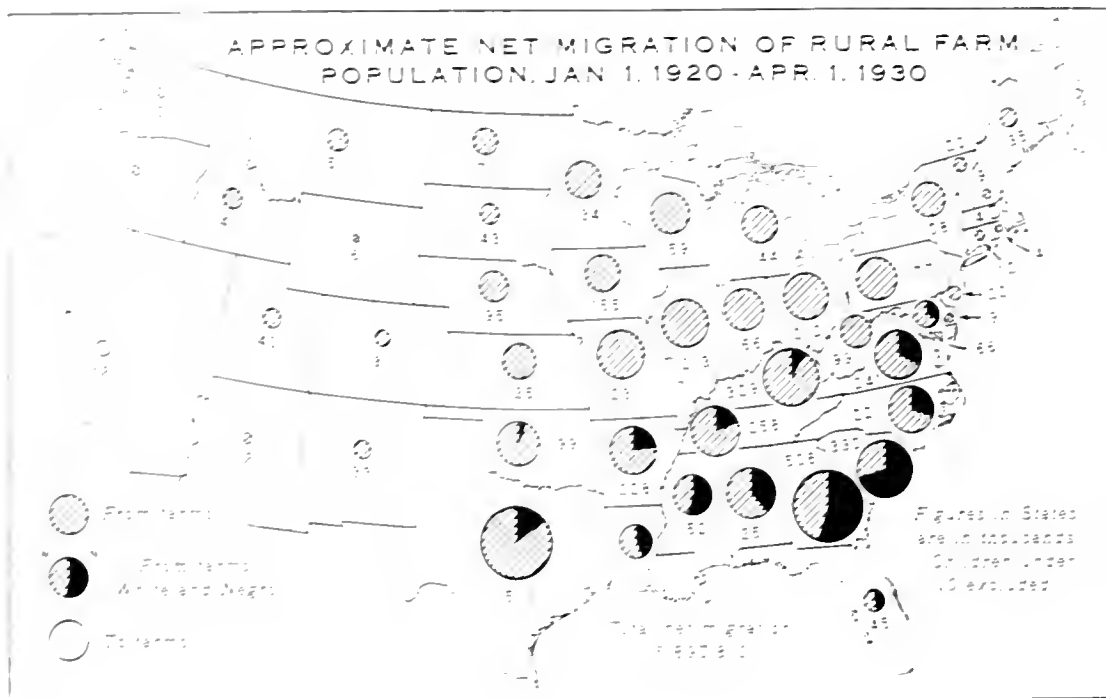
Metropolitan Areas

There is a significant trend in urbanization which in recent decades has become quite marked. It is revealed by the extraordinarily rapid growth of small satellite towns and rural communities within the orbit of metropolitan centers as compared with the central

cities themselves.¹² This is in a sense an expression of the coming into more general use of the automobile, electric service, the telephone, and the extension of urban utilities into the surrounding territory. As a result, a new type of urban community has come upon the scene—the metropolitan region.

The metropolis subsists not merely upon its own hinterland but it has become the most vital link in world affairs so that the lines of communication and transportation that link the great metropolitan centers with one another may be thought of as the Main Streets of the world. Since the trend toward a greater concentration of the Nation's population and industry into great metropolitan centers is almost wholly the unplanned product of interacting forces of which we are as yet scarcely conscious, we may infer that these

¹² "It is a familiar fact, however, that the population of the corporate city frequently gives a very inadequate idea of the population massed in and around the city, constituting the 'greater' city, as it is sometimes called, and that as regards large cities, in few cases do the boundaries of the city limit the urban population which that city represents or of which it is the center. The suburbs are from many standpoints as much a part of the city as the area which is under the municipal government. The suburban residents share in the economic and social activities of the city; many of them have their business or employment in the city; and to a less extent persons residing in the city are employed in the suburbs." Fifteenth Census, 1930; Metropolitan Districts (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1932), p. 5.



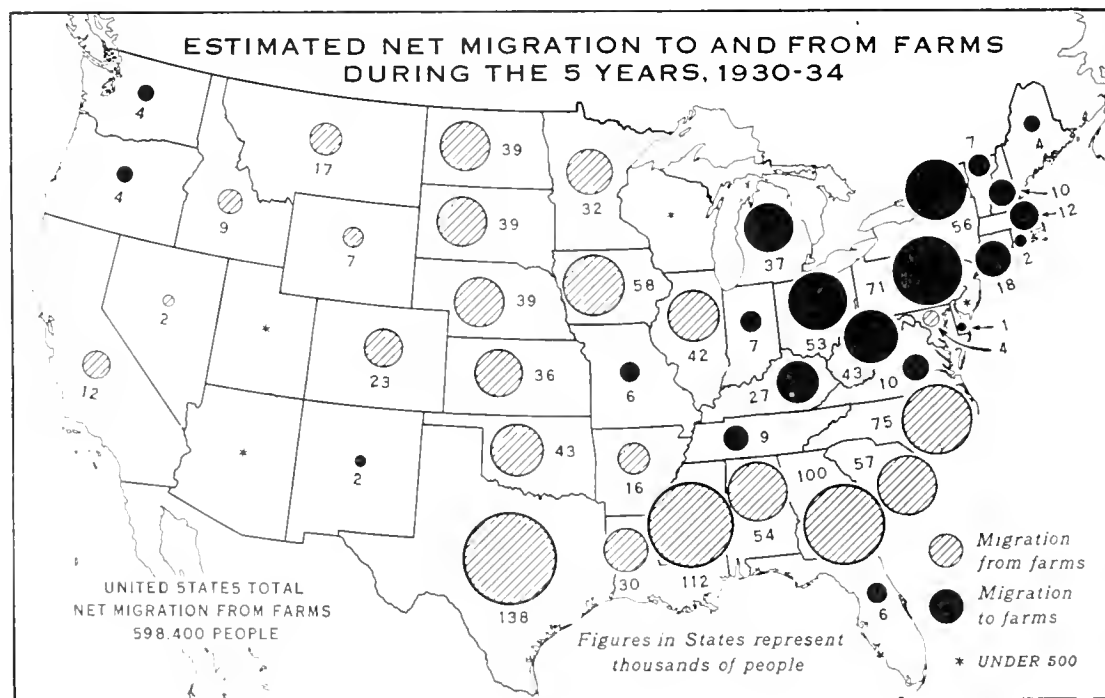
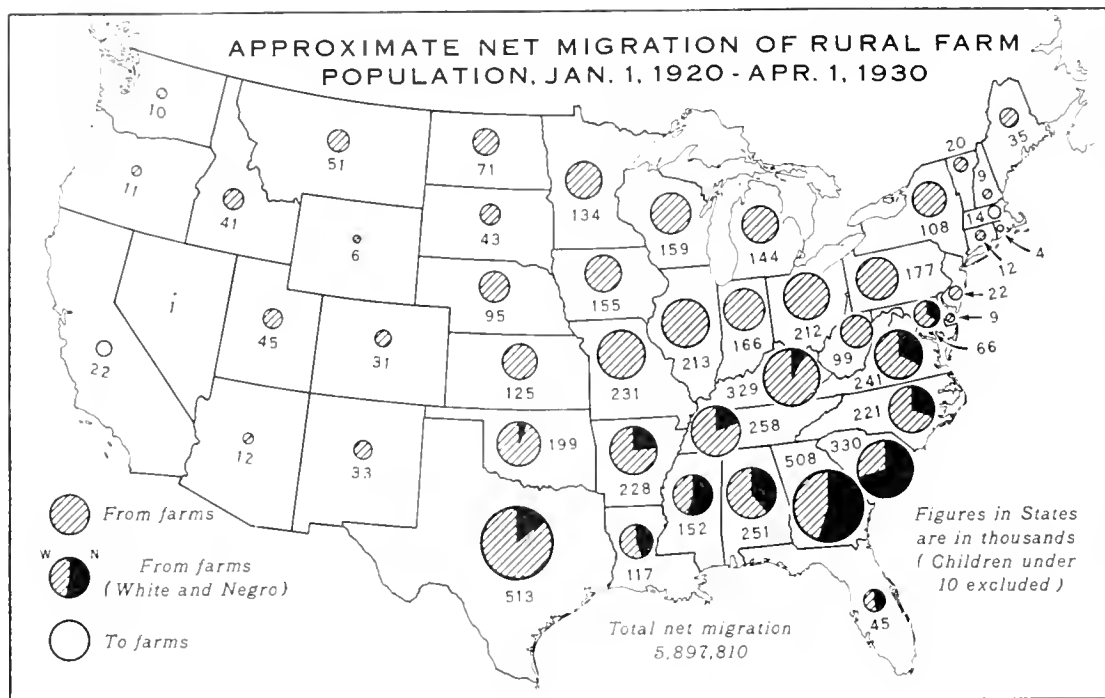


Figure 40

BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

ESTIMATED GROWTH OF CITIES DUE TO MIGRATION

100 LARGEST CITIES

1900 - 1930

ESTIMATED BY BERNARD D KARPINOS AND LEWIS COPELAND

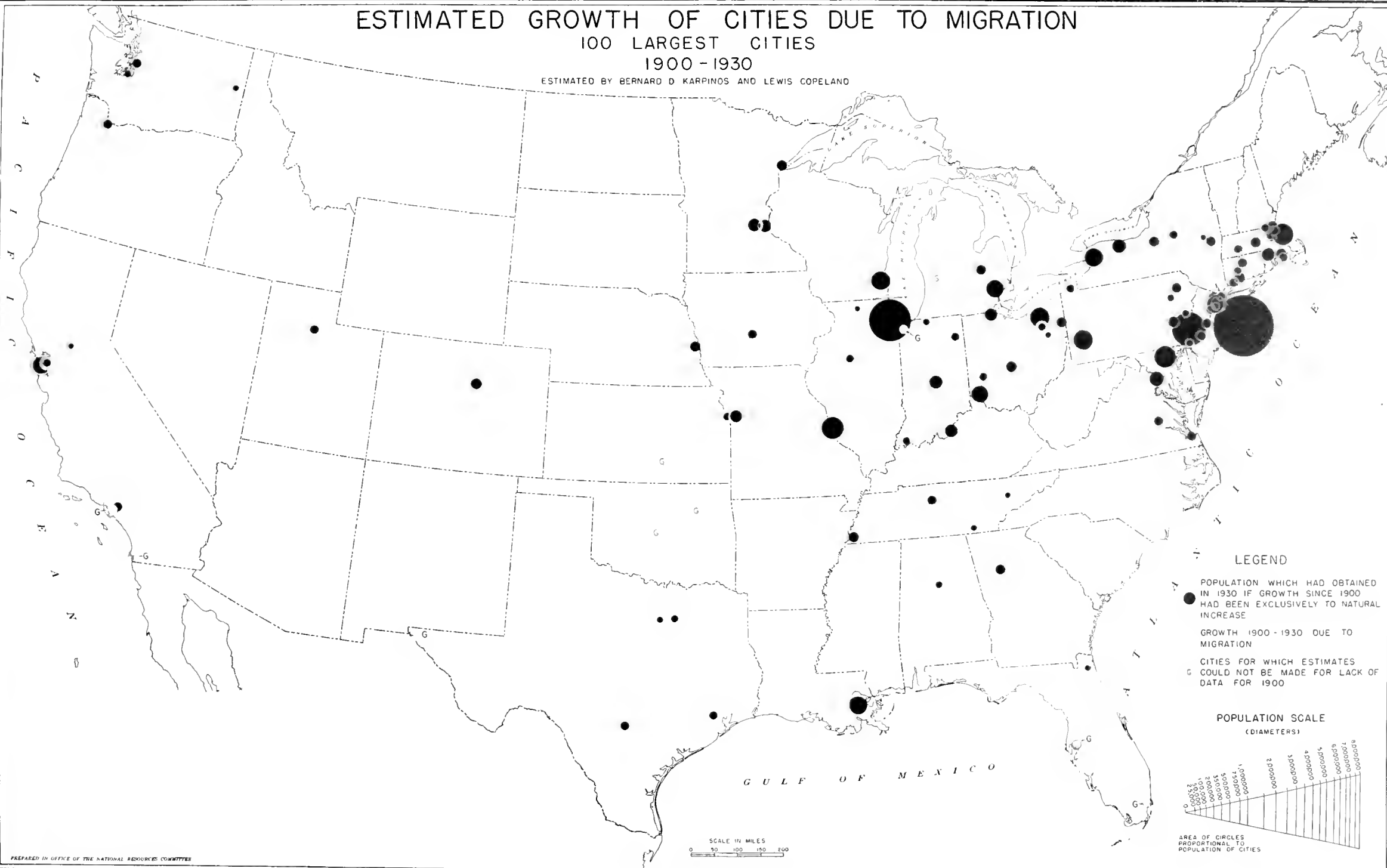


FIGURE 41.

metropolitan aggregations perform essential functions in the national and world economy and owe their genesis and growth to the vital role they play in modern civilization.

Nearly one-half of the population of the United States at the time of the last census lived within a radius of from 20 to 50 miles of cities of over 100,000 inhabitants. These metropolitan areas have absorbed a steadily increasing proportion of the Nation's total population growth, ranging from 46.4 percent of the total national population increment in the decade 1890-1900 to 74 percent in the decade 1920-30.

The growth of the 96 metropolitan districts recognized by the United States Census in 1930 will serve to illustrate the nature of this regional development of the urban community in the United States. Since 1900 the rate of population increase has been greater in the satellite areas surrounding those large cities than that within their limits. While the central cities in the decade 1920-30 increased 22.3 percent, those portions of the metropolitan districts lying outside the central cities increased at about twice this rate, or nearly six times as much as the nonmetropolitan part of the United States. The central cities contain a declining proportion of the total population of the metropolitan districts, indicating that metropolitan growth is in even larger degree than formerly a suburban trend. But what might at first glance appear to be a decentralization of population, therefore, is revealed upon closer inspection to be merely a redistribution of the urban population within metropolitan regions or a dispersion from the central city into the adjacent suburban periphery. It is not a general devolution of cities or a flight from the city. What is actually happening is, rather, that the urbanite is steadily being transformed into the suburbanite. While the movement of the last 100 years toward the centralization of population apparently continues, actually satellite cities and satellite rural areas are increasing so rapidly as to evidence a powerful dispersive force within urban regions. This dispersion has not yet become a definite centrifugal movement, but might well develop into one.

Far from being on the decline, the city thus gives evidence mainly of a new phase of its growth by emptying at the center and spilling over its own corporate boundaries. The basis of this centrifugal tendency is to be sought in the urge on the part of those who have the means to escape the congestion, the disadvantageous family life, the undesirable and expensive housing and living conditions, and the high taxation which urban life so frequently involves. The hegira from the city is motivated by the ease of commutation and communication giving ready access to urban technical and cultural facilities combined with

the lower taxes and land values, the better housing, more desirable family and community life, and more healthful conditions of existence prevailing in the suburbs. The intraregional dispersion of industry follows in the main from the same factors. Sometimes it precedes and stimulates and at other times it follows and accentuates the centrifugal movement of population.

The redistribution of the urban population into the peripheries of metropolitan regions involves the close and constant dependence of the suburban communities upon the economic and technical functions and cultural opportunities which the metropolis provides. The model suburb, whether it is industrial or residential, however superior, aloof, and detached it may believe itself to be, has its basis of existence and draws much of its sustenance from the noisy, grimy city of which economically and culturally it is an integral part, but from which it has managed to remain independent politically.

It has been said that the suburbanite shuttles back and forth from a place where he would rather not live to a place where he would rather not work. In his daily or periodical pendular movement, of which the clock and the time schedule are symbolic, the suburban commuter exhibits the peculiar segmentalization between working and living so characteristic of modern urban society. The bedrooms of American cities are increasingly to be found in the dormitory colonies of the suburbs. The suburbanite, who in his daily routine oscillates between his vocation involving the humdrum, high-speed, technical work of business, industry, and the professions in the heart of the metropolis, and his avocation, which may range from amateur gardening and similar pastoral activities to suburban politics, is not an exception to the urban type of personality but is merely a variety of it. The motives leading to this type of existence are to be sought in the urge to escape the obnoxious aspects of urban life without at the same time losing access to its economic and cultural advantages. In the process, the form and the functions of the city are being revolutionized.

The City as a Consumer of Human Resources

In the 140 years of our national history depicted by the United States census, our rural population grew from 2.7 millions to 53.8 millions, while the urban population grew from less than a quarter of a million to 68.9 millions. Apparently the city is the principal consumer of man. Its role in the national economy in the broadest sense, therefore, centers around the utilization of human resources.

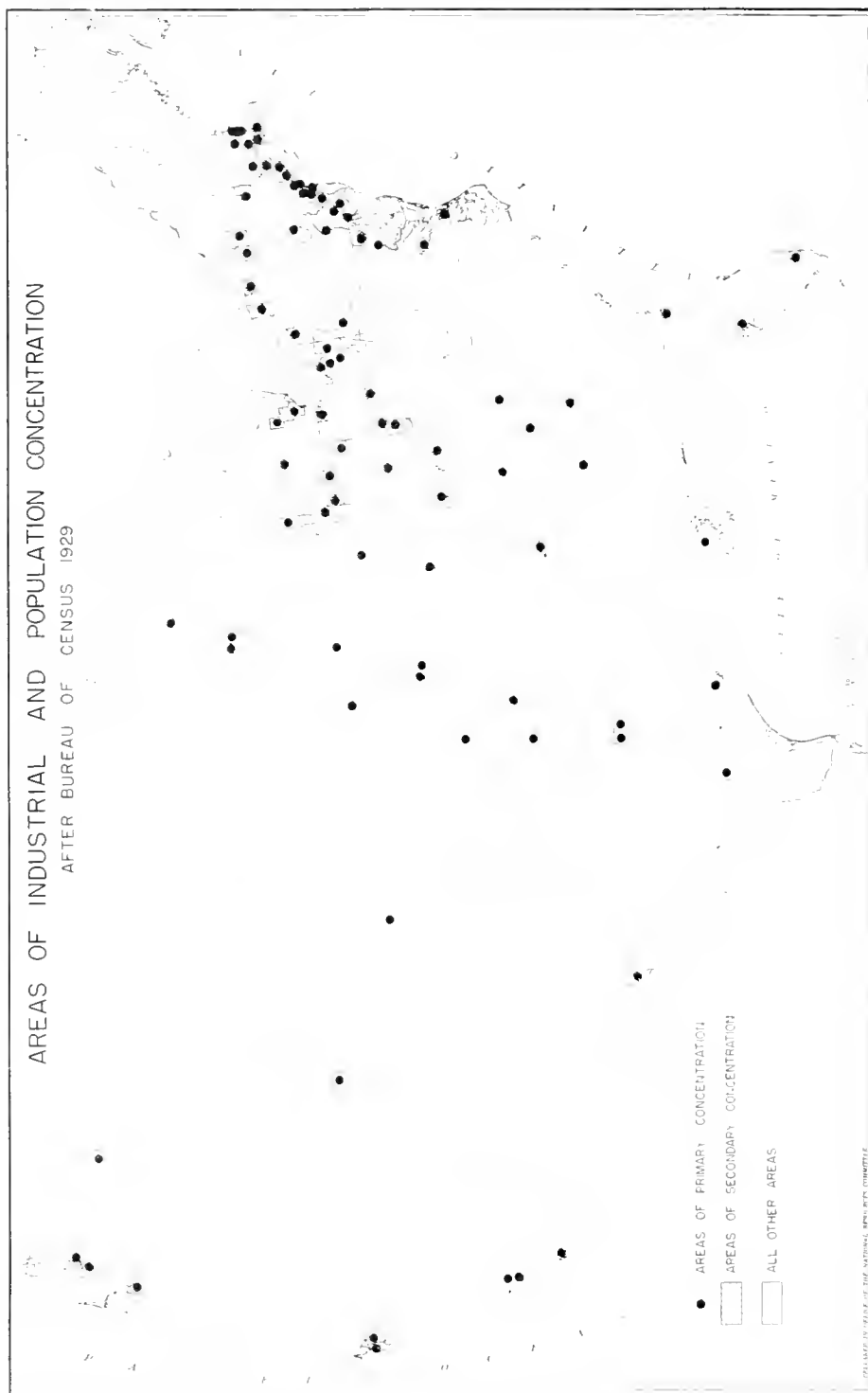


Figure 12

While cities had their origin as fortresses, as military and administrative centers, as religious shrines, or in the fairs symptomatic of industry, commerce, and transportation in the industrialized portions of the world, their growth was conditioned by agrarian reform, a surplus of rural births, and world-market politics. The extraordinarily rapid urbanization of the United States, however, has been significantly influenced by the tremendous disproportion between natural resources and manpower, which has attracted immigration to a vast unexploited frontier and, by putting a premium upon labor-saving devices, has stimulated industry. The virtual cutting off of foreign immigration may be regarded as indicative of the fact that the frontier has vanished and that the reflux to the cities has begun.

Internal migration will, therefore, be more important than foreign immigration for the future of our cities. During the decade 1920-30 about two-thirds of the States suffered losses in farm population. The Southern and the Middle Western farm areas, especially, sent such large numbers of youth to the cities that they could not maintain their own numbers. Without this migration, amounting to a net movement of 6 million people away from the farms in the decade 1920-30, the American cities could not have grown as they did in the past and without it they cannot even maintain their numbers in the future. Since 1930 there has been a marked decline in the cityward migration of farm population, due probably to the depression. The net migration from the rural areas to the cities during the past 5 years is estimated at only 600,000, so that our cities have had to depend for the first time for their growth—retarded as it is—upon their own surplus of births over deaths. Making certain assumptions about the improvement in the expectation of life until it is about 5 years higher than at present, and allowing for a slowing down in the decline of the birth rate, our urban population would—if it were deprived of migration—reach a maximum of about 71 million (less than 2 million more than at present) in 1945 and then decline until in 1960 it reached a point 600,000 lower than it was in 1930.

Even if we assume that cities will draw the same proportion of rural natural increase that they absorbed in the decade 1920-30, they would, under the above conditions, increase by 1960 to only about 82.4 millions. When we consider that our cities and especially our industrial centers have been expanding in the past on the basis of an unlimited supply of cheap labor and new population recruited from the outside, it is clear that this slowing down of growth and impending stabilization will profoundly affect the future of cities and the Nation. Our land and industrial policies, our

social institutions, our Government and our national economy generally must accommodate themselves to changed conditions to meet the changed need and opportunity for public services that will arise out of the new equilibrium and composition of our population. The easy reliance upon continued unlimited expansion characteristic of a country in its youth, and the accompanying naïve faith in numbers and size should, if we are wise, give way to a sober quest for stability, security and quality.

Cities as Commercial and Service Centers

The national trend in urbanization is merely a phase of the development of the Nation as a whole. In the past it has been conditioned basically by national trends in industry. Of late, however, the rapid growth of the larger cities has reflected their increasing importance as commercial and service centers rather than as industrial centers. The shift in emphasis from industry to commercial and service enterprises is indicated by the increasing proportion of the workers in large cities who are classified as white-collar workers. The mechanization of industry in the United States has proceeded at a pace faster than the increase in the Nation's wage earners. From 1900 to 1929 the horsepower per wage earner in manufacturing industries more than doubled, but the number of wage earners increased by only about one-third. While the increase in the index of production during this period was almost 100 percent, the population increase was only 29 percent. As industry and population in a city increase, and as larger areas outside of the city are brought within the orbit of its influence, the demand for service functions increases. As industry and business enter the mass production and mass distribution stage, the clerical and managerial functions require a relatively larger personnel. The range of occupations, of incomes and, consequently, of standards of living tends to increase with the size of the city, producing great diversity and contrasts between various sections of the urban population. The city is thus both a product and a cause of the division of labor and of specialization.

Types of Cities

Similarly, individual cities themselves acquire a specialized role in the national economy. They become differentiated partly as a result of differences in access to suitable resources, transportation facilities, and labor supply. In addition to these natural and technological factors, cities in the course of time become distinguishable from one another also because of the initiative of entrepreneurs and of the advantages derived from an auspicious start, which are cumulatively

enhanced by tradition and reputation so that certain cities acquire a prestige and renown for the production of certain goods. Such factors will in the course of time shape the industrial contour of the community. Furthermore, certain industries can exist advantageously only where others upon which they depend are already established. Some cities, therefore, developed a highly specialized economic base, while others, offering more general locational advantages, attract a variety of industries and thus become more balanced economic entities.

The functional differentiation of cities, moreover, proceeds not merely on the basis of industrial specialization but is conditioned also by the commercial, governmental and social roles which cities assume. Thus we have developed in the United States some cities whose economic base rests primarily upon the extraction of natural resources from the immediate or nearby sites. Mining cities, oil cities, fishing cities, and lumber cities are familiar examples of specialized urban communities. Others derive their specialized industrial character from the presence of less localized advantages. The selection of Gary, Ind., as a site for a steel producing center proved eminently successful despite the absence of either coal or iron ore in the immediate territory, because of the economical accessibility of the raw materials for steel manufacture derived from its position intermediate between coal fields and ore fields, combined with proximity to a great market and a source of labor. Again, such a city as Chicago has risen on an economic base as a transportation focus and transshipment center, just as others have centered around a port. Still other cities are predominantly commercial, others are educational centers, governmental centers, or resorts. Moreover, cities that were once expanding and prosperous communities have changed their primary function in the course of time or declined either because of the exhaustion of nearby resources, the development elsewhere of a new industry which made a prior one obsolete, the perfection of transportation facilities, changes in the rate structure, or the rise of a rival city with special advantages. Many communities have become chronically substandard as a consequence of such changes which have deprived them of their economic base.

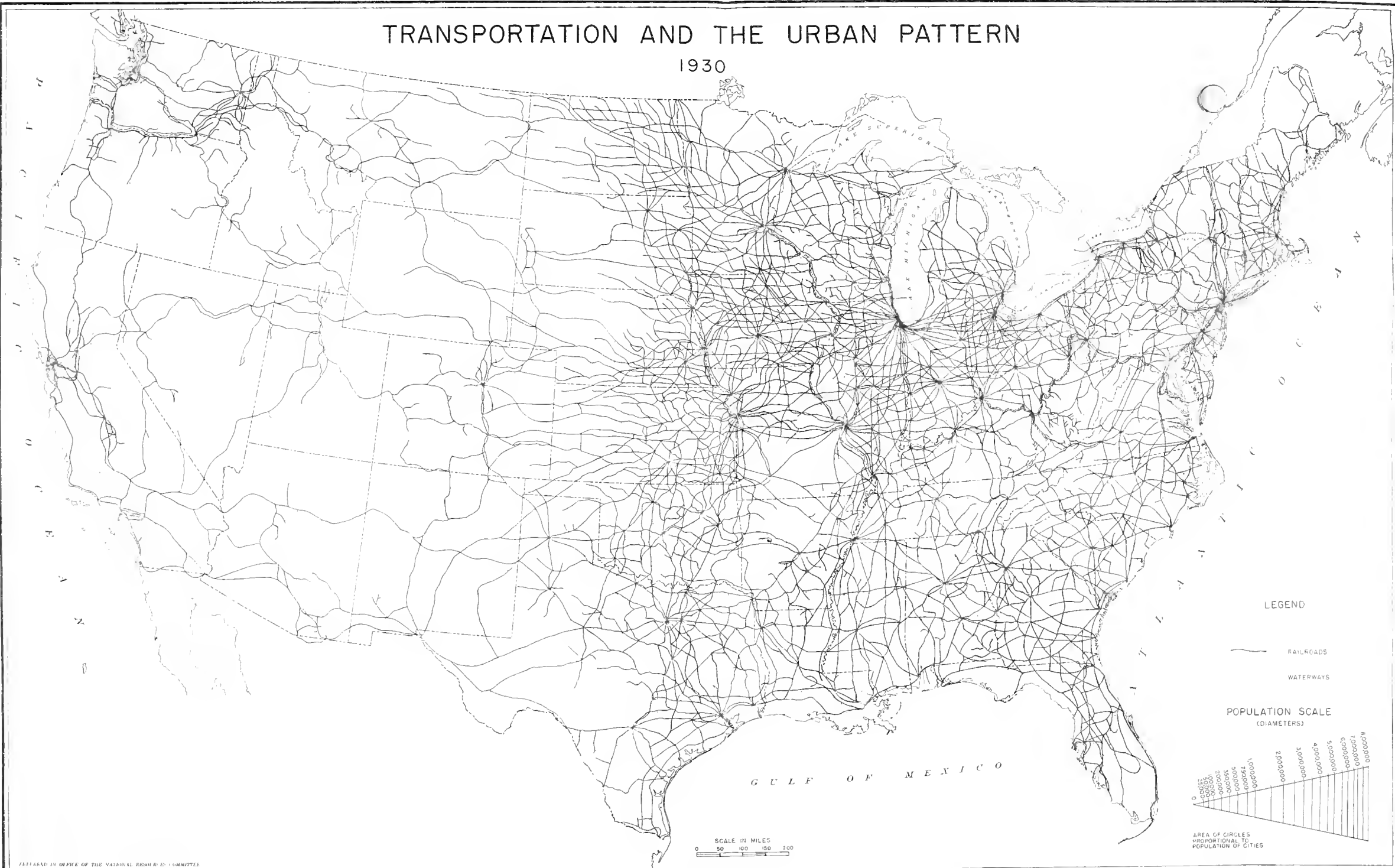
Industrial Factors and Trends

While American industry is at present highly concentrated geographically, certain recent shifts in industrial location have occurred which have significantly changed the national urban pattern. In general industry has moved westward with the frontier but this westward movement has been retarded since 1890. Some industries, such as cotton textile, have moved

from New England to the South Atlantic States during the post-war period. From 1919 to 1929, for example, the number of cotton textile plants in the four major textile States of New England decreased from 324 to 241, while the number in the South Atlantic textile States increased from 646 to 730. At the same time the average size of the New England plant also decreased, while that of the Southern plant increased. In 1899 over half the wage earners worked in the New England and Middle Atlantic States. By 1933 this had declined to 40 percent, but the intensity of this trend, too, has diminished in the most recent period. In general, there seems to be a tendency for industries to be less tied to the region in which they originally located than at one time was the case. The concentration of industry in given regions is becoming somewhat less marked. While in 1900 three States did over half of the slaughtering and meat-packing in the United States, in 1933 concentration was lessened to a point where it took six of the leading meat-packing States to account for half of the business. The same is true for the glass industry.

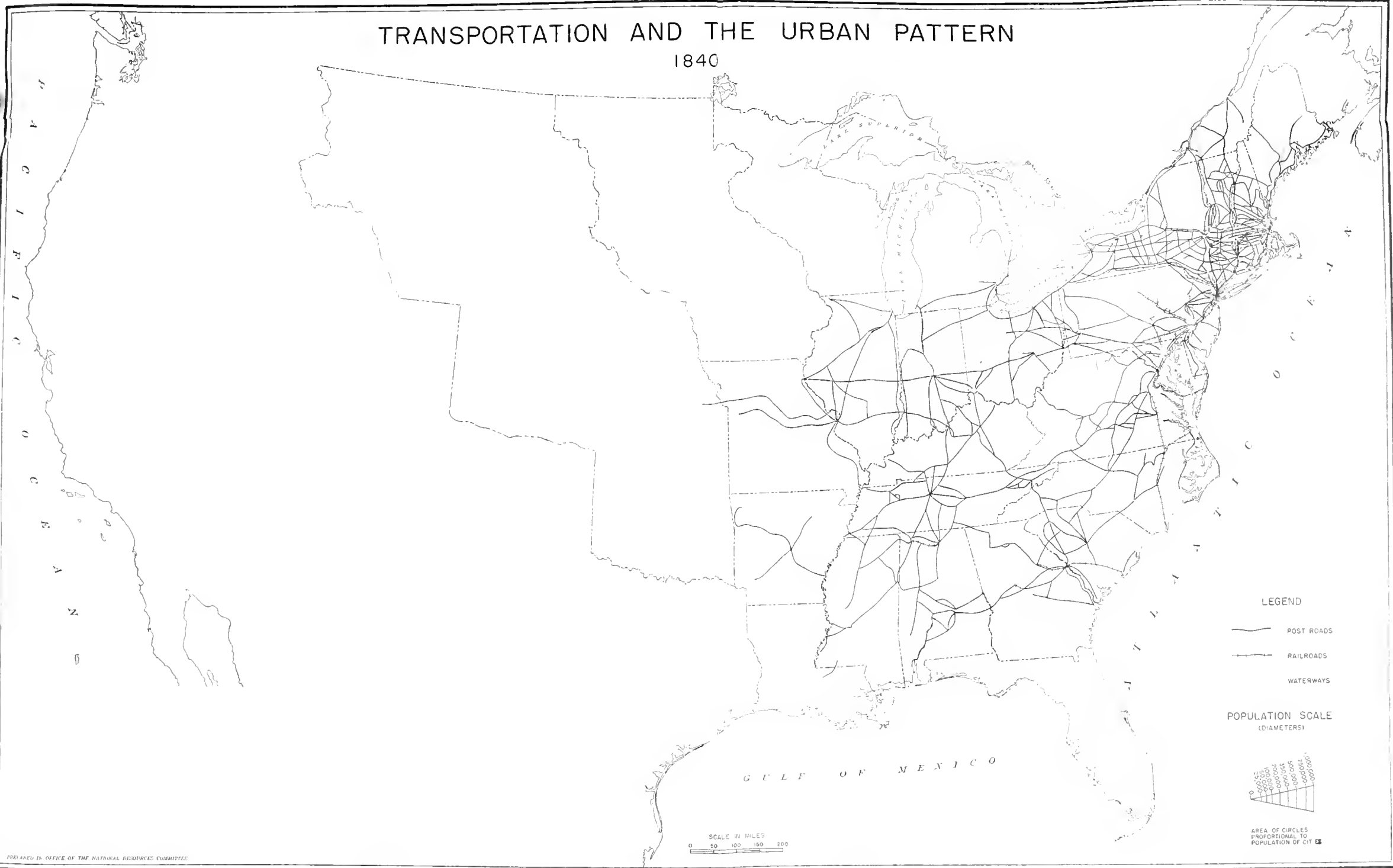
Certain types of industry have moved from the centers of the cities to peripheral areas, while industries with large capital investments in huge and complex plants and requiring concentrated pools of labor have shown less tendency to follow. This phenomenon is particularly true of the larger cities. But there is no evidence of a marked dispersion of industry from the cities into the country. In 1933 slightly more than one-third of the Nation's wage jobs were located in the principal cities of the 33 "industrial areas", and about 20 percent in their industrial peripheries, while only 25 percent of all the wage jobs were in the non-industrial, nonurban areas. In general, then, it may be said that the number of industries that are changing their location is decreasing, although the movement from the urban centers to the metropolitan peripheries remains significant. Industries locating or relocating in the suburban and satellite zones of great cities have done so to gain competitive advantages derivable from such factors as lessened transport time and cost, freedom from collective bargaining and urban social control, decreased labor turn-over, and lower land values and taxes. Benefits may accrue to the community from the greater stability, strength, and employing power of the enterprise incident to favorable location, lowered concentration and congestion of transport, improved health standards and public services and stabilized tax revenues. The advantages to the industry, however, are sometimes offset by the disadvantages to the community, and the gains of the peripheral area are sometimes a loss to the central city, especially if they are politically separated, because the central city may continue to render certain public services incident

TRANSPORTATION AND THE URBAN PATTERN
1930



TRANSPORTATION AND THE URBAN PATTERN

1840



PREPARED IN OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

FIGURE 43

to the industry without receiving proportionate tax revenue.

The greater mobility of goods, persons, and ideas produced by our technological advances has operated, on the whole, to concentrate industry and population into urban areas. Recently this development has been most marked in the West and the South. Within the metropolitan areas themselves the trend has been toward more dense settlements on the margins of the city. Retail trade has begun to disperse with the population into these peripheral areas. But certain types of industry, like clothing, printing, and light manufacturing, as well as commercial offices and large department stores, still favor the center of the city.

A significant trend in American industry is that toward larger corporate units of manufacturing, merchandising, and management. These larger units reflect the swing toward centralization of financial control, the growth of large corporations, and the development of holding companies. This has introduced centralized and absentee control over local industrial activities, and has made industry more detached from the interests of local communities than was true in an earlier period of greater local self-sufficiency and indigenous enterprise. While on the one hand monopoly to some extent limits the mobility of capital and so hinders efficient and desirable relocations, on the other hand centralized control is likely to influence industrial location to some extent in a more rational direction on a national scale by tending toward a more exclusive emphasis of pecuniary factors and the minimization of local pride, traditional attachment, and sentiment.

The emergence of a Nation-wide network of transportation has tended to upset the economy under which communities in proximity to large markets have depended in times past. The rationalization of transport facilities would undoubtedly encourage an even more rational industrial location. As the Nation matures, such rational considerations in plant location as nearness to markets and raw materials, labor supply, accessibility of cheap land, and economical transportation become more important. Since these factors in location are not likely to change markedly in the near future, our national pattern of industry, insofar as it is molded by them, is also not likely to change greatly. Unless our internal migration of population, through a change in agricultural production, undergoes unexpected changes in the future, or unless our public policy is significantly altered, the industrial pattern that we now have is likely to persist nearly in its present state. With increasing maturity of the national economy it is likely that single factors will become less important in the whole complex of forces affecting industry, and that, in general, indus-

trial locations and the industrial pattern will become more stable.

There is no assurance, however, either that technological factors affecting industry will remain constant or that the controls which society exerts through government for the attainment of a higher type of community life and for the advancement of the national welfare will remain the same. Thus synthetic products and scientific consumption standards, the rationalization of industrial operations, plants, equipment, market practices, and personnel are subject to improvement. The slowing down of population growth and the rising cultural standards of the population together with labor organization are almost certain to affect industrial operations. Great progress in automatic machinery, for instance, is likely to revolutionize labor requirements by altering the labor demand and the skills required of workers. The greater national concern about the unchecked and heedless exploitation of our national resources and the likelihood that the Nation will, in the future, exercise more unified social control over transportation and communication facilities may also be expected to exercise salutary influences upon the future course of industrial development and, coincidentally, upon the location, structure, and functions of cities.

Among the most significant controlling factors in the establishment in certain locations of industrial enterprises and the communities dependent upon them have been rail facilities and rates. Their supervision by governmental agencies has deterred some rational adjustments of industrial location while furthering others.

An important though short-run factor in plant location has been the existence of diverse wage levels and labor standards in various regions of the Nation and in the more urbanized, as distinguished from the rural, parts of the same region. Federal and State regulation of wages, of hours of labor, and of unfair practices of distribution has tended to promote a more orderly and rational industrial location.

Other underlying factors have been the desire of railroads for tonnage, the desire of realtors for sales, the desire of banks and promotional agencies for new accounts, the cumulative desire of industry for needed services and trade outlets, labor's desire for additional jobs, and the boosting attitudes of the organized communities. In the past, publicity campaigns, special grants and subsidies, including sometimes free sites or free plants, credits, and exemption from or special consideration in respect to taxation, have been employed to attract industries and to lead them to ignore more advantageous locations elsewhere. Such inducements as these have been offered by cities and, especially, small towns without even a guarantee from

industry to maintain minimum labor standards, in the attempt to gain advantages by artificial means which they did not possess by nature. Unless communities can be persuaded to pursue sounder principles of industrial planning, large sums will be wasted on the private and community plant in the attempt to expand or strengthen the economic base of the community. This will, in the long run, saddle these communities with debt and an imbalanced and an unstable industrial structure. Community industrial imbalance operates in a vicious circle. The weak industries of the community constantly become weaker and this discourages new industry which might otherwise locate there.

In recent years the use by communities of such incentives to industries as credits, tax exemption and free land has declined, although the depression for a time revived the practice. On the whole it does not appear that such attempts to attract industries have been very successful. Of late more attention has been given to the problem of industrial articulation. There seems to be less of a tendency on the part of both communities and industries to accept surface indications as satisfactory reasons for locations. Only scientifically sound, long-range planning can lead toward a more economical and stable national pattern of industry and prevent and mitigate the evils of substandard, mushroom community structures based upon short-sighted and potentially socially-disastrous perspectives.

Transportation

As has already been pointed out, our waterway and railway net has been an important factor in shaping the national urban pattern and, to a lesser degree, the internal urban structure. As the cost of transport has been decreased and facilities have been made available over large areas, greater division of labor and intensified urbanization have been made possible. The points of convergence of a number of railroad and water routes have in general become the sites of the great cities of today. Along the railway and water routes small cities have located at points of transportation breaks, where water route, railways, and roads met. Certain elements in the national environment have significantly influenced the transportation routes and centers and, thereby, the pattern of urbanization. The location of minerals, forests, and agricultural areas, harbors, and other topographical features, combined with such man-made facilities as fords, ferries, portages, bridges, canals, and land routes, have served to direct the form of our railway system. But competition between like and different transport agencies and rivalries between communities had a no less significant influence.

Aside from the physical facilities, the rate structure and transportation practices are significant factors in the location and growth of cities. Some communities and areas owe their growth and present importance in part to the fact that they have enjoyed privileged access to materials and markets because of favorable transportation rates. This has been due sometimes to the initial or potential competition between railroads, and between these and water routes. While certain cities and regions have been favored by the construction of such governmental projects as the Panama Canal, others, like the Middle West, have been adversely affected.

Improvements in transportation technology had a diffusing effect upon urbanization, but the economic influences of rate making gave the established communities, having competitive advantages derived from access to alternative facilities, an initial influence which outweighed the effect of technological improvement. There was thus a cumulatively progressive development starting with locational advantages, such as access to water, physical or institutional breaks in transportation, access to natural resources or markets, which successive developments in transport types and technology accentuated unless they were reversed or impeded by the rate structure or intervention by government.

Although our transportation system and our urban pattern are largely cast, there are dynamic elements in our technology as well as in our social arrangements which render the transport system and the rate structure potential instruments for bringing about a more desirable distribution of population and of cities. Consequently, transportation becomes significant in the social control of economic activity and urbanization.

Certain characteristics of the present transportation technology offer the opportunity to adjust the transportation system to any urban pattern that is considered socially desirable. The increasing use of highways has made transport available over a much wider territory than formerly. The transmission of electric power over large areas through interconnected and coordinated systems offers power advantages in many places where they were not formerly available. The use of the motor truck in conjunction with the railway makes the countryside now less dependent on direct contact with the railway. The efficiency of all forms of transport is increasing by leaps and bounds, while, in general, the costs are being materially and progressively reduced.

Private enterprise has been depended upon to lay out the nation's transportation system. This means that the job has been done piecemeal with an eye always to private and to local interests. Thus facilities have been constructed and rates set so as to en-

courage and benefit existing communities and the enterprises involved, without adequate regard to questions of economic soundness or social desirability.

The transportation system and the rate structure took shape not only without adequate Government regulation but under the pressure of competition, patronage and favoritism. Competition of routes, market competition, competition of directions—these and other forms of competition determined in some part the transportation pattern and in large part the rate structure. If occasionally a problem arising from such competition was solved according to sound principles, it was an exceptional occurrence.

Some efforts at direction and control over the development of transportation facilities have taken the form of Government enterprise and Government aid or subsidy. Both the States and the Federal Government have given aid to turnpike, canal, and railroad companies. Mail subsidy is a familiar form of Federal aid. Also the merchant marine has been subsidized. Further, since 1918 the Government has operated a barge line on the Mississippi and Warrior Rivers. Federal grants-in-aid in the construction of highways are well known. Unfortunately, these various efforts have been largely uncoordinated; they have been made in the absence of a plan for a national integrated transport system. Moreover, there has been almost no attempt made to plan for the parallel development of transportation facilities and the urban pattern. In sum, the transportation system, both physically and in matters of rates and practices, came into being without sufficient attention to its social implications. It fails to this day to receive such attention. Abuses remain notwithstanding statutory prohibitions, and some of the chief abuses are completely ignored by the laws. Government regulations, nevertheless, grow constantly more important.

Some research into the broad social implications of transportation is carried on by the regulatory agencies. Thus the Interstate Commerce Commission maintains a bureau of statistics and conducts research pertinent to its functions, and recently a bureau of research for the motortruck industry was established. The Office of the Federal Coordinator of Transportation conducted several studies and analyses. The Bureau of Public Roads and the Federal Power Commission likewise have made surveys. Notwithstanding the individual usefulness of these studies, there is no general planned program of integrated research.

Transportation and the Internal Structure of Cities

Just as transportation has been instrumental in shaping the national pattern of urbanization, so it has left its imprint upon the internal structure of cities.

Whereas the European cities were already formed when the railway age dawned, in America most cities developed with the railroad. In general the railroad system spread before our cities had fully matured, and the newer cities have often been built around the railroad as the center. While new methods of transportation have made possible unprecedented urban decentralization, the interior replanning of our cities has not taken adequate account of the new mobility.

Our transportation system affects the internal structure of the city largely through the need for terminal facilities, railroad and switching yards, industrial sidings, docks and wharves, passenger stations and auxiliary devices. It is a notable fact that yard and terminal costs constitute over 50 percent of the total freight operating expenses. Until recently terminals were located as close as possible to the center of the city. Recently, the automobile and other facilities for intracity transport have helped to reverse this trend and are continuing to exert their influence.

Underlying the multiplication of terminal facilities has been the competitive systems under which the railroads and, consequently, their terminal facilities developed.

Most railroad-owned freight houses are operated by and are for the use only of the railroad owning them. Thus in Memphis half a dozen freight houses adjoin each other; in Cincinnati, three adjacent freight houses were erected as late as 1934. While during most of the transportation history of the United States competition has been the deciding factor in terminal location, in recent years Government interposition and economic necessity have begun to influence terminal consolidation, shifts in location to cheaper land, coordination among transportation agencies, and modifications in operating methods, such as store-door delivery and pick-up, and the use of the freight container.

At present individual railroads are consolidating stations and other facilities and abandoning those which are least efficient. Where competition is not too keen, two or more roads operate joint freight stations. In several cities a terminal operating company controls all switching movements and may operate joint freight houses and team track yards. In some cities certain parts of freight terminal operation have been coordinated and "reciprocal switching" is practiced. Pick-up and delivery service is coming into constantly wider use. This is likely to prove exceedingly important in the future for the consolidation and relocation of terminals, inasmuch as freight terminals will no longer find it necessary to operate in the downtown section of the city "close to business." The development of forwarding companies which, in an important sense, operate consolidated terminals is significant. Many cities located on waters have pro-

vided municipal water-rail terminals, although for many years the railroads refused to make use of such terminals.

Since the railroad net is now well established, it is not likely that many new roads will be constructed. It is probable, therefore, that the number of railroad terminals is more likely to be reduced through consolidation and abandonment than increased, even though certain cities may increase in size.

Automobile

Among the factors that have operated during the last two decades to reshape the transportation system of the Nation and hence the structure of cities is the automobile. Motor transportation has diminished the importance of the small villages along the railroads, and has even decreased the importance of intermediate towns as trade centers by making larger cities with their superior advantages accessible to greater areas. Within the metropolitan areas it has given impetus to the development of imposing residential suburban cities. Interurban traffic on rails has practically disappeared, except for passenger commutation between the central city and its suburbs in the largest metropolitan districts.

It is particularly through the freight motor vehicle, the truck, that some of the most important influences upon our transportation system, especially the railroads, have been exerted. As in the case of the railroads, the question of motor truck and bus terminal facilities has arisen. Motortrucking terminals operated jointly are found in many cities, among them Los Angeles, Chicago, Lincoln, Sioux City, Indianapolis, and Seattle. On the other hand, many cities have a large number of truck terminals. Cincinnati, for example, has 35. While the railroads appear not to have been anxious to consolidate their freight terminals, they have frequently pooled their passenger business into one large station. Likewise, joint motor bus terminals have been established in a number of cities.

Airplane

The most recent addition to the transportation facilities of the Nation, the influence of which is already beginning to be felt, is the airplane. At present its main role is still confined to passenger and mail transport, and it serves only the larger urban communities which, in most instances, have seen the wisdom of facilitating the air traffic by constructing municipal airports. In 1934 there were 702 municipal airports in the United States as contrasted with 618 commercial ones. By 1936 the number of municipal airports had grown to approximately 750.

In only a very few cities has the large problem of air and rail terminal coordination been attacked intelligently. The Newark terminal probably is outstanding in this respect. Philadelphia is planning an even more extensive combination railway-waterway-airway-motor terminal on Hog Island. It is not likely that union terminals serving all transportation agencies will prove advantageous in many cities.

Urban Transit

One of the primary necessities of urban industry and urban living is a set of rapid mass transit facilities connecting the various parts of the city and metropolitan region. The earliest transit facilities were the creations of free private enterprise and were inspired by the profit motive. Thus, transit companies sought franchises, built their lines, and made extensions only where they could foresee probable returns.

A cardinal principle was that transit users must be brought to the very center of the city. This meant that transit lines were constructed to the heart of the community and radiated from the city's center along established and well-traveled thoroughfares. Further residential congestion was temporarily relieved by making it possible for workers employed in the center of the city to ignore "walking distance" in the choice of their residences. Instead, population tended to concentrate within easy walking distance of transit routes.

The initial relief from residential congestion near the heart of the city, made possible by mass transit facilities, was soon counterbalanced by the congestion of traffic itself. The largest cities resorted to elevated and underground transit systems to relieve the congestion of street traffic which was accentuated by the introduction of the automobile. The ability of the streets at the core of the city to carry the daily ebb and flow of the urban population, the concentration of which proceeded apace with the multiplication of skyscrapers, relatively decreased. The time spent in going and coming from residence to the business and shopping center has promoted the development of business and shopping subcenters and has diminished the utility of the private passenger motor car in the largest cities. Traffic hazards and delays, ordinances restricting parking, and the costs of garaging impede the wider use of the automobile in intraurban transportation in the largest cities. Of late, in the larger cities electric surface cars are tending to be supplemented and displaced by omnibuses, while in the smaller towns electric street cars are increasingly giving way to the private automobile and the motor bus.

The profits inherent in the early transit enterprises made these attractive financial ventures. The multiplicity of small, weak, and competing companies soon led to difficulties. Banking groups obtained control of existing companies and began the process of consolidating them and recapitalizing. Overcapitalization was the frequent result. Another result was the development of the holding company which owned or controlled many separate systems. These financial operations, which virtually eliminated competition, plus the policy of the transit companies to put profits first, led inevitably to efforts at public control. Thus, Public Service Commission laws were enacted in most States, and local regulatory commissions frequently came into being. In some cities, notably foreign ones, municipally-owned transit has proved quite successful, often earning considerable profits and so contributing to the operation of city government.

Electric Power

One of the most far-reaching of recent influences upon national life, and upon the urban community in particular, is represented by the discovery and application of electric energy. Its potentialities for the future reshaping of the life of the Nation and the form of the city are, as was pointed out earlier, merely foreshadowed by recent developments. Whereas in the past electric power has attracted industry and population to the cities and has made possible the decentralization of population within the metropolitan areas by facilitating the growth of satellite cities, improved techniques and methods for transmission, along with increasing public regulation and control for coordinating the generating and transmission systems, are progressively making larger quantities of electric energy available over wide areas outside the larger urban centers.

The first electric generating stations were installed in large urban centers which offered the greatest potential markets for the sale of electric energy. These early power plants were small units which served limited areas. The demands upon them were irregular and the loads poorly distributed. Better to distribute the loads and demands, the individual generating stations within the same urban area were "intra-connected" and their ownership was consolidated. Also, the use of electric power for traction purposes further concentrated generating facilities in large urban areas, more especially in the metropolitan districts.

As the power industry grew, larger installations of generating equipment made it possible for electric utility companies to encourage an increasing use of electric power. At the same time, it became possible to transmit electric energy over considerable distances. With the development of transmission networks it be-

came apparent that interconnection as among plants and networks of various cities would serve the same purpose which had been served earlier through intra-connection of the small plants within a particular city. Progress was slow, however, and interconnection and coordination still lags far behind their possibilities.

Even now there is a general lack of coordination of generating and transmission systems. Notwithstanding the unmistakable trend toward holding company control over large areas, the rivalry between holding companies too frequently has prevented desirable interconnections and coordination. Today the average loads on plant and equipment are still relatively low, and high rates are required to maintain idle capacity. The rates for electric energy are too high to encourage a larger average consumption per consumer. Where rates have been lowered, consumption has increased. In general, rates for residential service vary inversely with the size of the community. The rapid mechanization of industry and the electrification of primary power equipment have concentrated industrial demands for electric power in the larger industrial urban areas. Today two-thirds of the industrial demand for electric energy is concentrated in the cities of 25,000 and above.

The generating and distributing of electric energy has come to be recognized as a public utility, particularly because of its monopolistic character. The financial control of the electric power industry in the United States has tended toward concentration into a relatively few major holding companies. In 1933, 12 companies controlled about 50 percent of all electric power produced and served more than 50,000,000 people. In contrast, while 50 percent of the electric-light and power establishments in this country were municipally owned in 1932, municipal plants generated only about 5 percent of the electric energy produced in that year.

Recognition of the problems in the power industry has brought with it efforts at public control which have taken the form of State utility acts and, in later years, of Federal measures. There is little uniformity among State laws regulating the production, transmission, and distribution of electric power. Only within the last 2 years has the Federal Government entered the field of regulating the electric utility industry. Federal enterprises relating to electric utility regulation are the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935, the various hydroelectric projects now under construction, the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Rural Electrification Administration program, and the Power Division of the Public Works Administration.

Land Use, Ownership, and Control

Both physically and socially the cities of the United States bear the imprint of private ownership of land and the absence of a sound long-term land policy.

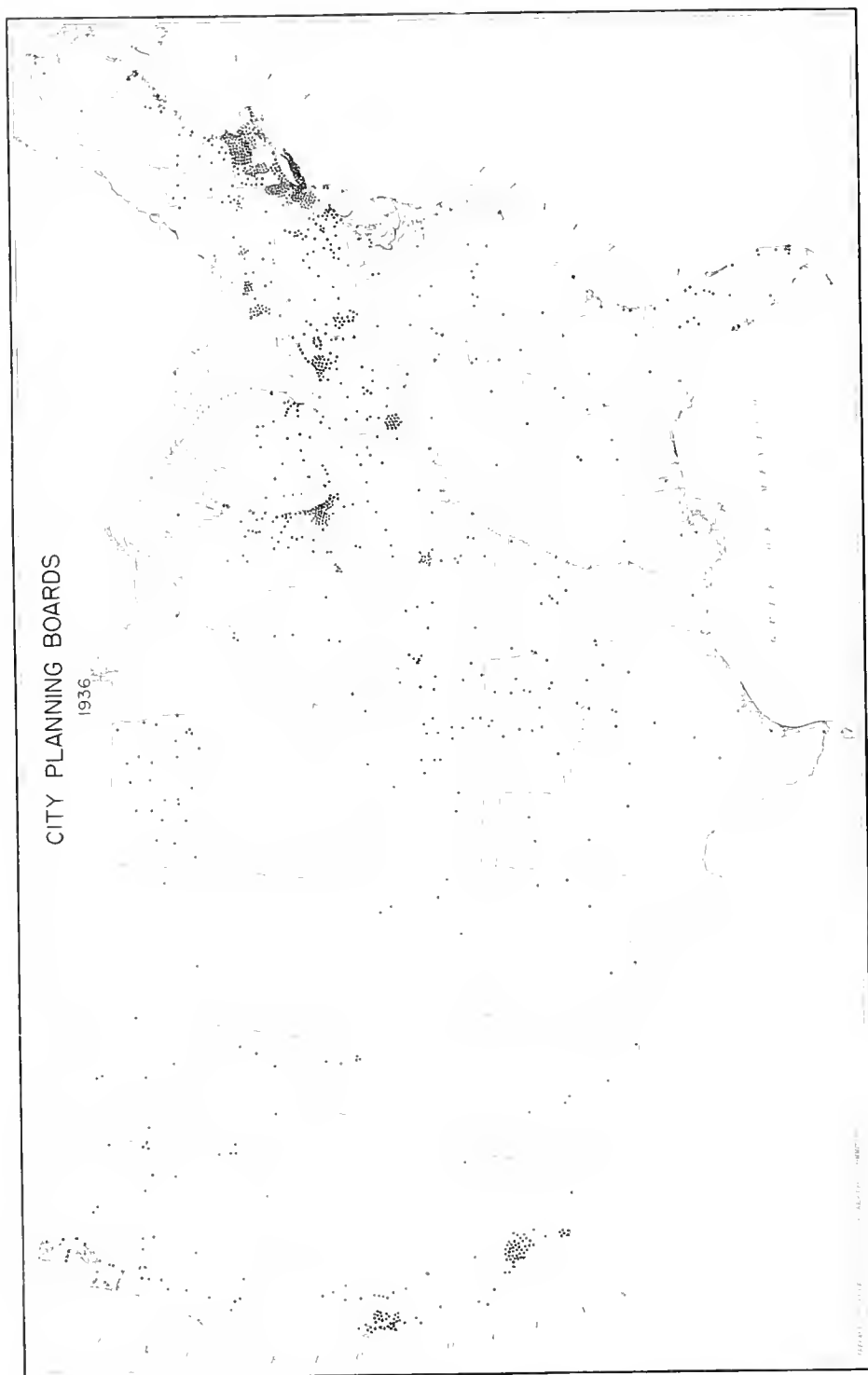


Figure 15

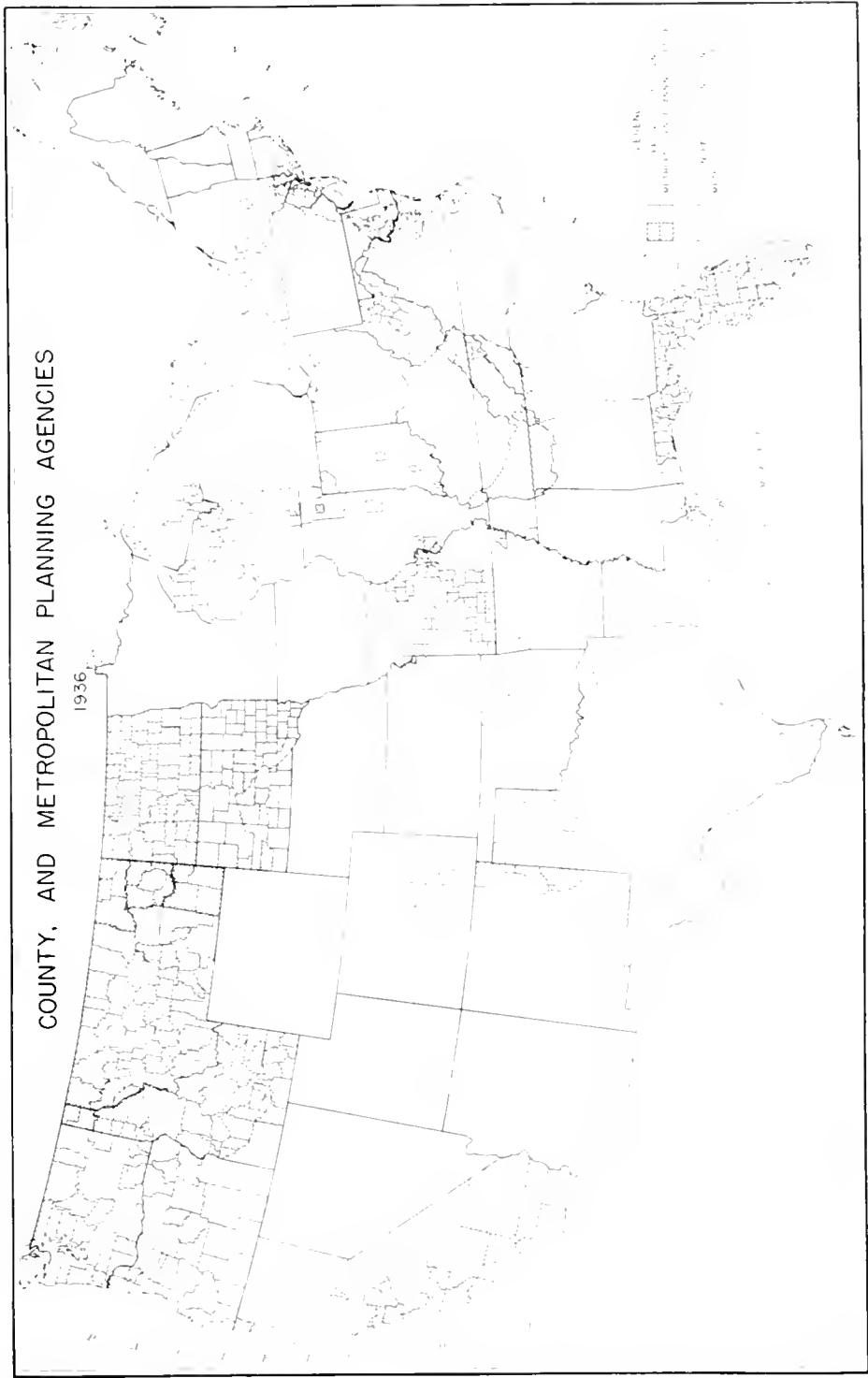


Figure 46

Our traditional procedure of settling communities by allotting homesteads to those that wanted them, and our time-sanctioned method of allowing their subdivision into uniform small lots which were sold to private owners to use, by and large, as their means, their tastes, and their needs dictated, have produced the characteristic features of the typical American city with its stereotyped, monotonous gridiron block pattern.

So phenomenal has the growth of our cities been that even the most optimistic first settlers seldom could envisage the future uses of the land that was to be had virtually for the asking, or the best uses to which it might be put. The city itself, although it generally retained through governmental provision a portion of the available area for public use, was induced, as the settlement grew, to squander its priceless heritage of land which should have been set aside for schools, parks, open spaces, streets and public buildings. The community generally was unable to foresee its own future public needs. Its citizens shortsightedly, or with the idea of private speculative gain, allowed the community to dispose of a substantial part of its holdings in order to "pay as it went" when its credit was poor or to avoid taxation of its inhabitants when their limited capital was profitably employable in pioneer, speculative ventures.

Nor were American cities, at least during the formative stages of their history, particularly concerned about the uses to which private owners put their land holdings or the structures they built upon them. Only a few had any sort of plan, and those that did allowed the growth of the city to run away with whatever plan there was. At any rate successive subdivisions and additions were mechanically joined to the existing settled area or at some distance therefrom, without thought of the product. For the greater part of their history cities cared little how much of his land area the owner would occupy by buildings, the type of structures he would erect, the materials of which he would build them, or the uses to which he would put them. Building lines and street widths varied widely and arbitrarily. Order, safety, and beauty were of little consequence. Even where the original buildings were acceptable for the purpose for which they had been built, the expansion of the city soon produced the incentive to convert them to other and generally more intensive uses.

As the city grew and as new technological factors were introduced, it became increasingly difficult and costly to readapt the fundamental urban street and building pattern to changed needs. As a consequence, there has emerged a public attitude of placid resignation which too generally accepts what is as inevitable and irremediable. Even when disasters such as fires or earthquakes reduced the major part of

the city to ruins, as in Chicago and San Francisco, respectively, the rebuilding on the same site has usually been guided by little more than intensified speculative fervor.

While during the colonial period there was evidence of building restrictions and some indication of an interest in community design, the subsequent irresistible expansion and the undaunted spirit of private enterprise swept most of these away. Laws designed to curb the greed and heedlessness of the individual owner and speculator in the interests of order, health, safety, and public welfare were allowed to lapse and were resuscitated only when it was too late to repair most of the damage that had been done through generations of neglect.

As cities have grown big, they have also, in general, grown more sordid and uninhabitable. Building regulations and their enforcement came into use only after the evils of the tenements in the large cities had become glaringly manifest and had been exposed through arduous campaigns of urban social reform. It was not actually until the "muckrakers" through journalism, the social survey, and social research had awakened the public conscience in regard to some of the most disreputable phases of urban living, that legislation designed to mitigate the disastrous consequences of civic apathy and neglect was enacted and some effort made to enforce it. The tremendous growth of cities during the last half of the nineteenth century, the wreckage left behind by periodic depressions, and the appalling congestion in the urban slums helped to call attention to the social and individual cost of land gambling and to the absence of social control of housing and of the physical development of the community.

Today over 1,500 municipalities have building codes and the number of municipal zoning ordinances in force, which have increased phenomenally since 1916, has grown to over 1,300. Legislation authorizing city planning commissions now exists in 42 States, and county planning, which is essential to effective metropolitan planning, is authorized in 26 States.

The nonexistence or nonenforcement of rational land policies, combined with an overemphasis on individualistic enterprise and speculation, in the face of unparalleled opportunities for private gain because of enormous growth and expansion, are the underlying factors in some of the most acute problems of urban life. Such problems include congestion of traffic, the herding of the low-income groups into dark, poorly ventilated dwellings, the contagion of blight near the heart of the city, the uneconomical, unsafe, and disorderly distribution of structures, a deficiency of public open spaces combined with a surplus of unused private space, undue concentration of land values, in-

equitable apportionment of local tax burdens, and inadequate public services. In varying degrees these are to be found in practically every city.

New methods of transportation have made unprecedented urban decentralization possible. The scale of the interior planning of our cities, however, has not been changed to conform with the new mobility. Great inconvenience and waste have resulted from our outmoded street system. These conditions have been among the factors which have produced blighted areas and slums, premature land subdivisions, and jerry-built potential slums. Disintegration of the general property tax resulting in differential rates of taxation and increasing exemptions of property both by type and use; the inefficiency of assessments generally, but improvement of some assessing techniques; confusion and inefficiency of collection practices; widespread use of special assessments; and the spread of rigid tax limits—these are probably the most outstanding recent trends in taxation which, for good or ill, directly affect urban land policies.

Even such instrumentalities as city planning and zoning and the control of subdvisions designed to lead to a more rational policy have often been infected by the speculative psychology of a perpetual land boom. Thus cities are induced to overzone land for uses to which it can never be put, and to extend utilities and services into areas long before they will be so densely inhabited as to warrant such expenditures. The losses, both financial and social, affect the private owner and developer as well as the public treasury, and must be underwritten ultimately by the general public in the form of tax arrears, the decline in public revenues, increasing cost of wasteful public services, and the support of a dependent and handicapped, if not socially dangerous, debtor population.

The growth and welfare of many individual cities shortly will be affected by Nation-wide population trends, by changes in methods of production, transportation and distribution, and even by national policies with reference to interstate commerce, tariffs, and international relations. Urban land policies, therefore, are not merely questions of local public opinion and legislation, but they are intimately related to State and National constitutions and laws and to other factors even more difficult to control. Cities will probably, unless present trends are reversed by large-scale rehabilitation of the blighted areas, continue to increase in density of population at the periphery and to decrease at the center. Land values most likely will follow the same course. But on the whole, the slowing down of growth due to an approaching stationary population has created opportunities for effective social control over land use and community development seldom equalled in American history.

Cities, moreover, are subject to the restriction that they can acquire land for municipal purpose only. This applies to all methods of acquisition—condemnation, purchase, excess condemnation, gift, devise, or dedication—although the courts may apply a more liberal interpretation where the expenditure of public funds is not involved. The eminent-domain statutes almost uniformly prescribe a procedure which is usually highly technical, expensive, and dilatory, and the awards are often excessive. Only a few cities are equipped with the powers, the personnel, and the procedure employed by private real estate organization. Nine States have constitutional amendments permitting the use of excess condemnation for public purposes. The provisions and effectiveness of these laws vary widely.

In the acquisition of additional land by municipalities, the chief causes for the present situation are: narrow interpretation of what constitutes a public use; the opposition to increased activities and expenditures by government agencies; and the tradition that municipalities should not act as real-estate investors or speculators and, hence, must not acquire land until it is actually needed. As usual, even though these attitudes are being slowly liberalized, statutory provisions and procedures thereunder have failed to keep pace with changing needs and public opinion.

Only very recently have the housing problems of the urban dweller been recognized by government. Efforts have been made through offering attractively financed loans to home owners and prospective builders, the refinancing of mortgages on homes, tax exemptions, and to a much lesser degree through the construction of urban and suburban Federally financed housing, to stimulate private and local initiative in the improvement of the housing accommodations for families of low income. At present, for instance, the Home Owners' Loan Corporation holds a substantial amount of urban mortgages. But as yet there are no signs that either an adequate program of urban housing is under way or that effective steps are being taken to remedy the physical and social conditions into which private land speculation and social planlessness have plunged the cities.

In other countries throughout modern history, and in this country only recently or sporadically, the comprehensive planning of communities has been undertaken. Planned communities here and there have been developed by industry, governmental agencies, real-estate organizations, and philanthropic enterprises. The war housing developments have made an important contribution to planning, as have philanthropic agencies.

A survey of 144 planned communities undertaken by this committee indicates the unmistakable success

of planning. The industries involved recognize the value of the city plan as do the real-estate people. Such communities are comparatively free from overcrowding of buildings and of people. The residents of the better planned communities enjoy greater efficiency, greater safety, a more healthful environment, and, in great measure, live a more satisfying life. A high degree of social cohesion and community spirit is evident and a greater degree of self-sufficiency is found. Large departures from the plan are the exception. Unforeseen change is a much greater threat to a city plan than physical deterioration. The borders of the planned community are its weakest points; they should be protected from unsuitable development by such physical buffers as "green belts" and land acquisition on a generous scale. Except where all the homes are rented by an industrial company, they tend to become occupied by persons working elsewhere.

That there is a direct relationship between the definiteness and continuity of governmental policy and the success of a city plan can scarcely be doubted. Under conditions of long-time unified control, intelligent planning may confidently be expected to be effective as a tool in the hands of those working for community welfare to prevent many of the ills and conflicts of purposes and interests otherwise likely to occur in the development and continued existence of future new and enlarged communities. It is quite clear, however, that constant vigilance and continuous readaptation to changing conditions are essential elements in every form of social control of the urban structure, whether it be desired to obtain a more adequate urban existence through building regulation, zoning, planning, taxation, a rational land policy, or a combination of these devices. Until the Nation as a whole recognizes that land is a public utility instead of a speculative commodity, not much prospect exists either of obtaining adequate housing for the population or for reconstructing cities to make them fit for human living.

Municipal Government

The urban governments of the United States perform those essential public services without which the inhabitants of the urban areas, containing the majority of our people and the bulk of the country's enterprise, could not continue to exist. Urban governments have been invested with the responsibility of providing for a range of services which affect virtually every aspect of the citizen's life. They provide water, dispose of sewage, prevent epidemics, guard the public health, protect life and property, control traffic, regulate and facilitate trade and industry, and furnish educational, recreational, and a host of cultural services. As urban centers have grown and civilization

has become more complex, the services rendered by Government have expanded enormously. Since 1890 the number of cities has doubled and the size of the urban population has trebled, while urban budgets and pay rolls have trebled since 1915.

The most significant trend in Government, apart from the expansion of its functions, has been the transition from regulatory to service activities. Thus, recreation, education, welfare, and health are the most rapidly growing urban public services. Education alone consumes about one-third of the total urban government expenditures in cities of over 30,000 inhabitants, while regulatory and protective functions consume only about one-sixth. Narrowly circumscribed and inadequate poor relief has developed into the more comprehensive and humane outdoor public welfare and social services. Public-school systems, formerly exclusively preoccupied with the teaching of the three R's, have developed into extensive modern educational institutions with broad curricula covering not merely child education but higher and adult education as well. Recreation sponsored by urban governments has developed into a comprehensive range of activities carried on the year round under trained supervisors and now provides opportunities not merely for physical play but for a variety of group activities, and for artistic self-expression. Even to the narrowly restricted police activities of policing and detecting have been added prevention and inspection.

Urban governmental services also represent some of the most important public utilities. Municipal water supply systems in the United States have been rapidly changing from a private to a public activity. Out of a total of 10,800 water systems in the United States in 1936, as many as 7,800 were estimated to be publicly owned, including all of those in cities of a half million and over and 84 percent in cities of 30,000 and over. At present, even other utilities such as electricity are, under the stimulus of Federal loans, undergoing a revival of the movement toward municipal ownership.

The trend toward broader and more inclusive municipal functions is accompanied by a correspondingly extensive transformation in the machinery of urban government. City government has, in the past few decades, been growing more unified and coordinated through the concentration of powers in a single executive, either the mayor or the increasingly popular city manager. The small unicameral city council is taking the place of the unwieldy bicameral council of earlier days. Independent administrative boards are being integrated under single administrative heads. Experiments and widespread uses have been made of such administrative devices as executive budgets, unit cost

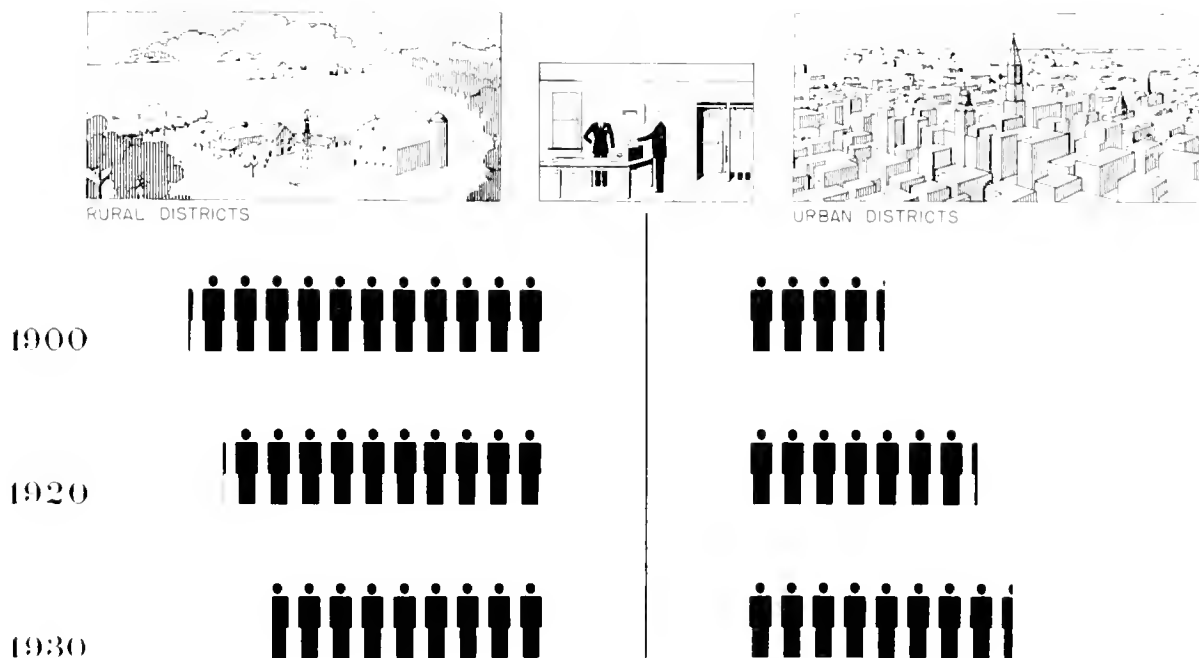
accounting, central purchasing and registration, and public reporting. Municipal reference libraries, neighborhood health centers and municipal cultural institutions are coming into existence. Urban governments have pioneered in some of the most modern, mechanical developments and scientific techniques such as traffic signal lights, police radio broadcasts, sewage treatment processes, voting machines, parking meters, and public health laboratories and clinics. In structure and techniques and in contribution to the public welfare, urban governments have undergone a development in every respect comparable to the Nation's private enterprise, though less known publicly.

For years the expert has been gradually displacing the untrained amateur in the key positions of municipal government, and he has been developing the skills which are essential for the efficient discharge of increasingly complex public services. Tenure in the ranking administrative and technical posts has become more secure. The irresponsible urban boss is rapidly becoming extinct. The merit system has begun to displace the spoils system through the establishment of civil service commissions in some form or other in 38 percent of the cities 10,000 and above, affecting 80 percent of the municipal employees of the Nation. Such advanced personnel devices as standard classification

and salary plans, pensions, efficiency ratings, in-service training, and nonpartisan elections are finding acceptance.

Technical improvement in municipal government and the enlargement of its functions have been accompanied by neither a corresponding enhancement of its legal powers, which have been relatively declining, nor by a correspondingly significant voice in the State and in the Federal Government. With the growth of the Nation, a preponderant share of which has been urban growth, the cities are underrepresented in Congress, on the basis of population, to the extent of 13 representatives. A candidate could win a Presidential election by getting the bulk of the votes in only 65 of the 3,053 counties in the United States. A majority of the State's votes was cast in Illinois (in 1932) in four counties; in New York in five; in Maryland in two; in Utah and Washington in three. Nevertheless, in every Congress from the Sixty-Sixth to the Seventy-Fourth more than half of the important chairmanships (73 out of 108) were held by rural members. Rural Congressional representatives as a rule have a longer tenure than urban ones. This is true of both Senate and House. It does not seem likely that the urban States will ever attain a majority in the Senate. The Senate is thus now the haven of the rural States instead

CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATION IN THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



EACH FIGURE = 25 REPRESENTATIVE

Figure 47

of the small States, which it originally was. It does not appear, however, that the great rural Congressional majorities have pursued a policy calculated to foster a rural as opposed to an urban set of goals. The Congressional votes on the McNary-Haugen bill showed that sectional interests still take precedence over the rural-urban division in national legislative activities.

Although the city is an imposing functional entity, legally it still remains the ward of the State, and as such is deprived of many of the powers essential to its adequate functioning. Constitutional home rule over municipal affairs, though it has been adopted in 18 States, has been narrowly construed by the courts, and has tended to become a waning movement. Widespread gerrymandering and underrepresentation of urban areas, together with urban bargaining and the rural shifting of responsibilities in the State legislatures, have helped to defeat progressive legislative programs and have blocked a due consideration of urban problems. In some instances States have even invaded fields of urban administration by taking over city licensing fees and inspectional functions where the city has already to its credit a record of successful experience, such as in the realm of health and safety. State constitutions and laws, by controlling the election system and the revenue system, are frequently obstructions to efficient urban government. Cities have often found themselves shackled in their efforts to enter into cooperative relations with other cities, especially with cities in adjoining States. Finally, by having the States as their spokesmen, the cities' problems have been submerged by being pooled with the problems of rural communities, so that the distinctive characteristics and interests of these two divergent types of communities are often ignored.

Despite all of these handicaps, American cities are beginning to break through their own corporate isolation by working out their problems jointly with other governmental authorities. Some advances have been made in intermunicipal relations, among them contractual provisions for joint water, sewerage, fire, health, and police service. On a national scale even more extensive collaboration has been developing among cities through the voluntary organization of municipalities or of municipal officials into State leagues of municipalities and national associations. These associations have, for more than a generation, been active in the development of expert municipal techniques, improved standards of personnel, in-service training, cooperative purchasing, and technical personnel administration.

On the whole, however, it was only during the crisis that came to focus in the recent depression that the Federal Government, which had hitherto largely ignored the existence of cities and had carried on its

relations with them exclusively through the States, began to recognize the need of dealing directly with cities as political, economic, and social entities.

The great majority of existing Federal-city relations are casual and incidental, if not extralegal. They have developed out of a simple, administrative necessity for effective contact or out of the overlapping of governmental services. For the more important of these services, the States has been the only political subdivision officially recognized by the National Government. The recent critical developments have necessitated the creation of some major contacts between the Federal Government and the cities. The older administrative hierarchy of National-State-local government appears side by side with the newer, direct, national-local contacts. A crucial fork in the road, which promises to be significant in the future course of American government, seems to have been reached.

In certain recent Federal activities the distinctive problems and characteristics of urban life have been given overt recognition. In the setting of wage rates under the National Recovery Administration and of the security wage under the Works Progress Administration, the special requirements of urban dwellers have been recognized. In view of the fact that in many public services, particularly in social welfare programs, urban communities in both their private and public institutions and agencies seem considerably further advanced than our rural communities, the adoption of a uniform standard for the country as a whole, irrespective of these differences, would tend generally to level down the achievements of cities in these respects.

Approximately a score of Federal bureaus or offices are primarily concerned with affairs of the urban dweller, although they do not recognize the city as such. Among such bureaus are the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Federal Housing Administration, and the Bureau of Air Commerce. Approximately the same number are primarily concerned with affairs of the rural dwellers, among them such agencies as the Soil Conservation Service, the Farm Credit Administration, and the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. The majority of the former agencies are in the Departments of Commerce and Labor, while most of the latter are in the Department of Agriculture. Some 25 or 30 Federal bureaus have direct administrative relations with municipal officials with sufficient regularity to be considered important parts of the agency's function. The Bureau of the Census, for instance, periodically collects financial statistics of cities and vital statistics through municipal officials commissioned as Federal agents. Another 20 or 25 Federal agencies have occasional relations with the municipal officials, not of sufficient frequency to

be regarded as important activities in the total work of the agency. Thus the Geological Survey occasionally makes surveys of water resources in cooperation with cities.

Federal-city relationships vary all the way from furnishing bison to a municipal zoo to lending money for public-works construction: from loans and grants, contractual agreements, and cooperative regulatory activities to advisory and other technical functions, such as statistical services. It is a notable fact that in 10 cities of 26 which were studied, the Works Progress Administration spent more for public works in 1935 than the cities themselves spent in 1930, which was a year of high expenditures.

In their most fundamental aspects, however, the relations between cities and the Federal Government still remain in an amorphous and anachronistic state. Although a substantial majority of our population is urban, we continue to live politically in a rural society. The city has been taken for granted as a necessary and inevitable byproduct of a developing industrialism. The Federal Government's perspective has traditionally divided the national scene into the agricultural and industrial spheres; and while rural life was, on the whole, synonymous with agriculture, the city and urban existence were never completely covered by industry. Accordingly, governmental measures designed to aid agriculture generally promoted the welfare of the rural population, whereas those designed to assist industry benefited only a narrow segment of city life or even aggravated the conditions of urban existence.

The Urban Personal Equation

The human and social life of the city derives certain distinctive features from the factors enumerated in the previous sections. The personality of the city man and the typical social relations that characterize his existence are thus distinctive from those of the country man.

The mobility of the urbanite, the range, the superficiality, the anonymity, and the segmental character of his contact account in part for his freedom from traditions and for the rationality of his outlook. In the competition of the city, the status of a man is determined more by what he can do or what he owns than by his blood or his ancestry. The city man typically moves in and is a transitory part of a multitude of social groups and is not permanently attached to any one of them. His loyalties thus are more fickle, and he is inclined to greater tolerance which he sorely needs in order to live among fellow citizens who are so different from himself in heritage, interests, belief, and character. Moreover, the city man is typically

out for himself, is a member of large rather than small groups, and associates with others for the pursuit of a common interest, rather than because of sentimental ties. His relations with his fellowmen, therefore, tend to be formal rather than intimate, and he is inclined to use other men as instruments to gain his own end, rather than to regard them as ends in themselves. This may aid in accounting for what will appear to the country man as an abnormal and mercenary type of human relationship in the city.

The city puts a premium upon innovation and progress and is able, through the collective power of great masses, to achieve fundamental changes in the existing order. Cities have traditionally been regarded as the home of inventions and revolutions. They secularize the sacred beliefs, practices, and institutions; they democratize knowledge, fashions, and tastes and, consequently, generate wants and stimulate unrest. The urban mode of life tends to create solitary souls, to uproot the individual from his customs, to confront him with a social void, and to weaken traditional restraints on personal conduct. This may aid in understanding both the achievement and the disorder characteristic of cities. The grandeur of the city is capable of stirring men's souls and rousing their imagination. It is not merely the magnificent size of the structures, the hum of the traffic, the display of culture and wealth, side by side with the most abject poverty and degradation, but it is also the imposing demonstration of human ingenuity, the sense of personal emancipation amidst a variegated cultural life that stirs the city man to thought and action, and gives urban existence its zest. In modern civilization it is the city that becomes the scene where the ultimate struggle between contending forces is waged and decided.

Personal existence and social solidarity in the urban community appear to hang by a slender thread. The tenuous relations between men, based for the most part upon a pecuniary nexus, make urban existence seem very fragile and capable of being disturbed by a multitude of forces over which the individual has little or no control. This may lead some to evince the most fruitful ingenuity and heroic courage, while it overpowers others with a paralyzing sense of individual helplessness and despair. The oscillation of the city man between the most extreme individualism and the most concerted type of collective action with his fellow men arises out of the conflicting forces that impinge upon him. But it is precisely because of the tenuous basis of his existence that the city man is inclined to have a sense of his own interdependence with others, to have a cosmopolitan outlook, and to unite with others near and far in the pursuit of similar, if not common, ends.

Rural-Urban Balance

Even though, through the development of modern systems of communication and the close interdependence between country and city, the rural and the urban world tend to be more alike, the differences and conflicts between them still persist. The city holds such fascination for country inhabitants that it often leads them to migration. The city dweller, on the other hand, having failed to find a satisfactory life in the city, often generates a nostalgic longing for more "natural" ways of living and seeks a refuge in the country. Because the city has become indispensable to civilized existence, but at the same time subjects man to so many frustrations of his deepest longings, the notion of an ideal mode of life lying somewhere between these two extremes has been a force ever since cities have been in existence. In modern times this ideal expresses itself in a movement known as "rurbanization." It embodies the effort to find a balance between agriculture and industry, between the open natural landscape and the congestion of the city. Model suburbs, garden cities, and suburban homesteads represent variations of this ideal, and the promoters of large scale decentralization of industry have

also found argument for their program in the attempt to combine the advantages of urban and rural life in the same community.

If conscious social effort may be assumed to play a significant role in shaping the conditions under which man lives, the present crisis and opportunity in our national life calls for a prompt examination of the alternative modes of life that we might follow. If rural life or living in communities of small size is either wholly or in certain respects more desirable than living in small or large cities, the evidence to that effect should have a bearing upon the formulation of our national policy, insofar as that policy will further or hinder the rural or urban trend. It may well be that the future of our civilization will in large measure depend not upon man's ability to escape from the city but upon his ability to master and use the forces that move and control it. It is doubtful whether without the city we can hope to enjoy the plane of living that contemporary civilization makes possible. The central problem of national life in regard to cities is a problem of creating those conditions that are required to make cities livable for human beings in a machine age.



PART I—SECTION 3

THE PROBLEMS OF URBAN AMERICA

In the wake of the process of urbanization, a series of maladjustments have bobbed up which militate against the attainment of a satisfactory urban life. The difficulties now confronting the urban community not only prevent the city from making the maximum contribution to our national economy, but in some instances they actually menace urban existence. These problems have been encountered in the course of the committee's studies, and it is appropriate to summarize them in this chapter before undertaking to advance general policies and suggestions for their solution.

Poverty and Inequality

Poverty stalks the city streets in good times and bad. In spite of the increasing standard of living of the city worker, there still exists a large number of individuals and families who are without the essentials necessary to sustain life on even a minimum standard.

While poverty is not exclusively an urban phenomenon, since privation is widespread among the farm population and especially the tenant farmers and share croppers, the city is, nevertheless, the home of the most drastic inequalities in wealth and income. In contrast to their rich fellow citizens, the poor are poorer in the city than they are elsewhere.

It is not merely the existence of large numbers of poor and underprivileged families, nor the philosophic implications of economic inequality, which constitutes a basic problem of urban life. An interdependent, mass production economy rests upon mass purchasing power. Widespread poverty, therefore, threatens the stability and even the survival of such an economy and the society based upon it. Extreme concentration of wealth, on the other hand, leads to personal and corporate oversaving and overexpansion, and is regarded as an important factor in the periodic dislocation of our national economy. The Nation must look to the abolition of poverty and to the reduction of glaring inequalities in wealth and income, because in that direction lie the beginnings of the essential reforms of our economic system and the improvement of urban life.

Insecurity and Unemployment

Poverty and inequality in the city, though relieved by economic opportunities of various kinds in good

times, are accentuated by the insecurities and uncertainties which in some measure characterize the problem of the breadwinner at all times, particularly in times of depression. The causes of our economic cycles may be Nation-wide or even international, but it is the city, as the nerve center of the country's commerce and industry, that is most immediately affected. The stock market crashes, the banking house calls in its loans, the factory cuts production and wages, business offices slash their overhead, the city workers lose their jobs, interest payments on home and farm are defaulted, the banks fail, purchases are curtailed, the retailer's business shrinks, orders cease, the factory stops production, and the vicious circle is complete. The depression hits hard and suddenly in the city, which is precisely the spot where lives the mass of people, both factory and white collared workers, who are dependent on their jobs and possess little beyond their ability to work. They have few or no reserves to fall back on in case of unemployment. In fact, they do not have even a meager food supply which, on the farm at least, helps to sustain life.

Vulnerability of City Life

The tenuousness of the urban economy, which expresses itself particularly in the rapid and cumulative effects of depressions, is actually a characteristic that is basic to urban life generally. On the technological side, for example, it is apparent that the city is a delicate mechanism which can be thrown out of gear and demoralized at a number of vulnerable points.

How hazardous a place the city can be is indicated by events in time of epidemic, storm, accident, conflagration, war, internal strife, sabotage, strike, or flood. Death and disaster wrought by the recent floods in the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys and the suspension of vital municipal services in the cities, large and small, illustrate in a dramatic way what happens when the mechanism of public services is disrupted. Even in normal times, the breakdown of an electric power station or a transmission line may paralyze the city. A subway accident leaves hundreds of thousands stranded. The bursting of an important water main leaves a whole section of the city without water and exposes it to the hazards of conflagration. The fact that these and other difficulties do not arise more often is a tribute

to the smooth functioning of our technology, but when they do happen the effects are swift and serious.

Recognizing this vulnerability of the city and foreseeing the havoc that may be and actually is being wrought by military attacks on cities, European authorities are making provisions for the required emergency facilities and administrative machinery, and are equipping and preparing the cities and their inhabitants for such eventualities. Bomb-proof cellars, gas masks, mock air raids, warning sirens, rescue squads, and the even more fundamental steps drastically of replanning the cities, illustrate the frantic efforts to lessen the extreme vulnerability of the city in case of war.

Population Problems

In spite of the rapid increase of the urban population during the past several decades, the American city is faced by serious problems of biological imbalance. To begin with, its reproduction rate has been declining so rapidly that at present, even more than in the past, it is dependent upon recruitment from the country in order to maintain its population. Only in smaller cities are women bearing enough children to replace the present population. Foreign-born women are still reproducing at more than replacement rates, but their influence in this respect will probably not be important beyond 1940. Negro women are not maintaining their share of the urban population. Rural women, on the other hand, are reproducing at more than a replacement level. In short, the biological suicide of the cities is one of the most significant problems confronting American life.

Dependency

Insecurity of the urban worker, his lack of reserve resources, and the impersonality and mobility of urban life combine to make the problems of dependency more acute and more widespread in the cities than in rural areas. A much greater proportion of the urban population was forced on the relief rolls during the depression than was the case in rural areas. One-fifth of all the employable persons on relief in 1935 were located in the 10 largest cities and consisted mainly of unskilled workmen. The need for the amelioration and prevention of distress brought forth in the cities organized agencies supported by private funds, but, as is well known, these found themselves unable to cope with the task during the recent depression when dependency assumed extraordinary proportions. Relief expenditures from private funds declined in the last 6 years from about one-fourth of the total relief expenditures in 1929 to less than 2 percent. Ex-

perience of the past few years has also shown that urban local government and State governments were financially unable and otherwise unprepared to take over the task from the hard-pressed private relief agencies and to meet the tremendously increased problem of dependence. It remained for the Federal Government to come to the rescue of the States and urban communities in meeting the problems of dependency and relief.

Municipal welfare activities are lacking in uniformity because of the varying distribution of functions among county and city authorities. Together with the counties and States, the cities have assumed greater responsibilities during the recent depression, and welfare organization in general is in a state of transition from an emergency to a permanent basis.

The important problems in caring for dependency include those of finance, the inability of the less wealthy communities and regions to bear the cost of local needs, the constitutional or statutory limitations on taxation, regional organization through city and county collaboration, interstate cooperation in the planning of legislation and administration, adequate standards of administration and professional personnel, and closer Federal-city cooperation.

Racial Heterogeneity

Racially and from the standpoint of national origin the urban population of America is more heterogeneous than in cities of other countries. Foreign-born parents and their children constituted in 1890, 1910, and 1930, 73.0 percent, 74.3 percent, and 63.7 percent, respectively, of the populations of cities of over 1,000,000. The proportion of foreign stock was smaller in the smaller cities. The proportion of Negroes is increasing rapidly in cities of over 250,000, though it is declining in the smaller cities and in the rural districts. Heterogeneity of origin also results in heterogeneity of language and customs, and accounts for the disunity of American urban culture and for some of the conflicts and difficulties in regulating and stabilizing behavior.

With the curtailment of immigration such distinctions may become less marked. But in any case, we are very far from a uniform national type even if this should appear to be desirable.

Family and Community Disorganization

Racial heterogeneity contributes in some measure to family misunderstanding and disruption, particularly between the Americanized child attracted by the variegated outlets of urban existence and parents with an unassimilated outlook and culture. Forces are at

work which make divorce and family desertion more prevalent in the city than on the farm. Anonymity of human relations in the city further contributes to the weakening of family and community ties. In the face of these disintegrating forces there is urgent need and great opportunity for finding a new anchorage for the urban dweller who now lives in a social void. This is a task for the church, the voluntary association, and other community institutions.

Education

Although educational facilities are widely developed in American cities, the problems of making a living preclude a large proportion of the urban population from taking advantage of them. Children and minors have opportunity for free education even when they have passed the compulsory school age, but they are often barred from such opportunity because they must too frequently supplement the family income by going to work.

Classes for adults have also been made available, but mass adult education has until recently not made much progress. Designed primarily to serve immigrants, public-school facilities for adults have only lately begun to catch up with the apparent demand for a more mature program of adult education. Public facilities for adult education, except for the emergency educational program, are still limited primarily to the night schools. The proper use of the public forum and of the radio for adult education and mass enlightenment in America promises to become one of the outstanding problems in this field.

Dangers to Public Health

The provision of adequate public-health services is a significant problem of urban life. While urban morbidity and mortality rates in such fields as infants' diseases and tuberculosis compare favorably with the rural rates, in blighted areas and among low income groups in the city the rates are higher than they would be with adequate, modern, public-health services.

The difficulties of urban public-health regulation are not merely financial, but they involve such irrational and incongruous factors as group selfishness and prudishness. Only under a fearless program recently launched with Federal aid have we deigned to admit the vast prevalence of syphilis and to attack it on a national scale with direct cooperation between the Public Health Service and the cities. It should be possible to restrict within much narrower bounds the common cold so easily transmitted in an urban environment, and its associated diseases of influenza and pneumonia.

Dirt, Smoke, and Waste

Inimical also to the public health are the polluting effects of industrial waste and urban waste in general. In spite of valiant efforts to enforce smoke abatement ordinances, the belching chimneys of factories, office buildings, and apartment houses fill the air with smoke injurious to the respiratory organs, and are inducing neo-modern man to take refuge in air-conditioned buildings. Soot and grime settle on buildings, dirt blackens the streets, and dust seeps into the homes. Garbage, considering the size of the task, is generally well disposed of, but it sometimes piles up in alleys and in outlying dumps, with extremely noxious if not unhealthful consequences. One or a few misplaced industries emitting noxious odors at times pollute the air of large sections of the city. Worse still, communities and industries often dump their wastes untreated into the source of the water supply where regulation and legal powers are not adequate to prevent this, or where conflicting State, county, and city boundaries encourage it, with the result that drinking water must be so highly treated with purifying agents as to be nearly unpalatable. The usefulness of many bodies of water is destroyed for much needed recreational purposes as a result of pollution.

Noise and Strain

The large city and especially its central business district is so characteristically a place of noise that a sudden wave of silence frequently proves to be oppressive to the urbanite for he is accustomed to distracting sounds of all kinds. Screeching brakes, screaming trolley cars, rumbling trucks, rasping auto horns, barking street vendors, shouting newsboys, scolding traffic whistles, rumbling elevated trains, rapping pneumatic hammers, open cut-outs, and now advertising sound trucks and aircraft with radio amplifiers, when added together, constitute a general din for which it would be difficult to find a precedent in the history of cities.

With the development of techniques for measuring the intensity of city noise, and with the experiments now conducted through municipal regulation and informal antinoise campaigns, as in New York City, urban noise and the consequent nerve-racking strain of urban life promise to be recognized in the near future by the American city as problems calling for a serious attack.

Insanity and Suicide

There is some evidence of a higher rate of institutional commitments from urban than from rural communities of people suffering from mental diseases. In 1932, admissions to hospitals for mental diseases were

78.8 per 100,000 population for the urban population and 41.1 for the rural. The rates for feeble-mindedness and epilepsy are also higher in urban areas, although some States have higher rates in rural areas. In interpreting these facts, the question occurs at once whether the contrast is not distorted by the greater tendency in urban areas to institutionalize individuals who in the country would continue to live at home. In addition there is the related problem of personal disorganization leading to suicide which is closely related to the degree of urbanization. In any case the tensions of urban existence give rise to serious problems of mental hygiene.

Delinquency and Crime

The outstanding characteristics of urban delinquency and crime are the emphasis on crimes against property rather than persons, the greater tendency toward organized and commercialized crime and the wide opportunities for juvenile delinquency. There is no evidence, however, that, as compared with rural areas, the city has looser morals, particularly in matters of sex crimes, like rape. Rackets, and the extortion of tribute from legitimate business are restricted mainly to some large cities, but commercialized crime of the type characterizing the prohibition era had its origin not only in the conditions of urban life but also in an unenforceable code of behavior dictated by the nation at large and especially by the rural areas. The remedying of the failure to provide outlets for juvenile energy and the combating of delinquency are among the primary problems the city will have to face and solve in the future.

Inadequate Recreational Facilities

The most obvious problem in urban recreation arises out of a lack of sufficient space for play and recreation in some cities and, still more, out of the poor distribution and the consequent ineffectiveness of existing recreational areas in many more cities. This difficulty is due mainly to the failure of municipal authorities to realize the need for recreational facilities until after the cities were built up. As a result, the establishment of adequate parks and playgrounds in the congested sections of cities is made prohibitive by the high cost of land in such districts.

Another emerging problem is that of providing the type of cultural services suitable to a city population which is growing "older" and which is coming to have more leisure time at its disposal. Music, art, light opera, movies, and the theater have not played a large part in the public recreation programs of the past, but with some notable precedents going back to the pre-

war period and with the stimulus of the Federal arts, music and theatre projects, these forms of recreation may become more widely incorporated into the recreational programs of American cities.

The 200 million dollar annual public expenditure for recreation is made largely by municipalities, which accounted for roughly three-fourths of the total public recreational expenditures during the year 1930. State and Federal park facilities and expenditures, in spite of their conspicuous growth in recent years, thus still lag far behind the municipal or urban figures. This does not mean, however, that cities can continue their programs without outside aid. The depression especially had a curtailing effect. Recently the deficiencies have been reduced in many cities by Federal and State work relief expenditures which, according to estimates held to be reliable, have advanced recreation facilities in some cases 5 or 10 years ahead of expected normal development.

Whether or not this type of Federal aid is to continue, particularly for cities which lack adequate facilities or minimum recreation opportunities, it is apparent that the Nation as a whole has a large stake in urban recreation, not only because it will have to adjust this function to the changes in the industrial economy and leisure-time utilization, but because recreation has wide social implications as well. The problem is not only one of providing more adequate facilities for physical recreation, but of putting forth greater national, State, and community effort to offer adequate opportunities for cultural self-development, artistic self-expression and group participation.

Congestion

The problem of urban congestion arises from the fact that as the city spreads out at its periphery it almost invariably also rises at the center. The skyscraper is a visible symbol of this congestion. As it fills and empties, the streets and traffic facilities, which were designed for smaller cities and lower buildings, are no longer able to carry the load without friction and delays. The extensive remodeling of these facilities to bring them again in scale with the new and greatly more intensive use of private property is inordinately expensive in most cases. For it is precisely at the center, where the region-wide functions of the city are concentrated, where the daily ebb and flow of the human tides converge and where the acquisition of every foot of additional space involves high land costs and building damages, that this remodeling is most needed and space is at a premium.

While the elimination of congestion would involve enormous costs, the aggregate cost of permitting this

congestion in our cities to continue represents an imposing waste. Traffic delays where speed and promptness are at a premium, overcrowding of sites and buildings, dark and badly ventilated dwellings and offices, overtaxing of public facilities and services, deficiency in public open space combined with a surplus of unused private open space, undue concentration of land values, and unfair apportionment of the local tax burden—these and other detriments to urban well-being are present in varying degrees in practically every American city. These conditions generally accompany the type of urban growth which is characterized by uninterrupted accretion at the periphery and increasingly more intensive building development, concentration, and congestion in the center, seldom relieved for long, but rather aided and abetted by subways, traffic lights, one-way streets, and the staggering of office hours.

One of the most serious consequences of traffic congestion at the center of urban areas and of the high-speed radial traffic to their outskirts is the increasing rate of street-traffic accidents and the appalling number of fatalities. These constitute a hazard in present-day city life comparable in some respects with the plagues of old.

Dispersion

Just as extreme concentration is wasteful, so is extreme dispersion. The suburbanite aims to escape at least some of the disadvantages of living in the densely built city but by coming to the central city to earn his living, he creates new problems of overcentralization. The advantages of residential dispersion are coupled with the disadvantages of atomized administrative areas which tend to break up urban regions into suburban bailiwicks and dormitories independent of the central city.

The real difficulty with the dispersive tendencies of suburbanization and other centrifugal movements lies in the lack of planning and the consequent waste in public facilities, services, and the use of urban land and space. Urban expansion being left largely to the whim of the subdivider, discontinuous, sporadic, suburban settlements or ribbon developments along the highways, with large undeveloped interstices between them, greatly increase the cost and difficulties of providing the essential public facilities and services. On his part the subdivider has so thoroughly pursued his job—in many cases at the expense of either the land owner, the gullible home seeker, or the community—that even now enough land is subdivided in the outskirts of many of our larger cities to exceed any prospective need of these communities for building sites for a great many years to come.

Exploitation of Urban Land

Gambling in land values has contributed to alternate booms and depressions, raising false hopes, encouraging over-ambitious structures, wiping out private investors, and, all in all, has been one of the major tragedies of American urban life. Inflated valuations have contributed to vertical expansion and over-intensive land utilization, with the result that the private use of land has far outgrown public facilities and services, including water, sewerage, health, police and fire protection, street and transit facilities, and has created all sorts of congestion.

The dispersive developments of recent years have left blighted vacuums in the interiors of our cities and have themselves been vitiated by land prices at a level too high to permit a desirable standard of urban development. Boom subdividing has resulted in paper streets with impossible grades and unintelligent grid-iron patterns, as well as unnecessary or premature and poorly planned subdivisions.

The plight of our cities is commonly ascribed to the unbridled exploitation of land by private owners. But in fairness, the blame cannot be fixed so simply and definitely. Indeed, candid analysis must place the major responsibility on our lack of urban land policies and on the consequent failure of our public authorities to afford to private owners and developers adequate opportunities for sound and profitable land uses. It is the guidance and protection rather than the restriction of land users that need major emphasis in the formulation of land policies for desirable urban development. For every landowner who wishes to exploit his property to the detriment of his neighborhood or community, there are hundreds who desire to be safeguarded against such antisocial uses. But where community protection is lacking, it is quite natural for the average property owner to try to secure, in self-protection and at the expense of his neighbors, advantages which they might otherwise secure at his expense.

The basic problem then is not private exploitation alone but also our failure to realize that the tenure and use of urban land are matters of urgent public concern; that a larger measure of protection for socially beneficial private uses and of public ownership of land would be in the public interest; that orderly and speedy reform is essential to the present well-being and future progress of our cities; and that few of these reforms can be worked out on an exclusively local scale but require new principles and policies in urban land economics, country-wide in effect and expressed through State, local, and, perhaps, even through national legislation.

Slums and Blighted Areas

The slum is the most glaring symptom of urban disintegration. Much more than the rural slum and the village hovel, the urban slum is a contagious blight on a large scale. It is by no means limited to derelict, residential areas, but often consists of decaying business and industrial sections. Neither is the location of the slum limited to the older, central parts of the city. Actual or potential suburban slums are probably developing faster than the older, centrally located slums are being eradicated.

The areas of blight and decay drag down neighboring values, reduce rentals, restrict tax paying ability, and curtail those community services which could be used to supplement the waning facilities of the neighborhood. In this sense, the slum is a drain on the resources of the community and is inimical to the welfare of the entire city.

As to residential buildings of the cities, a substantial proportion of these are substandard in respect to structure, open space, overcrowding, sanitary conditions, and conveniences. Of approximately 1,500,000 residential buildings in 64 cities, between one-sixth and one-fifth were found to be substandard on the basis of the Real Property Inventory made in 1934 by the Department of Commerce and the Civil Works Administration.

Numerous local studies indicate that inadequate housing conditions are causally connected with high infant mortality rates, high tuberculosis rates, high incidence of delinquency and crime. Likewise, there is a close coincidence between poor housing conditions and social disorganization; similarly, between fire hazards and poor housing. The cost per capita of providing fire, police, and other services for the population in the areas of poor housing is usually much higher than for other sections, while the tax revenues from these areas are disproportionately low. The community thus subsidizes areas of poor housing, when it might employ such resources constructively for good housing.

Housing Difficulties

Even the more desirable homes of the urban community present problems. In the first place, there is an inadequacy of acceptable housing facilities. Urban home ownership, though it had been rising in the decade 1920-30, was still as low as 46.8 percent in 1930. In fact the larger and the more industrialized a city, the greater the tenancy. Principally, however, the problem lies in the fact that family incomes are inadequate or the cost of satisfactory housing is too high and that, consequently, too large a proportion of the family budget is spent for rentals. To aggravate the problem, families with low incomes generally must

spend a larger proportion of their income for rent than those of the higher income groups.

National policy has recently recognized, through the establishment of such Federal agencies as the Home Owners' Loan Corporation, the Federal Housing Administration, the Housing Division of the Public Works Administration, and the Resettlement Administration that Government lending for and the construction of housing is a public responsibility, not only as a means of economic recovery but for the sake of improving housing facilities.

But even with the adoption of this national policy, problems still persist. The States, even with the enactment of limited dividend and housing authority laws, are not moving fast enough to give general and Nation-wide encouragement to housing. State and local authorities are but slowly appreciating the necessity for vigorous action and for a definite acceptance of public responsibility and leadership. The problems of slum eradication are still being confused with those of low-rent housing. Areas which should not again be used for housing, because they are functionally unfit and undesirable for this purpose and are not in proper relation to the desirable development of the whole community, are being enthusiastically rebuilt, often on such a limited scale that shortly they may be subjected to and are likely to be the victims of the same forces of deterioration which dragged down the old development before them. Similarly, loans are being made on homes which by no means meet minimum requirements of neighborhood, space, construction, and sanitation, and will contribute to future deterioration and blight. A national housing policy to be fully effective must not only be tied in with the national economy and financial structure, but it must be an integral part of a comprehensive long-range plan for the development and redevelopment of the community, in order to prevent patchwork projects and to insure against the instability of new developments, new dislocations in the community structure and, in general, the very unsoundness and deterioration which caused the conditions that the new policy and program are intended to remedy.

Obsolescence

In the United States generally and, especially, in our cities, there appears to be more obsolescence and demolition of equipment than would seem to be called for in a relatively new country. In an amazingly brief period, as compared with other Nations, American villages have become towns and the towns cities, other cities and towns have become decaying mill sites or ghost towns. Brick houses succeeded frame, apartment hotels replaced residences, office buildings followed shops and lofts, garages of one story were suc-

ceeded by garages of several stories, inns have been turned into grand hotels, and the early "cloud scratchers" of the last generation have been torn down to make room for colossal skyscrapers. Cobble-stone and wood-block roads have been replaced by concrete, single tracks have given way to double tracks, and double tracks have soon been transformed by the advent of motorbuses into silent and useless reminders of the trolley age and the days of the suburban and inter-urban electric lines.

The explanation for this unprecedented rate of obsolescence lies partly in the rapid growth and spread of population and enterprise which in swift succession overtaxed and outmoded existing facilities; in the existence of over-abundant natural resources which discouraged conservation and put a premium on waste; in the rapid but careless workmanship and, as a result, quickly-depreciating construction; in the lack of community stability characteristic of the frontier; in the lack of planning and zoning control which permitted owners to lay out and use their land as they saw fit; and in the general lack of regard for the interest of the community in favor of personal and material gain.

If this unreasonable waste of our physical plant and equipment could but remain physical in its consequences, this problem of obsolescence in American life might prove less serious. But it has had its effects in the disorganization of production, the wastes of unemployment, the destruction of skills, the discouragements to thrift, and the cumulative disregard of community appearance and community values.

Unattractive Appearance

Uninspiring buildings, vacant and neglected land parcels, ugly billboards and lack of architectural consistency are characteristic of many American cities. Architectural style may be difficult to regulate, but that it is possible and practicable to do so is evident from European experience. The beautiful cities of the Old World and the few planned cities of America have not become so by accident. They have been deliberately modeled according to well-conceived patterns not only in matters of construction and safety but also in matters of design.

In America we have not given so much attention to the physical attractiveness of cities. Nor have we done much to stimulate among our people an appreciation of beautiful architectural form and civic design. There is practically no effective regulation nor is there an adequate body of custom which would compel owners to conform to the architectural style of the neighborhood. Likewise owners of vacant land are not made to keep their property sightly, let alone to offer these unused areas for recreational or other public

purposes. On the contrary, normally there is an attempt to capitalize the space for advertising and cheaply constructed structures of unattractive appearance. While of late years zoning ordinances and building codes have somewhat mitigated this evil, in most of our cities ugly sights and ungainly structures still remain in all too many places.

Dislocation of Industry

One of the principal urban problems is the articulation of the industries of the community into a structure which will secure the maximum employment of the available labor supply, the minimizing of seasonal and cyclical fluctuations in the total employed pay roll of the community, the optimum use of the advantages of location from the standpoint of raw materials and markets, and a balance between the cost of community services to industry and the income derived by the community from industry.

Lacking an appreciation of the need for a selective program of industrial development, communities have attracted and subsidized enterprises without adequate attention to their effects upon the total industrial structure. Too frequently, the test has been not the qualitative test of the effect upon the various parts of the community's industrial mechanism, but the quantitative test of increasing the total amount of industrial activity at the time the new enterprise is established. A poorly balanced local industrial structure throws the entire industrial front out of joint by causing migration of labor, unemployment, lower wages, curtailed purchasing power, less trading business, lower living standards, high cost of relief, high taxes, tax delinquency, untenanted property, stagnation of building enterprises, obsolescence of community plant and depreciation of industrial equipment.

On a national scale, too, the industrial pattern has developed from a background of factors which either have never been or are no longer sound. The location of an industry in one region or another, in one city or another, was too frequently decided on the basis of the internal economy of that particular industry with no reference to the possible ill effects upon other and related industries or upon the community. It was, on too many occasions, influenced by a transportation system and a rate structure which favorably beckoned the enterprise to locate at a particular place at the expense of the entire productive balance of an industry of nation-wide importance. Stranded industrial population groups are not local phenomena. In origin and consequence they are nation-wide.

Such maladjustments can be averted through planned industrial selection, as in the case of certain local communities of the United States where notable

success has been achieved through planning which considers not only immediate returns to the individual enterprise, but also the effect it will have on the productive balance of the entire community. In the absence of effective local, private initiative in this direction, the answer must be found in government stimulation and national industrial zoning.

Inadequate Control Over Transport

In addition to industry, the transportation network and the rate structure of the country contributed to the maladjustments in the national urban pattern and urban life. Located principally on natural waterways, the early American cities were soon subjected to the disrupting effects of competing forms of transportation. During the canal era, cities rose up along the new water routes, leaving more mature but less favored places to decay along the old routes. When the railroads came, these canal cities frequently met, in their turn, a similar fate. Then came more railroads, and the rivalries between cities took the form of subsidies, railroad construction by cities themselves, and cut-throat rate reduction.

The consequences were cumulative. Failure of railroads to obtain business on one line led to frantic construction to tap new areas. The tapping of new areas brought about new urban centers which attracted new lines and sought to attract more lines. But the end of this process has not yet been reached. The motortruck and passenger bus are not only cutting into the business of the railways, but they are beginning to influence both the national urban pattern and the local and regional urban structure.

We can only speculate on what may happen as a result of airway development and long-distance electric-power transmission, but unless a less competitive policy is adopted in all these fields, either through private initiative or public regulation, the history of earlier forms of transport may be repeated. Urban communities will attract new forms and facilities of transportation, power, and communication, and largely in the hands of these newer technological developments will lie the cities' future.

The principal problem at present is how to control and manipulate the existing transportation network either to preserve or to reshape the existing national urban pattern and the urban community or region. Instead of utilizing the transport system and the rate structure to influence the flow of goods and people, and the distribution of economic activity and urbanization according to some previously conceived national plan of development, we have permitted our transport facilities and rate structure to accentuate existing advantages and disadvantages. A new policy must be adopted, designed to make our transport system and

rate structure a flexible tool instead of a rigid cast for future urban development.

Transportation Terminals

The present multiplicity of terminals in urban areas arises from the same competitive practices between transport agencies which characterizes our entire transportation system. Many of these terminals are located in congested central areas. The number of railroad freight stations alone is, for example, as high as 700 in the Philadelphia district.

The fact that in 1932 almost three-fourths of all railway traffic terminated in urban areas, and that over one-third (37 percent) of the total railroad freight operating expenses in 1932 consisted of terminal costs, indicates the importance of the terminal problem from the standpoint of the national and urban economy. The transportation companies, the shippers, and governmental authorities are cognizant of this aspect of the terminal problem but have not adequately appreciated the broader relations between terminals and urban community structure and development as a whole. The location and operation of terminal facilities have profoundly influenced the development of our urban communities, and any major changes in these facilities and their operations are bound to have a material effect on the future physical development of our cities and metropolitan regions.

The possibility of enormous savings will no doubt stimulate the present tendency toward terminal consolidation and coordination, and will encourage the shifting of terminal locations to cheaper land. Efforts by governmental authorities to further terminal consolidation and any major reorganization of the transportation system would accelerate this trend. The major community problem in connection with these changes is to bring them into harmony with the long-range plans for the development of the urban community in order to guard against conflicts and dislocations.

Aside from the influence of the terminal changes on general community development, the specific problems which the community will have to face will include such matters as the effect of new facilities on the immediately surrounding areas, on land values, land uses, streets, and other public facilities, and also the proper utilization of abandoned terminal properties along with the redevelopment of their surroundings. In addition, the community may often be called upon in connection with such terminal changes to undertake the construction of new streets or street widenings, utility mains and sewers, or to participate in the building of grade separation structures.

As has already been indicated, neither the transportation companies nor the State or Federal regu-

latory authorities have shown an appreciation of the community aspect of the terminal problem. Local planning commissions are practically the only public agencies which have concerned themselves thus far with the question of the proper place of transportation facilities in the community plan. Unfortunately, however, local planning agencies are without the necessary authority to bring city planning considerations to bear on the decisions of transportation companies, either directly or through the State or Federal regulatory agencies.

Urban Transit

Like transportation and terminal facilities, so urban transit and the policies and practices pursued in matters of rates and services, ownership, public regulation, location, and operation, have played a prominent part in determining the development of urban communities and regions. The growth of the urbanized area, the distribution of population and economic activities, land use, land values and the intensity of building development have all been materially influenced by local transit facilities. There is ample evidence to indicate that in spite of the new mobility which came with the general use of the private motor vehicle, the pattern of development of our urban areas still bears the marked imprint of our past transit policies and practices which gave little or no consideration to the interest of the community as a whole. The maladjustments to which past transit policies have contributed include over-concentration of population and of extremely high real estate values in some areas, undue dispersion, vacant land, and falling property values in others, excessive cost of public services resulting from these conditions, and difficulties in the transaction of business, including traffic congestion with all of its attendant wastes, hazards, and inconveniences.

The central problem is therefore how to utilize the instrument of urban transit as an effective tool in furthering the desirable development and redevelopment of urban places and regions in accordance with long-range, comprehensive, community plans.

Urban Planning and Zoning

Although city planning and zoning as practiced during the past 20 years has, by and large, been beneficial, it has fallen short of expectations and potentialities. It has been, and still is, handicapped by a combination of obstacles, the removal of which is held to be fundamental to really effective and successful urban planning and zoning.

To begin with, city planning bodies lack sufficient legal powers to guide effectively the physical, social, and economic structure of the community through the instrumentality of a comprehensive plan broadly con-

strued. They are subject to uninformed official and public opinion which does not fully appreciate the great importance of community planning. They often encounter jealousy and even opposition on the part of administrative departments. They suffer from insufficient appropriations and a scarcity of competent technical planning personnel. They are themselves sometimes at fault, because they lack sincere interest and vigor in performing their task of which they often have but a limited understanding or a narrow view.

Even where legal powers and planning practices are most advanced, local planning agencies seldom have even advisory authority over *all* public works projects within the area under their jurisdiction, but are limited to projects of their own local government. Nor do they have such authority over the facilities of transportation, transit, and utility agencies, except when the proposed changes directly affect a public facility or public property. Their powers over the layout of real estate subdivisions are inadequate to be fully effective and they are without authority to regulate the quantity of such subdivision developments. In general, local planning agencies need stronger and wider authority in order to exercise jurisdiction over all matters relating to community development, and, where a county or regional planning agency does not exist, not only within the municipal boundaries, but over the entire area now urbanized or likely to become so and as much of the region beyond as bears relation to the proper development of the urban community itself.

Another weakness in local planning has been the absence of more general plans for larger areas—the region, the State and the Nation—which might have furnished a framework and much needed over-all controls for local effort.

In fact, the entire scope and conception of local urban planning need broadening. While the influence of the physical environment upon the economic and social structure of the community is everywhere in evidence, planning agencies and planners have been slow to recognize and give proper emphasis to the social and economic objectives and aspects of planning and zoning. Studies of the economic base of the community, its soundness, deficiencies, and its prospects, and the need for a selective program of industrial development, have been almost completely overlooked. The pressing problem of housing has not received the attention from planning agencies that it deserves.

Local planning should be given or must gain for itself a place in the structure of government where it will be closer to the local legislative body, the chief executive and the administrative departments. A pos-

sible way to achieve this might be the transforming of the independent planning commission or board into a planning department as one of the staff agencies of the local government, with or without an advisory committee of citizens. However, thorough understanding and acceptance of planning by the local legislative body, the chief executive and, most of all, by the citizenry in general, would appear to be a prerequisite for such a change.

Lag in Public Improvements

Urban communities have shown a widespread need for the stimulation of public works and facilities. The difficulties of urban public improvement programs arise first from the historic practice of cities to dispose of their land holdings for a pittance only to be compelled in many cases to buy them back later for their own use at exorbitant prices. The problem of financing public improvements has been only partially relieved by Federal grants and loans recently made available for worthy or self-liquidating public works. The planning of public works has also been neglected both locally, as part of the city plan, and nationally, as part of a broad program for increasing employment directly and for stimulating industrial activity during slump periods.

An additional difficulty has been the existence of a number of overlapping and coordinate governmental authorities in the urban region. Each of these authorities may have a veto power over essential improvements, such as roads, sewers, and sewage disposal plants, and may be unprepared to proceed when all the others are able and willing to do so. Moreover, the obvious advantages of combining the office buildings of all governmental authorities in the community into a "governmental center", have been achieved in but a very few instances because of the lack of unified control over public works projects. City and county, school board and special district, State and Federal Governments almost invariably pursue their land purchasing, construction, or rental policies irrespective of the needs of the others, regardless of the increased bargaining strength of a joint program and apparently unaware of the symbolic and practical values of a single, planned community center for all governmental buildings.

However, the most important and fundamental reason for the lag in public works is the difficulty of finding the funds to pay for them. Municipal governments are hard pressed to raise funds for even the most essential public improvements, because the tax on real property is practically the only source of general revenues for local government, or because of rigid tax limitations, or the taxpayers' reluctance to

vote for bond issues. A further handicap in the financing of public works is the lack of legal powers to use more up-to-date methods, such as special district assessments, excess condemnation, and land-value increment taxes, in order to finance improvements more nearly from the increased values which they create.

Legal Obstructions to Physical Improvement

Attempts at improving the physical environment in the city have been blocked at almost every step by the restrictive provisions of State laws, by inadequate grants of power to local governments and by adverse court decisions. In the case of billboard regulation, for example, after some hesitancy about sustaining regulatory ordinances on the basis of the police power, the courts have for years frowned upon regulations which were defended chiefly on aesthetic grounds until in 1935 the Massachusetts Supreme Court upheld an ordinance based purely upon such considerations.

Similarly, the acquisition of land by municipalities has been hampered by narrow legal interpretations of "public use" and of the power to condemn for public use, complex and over-technical eminent domain and land acquisition statutes and procedures, restrictions on excess condemnation, and the absence of a single real estate office within the city government.

Physical improvement programs have also been handicapped by the weaknesses of general property tax administration, uncalled for tax differentials and exemptions, overburdening special assessments, tax limitations, and slow and inefficient assessment procedures. Even private land transfers are subject to frequently cumbersome and usually expensive procedures and to complex laws relating to title registration, title insurance, mortgage foreclosure and sales of tax delinquent property.

Inadequate Governmental Powers

In contrast to the rapidly increasing responsibilities and services of urban governments, their legal powers are relatively stationary. Legally, the city is the creature of the State, and in practice the city must contend with all sorts of meddling State statutory details or conversely with statutory gaps which prove judicially fatal when the city embarks upon new programs. All ranges of urban activity, from petty questions of administrative procedure to general questions of urban policy, are determined by State law. Between 1896 and 1936 the number of Supreme Court cases, State and Federal, involving the exercise of municipal powers, has increased fourfold, and one-third of these cases have been decided against the city. Even constitutional home rule over municipal

affairs, though it has been adopted in 18 States, has become a waning movement, and where it has been adopted, courts have, on the whole, tended to construe the grant of municipal powers more narrowly than was expected.

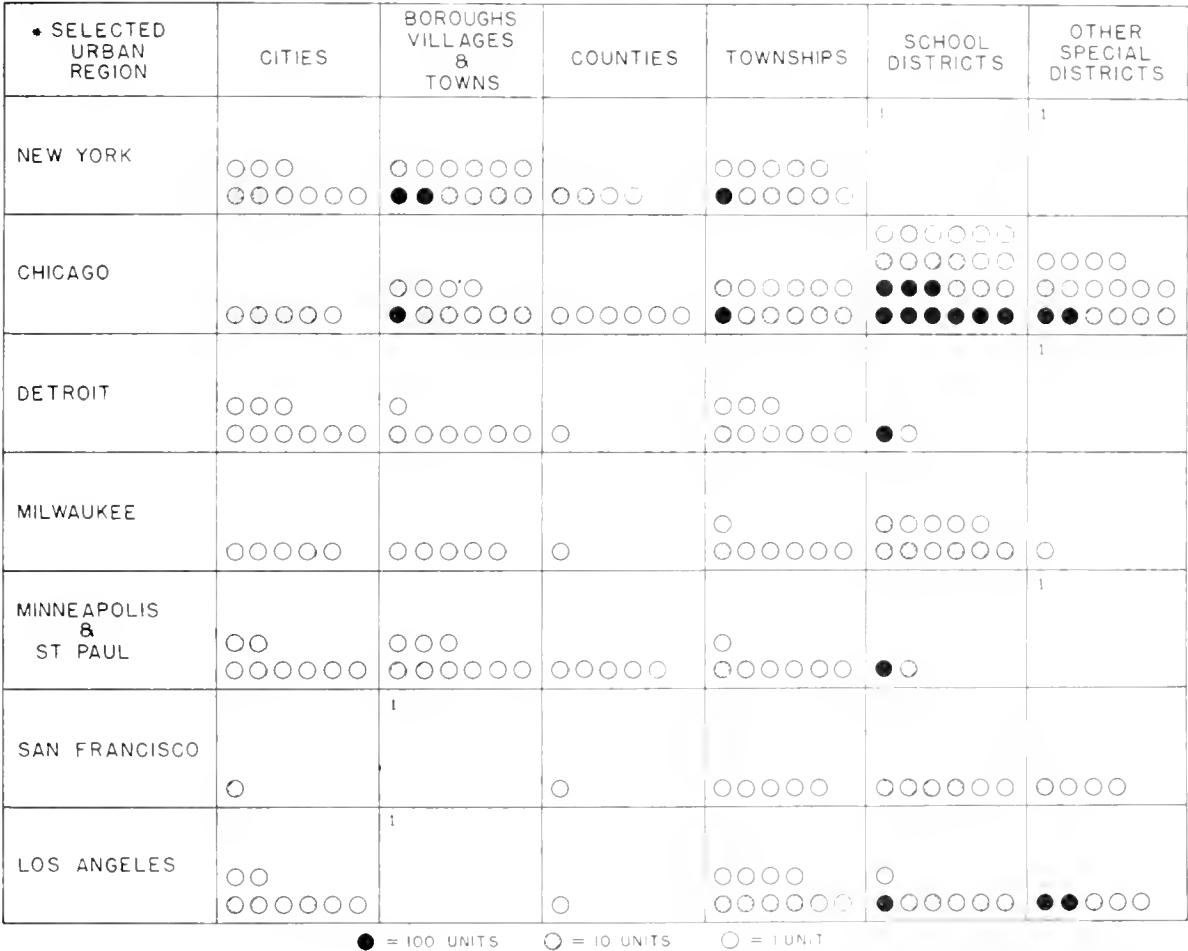
Duplication of Governmental Levels

A problem which underlies the difficulties of regulating urban affairs in the United States is the duplication of governmental levels—local, State, and national. Whenever a program of municipal reform and reconstruction is initiated, either locally or on a national scale, this dilemma has to be faced: our constitutional system forces the cities to work largely through the States which, either singly or collectively,

have been unable to deal adequately with urban problems.

Where, for example, the State's power has been practically exclusive in matters of distinct urban significance, such as the criminal law and judicial procedure, the Nation has witnessed one of the most hesitant and barren fields of governmental endeavor; and the cities have been forced to experiment with police and judicial reforms without the encouragement of advanced State laws. On the other hand, in fields where cities do possess the power and have developed an adequate program of regulation, the States have engaged in a subtle process of invading municipal activities. A study of a dozen major regulatory State acts in one State, for example, shows that the usual

NUMBER OF GOVERNMENT UNITS IN SELECTED URBAN REGIONS



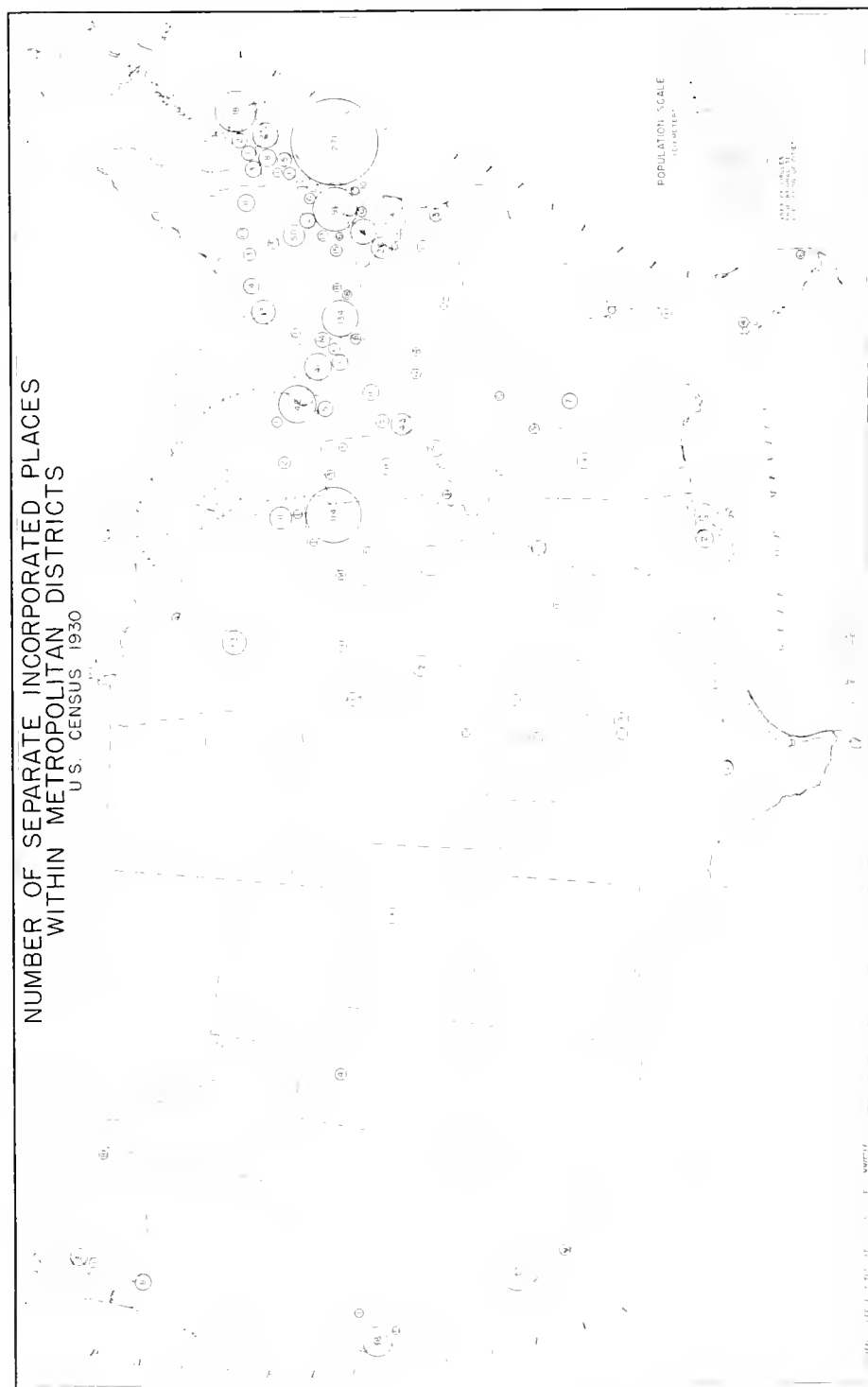


Figure 50 --Numbers of separate incorporated places shown within the circles do not include the central incorporated city within the district enclosed

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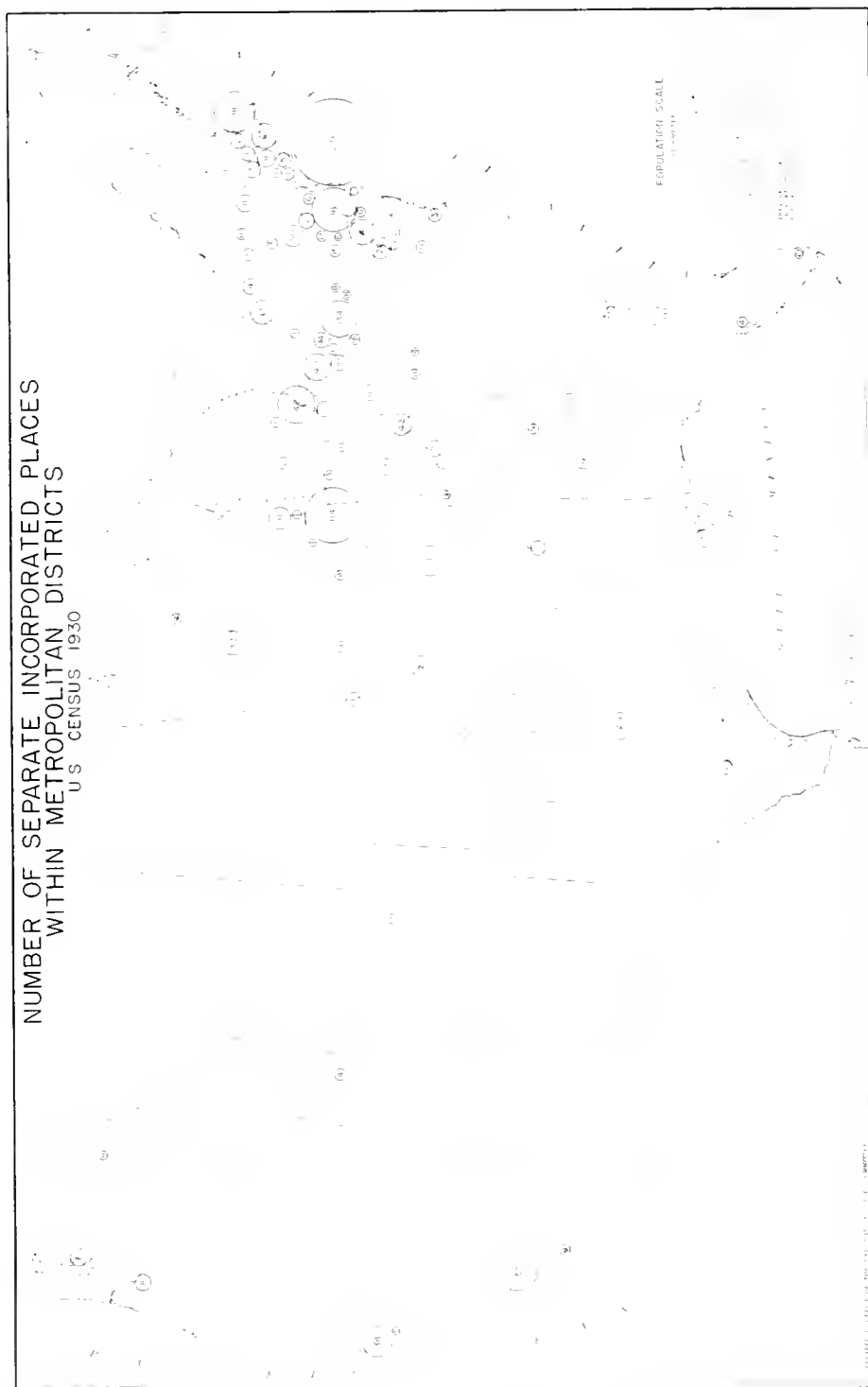


Figure 50—Numbers of separate incorporated places shown within the circles do not include the central incorporated city within the district enclosed

METROPOLITAN DISTRICTS

U.S. CENSUS 1930

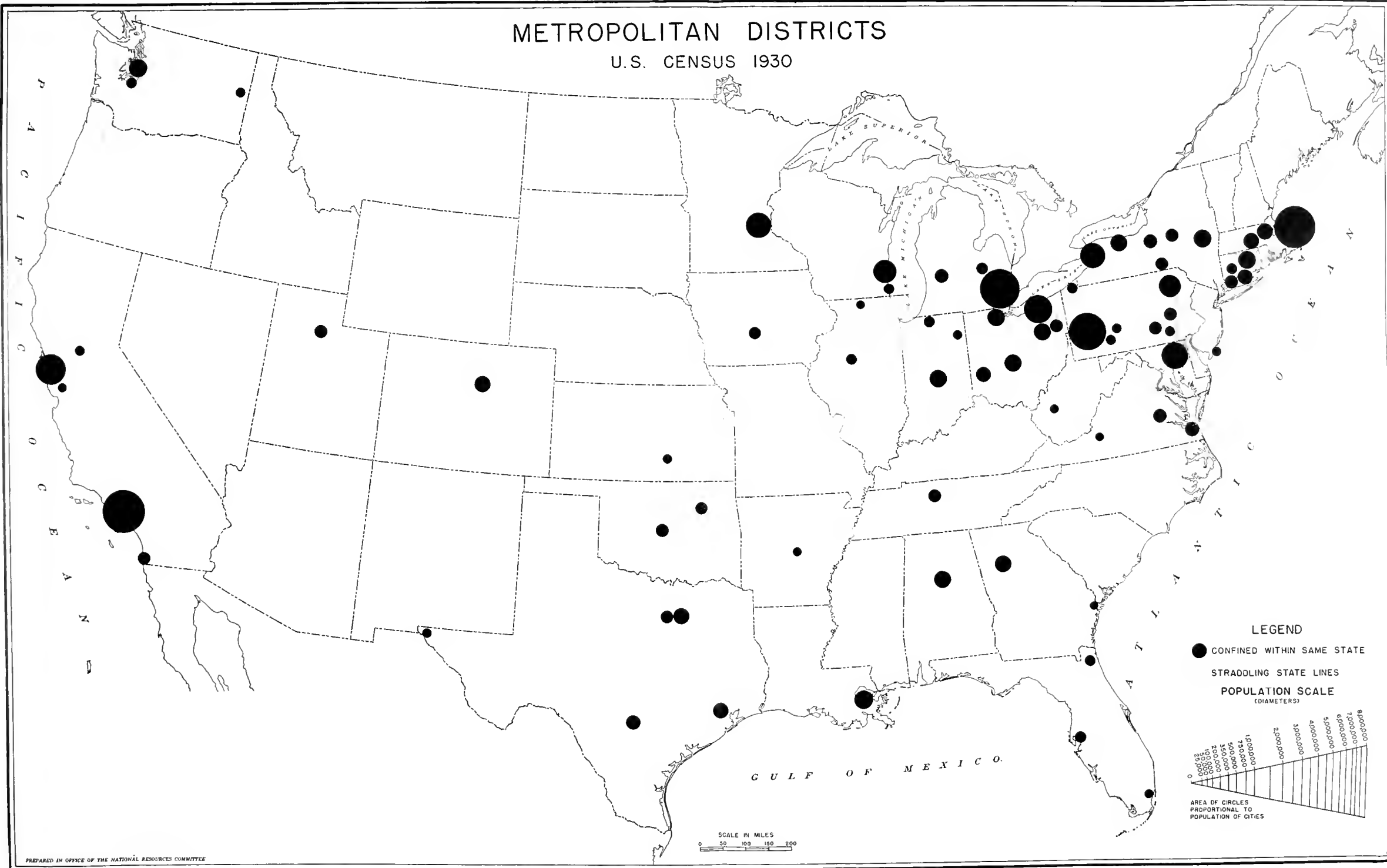


FIGURE 51

practice has been for the city to initiate a regulation, to develop technical standards for its enforcement, and to install an inspection service, and then for the State to step in, enact some of the standards set up by the city and take over the licensing powers and the licensing fees without, however, enforcing adequate standards or inspections itself.

Now that the Federal Government has embarked upon a policy under which it has enlarged the scope of its activities and relationships with reference to cities, the urban controls exercised by State governments will be supplemented in some instances with a new set of controls. If these could, at least for the larger cities, "short circuit" the States, the administrative relationships which are growing up would not seem so complicated. But again our existing constitutional system may militate against direct Federal-city relationships.

Governmental Disorganization of Metropolitan Regions

As has already been pointed out, the process of urbanization has brought larger aggregates of population and wider areas within the orbit of a central dominant city. In continuing to treat the city as a municipal corporation, however, we have obviously allowed the realities of today to be obscured by the artificial and often arbitrary administrative boundaries which are a heritage of the past. Taking only the largest urban areas, i. e. the 96 metropolitan districts containing 55 millions of people or 45 percent of our total population, it is found that the urban governmental system of these districts consists of a bewildering maze of overlapping authorities and of a growing number of suburban and satellite cities.

The multiplicity of governments in the metropolitan areas is best indicated by the fact that, besides a very large number of overlapping authorities, in 1930 there were 272 separate incorporated places in the New York-Northeastern New Jersey metropolitan district, 135 in the Pittsburgh district, 115 in the Chicago area, 92 in the Philadelphia district, and 56 in the Los Angeles district. Together with their over-layers of counties, townships, school districts, sanitary districts, sewer districts, library districts, health districts, park districts, forest preserve districts, street lighting districts, utility districts, water districts, and even mosquito-abatement districts—each of them a separate body politic and corporate—these communities present an odd picture of independent bailiwicks performing related or even identical governmental functions with some degree of cooperation, but with a great degree of competition for municipal revenues, for administrative prestige and for legal powers. Frequently, these districts are too small in area or have insufficient tax resources to support essential public services. All this

governmental duplication, confusion and localism are in sharp contrast to the obvious disregard of the network of urban boundary lines by epidemics which complicate urban health work, by criminals who are not stopped by city limits, and by the city and suburban users of highways and transportation facilities who seldom know or care about the maze of political boundaries in metropolitan districts.

The whole problem is aggravated by the customary legal difficulties in applying the earlier, and now unusual, solutions of annexation, consolidation, and federation of metropolitan authorities and suburbs, and in utilizing the more frequent and current devices of special metropolitan authorities, intermunicipal and extra-territorial contractual and functional relations, and interstate and Federal arrangements.

On the latter point in particular, the difficulty is not merely in the lack of urban imagination or in the restraints of State law, but again it lies in the fact that the legal pattern of the nation consists of sovereign States and subordinate cities, while the concrete facts of our urban and administrative life defy State lines and State control. Twenty-two metropolitan districts containing 26,000,000 people, more than one-half of our metropolitan inhabitants and over one-fifth of our total population, straddle State lines. Since many of our cities are located along navigable rivers and since such rivers also generally serve as boundaries between States, it is to be expected that as some of these cities grow they will increasingly transcend the political units of which they are a part. For rivers, while they divide areas politically, generally unite them economically. But these populous urban regions and their administrative problems receive scant recognition in the existing machinery of our States and our National Government.

In their daily or periodic contacts the inhabitants of the metropolitan region, irrespective of municipal, township, county, State, or even national lines, are bound together into a community through industry, public utilities, social and cultural institutions, an interdependent system of transportation and communication, the newspaper, radio, telephone, and postal service, if not through a sense of social solidarity and common interests arising out of common problems. The greatest obstacle to the full emergence of a metropolitan community is the great number of conflicting and overlapping political and administrative units into which the area is divided. It is to be expected that as cities grow, an increasing proportion of their population will be found outside of their official boundaries. In fact, in the highly urbanized areas of the North Atlantic seaboard, even the different metropolitan regions shade almost imperceptibly into one another, constituting a vast aggregation or a super-

metropolis. Under such circumstances, the daily interrelations of the population are so far flung spatially and so intimate socially and economically that the official place of residence of the person scarcely defines the locus of his actual interest. In these areas with their concentration of population, commerce, and industry, their convergence of lines of transportation and communication, where mobility is high and spatial separation great, government, since it is not unified, is heavily taxed in dealing with the problems and functions that in smaller communities are not present, or are easily solved. In view of the relative inflexibility of political and administrative areas, the necessity of cooperation among and integration of the separate units of government has led to the development of *ad hoc* governments and to the increasing demand for greater freedom to deal adequately with the task of planning the physical structure and the functional coordination of the government constituting the region.

Unless, therefore, the boundaries of the political city can be stretched to include its suburban and satellite industrial and residential colonies, the economic and social base, upon which rests the welfare of both those who remain in the city and those who seek a partial escape from it, will eventually disintegrate. For no community in a democratic society can long remain a sound functioning organism, if those among its members who gain the greatest benefits from it, escape from most of the obligations communal life imposes, and if those who obtain the least returns in the way of the necessities and amenities of life are left to bear the brunt of civic responsibility and taxation. If an orderly development and a higher level of life for the people of the imposing supercities are to be attained, some measures calculated to endow them with the capacity to act collectively as a political unit are indispensable.

Inadequate Municipal Cooperation

Although a large number of voluntary quasi-governmental associations of cities and of city officials have grown up in the United States to fill the gaps in our legal framework of urban powers, procedures and personnel, our cities have not taken full advantage of these forms of collaboration on a national scale.

Certain States, for example, lack leagues of municipalities, and large cities do not take full advantage of the services offered by the national organizations of urban professional and policy officials. Finally, collaboration among municipalities and the clearing of ideas and coordination of programs have not developed as rapidly as would seem to be justified by the significant national role now being played by the de-

velopment of associations and conferences in the field of municipal government.

Personnel Problems

While the cities themselves are responsible for some of the obstacles to the development of a skilled municipal career service, for the systematic evasion of the civil service laws in some cities, for the failure to set up or revise classification and salary plans, for the occasional recurrence of inept or irresponsible personnel and leadership in some of the country's largest cities, or for official tolerance of certain conditions bordering upon corruption within the city hall and favoritism and racketeering in law enforcement outside—still State authorities must bear the largest share of the responsibility for the continuance of those provisions of the State laws which foster such distortions of the municipal service.

The continued existence of those State constitutions and State laws which foster large numbers of elective urban officers, ranging from judges to county surveyors; short elective terms and blanket ballots which burden and confuse even the most informed and well-meaning voters; the system of appointing deputies and employees on the basis of their ability to corral votes rather than to administer municipal affairs; the hesitancy of some of the most urbanized States to enact permissive legislation involving such forward-looking personnel devices as the city manager system (which today under the existing laws cannot be adopted in one-third of our municipalities of over 1,000 inhabitants); the retention of rigid residence requirements preventing the free flow of expert and trained officials between city and suburb, city and overlapping county, city and State, city and Nation, and even between one city and a sister city dealing with essentially the same problems—these cannot be glibly attributed to the shortcomings of our urban communities, for they are conditioned by and are inherent in the whole body of existing State law.

Tax Tangles

The confusion and inadequacies of American municipal finance arise in large part from unplanned and uncoordinated State financial control. The city is forced to depend upon the shrinking general property tax as the major source of municipal income, while the State has been preempting most of the newer sources of taxation and of the available public revenues. It is true that cities have in many instances been ineffective in local tax administration. On the other hand, the States have continued to handicap the cities by doling out under strict and sometimes arbitrary regulations grants-in-aid and local shares of State-col-

lected taxes to the cities. Recently property tax limitations have been reestablished in some States, and these seriously threaten to curtail urban services. The anomaly in the situation is that the 48 State governments which dictate the systems of local taxation are, from the standpoint of total expenditures, only half as important as all of the local governments they are presumed to control. Our largest cities alone, like New York, Chicago, Boston, and Detroit, have larger budgets than the States which contain them. The problem of municipal finance is becoming even more complicated with the extension of Federal and State taxation to support the newer services, such as social security.

These problems of municipal revenues are thus not merely problems of State-local relationship. They are problems requiring national planning as well, for a Nation which in its economy has come to be an interdependent whole, cutting across the differences between State and State, city and region, or town and country, cannot afford to compartmentalize rigidly the distribution of public revenues any more than it can compartmentalize the planning of the use and development of its natural resources, its industries, and its commercial activities, which in their turn constitute the fountain of public revenues.

Lack of Urban Information

In the course of its study, this Committee was continually faced with serious shortcomings in available urban information in the official Federal statistics concerning cities. These deficiencies were apparent in the narrow scope of subjects covered, in the variations in content interfering with comparability of the data from year to year, in the lack of continuity of publication in the unequal periods reported, in the decreasing number of cities covered, in the small number of topics treated during any one year making correlation difficult, and in the use of the area of the city corporate as a unit for the collection of data, instead of including also the urbanized region, thus failing to tell the complete story for the actual city or metropolitan district.

A voluntary program for the planned selection and articulation of local industries may encounter collateral difficulties, since the data collected by the Census of Manufactures are so compiled as to make it difficult, if not impossible, to relate and study manufacturing statistics within a given industrial area. In order to avoid divulging confidential information about individual enterprises, the detailed statistics by industries are not published for certain industrial counties where, as is frequently the case, certain industries are dominated by one enterprise. Also the data which are available are not presented as a whole for the

separate industrial counties, thus making it difficult to take a community-wide view of industrial facts. Nor are the data complete or detailed enough for analysis and guidance. Industrial planning by industry itself, as well as the accumulation of data to aid governmental planning, is thus made doubly difficult.

Most significant of all is the fact that our official Federal statistics relating to cities have receded as our urban population has increased. There has been a retrogression from what was officially known, as early as 1880, as the *Social Statistics of Cities* to the *Financial Statistics of Cities* and to occasional special studies on particular topics at the present time. In 1880, 17 major groups of items were reported in our general statistics for some 232 cities over 10,000, and in 1903, 15 groups of items for as many as 544 cities over 8,000, but in 1934 only one group of items was reported (that is, the financial statistics alone) for 94 cities over 100,000, together with separate bureau reports concerning special topics. In the meantime, between 1880 and 1930, the number of urban places increased 188 percent, from 1,099 to 3,165, and the urban population 382 percent, from some 14 million to almost 69 million.¹

Disunity of the City

Fundamentally, the United States is suffering from a lack of balance between the urban economy and the entire national economy, between the city and the country, and between the various aspects of urban life itself.

One of our basic urban problems consists of the widespread neglect of cities as a major segment of national existence, the consequent derision of urban politics and depreciation of urban administration as

¹ As an example of the type of urban reporting approximating adequacy, the following table of contents of the 30th annual edition of the *Statistisches Jahrbuch Deutscher Gemeinden* for 1935, containing the systematic compilation of significant facts about all German cities is reproduced below.

1. General tables	18. Tourist traffic
2. Area, land ownership, land utilization	19. Housing and suburban settlement
3. Electricity supply	20. Unemployment and unemployment relief
4. Gas supply	21. Crematories
5. Water supply	22. Financial summary
6. Transport services	23. Municipal debt
7. Motor vehicles in cities over 100,000	24. Real property tax rates
8. Street traffic accidents	25. Personal taxes in cities over 20,000
9. Public welfare	26. Municipal expenditure for vocational education by Prussian cities over 20,000
10. Municipal savings and commercial banks	27. Dog taxes
11. Tax revenues	28. National taxes
12. Education	29. Communities of less than 50,000 inhabitants
13. Public baths	30. Area, inhabitants, welfare, and finances of Prussian rural counties
14. Single-room-houses	31. The Prussian provincial and county associations
15. Population and occupational census	
16. Economic condition and migration of population	
17. Inland harbors and inland waterway traffic	

a career, and the cumulative disregard of the city hall as a principal center of American urban life. Indicative of this neglect is the fact that, although the United States has been a predominantly urban nation for more than two decades, this report of the National Resources Committee is the first inquiry on a national, official, and comprehensive scale into the problems of the American urban community.

The disfranchisement or underrepresentation of the city in the political and administrative councils of the Nation also contributes to the disunity of the city and its inability to deal effectively with its problems. In the United States we have little hesitancy in relating rural distress to the need for a national agricultural policy. The same connection, however, is not made between urban distress and the need for a unified urban policy. Perhaps the reason for this may be found in the fact that the country has a uniform economic base in agriculture, the farm and the farmer, while the city cannot be characterized by any such common symbol, institution, or group. Agriculture is identified with the farm and the rural community, but when we speak of manufacturing, of commerce, of banking, of professional or service enterprises, these are not synonymous with the city and

do not exhaust the major interests of the urban community. This may make the urban problem more difficult than the rural, but it is no justification, it seems, for applying national directives and policies to rural life while hesitating to in the case of urban life.

Even the contrast between the common economic base of the country and the mixed economic interests of the city as an explanation for the nonexistence of a national urban policy is being whittled away by time and experience. Farm tenancy and share-cropping, which is the lot at present of one-half of our rural inhabitants, is setting up a dependent economic class which, unless steps are taken to avert it, may soon resemble the economic disfranchisement which the city artisan suffered when the factory succeeded the household unit of production and when the machine supplanted the hand tool.

Yet, in contrast to the problem of urban enterprise and the city, the problem of agriculture and rural life is treated by our national policy-making bodies as a unified economic problem. If the city possesses any economic unity, our political economy apparently has not been ready to permit its expression to this extent.

PART II

THE SPECIAL STUDIES OF THE URBANISM COMMITTEE

The foregoing pages present the facts about urban America, the processes and problems of urbanization and of urban life. The material in these pages was drawn, for the most part, from studies of specific aspects of urbanism conducted by the Committee during the past year. These topics were singled out by the Committee for this initial exploration on a comprehensive scale of one of the most complex products of modern times—the urban community and its problems.

The subjects selected for study include those which seemed to the Committee to offer strategic approaches to the understanding and possibly the correction of defects and prevention of breakdown in the urban world. Underlying this view was the assumption that whatever happened in and to the city would in the long run be reflected in the rural areas as well, and would have vital implications for the entire Nation.

The selected aspects of urbanism of which studies were made by the Committee follow:

Social aspects:

- Urban population changes in the United States.
- Metropolitan regions.
- Employment, incomes, and standards of living.
- Social welfare.
- Education.
- Public health.
- Public safety.
- Recreation.
- The role of communication facilities in urban life.
- The religious life of urban communities.
- Voluntary associations in the United States.

Economic aspects:

- The location of industry and urbanization.
- The urban community and its industrial structure.
- Transportation factors in urbanization.
- Urban land policies.

Structural and developmental aspects:

- Planned communities.
- City planning.
- Urban housing.
- Transport terminal facilities.
- Transit facilities and urban development

Governmental aspects:

- Urban government.
- Association of municipalities and municipal officials.
- Federal-municipal relations.
- Federal reporting of urban information

Urban-rural contrast:

- Opposing theories of rural and urban ways of life.
- Talent and achievement.

Urbanism in foreign countries:

- Urban Germany.
- Urban France.

factors expected to influence the future course of urbanization, such as urban population changes, the location of industry and urbanization, transportation factors in urbanization; (2) those that inquire into the advantages and disadvantages of the urban and rural way of living and of communities of various sizes and types; and (3) those like city planning, planned communities, urban land policies, transit facilities and urban development, the urban community and its industrial structure, which investigate, appraise, and offer suggestions for the improvement of the instruments already available or which may be devised, for guiding urbanization, for the future development and redevelopment of urban communities, and for the improvement of the economic and social conditions of urban living and, thereby, of the welfare of the Nation.

In addition the Committee focused its attention principally on these topics in order to achieve:

(1) *A clearer statement of the divergent views of urban and of rural life, and their possibilities and limitations, together with a check on these ideas in the light of the actual facts and past trends.*

(2) *A more thorough understanding of the problems connected with the urban and rural mode of life with a view to isolating the physical, social, economic, and political characteristics associated with different types of cities, according to their size, location, function, age, rate of growth, population characteristics, type of government, and planning practices.*

(3) *A recognition of the principal tendencies toward realignments of cities with their regions, with other cities, with counties, with States, and with the Federal Government.*

(4) *A grasp of the most significant problems of urban communities, in the light of existing and proposed policies and methods of prevention and direction, with particular reference to planning.*

(5) *A better understanding of the urban community in time of a national crisis such as the recent depression.*

(6) *A more comprehensive and more precise understanding of the role of the urban community in the national economy.*

The statements of general policy and the recommendations which follow are based on the findings and suggestions and more detailed recommendations of these special studies.¹

¹The Committee expects to publish during the coming year most of these studies. Meanwhile the manuscripts will be on file and available for consultation in the library of the National Research Council.

In their relationship to urbanization and urban life these studies may be grouped into three categories: (1) those that deal with some of the most important



PART III

STATEMENTS OF GENERAL POLICY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Economic Insecurity of the City Worker

Some of the most fundamental problems of contemporary urban life flow from the fact that at present a large proportion of the urban population, due to its low income, is limited to such a low standard of living that it is barred from any of the advantages which urban life can offer. The situation of these people is further aggravated by the uncertainty of even such low income, and the inability, peculiar to the urban worker, to fall back upon reserve resources for subsistence. While low income and insecurity are by no means exclusively urban but rather national problems, they are, by reason of their acuteness and the large number of people involved, predominantly the problems of the city. Many of the gravest urban problems do not appear possible of solution, nor can an acceptable standard of stable community life be attained, unless higher incomes and greater security are assured for the great masses of urban dwellers.

The economic and social stability, in fact the very existence of the Nation, depends upon the proper appreciation and solution of the problems of the urban dweller. In the first instance this is a task for private enterprise, to the extent that it is capable of meeting it. Government must see to it, however, that a vigorous and honest effort is made and should assist, as may be necessary, in making private efforts effective.

Since a very large proportion of the American people with low and uncertain incomes is found in the cities, since the city worker has little to fall back upon when unemployed, and because many of the most acute and persistent problems of the city cannot be solved until the fundamental issue of adequate and secure income is met, the Committee urges that the efforts already made by Government, industry, and labor toward the raising of family incomes and the increasing of economic security be continued and intensified.

Depressed Cities and Industries

Generally speaking, the continued existence of a community and an industry cannot be justified if in the long run it fails to afford its inhabitants or workers a minimum level of existence consistent with an expanding American standard of living. Such communities and such industries are liabilities to the Nation because they do not make their full contribu-

tion to our national life. Communities and industries which fail to afford their inhabitants or workers a minimum level of existence are consuming human resources without giving back to society an adequate return. Such communities and industries are not paying the cost of their existence in terms of the human energies that they consume. Nor should an industry in any community expect its workers to be put into cold storage during periods of depression until it can profitably employ them once more. Although this is primarily a problem for private enterprise, it is clear that Government has an inescapable responsibility for its solution.

In order to decrease the dangers to family, community, and national life inherent in decadent communities and chronically depressed industries, the Committee recommends that the Federal Government periodically undertake an appraisal of the standards of life in urban communities, and, based on such appraisal, formulate the requisites of an acceptable minimum standard of urban life. If private enterprise cannot or does not solve the problem of submarginal communities, then Government should supplement in appropriate cases the local resources or opportunities for employment, as it is doing in the case of depressed rural areas, in order to raise the standard of life in these urban communities to an acceptable minimum. Where, because of a disappearing economic base, the conditions seem to be chronic and appear to offer no promise of self-support at an acceptable minimum standard, the reorganization of the community or a program of resettlement will have to be undertaken jointly by the several governmental units involved.

Quality of Urban Life Versus Bigness of Cities

The American way of life has always assumed that there was no ceiling to our potential growth. With the marked slowing down of our population increase and the apparent approach toward a stationary population and national maturity, we cannot reasonably expect a continuation of the unprecedented growth of American cities witnessed during recent decades. These changes, as yet not generally realized, demand a more prudent use and conservation of physical and human resources and the substitution in place of the philosophy and aspiration of bigness the philosophy and aspiration of quality. Almost every recommenda-

tion in this report is affected by the implication of this impending development.

Because of the marked slowing down of our population growth, the Committee recommends that all national and local policies, public and private, pertaining to cities, which have proceeded on the expectation of continuous and unlimited growth, be reexamined in the light of this approaching stabilization of our population.

Equalization of Opportunities Between Country and City

The city is the principal consumer of human resources. The quality of these resources is of prime importance if the urban community is to perform satisfactorily its role in our national life. The city, however, only partially produces its own population—it does not reproduce itself. The population of the city is drawn largely from rural areas having inadequate material resources, often in fact from regions with an extremely low standard of existence and opportunity. Thus, many men and women who come to the city are inadequately equipped for urban life. It seems appropriate that the standard of living in the areas from which this population is recruited should be made to approach the level that is considered the minimum acceptable for the urban community.

Better to equip the future urban citizen reared in the country and to satisfy the just claims of rural areas, the Committee recommends the equalization between country and city of all possible material and cultural opportunities. This can be accomplished through the equitable distribution of public revenues as is being advocated and to some extent already practiced in the field of education.

Social Welfare

The greatly increased need for welfare services incident to urbanization has been accentuated by the recent depression. This has produced an extension of social-welfare activities and has required a reorganization of social-service administration. With one-fifth of all the employable persons on relief in 1935 concentrated in the 10 largest cities, with private relief expenditures in urban areas dropping from 25 to less than 2 percent of the total in the past 6 years, and with an increasing share of the funds for public-relief expenditures being derived from Federal sources, the administration of the public-welfare services has become a central problem for both the local-urban and Federal Governments. Customary ways of financing these services, standards of administration formerly acceptable, and independent local administration have had to be changed or revised.

Experimentation during the last 4 years in meeting the greatly expanded need for relief and social-welfare services in cities leads the Committee to recommend that:

(1) *In States having antiquated "poor laws" modern social-welfare legislation should be passed, taking into account the special needs of the cities.*

(2) *Permanent county and State departments should be established. These should be responsible for administering all public welfare functions including the public assistance provisions of the Federal Social Security Act.*

(3) *Personnel for urban as well as all other public-welfare administration should be selected through the merit system, as is already the case in some communities. The social-welfare service should be protected from partisan politics and from the curbstone opinion that no experience or training is required for this kind of work.*

(4) *The Federal and State financing of the social-welfare services should take into full account the varying ability of different regions and communities to bear the cost of local needs.*

The Committee approves the policy of continuing the participation of the Federal Government in the financing of a broad public assistance program with recognition of the needs of those groups not at present included in the social-security program, and recommends a prompt inquiry into the methods for carrying out this policy. There should be a maximum decentralization of administration consistent with reasonable standards of personnel and services, preservation of the local interest and requirement for local participation.

Crime Prevention and Control

The ethnic and cultural diversity of the urban population, its insecurity and mobility, and the glaring contrast of conspicuous wealth and abject poverty, have contributed to the weakening of moral standards and legal controls. One product of this situation has been the widespread incidence of delinquency and crime in American cities. The efforts at coping with crime have been greatly retarded by antiquated legal procedures, inadequate attention to prevention and restrictive administrative boundaries. The present-day problems of criminal behavior have spread far beyond municipal, county, and State lines and often can be dealt with only by agencies having wider jurisdiction.

The Committee therefore recommends, as a means of reducing urban crime, that:

(1) *Changes should be made in the organization and procedures of the local criminal courts to make them*

more effective agencies for crime prevention. The time is here to substitute on a wide front investigation for prosecution and treatment for punishment. State statutes and local charters should be amended to provide legal authority for the carrying out of this recommendation.

(2) *Encouragement should be given to local communities in the initiation and extension of broad positive programs for the prevention of juvenile delinquency and crime, through a more adequate recognition of the problems of youth.*

(3) *The Federal Government should continue and extend its cooperation with local communities in crime prevention programs including, among other things, planned and supervised recreational projects, slum eradication, and programs of better housing for the low income groups, particularly in areas with high delinquency and crime rates.¹*

(4) *The Federal Government should continue to cooperate in the enactment and administration of uniform criminal laws and inter-State crime compacts.*

(5) *Regional cooperation among police systems, Federal, State, and local, and other law enforcing agencies, including the judicial branch, should be encouraged and fostered.*

Urban Leisure

We now have at our disposal techniques for production and distribution which are potentially capable of permitting the people of America to enjoy an increasingly larger amount of leisure. A lessening of the hours of labor and the tendency on the part of industry not to employ workers beyond a certain age have already created more leisure for larger masses of the urban population.

Because leisure time is increasing, because the work-day tasks of modern industry, largely concentrated in cities, are becoming more and more mechanical, monotonous, and repetitive, the Committee recommends a national policy which will encourage the States, cities, and private agencies to provide, especially for low income groups, adequate recreational and cultural opportunities for personal self-development, free self-expression, and group participation in play, art, literature, science and education for youths and adults. The Federal Government may well further these aims by cooperating with and giving aid to the States, local communities, and other public or private agencies in

their efforts thus to raise the level of life in the communities and in the Nation as a whole.

Abolition of the Slum

Decayed residential neighborhoods, deteriorated business districts, and deserted, tumbled-down industrial areas—these are the slums of the city, the visible signs of urban disintegration. They are the cut-over areas and the eroding lands of the city, the places of material decay and human corrosion. Like diseases they may be the result of the penetration of some infectious germ—plus neglect or inadequate nourishment. Often they are caused by a faulty or improvident original layout which, like a defective organ, undermines health. They are the visible evidence of our failure in city building.

The slums must be eradicated lest they spread to larger and larger sections or otherwise drag down the community. Whether these areas, after they will have been cleared, are to be used for industries, warehouses, homes, parks or playfields, airplane landing fields, or just left vacant, is a question which should be decided in each case as a part of a comprehensive community plan. This should be determined on the basis of the functional fitness of each such area and the community's need for land for these several purposes. But whatever may be their future use, the first task is the demolition of buildings unfit for human occupancy, the clearing of these areas of decay, and the liquidation of the inflated land prices which now prevent sound rehabilitation. Provision for the satisfactory rehousing of displaced families is an essential prerequisite of any such program.

Convinced that the problem of slum eradication must be attacked promptly and vigorously by local urban government with the aid and cooperation of State and Federal Governments, the Committee recommends that:

(1) *Municipal authorities should modernize and aggressively enforce to the limit of their powers their building and sanitary codes and zoning ordinances; they should initiate the widest program of demolition possible thereunder; and, where existing building and sanitary codes and ordinances dealing with the demolition of unfit buildings are inadequate, these should be made more stringent in order to enable the community to rid itself of such structures. Where necessary, State laws authorizing such codes and ordinances should be enacted.*

(2) *Local urban governments should consider the adoption of a single standard for buildings, old and new, and the progressive, wholesale condemnation of*

¹ See also recommendations under "Urban Leisure", recommendations under "Abolition of the Slum", and recommendations under "Housing" p. 76.

der the police power, after a reasonable period of grace, of all buildings that either for structural or sanitary reasons, or for reasons of inadequacy of light and air, do not measure up to an acceptable standard of use and occupancy.

(3) All Government agencies should adopt the policy, when they are acquiring land for public works or housing, of not compensating the owners of buildings unfit for human use. Wherever necessary, State constitutions should be amended, and State laws and local ordinances should be passed, authorizing the carrying out of this policy.

(4) Local planning and zoning commissions should rezone the decayed and blighted districts and housing authorities should formulate their programs with the view to facilitating the rehabilitation of these areas for stable, economically sound and socially desirable uses.

Housing

It has been demonstrated that a substantial proportion of the urban population lives in substandard houses and in neighborhoods that are injurious to health and morals, conducive to delinquency and destructive of family life. It is also true that private enterprise and local authorities have found no way thus far to provide decent housing for those with low incomes.

In order that a large proportion of American urban families should not continue to live in unfit dwellings, and in order to supply the urgent need for housing facilities conforming to an acceptable minimum standard for the low-income groups² and thus to attack the serious problems of health, welfare and order, which are directly related to inadequate housing, the Committee recommends that:

(1) A national³ policy should be adopted for rehousing the low-income groups at acceptable minimum standards, as a cooperative undertaking among Federal, State and local Governments and private enterprise.

This policy should be designed to stimulate local initiative, recognize local circumstances, and vest the control, save in exceptional cases, in the local authorities.

(2) The Federal and State Governments should extend, in accordance with local needs, financial assist-

ance to local authorities conditioned on the existence of a comprehensive city plan and housing program meeting satisfactory standards.

(3) The recommended Federal credit agency⁴ should extend capital grants, long-term, low-interest loans or annual rent subsidies to States and cities in order to aid in carrying out this national housing policy.

(4) The Federal Government and the States should provide long-term, low-interest loans, under proper safeguards, for housing purposes to individual home builders and building societies.

(5) All Federal housing activities should be coordinated or consolidated in order to further the more effective functioning of all Federal agencies now engaged in the field of housing in urban areas. This should include continuous research into the problems of reducing housing costs.

(6) A model State housing law should be prepared to enable States and local communities to take part in a national housing program and to carry out community rehousing programs in which public and private groups can cooperate. The States should be encouraged to enact legislation in conformity with such a model State housing law.

(7) State and local authorities should consider the reduction of the rate of taxation on buildings and the corresponding increase of such rates on land, in order to lower the tax burden on home owners and the occupants of low-rent houses, and to stimulate rehabilitation of blighted areas and slums.

Urban Land Policies

In the past, urban communities frequently chose or were forced by law to acquire land at excessive cost and dispose of their holdings in haste and at a loss.

Better to control urban development, to combat land speculation, and to have land available for low-rent housing, recreational, educational and other public facilities likely to be increasingly required in the future, the Committee advocates a more liberal policy of land acquisition by municipalities and accordingly recommends the liberalizing of the fundamental laws of the States in order to permit urban authorities to acquire, hold, and dispose of land with greater freedom and to allow a wider interpretation of the term "public use."

Since opportunities for land acquisition often are best when the urban community is least able financially to make such outlays, the Committee recommends that the

² This need has been estimated to involve the construction of approximately 900,000 family dwelling units annually during the next decade.

³ It should be noted that the term "national" as used here and throughout this report does not refer solely to Federal policies or actions nor exclusively to governmental enterprise. Rather it signifies a coordinated country wide policy directed toward achieving objectives for the Nation as a whole.

⁴ See recommendations under "Federal-city relations" p. 80

suggested Federal credit agency should be authorized to make loans to urban communities for the acquisition of both improved and unimproved real estate for the purposes mentioned above.

Articulation of the National and Local Industrial Structure

The present concentration of industry and population in a few large metropolitan districts has largely come about because of the development of the machine and the application of steam as a source of power for industry and transportation. This concentration has been further increased by the policies and practices pursued by competitive transport and utility enterprises in providing facilities and fixing rates. During the last generation or two, new forms of transport, electric power transmission, improved communication facilities, and other advances in technology, combined with the increased mobility of labor and corporate changes in industry, have weakened some of the factors making for concentration, which previously controlled the industrial pattern, and have made possible a wider choice in location. Nevertheless, recent trends indicate that such decentralization of industry as has occurred because of this greater freedom in location tended toward an expansion into areas adjoining well-established industrial centers rather than a wide dispersion into the smaller cities and towns throughout the country. Among the more important reasons for such decentralization are escape from urban taxation, high land values and the higher wage rates which followed unionization.

In spite of the growing importance of the commercial and service functions of the city, there is every reason to believe that industry will continue to dominate the pattern of urbanization and urban life. Whatever the national industrial pattern will be, it will affect the location, the growth and the character of cities the country over. The well-being and the prospects of individual urban communities and regions will depend on the soundness and stability of their local industrial structure, as it may be conditioned by the national industrial pattern. There is, therefore, in the opinion of the Committee, need for guiding the location of industry towards a national industrial pattern that will lead to more effective resource utilization and to a more efficient and socially more desirable distribution of economic activity and urbanization.

The bait of low taxes and cheap labor has often led to unsound locations and a low standard of community life, or to saddling the social cost of maladjusted industrial location on the community. The Committee holds that a national policy intended to assure the population of an acceptable minimum standard of living

should combat the present tendency of industry to move from urban regions to otherwise often uneconomic areas in order to exploit labor and escape due taxation.

In order to further the development of a sound national industrial pattern, and better balanced and more stable industrial structures in local areas, the Committee recommends that:

(1) The Federal Government, in cooperation with private enterprise, should develop an industrial section in a permanent National Resources Board¹ which should prepare broad plans and formulate policies and programs for industry and government designed to improve the national industrial pattern in the interest of both private economy and national welfare;

(2) The National Resources Board, cooperating with State planning boards, should encourage the establishment of local industrial planning committees in industrial cities and regions in order to foster a selective and balanced program of industrial development in these areas. Such planning committees should be a part of the official city or regional planning agencies and should contain representation from and work in cooperation with industry, commerce, and labor.

The programs of these local industrial planning committees should be directed toward the more effective use of man-power, the minimizing of seasonal and cyclical unemployment, and, through these, the maximizing of the family income; toward increased industrial efficiency through a proper relationship between industries; toward making the community less vulnerable to technological changes and to depressions; and toward a better balance between the cost to the community of services to its industries and the income of the community from its industries. In brief, toward a stronger, more stable, and better balanced industrial structure and a more satisfactory community life.

To aid the local planning agencies in the organization and functioning of these industrial planning committees, grants of Federal aid or services should be made to such official local and regional planning agencies as may meet requirements to be set up by the recommended National Resources Board. An example of such aid might well be the assignment to such local industrial planning committees of an advisory representative of the suggested bureau of urban information² (acting as a special agent of the Bureau of the Census), who

¹ The establishment of which has been recommended by the President's Committee on Administrative Management to serve as a central planning agency under the President.

² See also recommendations under "Planning", p. 78.

³ See recommendations under "Urban Reporting and Research", p. 82.

would have access to the confidential census information concerning industry.

(3) *Since no sound industrial development on a Nation-wide scale is possible without a unified taxation policy and a uniform labor policy, such policies should be developed and pursued to combat exploitation of labor and inequitable taxation.*

Transportation and Other Public Utilities

While in certain industries and commercial activities the stimulating influence of free competitive enterprise has proved beneficial in developing the open resources of our country, in others unbridled competition has produced waste, maladjustment, and lack of balance. These effects of unbridled competition have become increasingly severe with the disappearance of the frontier and with the rise of greater national interdependence. The wasteful duplication of transport lines, utilities, and real estate developments are significant examples.

In the widely held belief that the special interests of groups and individuals are identical with the public interest, competition among private enterprises and rivalries between communities were allowed to dominate the location of economic activities, the urban pattern, and the system of transportation and other public utilities. Industrial dislocations, economic instability, and waste of resources from which our communities and the Nation are suffering are proof that this belief was unwarranted.

This Committee favors a form of economic organization better attuned to the public interest in the case of those enterprises which are of general and immediate public concern, such as transportation and other public utilities. It is of the opinion that the kind of Government regulation heretofore practiced has, in the main, perpetuated and, in some cases, accentuated the pattern of economic activity and of urbanization which competitive private enterprise developed with little or no consideration for the public interest and under policies and practices which, with each advance in the technology, successively supported and stimulated the then prevailing economic and urban pattern.

In the interest of a more prudent use of our national resources, material and human, and of a better balanced and more stable local urban structure, the Committee recommends that:

(1) *A prompt and thorough study should be made by the National Resources Board¹ of our transportation facilities to:*

(a) *Develop the general framework of a coordinated national transportation system directed towards an economically more effective and socially more desirable distribution of economic activities and urban pattern;*

(b) *Determine the feasibility of creating a unified Federal agency for the regulation of all forms of transport.*

Since the studies of this Committee have indicated that interconnection, coordination, and integration of the electric power systems will tend to encourage a wider distribution of industry and population, the Committee recommends that:

(1) *A further study be made by the National Resources Board or other appropriate Federal agency of the probable effect on urbanization of the transmission and distribution of electricity over wider areas.*

(2) *A plan should be developed by the appropriate Federal agency in cooperation with State authorities and private companies for the coordination of all private and public generating, transmission and distribution facilities.*

Planning

During the past 20 years city, metropolitan, and county planning have become widely accepted and practiced throughout the country and, on the whole, with beneficial results. Nonetheless, planning needs to be encouraged and strengthened by vesting local planning bodies with legal authority for a wider scope of activities and by providing them with more effective means for contributing to the improvement of the physical environment and of the economic and social conditions of life in the urban community. To function more effectively, the planning agency needs to be given a place closer than heretofore to the local legislative body, the chief executive, and the administrative departments. Local urban planning also needs fundamental, over-all guidance based upon planning and research by government on higher levels. In addition, local plans need to be integrated with the more general plans of larger areas—the region, State, and Nation. In order to be able to appraise its assets and liabilities, and to have available the methods and techniques for the effective solution of its difficulties, the city urgently demands the aid of research in urban problems.

Recognizing the potentialities of planning as an effective aid in the better use and conservation of our resources, human and material, the Committee urges strengthening and extending the scope of planning on all levels of government and in regional areas, and accordingly recommends that:

¹ See also recommendation under "Planning", p. 78.

(1) *The Congress should enact legislation to establish a permanent National Resources Board⁹ with the necessary authority to engage, among other things, in the following activities:*

(a) *To continue and extend encouragement, cooperation, and support to State, regional, and local planning agencies.*

(b) *To continue, systematize, and improve the long-range programming of public works in cooperation with State, regional, and local planning agencies.*

(c) *In cooperation with industry and labor to establish an industrial planning section which is to develop, in collaboration with State planning boards, a better balanced and socially more desirable national industrial pattern, possibly a national zoning plan for industry, and through such industrial planning section, to lend encouragement and cooperation to industrial communities and regions in their efforts to improve the soundness and stability of their industrial structures.¹⁰*

(d) *To prepare, in collaboration with State planning boards, the broad, general plan of a coordinated national transportation system directed toward an economically more effective and socially more desirable urban pattern¹¹ and distribution of economic activities.*

(e) *To make a further inquiry into the probable effect on urbanization of the wider distribution of electric power.*

(f) *To establish a section for urban research which should perform for urban communities functions comparable to those now performed for rural communities by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and Agricultural Engineering.¹²*

(2) *The Standard City Planning Enabling Act¹³ should be revised to give official local urban planning agencies the same authority over projects in the areas within their jurisdiction which are constructed, authorized, or aided by any other local authority or State agency, as is provided for projects of their own local government. There should be included in such jurisdiction the proposals before State regulatory agencies over transport and utility matters when these involve the location, extension, or change in the use of facilities.*

(3) *State legislation should be enacted in conformity with this revised Standard City Planning Enabling Act*

to permit the organization of urban and metropolitan regions of an official plan, to be entrusted with adequate authority effectively to guide and improve, through the instrumentality of a comprehensive city or regional plan broadly construed, the physical environment and social and economic conditions in these areas. Such State enabling legislation should give urban planning authorities effective powers over the quantity and quality of real estate subdivisions, and over the zoning of unincorporated areas in the urban regions. The functions of zoning agencies, where these bodies are separate, should be transferred to the official planning agencies.

(4) *A policy should be adopted by the Federal Government requiring that all Federal agencies submit to the official local planning body, if such exists, for its review and recommendation, the plans of all physical projects to be located in the area under the jurisdiction of such local planning body which are to be constructed, aided, or authorized by the Federal Government. These Federal agencies should consider such recommendations and should be guided in their actions by the same minimum requirement as apply under State laws or local charters to the local authorities. Included among the Federal agencies that are thus to submit their proposals to such local planning bodies should be the existing or future regulatory agencies for transportation and other public utilities when the proposals of these agencies involve the location, extent, or change in the use of facilities.*

Modernizing Urban Government

Despite the numerous improvements made in municipal administration during the past few decades a number of major defects still handicap the Nation's system of urban government. If the urban community is to face effectively its growing governmental responsibilities, its powers and its structure must be enlarged and modernized to meet its duties and practical functions in the modern world.

To enable urban government effectively to discharge its increasing responsibilities, the Committee recommends that State laws and constitutions should be revised and amended in accordance with the most advanced practices in order to:

(a) *Permit urban communities to exercise a wider range of home-rule powers not only over their own internal organization and management but also over the emerging problems of urban life:*

(b) *Permit a more flexible classification of cities, and an appropriate distinction between the wider powers essential to urban or metropolitan communities and the*

⁹The establishment of such a board has been recommended by the President's Committee on Administrative Management.

¹⁰See also recommendations under "Articulation of the National and Local Industrial Structure", p. 77.

¹¹See also recommendations under "Transportation and Other Public Utilities", p. 78.

¹²See also recommendations under "Urban Reporting and Research", p. 83.

¹³Prepared in 1928 by the Advisory Committee on City Planning and Zoning of the Department of Commerce.

less extensive powers required by the remaining local authorities of the State;

(c) Facilitate the elimination in metropolitan areas of atrophied authorities like the township, and foster consolidation and cooperation among local urban governments.

Metropolitan Districts

With nearly one-half the people in the United States living in metropolitan districts which straddle local boundaries and in many instances State boundaries as well, there is urgent need for a reconsideration of the governmental management and structure of these emerging centers of urban life. Proper conduct of metropolitan affairs requires an enlargement and development of local governmental areas, powers, and techniques, irrespective of the political boundary lines which crisscross these complex urban districts.

In order to make the political and administrative structure of these metropolitan districts correspond more closely to their economic and social unity, and to solve the difficult problem of coordinating the activities of the great variety of independent authorities governing these urban areas, the Committee recommends that:

(1) The Congress should pass legislation giving previous blanket consent to the adoption of interstate compacts enabling the several communities within the same metropolitan region but in separate States to deal jointly with the regional aspects of health, sanitation, industrial-waste regulation, the control of public utilities, planning, public safety and welfare, education, and other governmental functions of regional scope.

As an experiment, the Federal Government should cooperate with the States of Maryland and Virginia and make use of the unique opportunity to devise a complete scheme of integrated metropolitan government for the District of Columbia and the urbanized outlying areas within this metropolitan district.

(2) Special legislation should be enacted by the States which would permit a reduction or federation or consolidation of overlapping and suburban authorities, easier annexation of territory to the city, joint services among neighboring cities through contractual relations, and intermunicipal cooperation in the conduct of metropolitan problems of all sorts.

Cooperation Among Municipalities

Until recently urban governments have not utilized the potential advantages obtainable through continuous cooperation among cities. Promising opportunities for improving the quality and reducing the unit cost of services rendered by urban government are

now available through the activities being developed by State leagues of municipalities, by national municipal associations, mayors' conferences, and by professional organizations of municipal officials, and in the cooperative effort now being made by these organizations toward the improvement of public administrative management and the raising of professional standards in public administration. The activities of these organizations relate to such matters as personnel, finance, and taxation, purchasing, planning, welfare, police, fire, public works and utilities, municipal research, housing, education, and recreation.

Because of the significant services now being made available to urban and other local governments by various State and National associations of municipalities and of municipal officials,¹⁴ the Committee urges governmental authorities on all levels, Federal, State, and local, to make the greatest possible use of the facilities of these associations.

Federal-City Relations

Many of the governmental functions essential to urban life cannot be carried on effectively without the participation of government on the State and Federal levels. During the recent emergency period the curtailment and partial break-down of certain essential local governmental services has accentuated the dependence of the city on the Federal Government. In the course of these relationships, problems have been raised which indicate the urgent need of improving and facilitating collaboration between cities and the Federal Government, either directly or through the State as an intermediary.

In order to clarify and formulate a Federal policy toward cities and to facilitate the administrative coordination of Federal services to cities, the Committee recommends that:

(1) Immediate consideration should be given to the urgent necessity of coordinating both at Washington and in the field the related services and activities performed by the various Federal agencies operating in urban areas. A prompt and thorough study should, therefore, be undertaken by a division of administrative research in the Bureau of the Budget¹⁵ of the best methods and administrative techniques for bringing about the closer coordination of Federal activities in urban communities and for improving and facilitating collaboration between the cities and the Federal Government.

The Committee further recommends legislation creating a Federal credit agency authorized to make loans

¹⁴ See *A Directory of Organization in the Field of Public Administration, Public Administration Clearing House, 1936*

¹⁵ Such a division is suggested in the recent report of the President's Committee on Administrative Management.

and grants under adequate legislative safeguards to State and local governments for the purposes of public works construction, acquisition, or construction of public utilities, land purchases, and similar capital outlays, and for extending credit to these governments in periods of economic stress. At the same time, the Committee believes that direct Federal expenditures in cities should be reduced to a minimum.

Public Personnel

The expanding scope of public services and functions and the developing Nation-wide concern about urban affairs make great demands upon the competence and integrity of our public personnel. Unless the cardinal requirement of an able public service personnel is met, the best policies of government, national and local, may founder. Furthermore, a high standard of public personnel is necessary if the public service is to attain that degree of prestige which will attract persons of talent and capacity. Urban government requires technical training and administrative caliber of the same high type as other levels of government. In fact the Federal Government may find itself seriously handicapped in carrying out any program requiring local cooperation, if the personnel problems of urban government do not receive adequate attention.

The serious need of raising the competence and prestige of the urban public service leads the Committee to recommend that:

(1) *States and urban communities availing themselves of Federal grants-in-aid should be required by the Federal Government to conform with minimum personnel standards under the merit system.*

(2) *The Federal Government should extend its present efforts in vocational training for public-service occupations.*

(3) *The United States Civil Service Commission should furnish eligible lists to local authorities at their request and prepare model personnel standards applicable to the same classes of positions on all levels of government.*

(4) *States and cities should foster the abolition of narrow residence requirements and other restrictive personnel practices and should encourage the development of a public career system in every city in the land.*

(5) *All public authorities should encourage the interchange of public personnel among the various levels of government.*

Taxation

Attention is invited to the archaic and often conflicting or overlapping tax policies practiced by the

various levels of government, and to the havoc this creates in Federal, State, and local finance. The absence of a national tax program produces instability in the economic structure and creates great difficulties in the programming of public works and in any attempt at long-range financial planning on any level of government or by private industry.

Believing that there is urgent need for a thorough study of the whole structure of taxation, to allocate revenue sources properly and to bring them into relation with the functions appropriate to each level of government, the Committee recommends that:

(1) *A comprehensive and thorough-going inquiry should be made by the National Tax Revision Council or other suitable agency of the entire subject of conflicting fiscal policies and practices as practiced by the local, State, and Federal Governments.¹ Special attention should be given to:*

(a) The reconsideration of the policies which have resulted in arbitrary constitutional amendments or statutory limitations on the general property tax; and (b) the elimination of duplicate taxes and tax collectors.

(2) *Such State laws or constitutional amendments should be passed as will enable cities to exercise incidental and excess condemnation in order to protect public improvements and to facilitate their financing.*

(3) *A thorough study should be made of the problem of special district assessments and the place of such assessments in the fiscal policies of the city. A study should also be made of the increment tax on real estate in lieu of special assessments, to see whether such a tax would make possible the financing of public improvements more nearly through the revenue derived from the increased values which these improvements create, and whether such a tax would aid in combatting speculation in land.*

Public Works Program

The urban community is recurrently afflicted by extreme fluctuations in industrial activities. Public works projects, which might have been instrumental in cushioning the effects of these fluctuations, could not be resorted to in the past by urban communities to any considerable extent because of the absence of long-range planning for such emergencies. In fact, communities in the past were least prepared to undertake public works programs when the need for them

¹ Compare: See Report of the National Resources Committee on *Public Work Planning*, December 1936.

² Compare: See Report of the National Resources Committee on *Public Works Planning*, December 1936.

was most pressing. In addition, to apply such programs effectively requires a coordinated attack on a wide front.

Since the Committee is convinced that if a public works program is to be brought into play as one of the means of minimizing the impact of business cycles on the cities and the Nation, such a program, in order to be most effective and of maximum social value, must be a part of a long-range, coordinated, Nation-wide program of public works; and, since such a program must in turn be based on carefully drawn long-term city, State, regional, and national plans of development, it recommends that:

(1) *A Nation-wide, coordinated, long-range program of planned public works should be developed by the Federal Government working in the closest cooperation with the State and local authorities. In this effort the planning agencies on all levels of government should be given a primary role.*

(2) *The Congress should establish a permanent Federal public works authority which should be directly responsible for the formulation and execution of a specific and detailed Nation-wide program of public works.*

This public works authority should administer any Federal loans and grants for public works to States and local agencies, negotiate the division of costs between the Federal Government and the other governmental bodies involved, and recommend the allotment of funds to Federal and non-Federal authorities. It should also be responsible for the approval of the engineering aspects of projects submitted by Federal, State and local authorities, for the preparation of standards and for the inspection necessary to safeguard Federal interests.

In its policies and the preparation of any specific program of public works it should be guided by the more general long-term program to be developed and kept up-to-date by the recommended National Resources Board.¹⁸ The actual making of loans and grants based on the recommendations of this public works authority should be the function of the national credit agency recommended elsewhere in this report.¹⁹

(3) *Local and State authorities should urge their departments and officials to cooperate with their respective planning agencies in the preparation of long-range public works programs in order to make effective the effort at a sound, Nation-wide, long-time public works policy.*

Urban Reporting and Research

In carrying out the task assigned to it the Urbanism Committee has been faced continually with serious shortcomings and gaps in the official Federal information concerning cities. The Committee has been impressed by the fact that, in the face of the rise of the city to a place of preponderant significance in the national economy and of the urgent problems of recent time, the reporting of urban information has relatively retrogressed in scope, comparability and periodicity. The Committee finds the paucity of reliable knowledge about urban life to be a severe handicap in coping with national problems.

The urban community constitutes a neglected field in governmental reporting. On a large range of topics, relating to some of the most basic facts of urban life and including questions of urgent interest and frequent recurrence, no adequate data exist at the present time. Where there are some facts relevant to these questions they are often subject to one or a combination of the following shortcomings:

(1) The material is available for only one or at best a few points in time and is not collected in accordance with sufficiently uniform standards to permit the ascertaining of trends.

(2) Frequently the data are not recent enough for application to current problems.

(3) The information, while often adequate for a few selected cities or for cities of a certain size, location or type, does not cover all cities, or a sufficient number of them, to permit its use on a national scale.

(4) The data are available in a form which defies comparison between cities and between metropolitan regions.

(5) Comparable facts about urban and rural communities are not available.

(6) Almost always the specific facts available from different Federal agencies on a given subject are not available in such form that they can be brought into relation even with other data about the same city because of the specialized functions of the agencies collecting them.

(7) While sometimes available about the city as a corporate entity, the data in most cases cannot be had for the actual urbanized area or metropolitan district.

(8) The information has been collected, tabulated, or published for States, counties, or units other than cities, and can only be approximated for the city.

(9) Even for the largest cities, Census data are in most cases not available by sufficiently small and permanent areal units to make possible an analysis of conditions and their trends in various parts of the city.

¹⁸ See also recommendations under "Planning", p. 75.

¹⁹ See also recommendations under "Federal-ity Relations", p. 80.

proposed research agency should include the stimulation of urban research in universities, research institutes, planning boards, and the furnishing of advisory and cooperative services for individuals and public and private bodies. Its program should include, more specifically:

(1) More specialized studies of sufficiently wide scope to demand Nation-wide attention, such as the diagnosis of the factors of unusually well-adjusted and markedly ill-adjusted urban communities; the underlying factors contributing to the failure of the urban community to reproduce itself; studies of municipal land-acquisition procedure; effect of population movements and of various types of public improvements on urban land values and land prices; experience with various methods of financing public improvements by added site values or ground rents created by such improvements; blighting effects of major traffic routes on residential property.

(2) A study aiming at a more realistic redefinition of the urban community and the metropolitan district for census purposes, and at a more usable classification of cities into size groups for the more discriminating reporting of the essential facts about each class.

(3) Periodic appraisals of the standard of existence in urban communities throughout the country; development, on the basis of such appraisals, of minimum acceptable standards for communities in different regions, of different types, sizes, etc.; and appraisal and evaluation, at specified intervals, of the conditions and the progress of urban life and the success or failure of policies and methods designed to deal with urban problems.²²

The Great Cities of Tomorrow

The concentration of so large a proportion of the urban population in extremely limited areas is wasteful of resources, time, and energy. The same would be true of undue dispersion. The Committee believes that the most desirable environment for the urban dweller and for the effective use of human and material resources is more likely to be found somewhere between these two extremes.

Wholesale decentralization, which is being advocated by some, does not seem to be compatible with the effective performance of the economic and cultural role of the urban community in the life of the Nation. Neither does it appear practicable under the existing organization of urban economic activity, because it would involve the scrapping of more of our existing

equipment than we could afford. Widespread dispersion would be wasteful also because it would probably increase the cost of production and distribution and the cost of providing public facilities and services, thus rendering the attainment of a higher standard of material and cultural well-being more difficult for the whole population.

Dislocations, maladjustments, and other defects and deficiencies in the urban structure, congestion and excessive land prices, slums, blighted residential areas and deteriorating business sections, as well as premature or unnecessary subdivisions—and the economic losses and social ills resulting therefrom—are the price of inadequate attention to the development and welfare of the community as a whole—of not planning—and may be found in almost every large urban area. Serious as these defects may be, it is believed that they are but blemishes or infections which an otherwise healthy organism can check and which can be removed without danger to complete recovery.

Provided the urban community possesses a fundamentally sound economic base and has a site the disadvantages of which are not too costly to overcome, the Committee is of the opinion that the realistic answer to the question of a desirable urban environment lies not in wholesale dispersion, but in the judicious reshaping of the urban community and region by systematic development and redevelopment in accordance with forward-looking and intelligent plans. In this, advantage would be taken of the natural trends in the shifting of industry between established industrial areas and its diffusion within such areas, of the drift of population from congested central districts to outlying sections, of the improved means of transit and the general fluidity of the population—to loosen up the central areas of congestion and to create a more decentralized metropolitan pattern. Such a moderately decentralized and yet integrated urban structure should have greater stability and should offer economies in production and in the provision of public facilities and services. It may be expected to extend the material and cultural advantages of urban life to a larger number of the population; to allow them to enjoy the benefits of a more healthful environment and a richer personal and communal life; and to offer to the lower income groups the possibility of the somewhat less tenuous existence afforded by village and small-town living.

A reasonable set of conditions for the attainment of a desirable urban community sketched in these broad terms would doubtless include a sound, well-balanced industrial structure; a rather compact community pattern but with ample light and air and adequate streets, recreational and other public spaces available in all sections; a balanced development free

²² See also recommendations under Depressed Cities and Industries, p. 73.

of building, population, or traffic congestion; a relatively stable and reasonable level of land values without excessively high or falling values, and with all the land in efficient and socially desirable use; and a minimum of obsolescence. The realization of a community with such characteristics can be furthered, among other means, by the organization of the urban area as a whole into neighborhoods and satellite communities, each of which provides for a maximum of opportunity to care for the daily activities and needs of its inhabitants, each of which possesses a social and political coherence which can arouse and hold community loyalty and participation, inspire responsible civic leadership, and can perform effectively its specialized function in the metropolitan region. Thus the eco-

nomic and cultural advantage of the great city might be further enhanced by the physical and social stability and unity which some have thought was obtainable only in a simple society. Thus also, the benefits of modern civilization which the great city has brought to an ever-increasing proportion of our people may be extended and increased.

The approach toward this type of urban community and a more satisfactory urban life will require much better appreciation and understanding of the city and its distinctive problems, greatly improved governmental organization and wider powers, and far more fundamental and much more effective planning on all levels of government.

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However, the Urbanism Committee wishes to give expression at this time to its indebtedness, at least in collective terms, to the agencies and individuals for the aid and cooperation it received, and individually to some of those who made special contributions by participating in the financing of the study or furnishing personnel, by conducting special inquiries or in other ways.

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