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Society Values and Goals in Respect to Agriculture

THE CENTRAL FARM PROBLEM of our generation is excess productive capacity in agriculture which is reflected in price-depressing surpluses and the relatively low income position of agriculture. There are other farm problems, but most of them are rooted in this one. Therefore, it constitutes the orientation of this chapter.

The theme of this book, "Goals and Values in Agriculture," is most appropriate. For the heart of any serious social problem is a conflict of deep-seated value judgments concerning the kinds of people and forms of social organization that are most prized.¹ In such conflicts, choice of goals is inhibited by uncertainty as to what alternatives are possible and which ones are most desirable. Determinate goals arise as component judgments of traditional value systems become identified and reweighted in light of appraised alternatives to present ways of living and of making a living.

In line with this concept of goal formation, four premises provide the framework for handling the subject of this chapter. (1) Our large excess farm capacity is the product of our machine age. (2) This age, including modern scientific agriculture, is in great measure the outgrowth of America's premachine creeds of life that were so weighted as to be harmonized wonderfully well in our premachine economy of predominately family production units in both agriculture and industry. (3) The very technical advance generated by these creeds now throw them into conflict at many points, thereby creating serious policy problems in all major sectors of our society. (4) Technical advance has proceeded rapidly in both agriculture and industry since the Age of Jackson. But the impact of such advance on the premachine institutions

¹ "It is exactly this disagreement in value judgments that is the root cause of all social problems, both in the original definition of the condition as a problem and in subsequent efforts to solve it." R. C. Fuller and R. R. Meyers, *Some Aspects of a Theory of Social Problems*. *American Sociological Review*, 6 (1941): 27.

differs in each case. For up to now at least, the shift to machine methods remains as compatible with family production units in agriculture as do hand manipulations and animal power, whereas in industry the same shift has long since transmuted the older system of family units into modern corporate firms requiring perhaps hundreds of thousands of workers, disciplined and guided by a vast hierarchy of bosses, supervisors and managers.

Through these opposite impacts, should we not expect technological advance in agriculture and industry to have induced the farm and nonfarm sectors of society to give substantially different weights to the component value judgments of America's pre-machine creeds? If so, what is the nature of the cultural gap thus generated?

More importantly, new forms of economic organization have arisen in the nonfarm sectors in response to technical advance in industry. Could these have introduced impediments to resource movements that are the basic cause of agriculture's large excess capacity? In this indirect way, may not technical advance in industry be generating the same conflicts among America's pre-machine creeds within the farm sector of society that it has long since generated within the nonfarm sector? If so, may this not eventually induce farm people to reweigh these beliefs in a fashion similar to that long since found desirable by the nonfarm population?

Analysis of these issues leads to the conclusion that society has not determined what weights to give its older creeds so as to achieve desirable goals for agriculture. For there is no consensus of whether the impediments to the rate of outflow of resources needed to remove excess farm capacity lie in characteristics peculiar to farm people or in nonfarm market imperfections generated by technical advance in industry. This means that both the value aspects and the organizational aspects of the farm problem are like the sides of the same coin: each can be known or resolved only in light of the way in which the other is understood and resolved.

In developing the grounds for this conclusion we need to consider two preliminary questions: (1) What are the key value judgments that have been the chief guides to policy formation in America since early times? (2) What is the model of social organization that traditionally has been prized as the vehicle of their fulfillment? Although we have considered these questions to some extent elsewhere, they are indispensable here.

VALUE JUDGMENTS AS EXPRESSIONS OF THE
STATUS PRINCIPLE

This chapter is not concerned with values in general. Unless values are tied down to specific judgments of what is valuable and why, talk of values is pretty much up in the air. Our interests center in a few strategic judgments of value that have functioned as chief guides to policy formation in American life since early times.

Before identifying these judgments we should note that running through them all is the status principle which gives each of them tremendous strength and driving power.

As a possession, status is the standing — the dignity, the approbation, and esteem — that each human being covets for himself in the eyes of all observers, including himself. As a dominant drive of action, status is the aspiration of men for an ever higher standing and the fear of falling to a lower one than they currently enjoy. Among the characteristics of this aspiration that are of analytical importance,² the one most relevant here is the fact that its vital center is a love of merit and an aversion to demerit. This sense of merit and demerit is the experience of self-acceptance or self-rejection that arises from the conviction that one demonstrates or fails to demonstrate an equivalence between his capacities and the level of approbation and esteem he covets.

This means that the status striving cannot be equated with the mere thirst for popularity. To be sure, this is an important aspect of the status drive. As William James observed, "no more fiendish punishment could be devised . . . than that one should be turned loose in society and remain unnoticed by all members thereof. If no one turned round when we entered, answered when we spoke or minded what we did — a kind of impotent despair would ere long well up within us from which cruelest bodily torture would be a relief."³ This, however, is only half the truth. An equally fiendish punishment is the feeling that one is so barren of meritorious capacities that he is unable to deserve the esteem of anyone. We are often popular with others but unacceptable to ourselves. Any attempt to equate status striving with thirst for popularity thus falls to the ground.

²These traits are more fully considered in the author's mimeographed paper, *Value Judgments and the Problem of Excess Capacity in Agriculture*. U. S. Farm Econ. Res. Div., ARS, USDA, Washington, D.C., May, 1960.

³William James, *Principles of Psychology*. Henry Holt and Company, New York. 1898. Vol. 1. Pp. 293-94.

Thus including a sense of merit and demerit, the status aspiration can be gratified neither by social esteem alone nor by self-esteem alone. The complete objective is twofold: To be the kind of person who deserves self-approbation, and also to belong to a social order that recognizes one's deserts. Every individual or group makes commitments of mind and conscience concerning which alternative ways of living and making a living are the proper ones for this purpose. These commitments are the value judgments that are a peoples' chief guides to policy formation, and in this way they shape its destiny.

AMERICA'S POLICY-GUIDING CREEDS

Early in American life, this status aspiration unfolded into at least four groups of value judgments that are relevant to our problem. These groups are called the work ethic, the democratic creed, the enterprise creed and the creed of self integrity.⁴

A. The Work Ethic

The work ethic centers in four component judgments.

(1) The first is called the work-imperative. Negatively expressed, this imperative is the judgment that one fails to deserve the esteem of self, family, country and even all men if he places love of backward or "easy" ways above love of excellence in any useful employment of his choice. Positively expressed, it is the judgment that the proper way to fulfill the status striving is to be a person who merits his own high esteem because of proficiency in his chosen field and therefore deserves a social order that prizes him for the same reason. With the so-called materialistic income incentive thus encompassed in the sense of merit, the drive that leads the farmer to adopt new cost-reducing and output-increasing technologies is obviously not merely a love of money but the aversion of mind and conscience to ways of life that deserve disesteem.

(2) The work-imperative includes the judgment that of many possible character types, the Self-Made-Man Ideal is the one most worthy of respect and emulation. For this imperative precludes any tie-up of status deserts with such personal traits as

⁴See pp. 11-33 of the citation in footnote 2 for a fuller discussion of these creeds than present space permits.

race or family pedigree which add nothing to one's proficiency in a given employment. In all considerations of merited advance, what counts are such things as initiative, diligence, and technical competence, which release one's potential into creative endeavor.

(3) At an early stage in American lore, the work ethic came to include the optimistic judgment that, in their creative potential, men and nations alike possess ample means of closing the gap between their present circumstances and their aspirations. According to this faith, human capacities are sufficient to improve the lot of the common man without limit. To believe less puts a ceiling on the American Dream and belittles the promise of American life. Thus the work-ethic is a wellspring of hope and confidence in a brighter future for all.

(4) Finally, in its judgment that proficiency in any employment of one's choice is the proper test of status deserts, the work-imperative obviously includes a unique concept of justice. This concept is expressed in the judgment that society owes to each man (a) the equivalent of his contributions and (b) also equal access to the necessary means of developing his creative potential to the fullest extent possible. The first of these is called commutative justice; the second is the justice of equal opportunity, sometimes called distributive justice.

There is no "natural" harmony between these. Meeting the first debt requires that society place no limit on inequalities of income that are out of line with equivalence of individual capabilities and contributions. At the same time, individual capabilities are themselves largely the function of goods and services that are within society's power to extend or withhold. Consequently, the justice of equal opportunity may require severe limitations on income inequalities that many regard as incompatible with equivalence between productive contributions and remunerations.

B. The Democratic Creed

The second key set of society values that has been in effect since early times are the two central judgments of the democratic creed: (a) All men are of equal worth and dignity, and (b) none, however wise or good, is good or wise enough to have dictatorial power over any other. These judgments include a positive concept of freedom which is expressed in the saying that all deserve an equal voice (or power) in shaping the rules which are deemed necessary for the sake of the general welfare. Thus, the democratic meaning of freedom has never been the mere absence of collective restraints on individual action. It has always meant

that men are free from arbitrary power when the views of each have the same weight as those of any other in shaping the common rules that all must follow for the sake of the common good.

C. The Enterprise Creed

A third creed, indigenous to premachine America, is called the enterprise creed. Its component values are expressed in four important judgments. (1) The individual (or his immediate family) is and ought to be responsible for his own economic security throughout life. Therefore, (2) a primary function of government is to prevent the imprudent from pressing either government or business into sharing the burden of their economic security.

By equating the burden of economic security wholly with individual responsibility, this pair of judgments renders work ethic beliefs the handmaiden of laissez faire attitudes. For it follows from this equation that if the individual winds up saddled with the hardships of insecurity, this is merely evidence of a misspent life — habitual distaste for the work-imperative whose just deserts are privation. Thus government sins if it seeks to liberate him from his hardships by either direction or indirection. A typical expression of this habit of thought runs as follows:

The government has adopted the role of the "welfare state" and declared its will to attain the "four freedoms," "full employment" and other grandiose objectives. This it proposes to do largely by redistributing the income of the people. By heavily progressive income taxation, it deprives its successful citizens of their product and gives it to the less successful; thus it penalizes industry, thrift, competence and efficiency and subsidizes the idle, spendthrift, incompetent and inefficient. By despoiling the thrifty it dries up the source of capital, reduces investment and creation of jobs, slows down industrial progress, and prevents society from attaining its highest level of consumption.⁵

The second pair of key judgments in the enterprise creed is this: (3) Proprietors or their legal representatives deserve exclusive right to prescribe the rules under which their production units shall operate; therefore (4) a prime function of government is to prevent anyone, including the government itself, from encroaching upon the managerial power of proprietors to run their businesses as they please.

⁵The American Individual Enterprise System, Its Nature, Evolution and Future. McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., New York. 1946. Vol. II. P. 1019.

In contrast to the democratic creed, this pair of judgments includes a negative sense of freedom. To be free means to be left alone to run production units as one pleases, unmolested by collective constraints on the managerial power of proprietors. There is scarcely a greater source of mischief than this confusion of the negative meaning of freedom with the positive sense of freedom implicit in the democratic creed. This confusion drags virtually the whole American heritage under the skirts of the enterprise creed. In this way, this creed has been used over and over in efforts to block almost every piece of social legislation ever passed on the ground that it threatened our democratic way of life. A typical expression of this habit of thought runs thus:

It does not follow that because our difficulties are stupendous or because there are some souls timorous enough to doubt the validity and effectiveness of our ideals and our system, that we must turn to a State-controlled or State-directed economic system in order to cure our troubles. That is not liberalism; it is tyranny.⁶

Thus by confusing the sense of negative freedom implicit in enterprise beliefs with the sense of positive freedom implicit in democratic beliefs, and by equating the burden of economic security wholly with individual responsibility, our enterprise creed obviously makes democratic government the handmaiden of *laissez faire* sentiments and views; otherwise, it ceases to be democratic. Thus the creed tends to render us:

"... singularly unable to do well those things that cannot be done for profit and which depend upon the initiative — of the community working through the state." Thus we are hamstrung with the half-conscious assumption "that those things which can only be done effectively by the community are in some way on a lower level than those which are effectively done for profit by individuals and private groups."⁷

In generating this assumption, our enterprise creed is essentially the core of "the great American inhibition" that many analysts hold

... prevents us from ever doing enough toward education, toward making medical care available to all families without bankrupting them, toward

⁶Herbert Hoover, in acceptance of renomination, August 11, 1932. Campaign Speeches of 1932. New York. 1932. Pp. 8-9.

⁷John C. Bennett, *How My Mind Has Changed*. Christian Century, December 23, 1959. P. 1501. For an able economic analysis of the same point see John Kenneth Galbraith, *The Affluent Society*. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston. 1958. Esp. pp. 132-38.

even such an obvious thing as the development of a reasonably efficient and well integrated system of transportation.⁸

D. The Creed of Self-Integrity

A final set of key values in our premachine heritage comprises the ethic of self-integrity. This ethic relates to the status deserts of dissenters. Its central judgment is that in case of conflict, both the individual and his group (or groups) are responsible for seeking new modes of thought and practice that will unify the hitherto conflicting views of each. In line with this judgment, (1) the community prizes its dissenting members as its agents for achieving new knowledge and practices that will enrich the life of all and (2) the dissenter in turn feels a strong obligation to identify himself with his own exceptional sentiments and views. In this spirit, both the individual and his group (or groups) take each other's role in order to find a way of composing their differences.

This ethic of self-integrity is best exemplified in research experience. Such experience involves a conflict — a tension — between the exceptional observations and thoughts of the individual thinker and some theory or concept believed true by his professional group. The very core of any genuine scientific problem is the fact that the individual has unique observations that cannot be explained as instance of a law (or laws) which others hold to be true. Thus he has an outlook on the universe which belongs to him alone — an outlook that runs counter to that of his community, say, with respect to how a certain disease spreads from person to person.⁹ In all such conflicts, both the individual and his group (or groups), if committed to the ethic of self-integrity, share the common judgment that the highest responsibility of the individual is to follow the dictates of his own exceptional insights to the last ditch as a means of either being proved wrong or of discovering and presenting his community with solutions for its problems — with new truth, new art forms, new songs and new ways of relieving pain and achieving happiness in all walks of life.¹⁰ This

⁸Bennett, pp. 1501-2. For a fuller treatment of this point, see Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Challenge of Abundance*. The Reporter, May 3, 1956. Pp. 8-11.

⁹On the central position of the exceptional experience of the individual in research, see George H. Mead, *Scientific Method and the Individual Thinker*, in John Dewey et al., *Creative Intelligence*. Henry Holt and Company, New York. 1917. Esp. pp. 206-9.

¹⁰George H. Mead, *Movements of Thought in the Nineteenth Century*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Ill. Pp. 264-67, 360-62, 405-17. Also Paul Tillich, *The Courage To Be*. Yale University Press, New Haven. 1953. Pp. 104-5.

judgment binds them together with bonds of mutual respect despite their differences. This ethic bears good fruit. There is hardly an implement of modern life, a piece of art, or a law of science whose history does not run back to where it once had no other home than the strange idea of some dissenter.

THE MODEL OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATION TRADITIONALLY VIEWED AS FULFILLING OUR PREMACHINE CREEDS

The component judgment of the work ethic, the democratic creed, the enterprise creed and the creed of self-integrity — these are the deep-seated society values that have functioned as chief guides to hard decision making since early times in America. They are rural to the bone, yet they do not stop at the farm fence; they inhabit the mind and conscience of all America. No temples are built to them; nor are they put in shrines; neither are they chiseled in stone: theirs is a finer abode — millions of firesides throughout the length and breadth of the land.

But the fact remains that there is no natural harmony among these value systems. Except for the democratic creed and the ethic of self-integrity, the component judgments of any one creed cannot be derived from those of the other beliefs. In fact, they are shot through with incompatibilities. This is true of the democratic creed and the work ethic, for example. Men do not possess any specific meritorious capacity in equal degree; hence there is a sharp clash between the democratic belief that all deserve status of equal dignity and worth and the work ethic belief that they should be accorded differential status in line with their productive contributions, economic or otherwise. Again, a people may feel deeply committed to the work ethic judgments and yet completely reject those of the enterprise creed. Apparently, this is the case among the Soviets.¹¹ People may be so committed to the work ethic and so averse to the enterprise creed that they feel that for practical purposes the democratic creed should be laid on the shelf; at least, for the time being.

Because of these and other implicit incompatibilities, America's dominant creeds of life present us with difficult problems in social organization. The difficulty is rooted in two main facts. First, the human mind is incapable of blueprinting any conceivable

¹¹ For discussion of the Work-imperative in Communism, see Dorothy Thompson's column, *Evening Star*, Washington, D.C., October 17, 1957. Also pertinent are Kenneth S. Lynn's *The Dream of Success: A Study of American Imagination*. Pp. 67-97, Little Brown and Company, Boston, 1955, and Sydney Hook's *Grim Report: Asia in Transition*, *New York Times Magazine*, April 5, 1959.

social order that can rub out the implicit conflicts of these creeds. With great rigor and originality, reason can construct many alternative social orders — ideal systems of associated life. But these alternatives simply represent competing ways of living and of making a living. None can wipe out the implicit incompatibilities cited. This means that any given set of social rules or customs is possible only by virtue of a unique set of relative weights that we give our divergent creeds of life. Each change in these weights calls for a corresponding change in our ordering rules of life, and, in turn, change in our ordering rules is possible only if we give correspondingly different weights to the components of our creedal heritage. This means that the value aspect and the organizational aspect of any social (policy) problem are joined like Siamese twins. Neither can be resolved except as the other is resolved. Each side involves a knowledge problem. In organizational terms, this problem is a question of what alternatives to customary rules can be spelled out and their results quantified. In value terms, this problem is a question of what new weightings of competing creeds would be required by the alternatives to our customary ways.

This brings up the second difficulty: No amount of rigor in any conceptual system of rules and no amount of completeness in quantitative measurements can determine what uniform weights to give our competing judgments of what is desirable and why. For each individual or group is its own unique weighting mechanism. Thus theory and measurement can never specify what change in customary rules constitute the appropriate solution to any social problem. This is not the office of theory and measurement; their office is simply that of a tool to be used in analyzing the conditions that are generating present conflicts, and in quantifying the outcomes of alternatives that people (including analysts) might choose, giving new weights to their competing values in doing so. Because their office is thus instrumental, the ideal models of scientific theory and measurement are not to be equated with so-called normative systems of life and social organization. Such systems always rest on value biases which unless recognized lurk behind the mask of scientific objectivity.

Yet despite their implicit incompatibilities, the fact remains that in the premachine era, America's competing creeds of life were bound together with a unique system of weights in a new model of social organization that is commonly recognized as constituting one of the most unified belief systems in history.¹²

¹² See observations of Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma, The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy*. Harper and Brothers Publishers, New York and London. 1944. Pp. 1-6.

This model is called the Lockean model. It takes its name from John Locke who, in his Treatise of Civil Government, first held that the good world lies in a sharp division of society into a big natural order, subject to no collective restraints on individual action, and a tiny political sphere of popularly controlled government that keeps its hands off what Locke called the "State of Nature," which Adam Smith baptized in the new name of "natural liberty," and which is today called the "free market." This model obviously gives very heavy weights to the value judgments of the enterprise creed, a fact never more accurately expressed than by Jefferson in his famous maxim: "That government is best which governs least." Cogent reasons for these heavy weights lie in the historic events that entered the shaping of this model and the sinking of its roots deeply into American life and character. As modern social structures are a series of adjustments of this model and its uniquely weighted value judgments, attention to its salient features and the great events that shaped it provides pertinent data on why we think and divide as we do on present issues, the current farm problem being only one of many.

However, as these are treated elsewhere,¹³ we pass over them here except for the observation that in no country have actual social structures so approximated the Lockean model as those of premachine America. This is true because in that era both the farm and nonfarm segments of our society were characterized by systems of predominantly family production units, which is actually the kind of economic organization presupposed by the Lockean premises.

DIVERGENT IMPACT OF TECHNICAL ADVANCE IN AGRICULTURE ON PREMACHINE ECONOMY OF PREDOMINATELY FAMILY PRODUCTION UNITS

With these observations in mind, we note the widely held view that the various beliefs and values of people are largely a function of the social structures in which they live. In line with this assumption should we not expect the influence of technical advance on the relatively heavy weights given the enterprise creed in the past to differ for agriculture and industry? For its impacts on premachine institutions in each case are as opposite as the poles because family production units are as characteristic of present-day mechanized agriculture as in the premachine era, whereas in industry they have long since passed into the realm of memory.

¹³ See pp. 34-47 of reference cited in footnote 2.

The reason lies in a fundamental difference in the nature of the Industrial Revolution in agriculture and in industry. This fact is evident from the vantage point of earlier times when farming and manufacturing were alike in respect to the sequence in which operations were carried on in productive units. Normally in both instances, they were done sequentially, one after another, usually by the same individual or family. Shift to machine methods quickly wiped out this age-old similarity. For, with minor exceptions of certain specialized poultry and livestock operations¹⁴ the shift to machine agriculture leaves relatively undisturbed the sequential pattern of operations that has prevailed in farming since the domestication of plants and animals. In contrast, the same shift in industry transmutes this sequence into the modern simultaneous pattern of operations that is characteristic of the factory system. Thus in agriculture, the Industrial Revolution is merely a spectacular change in the gadgets with which operations are performed, whereas in industry it is a further revolution in the premachine order or sequence in which men use their implements.¹⁵

This second aspect of technical change is the one that demolishes the older order, as it multiplies the number of concurrent operations far beyond the number of workers in a family. Thus from the standpoint of sheer physical necessity, such advance has long since replaced the premachine system of family units with immensely larger ones, often requiring thousands of workers with different concurrent tasks that must be coordinated and guided by layer upon layer of supervisors and managers.

In contrast, technological advance in agriculture is mainly a spectacular change in the gadgets with which operations are performed. For this reason, machine methods and power, by and large, are as compatible as hand techniques with either family or larger-than-family units of production. Their compatibility with family units lies in the fact that, by and large, farm operations remain as widely separated by time intervals after mechanization as before; hence the number of things that can be done at the same time in farming is as close as ever to the number of workers in an ordinary family. But machine methods are equally compatible with larger-than-family units, as they introduce no

¹⁴ For discussion of these exceptions see the author's paper, *Technological Advance and the Future of the Family Farm*, in proceedings issue, *Jour. of Farm Econ.* 15(5): 1606-7. December, 1958.

¹⁵ As explained elsewhere, this fundamental difference between machine industry and agriculture stems from the contrasting nature of materials handled in each case (see John M. Brewster, *The Machine Process in Agriculture and Industry*. *Jour. of Farm Econ.*, February, 1950. Pp. 70.)

new obstacle to expanding farm size beyond the capacity of an ordinary family to do the work in any particular operation. Such expansion simply involves multiplying the units of technology that are already on well-organized family farms, as, in general, nothing about larger-than-family units of production in agriculture is technologically unique. This means that now, as in the pre-machine era, virtually all economies of scale are realized well within the size limits of family farms. Greater returns to management but not appreciably lower cost per unit of output may be realized from larger-than-family farms.

As the acreage of land available for farming is now approximately fixed and as machine methods increase the area of land one can cover per unit of time, marked growth of machine farming involves a sharp reduction in the total number of family farms and farmworkers such as is now occurring.

Technological advance in agriculture thus has the singular distinction of being mechanically progressive but socially conservative. It creates no new occupational class of people whose new ways of living and of making a living force them to reweigh America's pre-machine creeds of life in light of their new needs of livelihood and sense of status deserts. Farm people may be experiencing painful conflicts among their older creeds, but the point here is that the generator of such conflicts lies outside their own rapid technological advance.

REWEIGHTING PREMACHINE CREEDS IN RESPONSE TO ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS OF TECHNICAL ADVANCE IN INDUSTRY

The reverse is true among nonfarm people, however, because of thorough-going incompatibility of technological advance in industry with pre-machine institutions. The organizational aspect of this conflict has found at least partial resolution in the rise of modern organizations of business and labor and the value aspect of the conflict has led to a sharp downward reweighting of the enterprise creed. This reweighting has increasingly liberated democratic government of its former linkage to laissez faire attitudes, thus enabling it to become increasingly the handmaiden of work ethic concepts of equity. Three observations bear out this point.

(1) In separating the managerial and labor roles of family production units into wide-flung bargaining classes, technological advance in industry quickly generated a conflict between the older enterprise beliefs that to proprietors (or their legal agents)

belongs the exclusive right (power) to run their business as they please, and the democratic creed that each deserves an equal voice in shaping the rules which all must observe for the sake of their collective welfare. For as the older identity of firms and households was destroyed it became evident to the new laboring classes that the freedom they most prized was liberation from the complete power of management over plant operations. To achieve this freedom, the so-called liberals sought a government that (a) would recognize that the power to shape the working rules of industry is in fact a joint power of all parties involved and (b) therefore a prime function of government is to protect the joint exercise of this power under legalized collective bargaining procedures.

The conservative classes that still held to the weights given the enterprise creed in the premachine era remained convinced that the world would fall apart if the positive meaning of freedom implicit in the democratic creed were made the organizing principle of industrial as well as political spheres of national life. As they were dedicated to the older *laissez faire* sentiments and views, their aim was to carry over into the Machine Age the older Lockean vision of the good world as one in which the chief end of government is to prevent anyone, including government itself, from interfering with the prerogatives of proprietors to run their businesses under whatever rules they see fit to prescribe. This was their summum bonum. To achieve it was the very essence of freedom.

Thus the very liberations deemed most precious by the so-called liberals were viewed as sure roads to serfdom by the so-called conservatives. This means that unless we pinpoint the specific maladies from which specific individuals or groups seek liberation, there is scarcely a whiff of wind between the teeth so devoid of meaning as the word "freedom." One man's freedom is the other man's tyranny, just as one man's orthodoxy is the other man's heresy. These conflicting views of freedom take the form of a power struggle wherein each participant seeks to persuade the public to reweigh its traditional values so as to make legitimate its own particular version of a free life by imposing corresponding restraints on its rivals. With the various collective bargaining acts since the 1930's, the so-called liberals succeeded in persuading society to give considerably more weight to the positive meaning of freedom in our democratic creed at the expense of its negative meaning in our enterprise creed.

(2) Similarly the shift to machine industry threw our enterprise creed and work ethic into sharp conflict with respect to the proper locus of responsibility for the individual's economic

security. In separating firms from households, this shift split into separate classes the ownerships of labor services and the implements of work. Under this condition, the individual may possess even greater devotion to the work-imperative than before and yet have less economic security than ever because his security now depends upon the way in which the management classes and not himself invest and use his savings. Under this circumstance, the so-called liberals were quick to see the fallacy of equating insecurity with the just deserts of one's habitual distaste for the work-imperative. Hence the new freedom they most prized was liberation from the injustices of this error. To achieve it, they sought a revised social order in which government, corporate management and the individual would shoulder their fair share of collective responsibility for the latter's economic security.

Remaining dedicated to the premachine weighting of the enterprise creed, conservatives opposed any such social order, saying that it would lessen the self-reliance and industry of the rank and file. Not until the 1930's did the nation abandon their persuasion; thereupon, it was found that public observance of collective responsibility for individual security was in fact a spur to greater productive effort and not a deterrent.¹⁶

(3) Still again, technological advance in industry brought to a head the potential conflict between the work ethic concepts of commutative and distributive justice. For, in splitting apart firms and households, it removed the older limitation on size of firms to the point at which families could supply most of their labor and management. In this way, it led to such great income inequalities that they were increasingly adjudged by so-called liberals as incompatible with the work ethic judgment that society owes to each an equal opportunity to the minimum income needed to develop and use this productive potential to the fullest extent possible. Thus the freedom the liberals most prized was liberation from the injustice of this inequality of opportunity. To achieve it, they sought a remodeled society in which a chief end of government is to establish and maintain greater equality of opportunity by taxing the rich more heavily so as to make more services available to all alike.

In contrast, by remaining dedicated to the premachine weights of our central creeds, conservative classes by and large were honestly convinced that the liberal proposals so violated our work ethic concept of commutative justice that they would dry up the

¹⁶Galbraith, *The Affluent Society*. Pp. 112-18.

incentive to productive effort¹⁷ by subsidizing "the idle, the spendthrift incompetent and inefficient;" by "despoiling the thrifty;" by slowing down new job-creating investments and thus preventing "society from attaining its highest level of consumption."¹⁸ The progressive rise of income taxes is only one of many evidences that the work ethic concepts of commutative and distributive justice have been substantially reweighted in line with liberal sentiment.

The foregoing types of drastic downward adjustments in the weights formerly given the enterprise creed have enabled modern industrial America to achieve new freedoms from all sorts of oppressions by placing collective restraints on individual action. Through cultural influence, technological advance in industry has done much to liberate democratic government from its older linkage to laissez faire attitudes, thereby enabling free men to use collective power increasingly as the servant of the equity mandates of the work ethic.

IS TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCE IN INDUSTRY INDUCING VALUE PROBLEMS IN AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY SIMILAR TO THOSE IT HAS INDUCED IN NONFARM SOCIETY?

The question now arises as to whether technological advance in industry is inducing value problems in our agricultural society similar to those it has long since induced in our nonfarm society. The issue turns on the answer finally given to two opposite theories concerning the essential cause of agriculture's large excess capacity. According to one theory, the cause lies in the characteristics peculiar to farm people. This explanation may be called the endodermal theory of the farm problem. The other theory holds that the cause is the fact that new market structures arising from technical advance in industry impede the amount of outmigration of farm people that is needed to rid agriculture of its burdensome excess capacity. This explanation may be called the environmental theory of the farm problem.

Our concern here is not to prove which theory is false and which is true, but to show that their value implications are as opposite as the poles. To do this, we need to sketch the salient features of each theory.

¹⁷Galbraith, *The Affluent Society*. Pp. 112-18. Said Samuel Insull, the great utility magnate of the 1920's, "The greatest aid to the efficiency of labor is a long line of men waiting at the gate." (Cited by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Age of Roosevelt*. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston. 1957. P. 120.)

¹⁸See reference cited in footnote 5.

The reasoning of the endodermal theory proceeds from the premise that the labor market behaves approximately in line with the competitive model. This means that if farm people themselves are responsive to their employment opportunities, then as surely as hens lay eggs and cows have calves, farm people with relatively low incomes, if given ample time, will shift into higher paying nonfarm employments until there is reached the combination of land, labor and capital under which comparable rates of return are realized from all similar resource uses in all sectors of the economy. However, during two decades of so-called boom economy, outfarm migration has not been anything like enough to do this; the lack is so great that agreement is general that the earnings gap between farm and nonfarm workers of comparable labor capacities is wider than can be explained by all factors consistent with perfectly functioning markets. Underemployment in agriculture is getting worse, not better.¹⁹ This means that there are serious impediments to the rate of outfarm migration needed to rid agriculture of its large excess capacity.

Where do these impediments reside? According to the endodermal theory, they lodge in either of two characteristics of farm people or in both. One is their atypical values: they prize such experiences as country life, hunting, fishing, loafing and being self-bossed more highly than they do society's work ethic sense of obligation to improve their social and economic status by pulling up stakes and moving to higher paying employments assumed to be available elsewhere. The other impediment is alleged to be their lack of knowledge concerning their employment opportunities.

Assuming the correctness of this theory, the value aspect of the farm problem is clearly not a knowledge problem of what new weights we need to give our older creeds; it is merely a question of stirring up sufficient unction to enable us to observe the policy prescriptions of the competitive model. Assuming that society acted in strict consistency with its creedal heritage, this unction would take either of two forms, depending on whether the cause of excessive manpower in agriculture were held to arise from their atypical values of farm people or from lack of knowledge of their best employment opportunities.

(1) If emphasis is given to atypical values, it would take the form of pronouncements that society's creed of self-integrity

¹⁹Robert B. Glasgow and W. E. Hendrix, *Measurements of Low Income in Agriculture as Problems of Underemployment and Economic Development*. Paper presented in Economic Section of annual meeting of Allied Social Science Associations, Washington, D.C., December, 1959.

obliged it to respect farm people's judgment that a life of low income, combined with being one's own boss and the like, is more worthy of esteem and emulation than a life that seeks ever higher economic position by hopping from lower to higher paying employments like a bird from limb to limb. To be sure, our society places high premium on superior proficiency in economic rather than noneconomic employments. However, owing to the heavy weight long given the creed of self-integrity, ours is also a society that feels a still higher obligation to respect honest dissent from its own predominantly commercialized version of the work ethic. This respect bids it honor the atypical values of farm people instead of bothering them with programs designed to stir up right motivations in them and reform their character so as thereby to rid agriculture of its large excess capacity. Thus to the extent that the large excess capacity of agriculture results from atypical values of farm people, it poses no public policy problem except in great national emergencies when atypical values must be sacrificed for the sake of national existence.

(2) The story differs, however, if main emphasis is given the view that the underemployment of farm people is due to their lack of knowledge of higher paying employment opportunities assumed to be available to them in the nonfarm economy. Under this circumstance, the action needed for removing agriculture's excess capacity would take the form of pronouncements that the weight which society has long given its work ethic sense of distributive justice obliges it to equalize the educational opportunities of farm people. Such programs might well proceed on three fronts: (1) a widespread information service in rural areas concerning nonfarm employment opportunities, (2) an expanded labor recruitment service for such opportunities and (3) grants of public funds.

But this blissful absence of hard-fisted value problems loses validity if the environmental theory of the excess capacity of agriculture is accepted.²⁰ To develop this point, we need to note that this environmental theory falls into two main parts. In the first part, the logic proceeds from the fact that the assumption that lack of knowledge of labor sellers about their employment opportunities is the cause of their underemployment is incompatible with the assumption that the nonfarm market behaves in

²⁰ The substance of this and the next three paragraphs has been worked out in detail by Wm. E. Hendrix, *Income Improvement Prospect in Low-Income Areas*, in proceedings issue, *Jour. of Farm Econ.*, December, 1959, pp. 1065-75, and *Economics of Underemployment and Low Incomes*, in proceedings of Economics and Rural Sociology Section, Association of Southern Agricultural Workers, Birmingham, Ala., February 5, 1960.

approximate conformity with the competitive model with respect to labor. For perfectly competitive conditions for profits and survival would necessarily force nonfarm employers into competitive bidding and labor recruitment to the point at which they equate marginal costs and returns for this activity as for their other activities. In this way, they would extend to farm people as well as to others the knowledge of higher paying nonfarm opportunities. But this is precisely what they do not do normally. This means that we cannot say in one breath that the labor market behaves in conformity with the competitive model and in the next breath that the cause of underemployment is the lack of knowledge of sellers of labor services concerning their employment opportunities. Such ignorance is compatible only with imperfect markets, not with the competitive model.

But why is agriculture saddled with a disproportionate share of the nation's total underemployment? Why isn't underemployment spread proportionately among all sectors of the economy?

The environmental theory explains this by three characteristics of the farm economy. (1) Agriculture is the only major industry that conforms to the competitive model in both freedom of entry and flexibility of labor earnings. Restrictions are seldom placed on entry of qualified wage workers into farming. Although much capital is needed to enter agriculture as an operator of a highly productive farm, relatively little is needed to become an operator of a low-producing farm.

(2) With respect to age, physical condition, education, ethnic and geographic origins, and other factors, employers are enabled to screen workers over and above actual job requirements. These screening practices yield a large job-seeking advantage to nonfarm workers. For example, a relatively larger percentage of underemployed farmworkers are above the age limit and below the educational and physical standards used by many nonfarm employers to screen job seekers beyond economically significant job requirements. Again, when new jobs open, farm people are more likely to be left out because of their greater distance from the new job openings which makes it harder for them to be on the spot when the openings occur.

(3) Finally, more than any other occupational group, agriculture is characterized by a combination of rapidly declining labor needs and a natural labor increase that greatly exceeds the replacement needs created by deaths and retirements.

With these characteristics and with limited food and fiber outlets, a perfectly competitive agriculture is joined to a larger nonfarm economy that is normally characterized by less than full employment and by imperfect labor markets that are generated

by technological advance in industry. Only under these conditions can its own rapid technological advance continually generate excess farm capacity, which is reflected in the fact that from 1949 to 1956 total farm output averaged 8 per cent more than consumption needs.²¹

If this environmental explanation of agriculture's excess capacity is correct, it follows that market imperfections generated by technological advance in industry is inducing the same value problems in the farm sector of the society that are similar to those it has long since induced in the nonfarm sector. Three observations bear out this point.

(1) Through its nonfarm market imperfections, society violates its own work ethic sense of both commutative and distributive justice with respect to agriculture. For in permitting these imperfections to impede an otherwise sufficient outflow of resources from agriculture, society puts farmers in a cost-price squeeze that so siphons off the benefits of their improved industry that they are the lowest paid of any major occupational group. Thus society violates its own work ethic sense of commutative justice with respect to farm people.

Nor is this all. Viewed in a time perspective, this underemployment of farm people lessens both their capacities and their incentives to invest in improving both their capital and their personal capacities. Thus in addition to being saddled with most of the economy's underemployment, farm people have been less able than nonfarm people to build up their productive potential. In this way, society's nonfarm market imperfections violate its work ethic sense of distributive justice with respect to farm people by withholding from them an equal opportunity to the minimum of goods and services necessary for developing their capacities to the fullest extent possible.

(2) If the only consequences of nonfarm market imperfections were the mere violations of society's deep-seated work ethic concept of commutative and distributive justice with respect to farm people, then unction could stir up remedial action almost automatically because everybody is for justice until faced with the question of whether it may not cost too much in terms of other values, such as the privilege to run one's business as one pleases. This is precisely the question that is raised if the cause of agriculture's excess capacity is the resistance of nonfarm market imperfections to enough outflow of farm resources to

²¹ James T. Bonnen, *American Agriculture in 1965*, in Joint Committee Prints, 85th Congress, 1st Session, on Policy for Commercial Agriculture, table 1, p. 147, U. S. Govt. Printing Office, Washington, D.C., Nov. 22, 1957.

resolve the farm problem. Under this circumstance, remedy might be found through a national policy of comprehensive supply controls to limit aggregate farm output to aggregate demand at stable prices. In principle, farmers tend to want such a program to protect them against a market that denies them an equitable share of the benefits of their technological advance. But they also resist it in the belief that it is wrong to deny proprietors the right to run their businesses as they please.

At issue is not a question of the democratic freedom of each to have an equal voice in laying down the rules which all must observe for the sake of the general welfare; the issue is the kind of malady from which the farmer most seeks liberation. Does he most prize a democratic order that restrains him from farming as he pleases in order to free him from being deprived of an equitable share of the benefits of his increasingly superior industry? Or does he most want a democratic order that subjects him to this injustice but leaves undisturbed his proprietary power to farm as he pleases? Either choice is consistent with our democratic creed. Thus, society's value problem with respect to agriculture is strictly a clash between its deep-seated love of commutative and distributive justice inherent in our work ethic, and the equally deep-seated love of the sense of negative freedom inherent in our enterprise creed.

(3) As of now, society does not know what weights it should assign to its older creeds in order to provide workable goals for agriculture. It has only conflicting values. In line with the negative freedom implicit in its enterprise creed, it wants a world that places no collective constraints on the customary privilege of farmers to grow whatever and however much they please. In line with its work ethic sense of justice, it also wants a world that returns to farmers an equitable share of the benefits of their cost-reducing and output-increasing technologies. Because of these competing ends, society has no knowledge of what alternative to present marketing and production structures might fulfill its work ethic concepts of justice through a minimum of collective constraints on the farmers to run their business as they please. Neither does it have any clear idea of the extent to which it might want to achieve a greater fulfillment of its work ethic sense of equity at the cost of foregoing some prized negative freedom of enterprisers to direct their businesses as they please. Thus, in this instance, America has no clear knowledge of what it most wants; neither the kind of people, the kinds of actions or the

forms of social organization it most prizes and aspires to achieve.²²

Such conflicting values are the very heart of the knowledge problem that is the center of policy making, or the process of goal formation. For this reason, any serious social problem is ethical to the core; therefore, as Dewey aptly observed, "Anything that obscures the fundamentally moral nature of the social problem is harmful" as it "weakens personal responsibility for judgment and for action," and thus "helps create the attitudes that welcome and support the totalitarian state."²³

(4) By throwing its older work ethic and enterprise creed into serious conflict with respect to our large excess farm capacity, nonfarm market imperfections thus generate a knowledge problem of determining both the most appropriate ends or goals of agriculture and also the most appropriate means of their achievement. "Ends" and "means" are thus equally indeterminate. For the means to any entertained goal are the other goals we would forego if we chose it. Through repeatedly taking one as tentatively chosen (given) and weighting it against the other, we finally reach a decision on appropriate ends and appropriate means simultaneously.

In the example under discussion, society's knowledge problem is that of reaching a decision as to how much less weight to give its enterprise creed than formerly so as to achieve greater fulfillment of its work ethic concepts of commutative and distributive justice by returning to agriculture a more equitable share in the benefits of its cost-reducing and output-increasing technologies. Conceivably, the latter may be accomplished through many alternative types of collective actions, all in line with the positive sense (meaning) of freedom implicit in our democratic creed. But how much will each alternative add to agriculture's share in the benefits of its cost-reducing and output-increasing methods, and how much more restraint will each alternative place on the older privilege of farmers to farm as they please? Without comparative knowledge of both types of consequences of each alternative, society does not have the data it needs in deciding which alternative is a desirable end. All it has to go on are rival judgments of value that cause dissension among people.

²²The logic of this section is of the same form as that first originated by John Dewey in his analysis of the "moral situation." See John Dewey and James H. Tafts, *Ethics*. Henry Holt and Company, New York. 1908. Pp. 205-11, and revised edition, 1932, pp. 173-76. On this point also see observations of Gunnar Myrdal on the moral nature of any social problem in *An American Dilemma*. Harper and Brothers Publishers, New York. 1944. P. xlvii.

²³John Dewey, *Freedom and Culture*. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York. 1939. P. 172.

CONCLUSIONS

The foregoing analysis leads to three conclusions. (1) The first concerns the role of economic theory and measurement in the resolution of value problems, which we take to be the heart of all serious social problems. Clearly, society sorely needs a way of nailing down both the qualitative and quantitative results of alternatives that is wholly indifferent to the value biases of all individuals or groups. Economic theory is well suited to this need. For, at every step, it reasons from the premise that men seek to act in ways that will maximize their satisfactions irrespective of differences in particular value judgments that determine whether certain experiences are satisfactions or dissatisfactions for given individuals. Based on this premise, economic analysis is oriented to variations in the mere quantities of satisfactions, which in great measure are weighted and reflected in the relative prices that people are willing to pay for goods and services. It is not concerned with the value judgments that underlie these price-weighted quantities of satisfactions.

If, for example, the city of Las Vegas suddenly shifted from a gambling oasis to a resort for ministers, the change in the value judgments thus wrought would greatly increase the want-satisfying power of religious literature relative to slot machines in that area. But this fact would have no effect on the formulas involved in predicting the new price of such literature and slot machines; and in manipulating these formulas, it would be immaterial to the economist as an analyst, whether the way of life most prized by the people of Las Vegas was that of saints or gamblers.²⁴

Because of this ethical neutrality, economic theory and measurement are admirable instruments for finding out the cost-price consequences that society would be likely to experience in using alternative ways of ridding agriculture of its burdensome excess capacity. Working in this way, economists can provide society with data it sorely needs in resolving its knowledge problem concerning which of many alternatives to present market structures systems will be most likely to fulfill its work ethic concepts of commutative and distributive justice for agriculture with the fewest possible constraints on the negative freedom that is implicit in our enterprise creed.

(2) But perhaps all this is premature. It is surely premature if it is presumed that we already know that the nonfarm market

²⁴ For excellent observations on the ethical neutrality of economic logic see Herbert Joseph Davenport, *Economics of Enterprise*. The Macmillan Company, New York. 1943. Pp. 126-27.

system behaves in approximate conformity with the competitive model. Under this circumstance, society's only value problem with respect to agriculture is that of enough unction to induce farmers and others to follow the policy prescriptions of the competitive model of economic theory. If the endodermal explanation of agriculture's large excess capacity should prove to be correct, we should expect the passing years to mark a sharply widening cultural gap between the farm and nonfarm sectors of society with respect to the relative weights that each gives to America's dominant creeds for the sake of making life as free and just as possible under modern conditions.

(3) Thus our final conclusion is that until consensus is achieved concerning the causes of agriculture's large excess capacity, both society in general and farmers in particular can have no clear knowledge of either the value aspect or the organizational aspect of the farm problem because, as explained, neither aspect can exist apart from the other. Until we can clarify the basic causes of the farm problem, we have no way of knowing, so far as the author can see, what are the actual value conflicts that we must face up to in dealing with it. To come to decisive grips with these causes is a tough job of analysis. But short of this, nothing definitive can be said on society's values with respect to workable goals for agriculture.

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Discussion

DISCUSSANTS OF TECHNICAL WRITINGS have at least four alternatives open to them. The discussant may find himself in substantial agreement with all major ideas and use his allotted time to agree with the author. Second, he may be sufficiently uncertain of the precise meaning of the author's arguments that his time is spent in restating what the author was trying to say but didn't. Third, the discussant may have an article of his own on his mind and use the discussant role as an opportunity to unburden himself to a captive audience. Fourth, he may find himself in basic agreement with some of the author's ideas but in disagreement with others.

In reflecting upon my reactions to Dr. Brewster's excellent chapter, my discussion follows the last alternative with a touch of the second.

Dr. Brewster emphasizes the importance of goals as necessary

foundations for the appraisal and development of farm policy. With this I agree. Conflicts among goals and conflicts between goals and implementing alternatives are stressed. Likewise, I agree with this point. The difficulty of "nailing down" qualitative and quantitative results of alternative policies in an objective manner is also emphasized. This point becomes obvious to students of farm policy.

The major contribution of Dr. Brewster's essay, as I view it, lies in his process of identification and development of four value concepts with their varied and conflicting interactions and with their reactions to exogenous stimuli such as technology.

Brewster introduces his four value concepts as the commitments of mind and conscience every individual or group of individuals makes in deciding upon one among alternative ways of living and making a living. Starting from a basic premise of human love for merit and aversion to demerit, Brewster unfolds this status aspiration into (1) the work ethic, (2) the democratic creed, (3) the enterprise creed and (4) the creed of self-integrity. Brewster points out inherent conflicts between these four values and the conflicts between these values in the minds of men and the results of means used by men to achieve these values.

Since these values originated in a premachine age of an overwhelmingly agrarian society, technological developments, and the social organizations they have engendered have had seemingly differential impacts upon farm and nonfarm groups. By and large farm people appear to have been able to accommodate technological developments within their historical set of values. In contrast, technology has necessitated the development of new social organizations among nonfarm people. These newer social organizations evolving from the nonfarm sector of society appear to come into conflict with the historical value-laden agrarian organizations.

At this point, I begin to question certain applications of Brewster's reasoning. While I agree with the initially differential impacts of mechanization upon farm and nonfarm sectors of our society, the extended impacts of mechanization disturb the historical values of the farm sector, too, and lead to new forms of social organization. For example, there are strains on rural values in the process of farm people shifting from underemployment on farms to nonfarm employment as well as strains on values in the urban areas where rural and urban people meet in a social as well as economic context. There are also greater strains on rural values as the farm sector strives to accommodate the greatly increased productivity of capital, land, and particularly labor resources in terms of the impact upon farm income.

The idea of receiving income from nonuse of 25 million acres in the soil bank may not be unlike the idea of unemployment compensation in terms of the work ethic or the enterprise creed. The pressure for higher price supports through organized efforts may not be unlike wage increases through the medium of labor unions. The use of income payments disguised as resource conservation investments may not be unlike featherbedding and work limitations practiced by urban workers in terms of the net effects upon Brewster's values.

The point I wish to make is that on the surface the effects of technology upon values and organizations of farm people appears less disturbing than upon nonfarm people. However, results of technology may be bearing down equally heavily upon farm people prompting them to alter their values in response to technology and its aftermath of productivity.

These impacts may be expected to present even greater stresses on rural values in the future. Until now, at least, agriculture has used almost exclusively the spending power of government to soften the impact of technology. On the other hand, urban sectors have used the police power extensively in a wide spectrum of adjustment from land uses to conditions of employment. As we regard the future, the acceptance and widespread application of the police power by urban people may bring about an extension of this power to farm areas as the two sectors jointly resolve the settlement of agricultural problems through legislation and other forms of group action in which preferences of both urban and farm people are registered as the solutions.

Until now, I have not questioned Brewster's four values as policy guiding creeds. However, I have not accepted the differential effects of technology upon these values in the farm and nonfarm sectors. Nor can I accept the idea that these values have altered materially the basic manner in which farm people as contrasted with urban people have endeavored to bring about adjustments in the machine age.

Now I would like to question the values Brewster sets forth as the commitments men live by and for. Suppose I were to suggest life, liberty and opportunity as the values underpinning our society. In penning the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson first stated life, liberty and property then replaced property with pursuit of happiness which may be translated into opportunity. The question arises whose life? whose liberty? whose happiness? The point is there are many kinds of values in our society depending upon where we attach ourselves to the means-ends continuum. I would be interested in learning whether Dr. Brewster's four values are ends-in-view used as means toward the

Jeffersonian values. Or are there other ends-in-view in between?

Suppose I were to suggest that people, both farm and nonfarm, could rally around the value of maximizing their net satisfactions or minimizing their net dissatisfactions. Suppose further that a productive norm could be derived from this supposition which would demonstrate how the maximization of net satisfaction could be achieved. In the process, a distributive norm might be stated which would tend to insure each resource contributor the value productivity of his resources used in the production mix. In this process, difficulties are experienced in articulating peoples' satisfactions and dissatisfactions. The identification and ordering of satisfactions and the means to achieve them becomes crucial, whose satisfactions? what order and what weight? The measurement problem most likely will be of ordinal rather than of cardinal nature. In the ordering process, the market most likely will be supplemented heavily with the ballot box and public reaction as preference indicators and the resolution process most likely will be a compromise based on acceptance and/or at least toleration.

The task of identifying and articulating values men live by and for is exceedingly difficult, and the added task of assigning weights of even an ordinal nature of values adds to the difficulty. Possibly this task might be viewed as an on-going process in which the basic values might be articulated in such terms of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness but in which the realizable ends-in-view change from time to time and from place to place and even from group to group.

Possibly Brewster's four values are relevant to this time and place as ends-in-view. However, other values might be equally relevant. I doubt that the Brewster values sufficiently articulate peoples' desires as a basis for developing and appraising policy alternatives. Even if they were sufficient in this respect, no weighting system is suggested for resolving inter-goal conflicts or a basis for compromise.

Values possess the important dual function in our society of helping define problems and of appraising remedial alternatives. In articulating and in appraising values competent of performing this dual function I suggest they meet the following conditions. First, the values be common to our society both rural and urban segments in the sense that people either accept or tolerate them. Thus values possess the basic glue that brings some degree of unity to our society and concomitantly prevents the society from falling apart. Second, the values be possible of achievement and not mere platitudes like life, liberty and pursuit of happiness

which cannot be directly related to particular alternatives of action in resolving social conflicts. Third, the values could not be compromised in terms of more ultimate values since the values would in themselves be consistent with more ultimate values and sufficient to resolve conflicts at a particular time and place. This does not mean that conflicts in values might not arise. Nor does it mean that the resolution of these conflicts would result in the maximum achievement of a particular value. Rather, the resolution of value conflicts demands application of the principle of proportionality in which the maximization of all values held by different groups would be sought. This might involve achievement of a little less of one and a little more of another until an equimarginal point was reached which is characterized by compromise.

Brewster uses the terms goals, values, value judgment and creed almost interchangeably throughout his chapter. Possibly his argument would be clarified by sharper definitions of terms and strengthened by extended use of the means-ends continuum concept to which he alludes through mention of John Dewey. Also, the extension of the means-ends continuum of values into such ends-in-view of current programs as family farms, owner operatorship, parity, ever-normal grainary, world food, soil bank and resource conservation might aid in bringing his discussion into the arena of current policy discussion.

Turning to Brewster's conclusions, I am somewhat more apprehensive of the suitability of economic theory to the resolutions of value problems than he is. The identification and articulation of human values and their applications to the development and appraisal of implementing policies requires close collaboration of students from many disciplines. This, in turn, demands interdisciplinary studies planned and conducted jointly by students in psychology, anthropology, sociology, political science, ethic, jurisprudence, economics and other fields.

But as Dr. Brewster concludes, it is surely premature if it is presumed that we already know that the market system behaves in approximate conformity with the competitive model. Perhaps an entirely new model of human behavior is needed that will help extricate students from assumptions that must be relaxed severely to accommodate reality.

Brewster's final conclusion that until consensus is achieved concerning the causes of agriculture's large excess capacity, we have no clear understanding of either the value aspect or the organizational aspect of the farm problem seems reasonable since neither aspect exists apart from the other. Granted more study is needed on the causes of agriculture's present dilemma.

However, it remains doubtful that researchers have been completely successful in translating their findings into form which can be readily understood and utilized by other groups in our society more deeply involved in making and administering policies and programs than we are. In other words, we as scientists in particular fields probably know considerably more than we as a society utilize in our approaches to agriculture's problems. Thus, we face the two-fold challenge of putting together our knowledge from relevant disciplines in a form understandable by the public and in the process discover the areas of inquiry needed for enhancing our knowledge of values and means to attain them.

The research and educational challenge in the area of goals can most profitably be met through exchanges of views among the disciplines as is being experienced at this conference and through interdisciplinary studies jointly planned and jointly carried out. The goals we seek and use as criteria for appraising farm policies are not likely to be ultimate but instead evolving ends-in-view in the process of change but nevertheless consistent with American traditions of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness which are flexible enough to accommodate changes in keeping with changing needs.