

## ALL THESE PEOPLE: THE NATION'S HUMAN RESOURCES IN THE SOUTH<sup>1</sup>

FOR over two decades the Institute for Research in Social Science at the University of North Carolina has been a beacon of enlightenment on social and economic problems of the South. For this, chief credit goes to Dr. Howard W. Odum who organized the Institute in 1924. From the beginning, Odum's idea was that of directing the major part of the Institute's research toward regional problems of the South in the hope that the multitudinous and complex ills of that region might be better understood and approached intelligently. His success in making the Institute a national center for regional studies has been due not only to his own high qualities of scholarliness and industry but also to his ability to attract brilliant colleagues and to instill in them a fervor for work akin to his own.<sup>2</sup>

One of Odum's outstanding coworkers, Rupert B. Vance, has recently completed *ALL THESE PEOPLE: THE NATION'S HUMAN RESOURCES IN THE SOUTH*. This is Vance's third major work on problems of the South<sup>3</sup> and it serves to complement Odum's *SOUTHERN REGIONS OF THE UNITED STATES*. As stated by the author, "This study of the Southern People follows Howard W. Odum's analysis of the resources of society in terms of natural 'wealth', capital 'wealth', technological 'wealth', human 'wealth', and institutional 'wealth'. The idea has been well put by Lancelot T. Hogben in *RETREAT FROM REASON*, where he points out that the wealth and the welfare of nations depends on (a) the material resources of man's environment, (b) the biological resources of social personnel, and (c) the social resources of organization and institutions for mobilizing the common will to make the fullest use of the first two." (pp. 7-8.)

More specifically, *ALL THESE PEOPLE* is divided into five parts as follows:

### Part I. The Dynamics of Population (pp. 1-153).

<sup>1</sup> Vance, Rupert B.: *ALL THESE PEOPLE: THE NATION'S HUMAN RESOURCES IN THE SOUTH*. Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press, 1945, 503 pp. \$5.00.

<sup>2</sup> For a brief account of the past work of the Institute, see Odum, H. W. and Jocher, Katharine (Editors): *IN SEARCH OF THE REGIONAL BALANCE OF AMERICA*. Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press, 1946, 162 pp. \$3.00.

<sup>3</sup> The two preceding ones are:

(a) Vance, Rupert B.: *HUMAN FACTORS IN COTTON CULTURE*. Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press, 1944, 162 pp. \$3.00.  
(Continued on page 424)

Part II. Population and the Agrarian Economy (pp. 154-247).

Part III. Population and the Industrial Economy (pp. 248-334).

Part IV. Cultural Adequacy of the People (pp. 335-465).

Part V. Social Policy and Regional-National Planning (pp. 466-488).

The South has long had the dubious distinction of being the Nation's outstanding "seed bed" for future population. But for the high fertility of the South the net reproduction rate for the country as a whole would be below replacement requirements. Much of this, of course, is due simply to the fact that the South is more rural than other regions. If this were the *only* factor in the situation there might be small cause for concern. However, the "social problem" elements arise from the coincidence of high fertility and poverty in the rural South. Families tend to be largest in communities where levels of living are lowest, and where facilities for child health and public education are least adequate. Thus, whereas the South contributes a disproportionately large share of the Nation's births, it is correspondingly an area where human resources have been sinfully neglected and wasted. The author sees this situation not only as a challenge to the region but to the Nation as a whole.

The author gives a well-rounded description of the agrarian economy of the South. Like other students of the problem, he holds "that share-tenancy as developed in the Cotton Belt is ruinous of both land and men. . . . The waste of human resources may be made clear by reference to the nutritional problems of the tenant family. The land owner, as indicated, gets his income from staple cash crops. Unless exceptional, he does not devote much of his supervision and financing to seeing that the tenant produces the fruits, meats, milk, and vegetables needed to feed his family. . . . Moreover the tenants, caught in the staple routine and steeped in the need for cash in an economy of book credit, rarely acquires the means, the training, or possibly the inclination, to produce an adequate supply of food or feed crops. . . . Measured by the returns to laborers, croppers, and share tenants, the South's agrarian economy represents the most uneconomic utilization of a large labor force to be found in our country." (pp. 228-229.)

Various changes in the traditional agricultural economy of the South

University of North Carolina Press, 1929, 346 pp.

(b) \_\_\_\_\_: HUMAN GEOGRAPHY OF THE SOUTH. Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press, 1932, 596 pp.

are noted. Industrialization is bringing nearby markets for food and dairy products and the A.A.A. program has helped to stimulate diversification. Although the outlook for the mechanical cotton picker is still somewhat uncertain, other forms of mechanization of agriculture have advanced rapidly and have served to dispense with the need for many tenant families. If the mechanical cotton picker proves to be feasible, far-reaching changes in the agricultural economy of the South may be expected.

In Part III, Vance examines the regional distribution of income, industry, and unemployment and attempts to ascertain "what would be involved in a fuller use of material and human resources for the regions and the Nation." As expected, the answer turns out to be more industry for the South. In this section the author also draws upon previously unpublished case studies of two industrial communities in the Southeastern Piedmont, Catawba Valley and High Point, North Carolina.

The cultural adequacy of the South (Part IV) is discussed chiefly in terms of health and education. A series of charts demonstrates that southern states fall into the disadvantaged class with respect to number of physicians and medical-care beds per unit of population, percentage of births attended by physicians, maternal death rates, ratios of stillbirths to live births, infant mortality rates, and per capita expenditures for public health. Parallel situations are found in data on educational attainment, school attendance, and annual expenditures per pupil enrolled in schools. Both public health and formal education are viewed as purchasable commodities. The author reasonably contends that the Nation has a stake in the health and education of the children of the South, for many of these children eventually will migrate to distant cities in search of employment. "Citizens ill-informed and prejudiced become the prey of demagogues and thus tend to break down the equitable functioning of government so necessary for the preservation of the free ballot in a democracy." (p. 445.)

Although the author makes a strong case for equalization of public health and educational opportunity through federal funds, he looks beyond the possibility of federal "hand outs." He urges a regional development that will enable the South to go under its own steam. "More than anything else the future of the Southeast depends upon the development of resources and capacities that are as yet largely unrealized. The region has natural resources and human resources. Their forms of wealth are

primary, but for their development they depend upon the building up of technological resources, institutional resources, and capital resources. The creation of these secondary forms of wealth, as Howard W. Odum has pointed out, are matters of organization, skill, and previous experience. This is both an economic and a cultural task in which the Nation is as vitally concerned as the region itself." (p. 476.)

Space limits prohibit a full and just review of this book. The amount of detailed information it contains is suggested by the inclusion of 146 tables and 281 figures. Many of the figures are base maps of the United States showing how the South compares with other regions with respect to given conditions. A small number of figures, however, might just as well have been omitted since they are rendered illegible by excessive reduction. (*See Figures 272-274.*)

Since the book required seven years for writing and one for publishing, it is not surprising to find some out-dated materials and sentences. Thus in two places (pp. 94 and 146) the author mentions the absence of direct data for the South on fertility differentials by socio-economic class. Before the book was finished, however, National Health Survey materials on birth rates by occupation, income, and education were available for the South and other regions. Furthermore, by the time Vance's book was published, the Bureau of the Census had released a large mass of differential fertility rates by region, education, and rental value of the home, based upon the 1940 Census.

The author has an axe to grind in this book but that axe is concerned with the Nation's human resources in the South.

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## AGRICULTURE IN AN UNSTABLE ECONOMY<sup>1</sup>

**B**ELIEVING that past studies of agricultural problems like those of industrial problems have too commonly assumed that industry and agriculture are separate parts of our economy, Professor Theodore W. Schultz of the Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Chicago, has written a book, *AGRICULTURE IN AN UNSTABLE ECONOMY*,

<sup>1</sup> Schultz, Theodore W.: *AGRICULTURE IN AN UNSTABLE ECONOMY*. New York and London, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1945, 299 pp. \$2.75.