

The need for a community with many job opportunities and a wide variety of goods and services is recognized by almost everyone. What often is not adequately understood are the various methods used in creating such areas. Success in causing economic development is usually not easy. It is challenging in rural areas because of the continual decline in farm population and the effect of this on the area. The problem in most of Rural America is not the inability to produce. The problem is a loss in the local markets of consumer buying of what is produced. The continual out-migration of people tends to reduce in rural areas the demands for many types of goods and services. Ultimately this restricts investments and job opportunities in those farm areas.

In most rural areas the trend of fewer and fewer farms can be expected to continue. This trend may be slowed down somewhat by irrigation development, increase in fertilization, increase in cattle feeding, dairying, truck gardening, etc. However, the underlying forces causing this unwelcome trend — the adoption of new farming technology and improved production practices — are anticipated to continue. Therefore, it appears that the greatest chance for employment opportunities in the rural farm areas are in non-farming types of work. Where farming is the major economic activity, expanding employment in agriculturally related industries should be closely investigated.

A very brief review of some essential elements required for community growth which have been successfully used in rural areas

should be considered. These requirements for economic growth and development could be referred to as the five P's of economic progress. They stand for (1) Priority of Time and Effort, (2) A Plan, (3) Project Selection, (4) Persistence and (5) Patience.

1. *Priority of Time and Effort* — One of the first decisions to be made by people of a community interested in economic development is whether they are willing to give the time and effort required to make the program succeed. If employment opportunities are to be created the time required for study and action in a development program has to be given a higher priority than the time involved in participating in some other types of activities. A host of organizations are constantly competing for everyone's time. The cost of failing to give the necessary time for economic development compared with the disadvantages of not participating in some other function should be seriously considered.

2. *A Plan* — A second essential for economic growth and development is for local people to follow a logical plan in moving through the steps of progress. While there is more than one plan or procedure that can be followed in economic development, the steps usually include: (a) stimulating local interest in development (this can be done by pointing out problems and possible opportunities), (b) organizing a steering or action committee, (c) inventorying the human and physical resources in order to better recognize the limitations and opportunities that exist, (d) choosing a course of action, (e) evaluation of the action

The 5 "P's" of Rural Development

- PRIORITY

- PLAN

- PROJECT

- PERSISTENCE

- PATIENCE

AND HARD WORK

