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Future of Small Communities in Nebraska

Address delivered by Lloyd D. Martin, Mayor of Lincoln, before Plattsmouth Rotary Club

A community is a marvelous thing. It is alive. It never sleeps. It has a spirit. It has character—either good or bad. It is not made of bricks and stones alone. It is made up of the ambitions, hopes, and aspirations of its people, whose interests are inseparably bound together.

Plattsmouth is a comparatively small community, but it has much to recommend it. It is the county seat, the heart of an agricultural section; a city of homes, schools and churches.

But more important than these things is the fact that the people of this community are men and women of character; they are of pioneer stock; they have courage and determination; they are home makers and community builders.

There are those who say that the small communities in America are doomed. I don't subscribe to this theory. For example the bumble bee according to scientists has too heavy a body for its wing span, its body is not stream-lined and by their rules should not be able to fly. However the bumble bee cannot read and not knowing about these findings just goes ahead and flies anyway. There is a very close analogy between the small communities and the bee.

If Plattsmouth keeps abreast of the times, is progressive, makes plans, and offers services and goods to the people of this section of the state which are comparable with such services and goods in large cities—then Plattsmouth will have a splendid future as well as a fine past.

And it is that future we are here to talk about this noon. Planning that future is not work for experts. Practical, workable plans spring from the people. We are going to spend the rest of our lives in the future so we should plan that future.

All of our communities are going to face a serious problem shortly after the defeat of our enemies. The whole nation has been geared to win a war. We have about nine million men and women in the armed services and about eleven million working in war plants. When the war is over, soldiers and war workers—about twenty million of them will be looking for jobs.

Nebraska alone has 110,000 men and women in the armed services and probably more than that number engaged in war work throughout the country. We want these people to come home to Nebraska—build their homes here and raise their families here. Nebraska cannot afford a further loss of population.

But we must have something to offer. When Johnnie comes marching home, from the army, or navy, you may meet him at the station with a band and hold a big banquet for him that night, but sooner or later he's going to ask that \$64 question—"Where can I get a job?"

Unless we make plans to meet this situation we will have chaos, unemployment and a depression. Industry cannot convert to peace time production quickly enough to offer employment, and most cities have concluded that a construction program is needed to take up the slack. They have:

- (a) Listed their needs in the order of their importance.
- (b) Determined how many of the projects can be financed.
- (c) Prepared plans and specifications for those projects.

In many cities the necessary bonds have already been voted, the needed land acquired, and all legal requirements have been met so that construction can commence promptly after the war.

For every man engaged in actual construction work, there are two others required in processing, transporting or preparing the material used in construction.

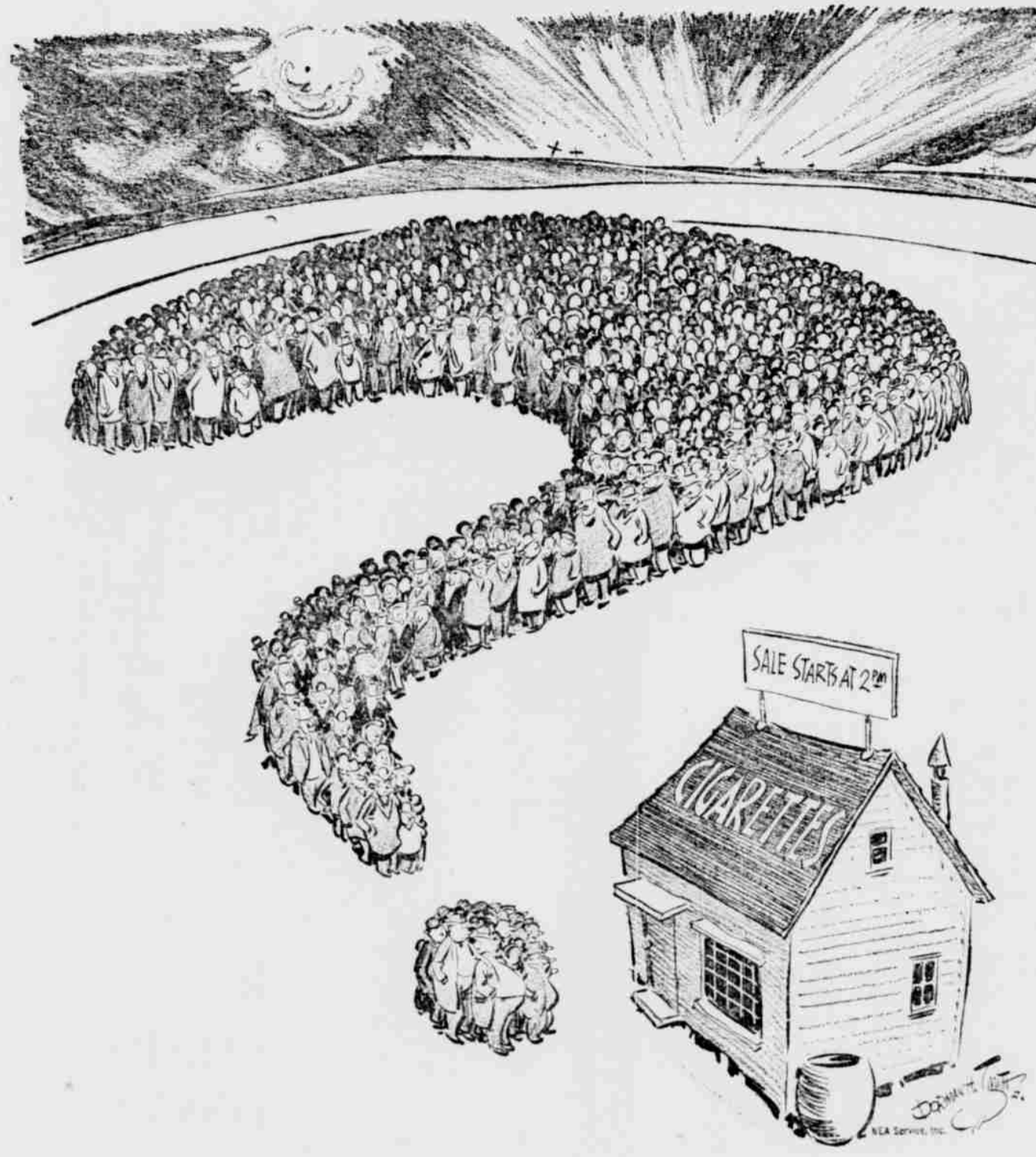
I don't know what construction work is actually needed in Plattsmouth, but I do know that in most communities, even proper maintenance has been neglected. First the depression and then the war kept us from doing many of the things which needed to be done. Some of our homes and retail establishments remind us of horse and buggy days. Many of our buildings have a drab and ugly appearance.

In Lincoln—over a year ago—I appointed a "Post War Planning Committee" for the city. The Chamber of Commerce also had such a committee. They joined forces, met frequently, and made some definite plans.

This combined committee found that Lincoln needed:

- (a) Numerous street improvements.
 - (1) Widen
 - (2) Straighten
 - (3) Pave or resurface
- (b) Sidewalk repairs.
- (c) Additional street lighting
- (d) Culverts, bridges and drainage improvements.
- (e) Park improvements.

The Great Manpower Problem



- (f) Swimming pool.
- (g) Municipal stadium.
- (h) A new library.

We estimated the cost of these improvements, determined how much of the cost would go for labor, made plans and specifications for some of the projects and we expect to submit a bond issue to the people for over two million dollars this fall.

We believe that in making these plans we should:

- (1) Have all classes represented—including labor.
- (2) Adopt only projects that the community needs, no leaf raking.
- (3) Adopt projects which will require considerable labor.
- (4) Give wide publicity to each of the proposed improvements.

Of course, such a construction program doesn't represent a permanent solution. It's a short range plan. It's intended to meet a temporary emergency during a transition period. We can't go on constructing and building and creating bonded indebtedness forever.

After the emergency, after the period of readjustment, after business and industry has converted to a peace time basis—then what?

Well, we know there have been marvelous developments and discoveries in almost every field since the war began, in aviation, automobile transportation and housing.

Last winter I heard Henry J. Kaiser speak. He told us about many things and then he said:

"Today man faces the most superb opportunity which has come to him. His world lies in ashes. It is his now to rebuild."

He said that if we would use the same intelligence, ingenuity, enthusiasm and determination after the war as we have during the war, we would enjoy prosperity rather than suffer a depression.

And Kaiser is no theoretical professor. He is a practical, hard headed, successful business man and one of the greatest builders of our time.

Bernard M. Baruch in his recent report on reconversion states: "We will emerge from the war with the greatest opportunities any people ever had. A post war depression is not inevitable. Handled with competence our adjustment after the war is won should be an adventure in prosperity."

But what has all this to do with Plattsmouth—or Nebraska, an agricultural section?

(1) Prosperity in any section of the country or in any industry will benefit us, directly or indirectly.

(2) There is a tendency to decentralize industry and Nebraska has much to offer.

Nebraska is too largely the producer of raw materials that are processed elsewhere. For example, we produce the hides, but the shoes are made in Massachusetts. We produce the wool but the suits are made in New York.

Unfortunately, the producer of the raw material gets only about 40 per cent of the dollar paid by the ultimate consumer.

A recent editorial in the Nebraska State Journal states the problem well.

"Nebraska's population is dwindling too rapidly for comfort, agriculture is too much a matter of producing raw materials to be sent away for processing and brought back to sell to the farmers, and other Nebraskans at good round prices. It is exactly this economy that has kept India pauperized under British rule. Left to develop unchecked, it would in time reduce the state to a few huge corporate farms with absentee landlords and wage-earning tenants."

Colorful Era In Hit Film

Reaching back into colorful post-World War I's "roaring '20's" for its plot and musical setting, "Greenwich Village," 20th Century-Fox's newest Technicolor excursion into another exciting period of America's past, opens Sunday at the Cass Theatre.

With Carmen Miranda, Don Ameche, William Bendix and Vivian Blaine, "The Cherry Blonde," involved in its tangle story, "Greenwich Village" rolls back twenty years to the riotous hey-day of America's world-famous artists' colony.

In "Greenwich Village," Don Ameche, most recently seen in "Heaven Can Wait" and "Happy Land," essays another intriguing role as a young composer who came out of Kansas to win a reputation in the Arabian Nights atmosphere of Greenwich Village.

Opposite Don is a new musical "discovery" whom 20th Century-Fox has slated for musical stardom—red-headed Vivian Blaine. The "Cherry Blonde" makes her leading-lady bow as Ameche's romantic interest, and sings three new hit songs in her introductory role which preview critics are betting will send her far along the path cut out by Betty Grable and Alice Faye.

"Greenwich Village" provides Carmen Miranda with her first role since "The Gang's All Here," and her subsequent critical illness. It offers her increasing opportunity to display her newly discovered talents as a comedienne, and provides her with songs streamlined to her unique singing-dancing interpretations.

More than 25,000,000 board feet of lumber are shipped overseas thru the Naval Supply Depot in Seattle each month.



BY DREW PEARSON
(Lt. Col. Robert S. Allen now on active service with the army.)

Drew Pearson Says: Senate is unfair in confirmation tactics; House gives Rep. Wilson absent treatment; Rosenman to be named appeals court Judge.

WASHINGTON—The fight against Aubrey Williams as Rural Electrification Administrator illustrates how far the senate has been going recently in unfair confirmation tactics. All sorts of wild charges were thrown around against Williams, but any careful senator, taking the trouble to sift them down, found out they weren't true.

Williams was even attacked on his war record, though it developed he had enlisted in the French Foreign Legion even before the United States entered the last war, had participated in the famous battles of Chemin-des-Dames, Compiègne and Chateau-Thierry. In this war, all four of his sons are in service.

When this charge flopped, Dupont-financed Senator Bushfield of South Dakota brought various charges of "radicalism" against Williams, quoting from a publication called "Headlines" to substantiate his charges.

Finally Senator Scott Lucas of Illinois exposed the fact that "Headlines" was published by the notorious Joseph P. Kamp, who helped organize the friends of new Germany which became the German-American Bund, was frequently seen on the same platform with Fritz Kuhn, now in jail, and was an intimate of George Sylvester Viereck, now in jail as a nazi agent. "I thought the senator would like to see the enlightened source of the testimony he is cross-examining Mr. Williams on," Senator Lucas said, smiling sweetly at Bushfield.

OVERTHROWING GOVERNMENT

Finally, Williams was charged with desiring to overthrow the government, with not being a good Presbyterian and with favoring equal economic opportunity for negroes. Senator Bilbo of Mississippi was one of his most intolerant hecklers.

"Do you subscribe to that theory of government," the Mississippi demagogue asked, "that private enterprise and private business is going to be regulated by some board or bureau in Washington?"

It's the congress, Senator, that decides that," replied Williams.

"You better not disband your army when this war is over because you'll need it," shot back Senator Bilbo who has been worried for fear Williams favors violent change of government.

(Note: Real fact is, of course, that behind the fight against Williams is the power trust and also the big southern plantation owners. Williams has spent much of his life fighting both and they have never forgotten it.)

Cold Shouldered Congressman
Straight-laced Representative "Curfew Earl" Wilson, Indiana republican, is best known to the public for having urged a curfew for government girls and complaining be-

cause they take a few minutes out for coffee or a soft drink. To his congressional colleagues however, he is best known as a hogger of the handball courts in the house gymnasium. They don't like him. The other day Wilson was delivering a long tirade against the Veterans' Administration. The house was almost empty.

Only Representative Jerry Voorhis of California sat at the parliamentarian's desk correcting a speech he had delivered earlier. Suddenly Speaker Sam Rayburn sent a page boy to Voorhis and asked him to step over to the speaker's dais so he could have a word with him.

"Jerry," suggested Rayburn, "why don't you correct your remarks out in the cloakroom?" Then Wilson won't have anyone listening."

Voorhis looked around and saw the house chamber completely empty. He walked out to the cloakroom. Wilson ranted on for five or ten minutes, talking to no one. Then Majority Whip Robert Ramspeck of Georgia came in to move for adjournment.

Violating Rent Ceilings

The OPA has received increasing complaints from servicemen and war workers all over the country describing new dodges by which landlords and real estate brokers seek to evade OPA ceilings.

One technique by certain brokers is to call together a group of applicants for an apartment and auction it off to the highest bidder. The winning applicant pays the amount he bid to the broker. The broker then rents the apartment or house at ceiling price, but the broker pockets the "bid price." This is just so much gravy and sometimes it runs into sizeable cash.

In New York, Washington and other areas, OPA has found that rental agencies tell prospective tenants they have no rooms. Later, they mysteriously produce them when a large enough cash bribe is passed across the counter.

JUDGE JED JOHNSON??

Representative Jed Johnson of Oklahoma has received a letter from Attorney-General Biddle notifying him that he will be considered for the post of judge of the customs court, in New York, if he is interested in the post. Johnson, who would like the judgeship, but doesn't want to appear to be running away from any congressional fights, wrote Biddle that he could not accept the judgeship before conferring with President Roosevelt. He added that he could not see the president yet, because he was too busy with appropriations hearings.

A reporter for an Oklahoma paper picked up the story. But unfortunately, his editor cut out the last explanatory remark, and what appeared

(Continued on next page)

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