

A REPORT

TO THE
HONORABLE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF TEXAS
AUSTIN, TEXAS

TO THE
MEMBERSHIP OF THE 50TH LEGISLATURE
FOR THE STATE OF TEXAS
AUSTIN, TEXAS

AND TO THE
PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS

BY

KARL HOBLITZELLE

Chairman

TEXAS CENTENNIAL OF STATEHOOD COMMISSION



February 1, 1947

To the Honorable Governor of the State of Texas, Austin, Texas

*To the Membership of the 50th Legislature for the State of Texas,
Austin, Texas, and*

To the People of Texas

Dear Fellow Texans:

The Forty-seventh Texas Legislature in regular session at Austin in 1941 authorized the formation of the Texas Centennial of Statehood Commission, and instructed it to plan a statewide observance of Texas' entrance into the Union, but did not at that time authorize any funds to implement such a program. Your Chairman sought the best advice from all quarters and an early decision was made not to sponsor any fairs or perishable memorials but, instead, to try to develop a program which would be constructive, long lasting, and ultimately benefit the greatest number of our people. I think it is apparent to the layman and the city dweller that, in general, our rural economy and our rural life has wasted away and deteriorated with the years. The days of the neat white farm house and its fat red barn, to symbolize an era, are almost gone. Many people are moving away from the farm. We submit that this whole trend should be a matter of supreme concern to all Texans, because:

First: The culture and tradition of our State are deeply rooted in the soil and its products;

Second: If our towns and cities are to thrive, our agriculture and rural life must be attractive and profitable, and

Third: Sound, straight-thinking, courageous Texans have always come from the farm and ranch. A sound, healthy and happy rural life will always act as a bulwark against "isms" which are contrary to our American way of life.

Steps have been taken from time to time by the State and Federal Governments, educational institutions, individuals and interested groups to deal with this increasingly important problem, all with some effect but without, in the aggregate, making the progress we should. Each of these agencies makes its contribution but there is no systematic control, no means by which duplication can be avoided, no agency to coordinate and systematically plan and direct

activities. There is no over-all control and organization of the several agencies by which the energies, resources and activities of all may be coordinated and directed systematically to permit a long-range plan and to collect, arrange and furnish the statistical data, research and experience of all agencies. No method has been developed by which such information and improvement and suggested methods and technical knowledge and skill may be systematically and continuously furnished the several farm, rural and livestock communities and the individuals engaged in such activities.

Assistance and incentive should be furnished to obtain better preparation for more persons to become equipped to do research and teaching in these fields. Until these conditions are met and solved, health, comfort and prosperity will not be the farmers' and stockmen's lot.

The war necessarily delayed such a program but in the early part of 1945 your Chairman appointed a Technical and Planning Committee to advise with him, under the guidance of the Director of Extension Service for the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas, and comprising a number of gentlemen of academic prominence, and others who are either technicians or specialists in some phase of agriculture in our State. This Committee met several times, and after a great deal of effort, study, trial and error, finally suggested and unanimously approved, in early January, 1946, a program designed to help revitalize rural life in Texas. This program was then submitted by the Chairman to the Board of Directors of the Texas Centennial of Statehood Commission in Austin on February 19, 1946, where it was unanimously adopted. This program, or plan, is made a part of this report and marked Exhibit "A".

Your Chairman since then has had many conferences with individuals whose training and practical experience peculiarly equipped them to make additional expert suggestions and contributions to the original Plan. As a result, certain additions and modifications have been integrated into the original plan and these have been endorsed by a majority of the Directors of the Texas Centennial of Statehood Commission so that a second Plan, marked Exhibit "B", is also incorporated into this report. Your Chairman and many others, recommend that this second Plan, or Exhibit "B", serve as the basis for legislative action. These Plans are, in

some respects, parallel except that the second Plan provides (1) for Short Courses in Agriculture and Processing, as well as Agricultural Scholarships; and (2) that the proposed Texas Rural Development Commission would have the authority to coordinate, integrate and implement the work of existing state agencies and institutions; that the agricultural colleges and schools shall effectively participate in carrying out the Commission's program, and in addition, that the Texas Rural Development Commission be empowered with over-all direction of research in state supported institutions.

These two plans (Exhibit "A" and Exhibit "B") are the results of two years of thought and effort and no little expense. There has been over \$17,000 spent on the activities of the Texas Centennial of Statehood Commission, all of which has been borne by the Interstate Theatres Company. We do not contend that either proposal is perfect. They are submitted with the thought and the hope that they may be useful to the Legislature in perfecting a program to meet the crying needs of Texas agriculture. There will be conflicting viewpoints. There will be many suggestions from various quarters. We hope that they will be constructive and *unselfish*, toward the end that the Legislature, in its wisdom, may conceive and fashion an agency which will project a program to revitalize Texas' agriculture during the second 100 years of our statehood, which will bring to our people who live by the land, higher standards of living, improved health, well-being and happiness.

It took foresight and courage for the pioneers of this State to subdue the wilderness which was early Texas. Today, new frontiers challenge us in the fields of research, science and engineering. Will we meet these challenges, and measure up to our responsibilities and opportunities, so that when Texas celebrates its second centennial of statehood, those of that future generation will look back with pride and admiration to our accomplishments and achievements, as we today look back to our pioneers of 100 years ago?

Respectfully submitted,

Karl Hoblit

EXHIBIT "A"

PREAMBLE

Under four flags, our pioneer forefathers established their humble homes in the wilderness of the Southwest to lay the foundation of a new empire. These heroic men and women came to Texas with high courage to endure bitter hardships and desperate adventures.

To these immortal men and women, we owe the greatness of our state, its unique culture, its distinctive institutions, its great communities, large and small. From the broad expanses of wilderness—the forests, prairies, plains, and mountains—the hardy pioneers of all races and creeds welded a state mighty in the councils of the nations. Through valor the state was born. Valor has ever remained its protective shield on the battlefields of the world.

One hundred years ago our pioneer forefathers wisely sought and were granted admittance in the United States of America. The Republic of Texas proudly merged its destiny with the great commonwealth of citizens under the Stars and Stripes.

Through a living monument, greater than any of perishable stone—one which will endure throughout time to keep alive those heroic virtues and sterling precepts of our forefathers—we are dedicated to commemorate 100 years of statehood.

The culture and tradition of the state, deeply rooted in the soil and its products, shall be preserved. It is to continue those basic principles, and the courage, enthusiasm and independence of the pioneers who laid the sturdy foundation of Texas, that this commemorative program is submitted.

Our agriculture and rural life, the mainspring of the culture of Texas, shall seek new horizons. Through science and research, agriculture and industry and rural life are destined to reach new heights.

The attainment of such a destiny will constitute a continuing living monument in which all people will share.

THE PLAN

We propose to commemorate 100 years of Texas statehood in a long-time program designed to revitalize rural life; to rebuild the land; and with the land, the man; and through the man, the state.

The future well-being of Texas is dependent primarily upon a sound economy and the happiness of our rural communities. The life of our rural communities must be attractive—economically, socially, spiritually and physically, so that our people will be drawn to the land.

The Centennial of Statehood Commission has knowledge that there are vast accumulations of useful and vital data on file and otherwise continuously available from many varied and widely separated sources relating to the rural community in all its phases. In its present form, the usefulness of these data to the local community is severely limited because the community has not the means to assemble, nor the technical talent capable of interpreting these data into a workable local plan of self-improvement.

Accordingly, the Centennial of Statehood Commission proposes that the State of Texas create and finance a coordinating and fact-finding commission to assist farmers through rural community planning. This service would not duplicate, but rather, coordinate and augment the work of numerous governmental, state educational, and private agencies to bring about the planned local application of selected and related data from a great mass of widely separated data.

Thus, local rural communities, or counties, would be enabled to make a realistic examination of their resources, advantages, disadvantages, needs and opportunities, but at all times, the initiative to carry out any project would rest entirely in the hands of the people of the community or county.

Local planning would be based on studies dealing with

1. Natural Resources.
2. Soil and Crop Practices.
3. Water Resources.

4. Livestock Improvement.
5. Farm-to-Market Roads.
6. Rural Electrification and Rural Telephones.
7. Local Industries.
8. Markets and Cost Analyses.
9. Financial Resources.
10. Labor.
11. Health.
12. Church and Recreational Facilities.
13. Local Government.
14. Schools.
15. Beautification.
16. Modernization Needs.

ORGANIZATION

The Centennial of Statehood Commission proposes that the plan be activated through the creation of a "Texas Rural Development Commission". This new commission is to consist of eleven commissioners who are to be nominated by the governor and approved by the legislature. Their terms are to be for four years, with their initial appointments to be of such duration as to perpetually stagger their replacements through the years.

The commissioners of the "Texas Rural Development Commission" are to serve without salary, but they are to be paid per diem and expenses for actual time served in official capacities.

The commissioners are to be selected as follows: One from the University of Texas; one from the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas; one from the Texas Technological College; one from the State Department of Agriculture; one from the State Department of Education; three to be nominated by the executive committees of the three regional Chambers of Commerce of Texas; and three laymen, one of whom shall be a dirt farmer and one a cattleman.

The commission is to be a policy-making body. All administrative matters are to be delegated to a board of administrators.

It is proposed that the board of administrators consist of three full-time employees. Its members are to be appointed by the commissioners of the "Texas Rural Development Commission", and subject to removal for cause by the commissioners.

Of these three administrators, one is to be selected from each of the following: (1) Agriculture; (2) Engineering and Industry; (3) Business Administration, Economics and Social Welfare. Each administrator must be qualified in one of the fields of activity enumerated. They are to be college-trained in their field of specialty, and have administrative experience. Their reputation is to be national rather than local as evidenced by special recognition, publications, and recommendations of authorities in their fields of specialization.

One of these men is to be designated executive administrator, and be responsible for the administration.

The technical staff and other employees of the board of administrators are to be hired by the administrators.

Under the board of administrators, there are proposed six major research and planning divisions, as follows:

Engineering Division:

(utilities, roads, water, minerals, etc.)

Economic Research and Business Administration Division:

(labor, marketing, etc.)

Agricultural Division:

(land use, crops, livestock, fisheries, wildlife, forestry, etc.)

Industrial Division:

(small industries, chemurgic development, etc.)

Social Welfare Division:

(education, recreation, beautification, health, etc.)

Information Division:

(editors, photographers, draftsmen, librarians, etc.)

EXHIBIT "B"

PREAMBLE

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To these immortal men and women, we owe the greatness of our state, its unique culture, its distinctive institutions, its great communities, large and small. From the broad expanses of wilderness—the forests, prairies, plains and mountains—the hardy pioneers of all races and creeds welded a state mighty in the councils of the nations. Through valor the state was born. Valor has ever remained its protective shield on the battlefields of the world.

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We propose to commemorate 100 years of Texas statehood in a long-time program designed to revitalize rural life; to rebuild the land; and with the land, the man; and through the man, the state.

The future well-being of Texas is dependent primarily upon a sound economy and the happiness of our rural communities. The life of our rural communities must be attractive economically, socially, spiritually and physically, so that our people will be drawn to the land.

Accordingly, the Centennial of Statehood Commission recommends that the State of Texas create and finance a coordinating commission to assist in the revitalization of our rural life. This new commission would not duplicate, but rather have the authority to coordinate, integrate and implement the work of existing state agencies and institutions to carry out its purpose. Further, the Centennial of Statehood Commission recommends that the legislature provide in the biennial budgets of the agricultural colleges and schools that these institutions effectively participate in carrying out the program of the proposed agency.

In consideration of the most effective and economical means for utilizing state funds, the Centennial of Statehood Commission further recommends that the new commission be empowered with over-all direction of research in state supported institutions. This is essential not only to make available for practical purposes the scientific data already accumulated and constantly becoming available, but to expand research in those fields from which the state will derive lasting benefits.

ORGANIZATION

An agency to be known as the "Texas Rural Development Commission", or by a more appropriate name, is suggested. This new commission should consist of eleven members, to be appointed by the Governor in the same manner as other state officers. The commissioners, three to be business and/or professional men, two educators experienced in agriculture or animal husbandry, three farmers, and three stockmen, should have terms of six years perpetually staggered so as to continually overlap.

The Commissioners of the proposed "Texas Rural Development Commission" should serve without salary, but they should be paid expenses during actual time of service in official capacities.

The Commission should be a policy-making body. All administrative matters should be delegated to an Executive Director, who would serve at the pleasure of the Commission.

The Executive Director should have the authority to appoint, with the consent of the Commission, two assistant directors, six field-coordinators, and any other staff members and employees essential to carry on the business of the agency.

PROGRAM

The program recommended by the Texas Centennial of Statehood Commission involves three phases: first, rural community planning; second, short courses in agriculture and processing, and third, agricultural scholarships.

RURAL COMMUNITY PLANNING

The Centennial of Statehood Commission has knowledge that there are vast accumulations of useful and vital data on file and otherwise continuously available from many varied and widely separated sources relating to the rural community in all its phases. In its present form the usefulness of these data to the local community is seriously limited because the community has not the means to assemble, nor the technical talent capable of interpreting these data into a workable plan of self-improvement.

Accordingly, the "Texas Rural Development Commission" should assist rural communities, or counties, through the assemblage and interpretation of these data, to make a realistic examination of their resources, advantages, disadvantages, needs and opportunities, to the end that a practical plan of self-improvement can be executed.

In rural community planning, particular consideration would be given to farm-to-market roads, rural health, soil and crop practices, livestock improvement, and other factors involving the economic, civic and social welfare of the community.

Specifically, and for example, the Commission would undertake to assist in such matters as the development of rural indus-

tries associated with raw material production. It would encourage home-grown industries, following the conviction that the best industrial development comes from within the community—a careful combination and usage of local capital, local natural resources, and local labor. In the ranching country, local processing of meat by new quick freezing methods, wool degreasing, tanneries, and plants for utilization of livestock by-products offer opportunities for local industrial expansion. Statewide local utilization of raw products of farm, range and forest for manufacturing and industrial purposes could stabilize our rural economy.

Where means and facilities of a community are inadequate, cooperative movements could be employed for financing, harvesting, marketing and processing, as well illustrated by the successful fruit growers' cooperatives in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas.

It will be the responsibility and aim of the Texas Rural Development Commission to work in close cooperation with the proposed Board of Veterans Affairs on all matters relating to the veteran and his problem on the land to the end that the life of him and his family is happy and profitable.

SHORT COURSES IN AGRICULTURE AND PROCESSING

To systematically and continuously carry technical knowledge concerning farming, ranching and certain basic processing industries to the several rural communities, and the individuals engaged in such activities, the implementation and expansion of short courses in agriculture and processing is suggested.

In explanation, a short course is a course of systematic instruction in a given subject or subjects of shorter duration than a four-year college course and not leading to a degree. Extension meetings, farmers' weeks and similar meetings for a few days are not to be classed as short courses, but as conferences and institutes.

Short courses may be classified according to their duration as year's courses, month's courses, or week's courses and shall be designated by their duration rather than by the general term "short course". For example, instead of announcing a short course in dairying, occupying six weeks, the announcement should state a "six weeks' course in dairying".

The short course provides a schedule of lectures, demonstrations and actual practice in field and laboratory centered around a specific subject. This subject may deal with any phase of agriculture or the processing of agricultural products. Examples of such subjects are: farm management, range management, citrus culture, dairying, poultry raising, animal husbandry, vegetable production, floriculture, beekeeping, quick freezing, dehydration, dairy manufacture, field crop production, marketing, etc.

Short courses aim to prepare persons not in a position to participate in college or vocational agricultural programs, to gain a working knowledge of specific fields of agriculture and related activities. Such courses should be open to men and women of all races who have reached the age of 15 years, and who have the ability to read and write.

Short courses should be coordinated by a central state agency empowered to fully utilize the existing state facilities at agricultural colleges and experiment stations, and the instructional staff of such state institutions, to insure that the state's investments and expenditures in these facilities and personnel be utilized to the fullest extent possible. These should be supplemented wherever necessary to fully meet the need for such instruction as it exists within the rural population of the state.

It is recommended that a survey of the state needs for agricultural short courses, and the most effective organization for conducting this short course program be made under the jurisdiction of the "Texas Rural Development Commission", by a committee of qualified agricultural educators selected by the National Association of Land Grant Institutions. This survey should be completed in 1947, so that the expanded program can be initiated on July 1, 1948, thereby to assist Veterans and others to obtain essential basic training in agricultural and processing fields.

AGRICULTURAL SCHOLARSHIPS

To provide the assistance and encouragement for more of our young men and women to become research scientists and teachers, and to develop their ability to make practical application of such training, state-supported agricultural scholarships are proposed.

These agricultural scholarships for advanced study should be available to graduates of Texas educational institutions of collegiate standing. Such scholarships should be awarded to students who belong to the upper two-fifths of their graduating class in scholastic rating. Candidates must have demonstrated promise in the field of agricultural or related sciences. No candidate ought to be more than 30 years of age upon date of appointment. Candidates should make application directly to the Commission and provide such information and references as may be required.

In order to insure that the training be directed to prepare men and women to meet the needs of our diversified agriculture, and to prevent the concentration of scholarships in one narrow field, such as cotton farming, the Commission should have the authority to designate the field of study for which specific scholarships are available.

Scholarships should be awarded on an annual basis, and subject to annual renewal to provide not more than four years of study.

The scholarships should not be renewed by the Commission if the student fails to maintain an adequate scholastic standing, or for other reasons incompatible with good citizenship.

In return for the state aid, students receiving state agricultural scholarships should be morally obliged to apply to Texas agriculture and related sciences the education and training acquired under this scholarship. This moral obligation could be discharged by a period of service in Texas equal to the number of years the scholarship was in effect.

The scholarship should be applied toward graduate study in any institution within the United States approved by the Commission.

These scholarships, for which Veterans should be given preferential consideration, should provide a higher stipend for married persons with additional allowances for each child, to the end that the cost of advanced education shall not penalize those desiring to rear a family.

A minimum of forty scholarships should be established, with not less than ten to be available annually for new appointees.