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## SECRETARY HOUSTON'S ADDRESS

**Masterly Treatment of Problems  
Which Confront Community,  
State and Nation**



SECRETARY Houston's address before the Sand Hills Farmers' on Wednesday was a masterly treatment of problems which concern not alone the Community and the State, but the Nation, which as he expressed it, "is just waking up to the fact that we have been relatively neglectful of rural life problems." ¶ Community subjects, also, the speaker dealt with emphasizing the necessity of making rural life practical—"profitable"—complete unto itself. ¶ "It is not so much because you buy outside and pay middlemen's profits, but because you are dependent, because you have nothing to put back." ¶ The one crop idea he discouraged, urging comprehensive agricultural activities, pointing out especially the opportunities offered for live stock and poultry production on economic lines in the South.

**HAS DEPENDED ON COTTON TO EXCESS**

The South, said Secretary Houston in opening, has depended to excess on cotton as a crop, arguing that one crop economy was unwise because it means uneconomical use of land, labor and capital; especially dangerous because when anything occurs to interfere with that particular crop, the entire section is prostrated. This was clear during the Civil War as it is today. It is, therefore, exceedingly apparent to most people that it is extremely urgent that the South much more rapidly diversify. Should the war continue and the South still produce as much cotton next year as this, it would clearly be an economic waste since the price would continue as low or even lower than now. The necessity of a decrease in production is a prerequisite not only to present but to future betterment of conditions and it is generally true that if the world was sure there would be a decrease next year, there would be a rise in the present prices.

**THE SOUTH'S OPPORTUNITY IS LIVE STOCK**

The question naturally arises, said the speaker, what is to be done, what is to be planted, and in that connection he emphasized the opportunity the South has by turning its attention to live stock and those crops which make live stock economy profitable, especially in hogs and poultry because they can be reasonably and quickly increased, and because the small farmer can, with relatively less trouble, add a few sows and increase his poultry. ¶ Continuing, he referred to the present meat situation and pointed out that while the population had increased twenty-five millions in fifteen years, the production of beef cattle has decreased between the census years, about twelve million head; sheep by nearly the same figure, and hogs by about the same proportion, adding that in the judgment of experts of the Department of Agriculture and elsewhere, the way to increase the Nation's meat supply was

to pay more attention to beef cattle, on settled farms, rather than "ranches;" more attention to hogs and poultry; the latter as becoming an increasing part of the table consumption of the Nation. In conclusion he urged the importance of eradicating hog cholera, tubercular cattle, and combating with periodic outbreaks such as the foot and mouth disease. ¶ In the judgment of experts, the Secretary urged, the South has a peculiar opportunity to develop live stock interests and grow the crops necessary for the foundation of this interest, giving necessary attention to all sorts of food products and careful attention to market gardening.

**NEGLECTFUL OF OPPORTUNITY**

The South has been especially neglectful in the production of live stock, he continued, showing that while the average Iowa farm had, for instance, thirty-five head of hogs, the average Southern farm had not over five; that while the average Iowa farm had one hundred and ten head of poultry the average Southern farm not over fourteen. Further, the judgment of the authorities seems to be that the South could raise hogs and poultry especially, quite as profitably if not more so than the Middle West if it used the same judgment and intelligent methods. The climate is more favorable, the season for growing crops longer and the grazing season correspondingly long. ¶ Secretary Houston admitted that it might be a question as to whether the South could grow wheat, corn, oats and forage generally and produce meat stuffs for foreign and interstate consumption in competition with the West, but he contended that it should, at least, grow enough for its own consumption. In one year, he said, the South imported two hundred million dollars worth of wheat, corn and hay, paying all middlemen's charges, transportation, etc.; that in one year North Carolina imported various food stuffs in value equal to the entire cotton crop. This is bad economy and should be corrected for it is highly important in this emergency that the South should provide enough to subsist on within its own borders and be relieved of the necessity of relying on selling the cotton crop immediately to subsist.

**COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION ESSENTIAL**

Continuing, the Secretary referred to marketing problems to be solved in case new crops were grown, not alone Community but State and interstate, suggesting the assistance of State and Federal agencies, leading up to a discussion of the necessity for Community organization for marketing. It is the opinion of experts, he said, that concerted action among producers is essential in order to ship in economical units and find the best markets. Referring to the difficulties he also called attention to the fact that the Federal Government was conducting an active inquiry in all sections and would willingly give all the assistance and advice that it could as the result of these investigations.