

THE MAGNITUDE OF DISPLACEMENT

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In this discussion I shall not attempt to approach the solution to the problem, but I would like to acquaint you with the magnitude of the problem. The Bureau of Public Roads during the past few years has been displacing an average of 55,000 families and businesses each year. Last year we displaced 36,000. The drop was caused by a new law and the gearing up to new operations. In addition, there are about 30,000 families and businesses being displaced each year by programs of the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Displacements from programs of other federal agencies, such as open space, urban parks, schools, and urban mass transit, average 3,500 families a year. Throughout the country there are also numerous displacements resulting from activities by industry and the private sector. Altogether total displacement averages 80,000 families and businesses a year.

In cities where the population is 100,000 or more, the average house is 50 years old. Of the houses 15 to 50 years old, 26 to 35 percent are deficient according to standards of decency, safety, and sanitation. For the next 10 or 20 years, this situation will worsen. The houses will get older. Replacement houses are not being provided in urban areas at the same rate as displacements are occurring. Close to 50 percent of the families in America cannot afford to buy a house that costs more than \$20,000, and the average cost of a new replacement house is currently \$20,000 or more.

Another alarming factor that we must begin planning for now is the population explosion. During the next decade births and increasing the longevity of life will more than double the number of people on the earth and create a tremendous need not only for housing, but also for space and many other facilities and services that will lead to environmental quality problems.

Displacement deals with social problems because many people require some financial and social assistance in order to accomplish relocation. This means that payments are added in federal highway and renewal programs, but other objectives and goals demand that other resources have to be tapped in local, county, state, and federal governments to bring together all the forces of assistance required by an effective relocation program.