

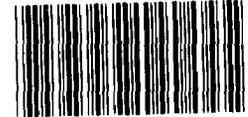
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UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

FOR RELEASE ON DELIVERY
EXPECTED AT 2:00 P.M. EST
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1982

STATEMENT OF
BRIAN P. CROWLEY, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR SENIOR LEVEL
COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS,
RESEARCH, AND FOREIGN AGRICULTURE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE



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AT
OVERSIGHT HEARINGS

ON
THE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

MR. CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE:

WE ARE HERE TODAY TO DISCUSS THE WORK WE HAVE DONE IN RE-
VIEWING THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE.
MY TESTIMONY IS PRIMARILY BASED ON OUR REPORT, "COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION SERVICE'S MISSION AND FEDERAL ROLE NEED CONGRESSIONAL
CLARIFICATION" DATED AUGUST 21, 1981 (CED-81-119). THE REPORT
DEALS WITH THE EXTENSION SERVICE'S MISSION, THE DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE'S ROLE IN ADMINISTERING THE EXTENSION PROGRAM, AND
THE EXTENSION SERVICE'S METHODS OF EVALUATING AND ACCOUNTING FOR
ITS ACTIVITIES.

THE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE'S MISSION

OUR REPORT POINTED OUT THAT THE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE
--WHICH IS MADE UP OF THE FEDERAL EXTENSION SERVICE IN THE DEPART-
MENT OF AGRICULTURE, THE STATE EXTENSION SERVICES LOCATED WITHIN
THE LAND-GRANT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, AND LOCAL OFFICES IN
VIRTUALLY EVERY COUNTY--ORIGINALLY FOCUSED ON AGRICULTURE AND HOME
ECONOMICS SUBJECTS IN PRIMARILY RURAL AREAS, BUT THAT THE RANGE

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OF PROGRAMS OFFERED AND AUDIENCES SERVED BY THE SERVICE HAS BROADENED SUBSTANTIALLY, ESPECIALLY DURING THE PAST TWO DECADES. THE EXTENSION SERVICE, WHICH HAS CONSIDERABLE LOCAL PROGRAMING FLEXIBILITY, IS NOW ACTIVE IN RURAL, URBAN, AND SUBURBAN COMMUNITIES AND CONDUCTS PROGRAMS IN SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND CULTURAL, RECREATIONAL, AND LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES AS WELL AS ITS MORE TRADITIONAL SUBJECTS.

THE EXTENSION SERVICE WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1914 PRIMARILY TO PROVIDE FARMERS WITH INFORMATION FROM AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO ADOPT IMPROVED FARMING METHODS. BY ENCOURAGING THE ADOPTION OF NEW TECHNOLOGY AND KNOWLEDGE GENERATED BY RESEARCH, THE EXTENSION SERVICE HAS BEEN CREDITED WITH AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN CONTRIBUTING TO THE GROWTH IN PRODUCTIVITY AND EFFICIENCY OF U.S. AGRICULTURE.

THE EXTENSION SERVICE HAS A BROAD LEGISLATIVE MANDATE. ITS ENABLING LEGISLATION, THE SMITH-LEVER ACT, WHICH REFERS TO AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS AND RELATED SUBJECTS, IS GENERAL ENOUGH TO ALLOW FOR DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS OF WHAT THE EXTENSION SERVICE OUGHT TO BE DOING AND FOR WHOM. FURTHER, OTHER LEGISLATION, ESPECIALLY DURING THE 1960'S AND 1970'S, HAS ALSO EXPANDED PROGRAM AREAS. FOR EXAMPLE, IN 1968 THE CONGRESS CREATED AN EXTENSION SERVICE-MANAGED NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM--THE EXPANDED FOOD AND NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM--FOR LOW-INCOME FAMILIES. THIS PROGRAM BROUGHT THE EXTENSION SERVICE INTO A NUMBER OF URBAN AREAS FOR THE FIRST TIME. OTHER PROGRAMS EMPHASIZED URBAN 4-H, URBAN GARDENING, COMMUNITY RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, FARM SAFETY, NATURAL RESOURCES, PESTICIDE EDUCATION, AND AGRICULTURAL ENERGY CONSERVATION.

THE EXTENSION SERVICE HAS ATTEMPTED TO SATISFY A WIDE RANGE OF NEW DEMANDS IN RECENT YEARS WITHOUT LOSING TOUCH WITH AGRICULTURE AND RURAL COMMUNITIES. AGRICULTURE REMAINS A MAJOR PART OF THE EXTENSION SERVICE'S PROGRAMING.

A LOOK AT SOME OF THE PROGRAMS THE EXTENSION SERVICE HAS OFFERED WILL HELP IN UNDERSTANDING THE CROSSROADS OF PROGRAMING AND MISSION DEFINITION AT WHICH THE EXTENSION SERVICE NOW FINDS ITSELF. EXAMPLES OF TRADITIONAL AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS PROGRAMS OFFERED INCLUDE PESTICIDE APPLICATION TRAINING, TRACTOR SAFETY TRAINING, PEST MANAGEMENT TRAINING, FINANCIAL PLANNING FOR FARMERS, SPECIAL SMALL-FARM PROGRAMS, HOMEMAKER CLUBS, NUTRITION WORKSHOPS, AND 4-H LIVESTOCK AND COOKING PROJECTS.

EXPANDED EXTENSION ACTIVITIES INCLUDE PROGRAMS IN ARTS AND CRAFTS, CREATIVE AND PERFORMING ARTS, MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH, HOME MANAGEMENT INFORMATION, HOME LAWN AND GARDEN CARE, AND DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY AND TOURISM. FOR EXAMPLE, A PROGRAM ON PHOTOGRAPHY TEACHES PARTICIPANTS ABOUT CAMERAS AND FILMS FOR HOME PHOTOGRAPHY, ELEMENTS OF A GOOD PHOTOGRAPH, AND DECORATING WITH PHOTOS. A PROGRAM CALLED "ART OF CLOWNING" DEALS WITH MAKEUP, COSTUMES, CLOWNING HISTORY, AND PANTOMINE/SKIT DEVELOPMENT. A PROGRAM ON DEATH, "HOW TO LIVE WITH DYING," DEALS WITH GRIEF, EXPLAINING DEATH TO CHILDREN, FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS AND COSTS, THE NEED FOR FINANCIAL PLANNING, BUSINESS AND LEGAL MATTERS, AND THE CHURCH'S ROLE AT THE TIME OF DEATH.

AS MORE PROGRAMS VIE FOR THE EXTENSION SERVICE'S RESOURCES, DISAGREEMENTS HAVE OCCURRED OVER WHAT ITS MISSION SHOULD BE. SOME GROUPS FEEL IT IS IGNORING THEIR NEEDS; OTHERS SAY IT IS TRYING TO

BE ALL THINGS TO ALL PEOPLE. DIFFERING OPINIONS ABOUT THE SCOPE OF ITS MISSION ARE VOICED EVEN WITHIN THE EXTENSION SERVICE ITSELF.

BECAUSE THE DEMANDS FOR THE EXTENSION SERVICE'S PROGRAMS ARE GREAT AND ITS RESOURCES ARE LIMITED, ITS AVAILABLE RESOURCES NEED TO BE USED AS EFFICIENTLY AS POSSIBLE. ALTHOUGH WE RECOGNIZE THE DESIRE FOR LOCAL PROGRAMING FLEXIBILITY, WE BELIEVE THAT FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE TEMPERED WITH MORE FEDERAL GUIDANCE ON THE OVER-ALL PARAMETERS WITHIN WHICH FEDERALLY SUPPORTED EXTENSION PROGRAMS SHOULD OPERATE.

U.S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S ROLE

THE ROLE THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S FEDERAL EXTENSION SERVICE SHOULD PLAY IS ALSO NOT CLEAR. AT ONE EXTREME ARE THOSE WHO SAY IT SHOULD ONLY ADMINISTER FEDERAL FUNDS FOR STATE EXTENSION PROGRAMS AND HELP THE STATES DO WHAT THEY WANT TO DO. AT THE OTHER EXTREME ARE THOSE WHO SAY IT SHOULD PROVIDE SPECIFIC NATIONAL PROGRAM DIRECTION. THE AMBIGUITY OF THE FEDERAL EXTENSION SERVICE'S ROLE HAS LEFT FEDERAL PERSONNEL UNCLEAR ABOUT THEIR OWN DUTIES.

ALTHOUGH THE FEDERAL SERVICE MUST APPROVE STATE PROGRAM WORK PLANS, IT HAS LITTLE INVOLVEMENT IN THE TOTAL EXTENSION PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT PROCESS, INCLUDING DETERMINING NATIONAL PROGRAM PRIORITIES AND INTERACTING WITH THE STATES IN DEVELOPING WORK PLANS. WE AGREE WITH A RECENT EXTENSION SERVICE STUDY WHICH EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT IF THE EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP IS TO BE MAINTAINED, THE FEDERAL SERVICE MUST ASSUME A MORE ACTIVE LEADERSHIP ROLE SO THAT A BALANCED PARTNERSHIP WILL EXIST TO SATISFY NATIONAL AS WELL AS STATE AND LOCAL NEEDS.

EXTENSION PROGRAM ACCOUNTABILITY AND EVALUATION

IMPROVED PERFORMANCE AND IMPACT MEASUREMENT IS NEEDED TO DETERMINE WHETHER EXTENSION PROGRAMS ARE EFFECTIVE. ALTHOUGH THE EXTENSION COMMUNITY RECOGNIZES THE NEED TO IMPROVE PROGRAM ACCOUNTABILITY AND EVALUATION AND SOME STATES HAVE IMPLEMENTED THEIR OWN EVALUATION PROGRAMS, NO COMPREHENSIVE SERVICEWIDE EVALUATION REQUIREMENTS HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED. WE BELIEVE THE MAJOR OBSTACLE TO ACHIEVING THIS GOAL IS THE ABSENCE OF A CENTRAL OFFICE RESPONSIBLE FOR CLEARLY DEFINING EVALUATION STANDARDS. WE ALSO BELIEVE THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE IS THE NATURAL PLACE FROM WHICH TO PROVIDE LEADERSHIP AND DIRECTION IN EVALUATION.

RECOMMENDATIONS

IN OUR AUGUST 1981 REPORT, WE RECOMMENDED THAT THE APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES EXAMINE THE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE'S MISSION. WE SUGGESTED THAT AS PART OF THIS PROCESS, THE COMMITTEES COULD DIRECT THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE TO PREPARE, IN COOPERATION WITH THE STATE EXTENSION SERVICES, AN UPDATED STATEMENT OF THE EXTENSION SERVICE'S MISSION. THE COMMITTEES COULD REQUIRE THAT STATEMENT TO CONTAIN EXPLICIT MISSION OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES AND THAT IT BE SUBMITTED TO THEM FOR THEIR INFORMATION AND REVIEW. THE COMMITTEES COULD ALSO REQUIRE THE EXTENSION SERVICE TO PROVIDE PERIODIC PROGRESS REPORTS ON MEETING ITS GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.

WE SUGGESTED ALSO THAT THE COMMITTEES COULD HOLD OVERSIGHT HEARINGS ON THE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE, AS YOU ARE DOING HERE TODAY, TO REVIEW CURRENT EXTENSION PROGRAMING AND TO CONSIDER AND FOCUS ON THE MISSION THAT THE COMMITTEES WANT THE EXTENSION SERVICE TO CARRY OUT. WE SAID THAT THE HEARINGS COULD PROVIDE THE

BASIS TO DEVELOP LEGISLATION, IF NECESSARY, TO MORE CLEARLY DEFINE THE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE'S MISSION.

WE ALSO HIGHLIGHTED SOME OF THE ISSUES THAT WE BELIEVED THE COMMITTEES SHOULD CONSIDER. IN THE PROGRAM AND CLIENTELE AREA, THESE ISSUES INCLUDE:

--SHOULD THE EXTENSION SERVICE CONCENTRATE ON TRADITIONAL AGRICULTURAL, HOME ECONOMICS, AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS IN PRIMARILY RURAL AREAS?

--SHOULD THE EXTENSION SERVICE CONCENTRATE ON TRADITIONAL AGRICULTURAL AND HOME ECONOMICS PROGRAMS BUT STRIVE TO SERVE URBAN AND SUBURBAN, AS WELL AS RURAL, CLIENTELE?

--SHOULD THE EXTENSION SERVICE STAY WITH WHAT IT NOW HAS IN TERMS OF PROGRAMING AND TARGET AUDIENCES?

--SHOULD THE EXTENSION SERVICE EXPAND BOTH ITS PROGRAMING AND TARGET AUDIENCES? IF SO, TO WHAT EXTENT?

IN THE FUNDING AND ORGANIZATIONAL AREA, THE ISSUES INCLUDE:

--SHOULD THE BASIC FUNDING FORMULA, WHICH ALLOCATES THE MAJORITY OF FUNDS ACCORDING TO THE STATES' FARM AND RURAL POPULATIONS, AND/OR THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE BE MODIFIED IF THE EXTENSION SERVICE IS TO CONTINUE WITH AND/OR EXPAND ITS BROAD PROGRAM EMPHASIS?

--SHOULD A LARGER PROPORTION OF THE FEDERAL FUNDS BE EARMARKED FOR SPECIFIC PROGRAMS?

--WHAT ARE AVAILABLE WAYS TO ASSURE THAT EXTENSION PROGRAMS DO NOT DUPLICATE OTHER FEDERAL, STATE, OR LOCAL AGENCY PROGRAMS?

--SHOULD FEDERAL FUNDS BE SPENT ON EXTENSION PROGRAMS THAT INVOLVE MAINLY CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES?

--SHOULD USER FEES BE IMPLEMENTED TO PARTIALLY OR FULLY COVER THE COSTS OF CERTAIN EXTENSION PROGRAMS?

WE ALSO RECOMMENDED THAT THE APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES, AS PART OF THEIR EXAMINATION, CONSIDER THE ROLE THAT THEY WANT THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S FEDERAL EXTENSION SERVICE TO PLAY IN PROVIDING EXTENSION PROGRAM LEADERSHIP AND GUIDANCE. WE RECOMMENDED THAT IN THE INTERIM, THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE DIRECT THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE FEDERAL EXTENSION SERVICE TO BECOME MORE INVOLVED WITH THE STATES IN THE TOTAL EXTENSION PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT PROCESS. THIS INCLUDES DETERMINING, IN COOPERATION WITH THE LAND GRANT COLLEGES' EXTENSION COMMITTEE ON ORGANIZATION AND POLICY, NATIONAL EXTENSION PROGRAM PRIORITIES AND GOALS; PROVIDING LEADERSHIP IN GETTING STATES TO IMPLEMENT EXTENSION PROGRAMS WHICH ADDRESS NATIONAL EXTENSION PROGRAM PRIORITIES; AND INTERACTING WITH THE STATES IN DEVELOPING, AS WELL AS REVIEWING, WORK PLANS.

FURTHER, WE RECOMMENDED THAT THE SECRETARY ASSUME LEADERSHIP, IN COOPERATION WITH THE EXTENSION COMMITTEE ON ORGANIZATION AND POLICY, IN DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A UNIFORM ACCOUNTABILITY AND EVALUATION SYSTEM FOR THE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE.

AGENCY COMMENTS AND ACTIONS

IN RESPONSE TO OUR REPORT, THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AGREED THAT CLARIFICATION OF THE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE'S MISSION WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL AND APPROPRIATE. TO THIS END THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE UNIVERSITIES AND LAND-GRANT COLLEGES HAVE RECENTLY ESTABLISHED A JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE FUTURE OF COOPERATIVE EXTENSION. THE JOINT COMMITTEE, WHICH INCLUDES KEY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND LAND-GRANT COLLEGE OFFICIALS, IS CHARGED WITH DEVELOPING RECOMMENDATIONS TO

THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE AND THE LAND-GRANT COMMUNITY ON THE APPROPRIATE MISSION, SCOPE, PRIORITIES, AND FUTURE DIRECTION FOR THE EXTENSION SERVICE. THE DEPARTMENT SUGGESTED THAT THE JOINT COMMITTEE'S REPORT ON EXTENSION'S MISSION AND PRIORITIES, WHICH IS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED DURING 1982, WOULD PROVIDE AN EXCELLENT STARTING POINT FOR CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT HEARINGS.

THE DEPARTMENT AGREED THAT THE FEDERAL EXTENSION SERVICE HAS A STRONG ROLE TO PLAY IN PROVIDING NATIONAL PROGRAM LEADERSHIP AND GUIDANCE AND SAID THAT, FOLLOWING COMPLETION OF THE MISSION STATEMENT THAT THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE FUTURE OF COOPERATIVE EXTENSION IS PREPARING, THE FEDERAL ADMINISTRATOR OF EXTENSION WOULD DEVELOP A COMPLEMENTARY REPORT CLARIFYING HOW FEDERAL STAFF DOES AND SHOULD WORK WITH STATES TO DEVELOP EXTENSION PROGRAMS.

THE DEPARTMENT AGREED WITH OUR RECOMMENDATION THAT THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE ASSUME LEADERSHIP, IN COOPERATION WITH THE EXTENSION COMMITTEE ON ORGANIZATION AND POLICY, FOR DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A UNIFORM ACCOUNTABILITY AND EVALUATION SYSTEM FOR THE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE. TO HELP PROVIDE THIS CAPABILITY, AN EVALUATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY PROGRAM UNIT HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED WITHIN THE FEDERAL EXTENSION SERVICE THROUGH AN INTERNAL REORGANIZATION.

THE FOUR STATE EXTENSION SERVICES THAT COMMENTED ON A DRAFT OF OUR REPORT GENERALLY AGREED WITH THE RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE NEED TO CLARIFY THE EXTENSION SERVICE'S MISSION AND THE NEED FOR IMPROVED PROGRAM EVALUATION. ON THE NEED FOR FEDERAL ROLE CLARIFICATION, THEY DID NOT DISAGREE: HOWEVER, THEY POINTED OUT THE STRENGTHS OF THE THREE-WAY APPROACH TO EXTENSION PROGRAM DETERMINATION AND SAID THAT THE FEDERAL ROLE SHOULD BE ONE OF GUIDANCE, NOT DIRECTION.

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MR. CHAIRMAN, THIS CONCLUDES MY PREPARED STATEMENT. MY COLLEAGUES AND I WOULD BE HAPPY TO RESPOND TO ANY QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE.