A Manual of
Group Discussion

Prepared to Aid Rural Groups in Organizing and Conducting Discussion Meetings

University of Illinois
College of Agriculture • Agricultural Experiment Station and Extension Service in Agriculture and Home Economics
Circular 446
A Manual of
Group Discussion

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Forewords
by
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For a long time this country of ours has lacked one of the instruments which freemen have always and everywhere held fundamental. For a long time there has been no sufficient opportunity for counsel among the people; no place and method of talk, of exchange of opinion, of parley.

I conceive it to be one of the needs of the hour to restore the processes of common counsel. . . . . We must learn, we freemen, to meet, as our fathers did, somehow, somewhere, for consultation. There must be discussion . . . . in which all freely participate. . . . .

The whole purpose of democracy is that we may hold counsel with one another, so as not to depend upon the understanding of one man, but to depend upon the counsel of all. For only as men are brought into counsel, and state their own needs and interests, can the general interests of a great people be compounded into a policy suitable to all. . . . .

—Woodrow Wilson
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FOREWORD

THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTEREST by rural people in effective, purposeful, organized discussion comes at a very timely juncture in their affairs and those of the country at large. The successful working of a democracy depends not only on the diffusion of accurate information among all the people, but on the ability of the people to think their way thru to sound policies for community, state, and national affairs.

Farmers, along with other groups, have in the past given their energies chiefly to the expansion of the country, to the development—even the exploitation—of its resources. The problems of physical growth have largely occupied the mind of the nation, and the matter of adjustment to the rapid economic and social changes that have ensued have been left largely to fortunate, or unfortunate, circumstance. We have now reached the stage when we must conserve and integrate, and in these processes every group must be able to formulate thoughtful judgments and express them clearly and forcefully.

Farm people can no longer afford to retain their traditional attitude of silence and permit others to speak and act for them. Their voice is needed in the common counsel of the nation; and they have learned, too, how vitally they themselves are affected by national and international policies, by social and economic developments, that on the surface seem far removed from their affairs.

Interest in rural discussion groups has been greatly accelerated by the action of the Secretary of Agriculture, Honorable Henry A. Wallace, who, early in 1935, in a letter to the Directors of Extension in several states, emphasized the need
for such a self-directed instrument of education and the benefits to be obtained from it.

Leaders and members of rural organizations—farm bureaus, home bureaus, community units, young adults, 4-H clubs—have shown eagerness to become acquainted with the technics of group discussion. In the organizing of discussion groups, they are saying, How shall we do it? What shall be our objectives? Where can we get materials for discussion? Where can we obtain guidance in the technics of speaking? This manual has been prepared with these questions in mind by a member of the University of Illinois staff who has had long teaching experience in this field and who has acquainted himself with rural groups in Illinois thru participation in the work of the Extension Service.

The extent to which this booklet will serve the needs of those for whom it is designed will be better known when the procedures and technics it outlines have been tested, as it is suggested that other ideas be tested, in the arena of group discussion. Improvements will doubtless be worked out as both groups and their advisers gain experience in this field of rural activity.

Director, Extension Service in Agriculture and Home Economics, University of Illinois
FOREWORD

(II)

PEOPLE HAVE ALWAYS TALKED, but in some periods of the world's history they have talked more than in others. Some times they talk less than at others because they are so busy at exacting tasks they don't have time to talk. At those times usually there is also less to talk about.

At this stage of national development there is more time to talk since there is less work to do. There is more need to talk and more to talk about, because of the fundamental changes going on about us, in government, in economic relations and in social habits. No set of people are more profoundly affected than the farmers. There is more purpose in their talk now than ever before in the nation's history.

It is the need to make their talk count that has brought about the great interest in discussion methods. Talk is becoming systematized and focused on a purpose. This manual is part of a widespread movement to help rural people turn to their best interests the fun and the fervor as well as the facts and the differences of opinion that come from spontaneous but orderly discussion.

The discussion method is new. Those who participate in it are helping to devise a tool that some day may be a fairly perfect instrument in group accomplishment.

M.L. Wilson
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This Manual was adapted to the use of rural groups in Illinois on the basis of studies carried on with the assistance of D. E. LINDESTROM, Associate in Rural Sociology, College of Agriculture, University of Illinois.
PART I. WHAT GROUP DISCUSSION IS

"The liberty of discussion is the great safeguard of all other liberties."—Macaulay

IDEAL GROUP DISCUSSION is the normal, voluntary, effervescent conversation of the small friendly gathering carried over to larger groups. It is the informal participation of the members of an organization in the discussion of some subject on which further information or some mutually acceptable action is desired.

Such spontaneous democratic discussion is largely a matter of habit and training. We carry it on in our homes. We enter into it on the street corner if we meet two or three acquaintances, and we may continue it freely if two or three, or even four or five, more acquaintances join the group. But as soon as twenty or more persons become involved certain habitual restraints begin to operate. People are not used to carrying on discussions in the presence of more than a few persons. And thus, altho discussion in its ideal state is informal and spontaneous, and altho it can be carried on with a great deal of spontaneity even in rather large groups, as a matter of practice, with such groups, careful planning, careful preliminary preparation and training on the part of leaders and participants are almost always necessary in getting satisfactory discussions started and keeping them going. With-

1The dependence of good discussion upon a mastery of the methods of discussion is stressed by Bogardus, E. F., in "Contemporary Sociology," Univ. So. Calif. Press, 1931, pages 272-276: "At first sight it might appear that the main condition of its success is that it should be as little 'organized' as possible, that the group should meet by accident, and
out such planning and preparation members usually lack the information necessary to discuss the subject intelligently, and leaders find themselves at a loss to guide the course of the discussion, draw out comments, and keep the meeting running smoothly. This manual tells how such planning and preparation may be done.

**Objects and benefits of group discussion.** The advocates of group discussion set as its chief object the encouragement of free, democratic participation of all persons in the examination of public questions. As one writer has said, "Discussion should be one of the most important things in the world, for it is almost our only arena of thinking. It is here that all the jumble of ideas and impressions that we get from reading are dramatically placed in conflict. Here only is there a genuine challenge to put them into some sort of order." The benefits resulting from widespread discussion are both public or general and personal or individual.

The local organization and the community benefit (1) thru the greater unity that results when "hidden" questions are brought into the light and amicably decided; (2) thru the development of greater harmony in cooperative undertakings; (3) thru the addition of this intellectual and educational element to the social and recreational programs; (4) thru the more widespread diffusion of information on vital subjects.

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that each member should freely obey his casual impulses both in speaking and in remaining silent. But a closer examination shows that the full efficiency of argument, carried on even by the most informal body of friends, requires not only that each should be master of the most delicate shades of the same language, and that each should be accustomed to make use of similar rules of thought, but that they should have a large body of knowledge in common, that each should be familiar with the peculiar strength and weakness of each of the others, and, above all, that each should be influenced by the same desire to follow truth whithersoever the argument may lead."

"Bourne, Randolph, in an article on discussion in the New Republic, May 27, 1916.

"Some of these benefits are listed by Wiledon, A. F., and Ewbank, H. L., in "How to Conduct Group Discussion," Circ. 276, Univ. Wisc. Ext. Serv., 1935."
WHAT GROUP DISCUSSION IS

and (5) thru united community action on worthwhile projects carried on with the force that results when decisions affecting a group are reached cooperatively.

Individuals who participate in well-conducted discussions gain a widened range of knowledge and an increased ability for straight thinking and effective speaking. They also develop latent abilities for leadership, and thru wider acquaintance make new and lasting friendships.

The state and nation benefit by the development of an electorate that is better informed and more ready to participate freely in state and national affairs. Then too the growth and spread of state and national discussion tournaments should develop a better understanding and harmony between the larger political and geographical units—the different states and the different parts of the country.

Discussion as a problem-solving device. In general, three steps are involved in the solution of problems: (1) the gaining of a clear understanding of what the problem is, its ramifications and limitations; (2) an exploring for possible solutions; and (3) a critical examination of the possible solutions and the selection of the best.¹ These are the steps an individual follows in solving his own problems, and they are likewise the steps followed in the solution of problems by a group.

Group or community problems. At the outset a group may meet because its members feel that they are confronted by some problem of vital interest to them as a group or as

¹A condensation of the five steps outlined by John Dewey in his book “How We Think,” pp. 68-78.
individuals. And they usually follow the three steps in problem solving in the following general manner. **Step 1:** Through the free interplay of ideas that emerge in a well-conducted discussion, the problem is defined and limited to those aspects which are significant. Thru the presentation of information carefully gathered by the members, the history of the problem and its present setting are brought out. A decision is reached in the light of this information, as to whether the solution of this problem rightfully falls within the jurisdiction of the group—that is, whether the problem is of such nature that it can be decided by the group. **Step 2:** Upon the spread of information and the maturing of opinion, possible methods of solution are proposed by individual members based on their various viewpoints and understandings of the problem. **Step 3:** These solutions are carefully weighed in the light of examples, expert opinion, statistics, and logic and, as a result, one of the proposed solutions comes to stand out in the mind of the majority of the members as being the best. Or, and frequently this is the case, all of the solutions are “pooled” and a compromise is reached which is a composite of the best points of several of the suggested solutions. At this point the group should consider the possible effects of the solution finally proposed. If it appears that it will solve the problem without the introduction of new and greater problems, it will be accepted.

From the standpoint of problem solving, group discussion is thus a device by which a problem of vital interest to a group may be examined impartially from every angle and a solution for it obtained.
Individual problems. Thorough discussion of a common problem often aids the members of the group to arrive at solutions for themselves individually. For each individual the solution may be somewhat different, designed to meet his own peculiar situation. At a discussion meeting held recently in an Illinois county the subject was methods of butchering hogs on farms. Various members explained their methods. Inasmuch as the problem was not a group problem, no attempt was made to reach any group decision as to the one best method of butchering, but each member went away with new ideas that he might put into practice for himself. This was using group discussion as a method to bring out the contributions of the many so that the individual might be helped in solving his own personal problems.

Discussion as a solution-originating device. On many occasions a group will discuss a problem and suggest possible solutions but not be in a position to see that such solutions are adopted. Such problems, as a rule, pertain to economic or social questions of state or national policy. Obviously the local group can do no more than find out about the problem, suggest solutions, discuss their feasibility, and decide which are preferable, according to its judgment. The steps followed in arriving at deliberate opinion on these broad problems are the same, however, as those followed when the group comes to a decision for action.

Having used discussion as a solution-originating device, the group may pass on its suggestions to county, state, or national officials. When enough groups have, in similar manner, passed on their suggested solutions to some higher
unit, then the officials of that unit are in a position to formulate, on the basis of the many ideas at their disposal, a solution which will best meet the demands of the total area.

If local groups know that their solutions have been taken into consideration in the drawing up of plans or laws which are to affect them, they will be more likely to agree with the plans or laws once they are put into effect.

**Pure discussion and primed discussion: definition.**

Most rural groups know something about pure discussion. This is the voluntary—almost involuntary—free or spontaneous interchange of ideas, expressed orally, that takes place ordinarily in small groups. It is that type referred to above as "ideal group discussion."

Primed discussion is not spontaneous, but is carefully planned or "staged" before the group. It is to pure discussion what priming a pump is to the flow of water that follows. It is used in the initial "forcing" period which, in large groups, usually precedes the effortless flow and ebb of pure discussion.

Few rural groups know how to get discussion started and effective priming methods and how to develop primed discussion into freely flowing spontaneous discussion. It is the lack of such knowledge that lies at the bottom of most of the difficulties which organizations experience in the running of business and discussion meetings. For description of methods that can be used to prime discussion, see Part V, pages 56 to 81.

**Discussion as an end vs. decision as the end.** The end product of a discussion may be, but need not be, some definite action by the group. Aside from bringing a question
to a decision, discussion has such important benefits that it may be considered an end in itself.

**Discussion for discussion's sake.** Many groups have the erroneous impression that time has been wasted in any discussion not resulting in some decisive action by the group. To assume such an attitude is to overlook a large part of the benefits of group discussion. "A discussion will have been adequate," says Randolph Bourne,¹ "if it has . . . . set the problem in its significant terms, or even defined the purpose that makes such a setting significant."

Besides clarifying the problem, discussion has certain inevitable effects upon those who participate in it. If persons with little or no idea—or half ideas—about a subject really participate in a general discussion, there is much greater likelihood that they will go away with a fund of information and a well-rounded understanding of the topic. "If the group discussion is a real one," says H. A. Overstreet,² "there will inevitably be points of view developed which no single individual would have compassed, points of view which will be pertinent, and which will, therefore, of necessity modify what would otherwise have been the individual's unaided conclusion."

Thus discussion has certain definite values even when it is not pointed toward a decision.

**Discussion for the sake of a decision.** If the group feels that the proposition under discussion is one on which some action should be taken, then a decision becomes the end and

¹Work cited on page 10.
²"Reason and the 'Fight Image,'" *New Republic*, Dec. 20, 1922.
objective of the discussion, tho the value of discussion for its own sake still remains. A question cannot be discussed indefinitely, however, without some stand being taken, some conclusions being reached by those who participate. The fact is that discussion is usually vitalized by the necessity of it leading to a decision. The desire of most people that the discussions lead to some concrete conclusions makes voting upon the questions discussed a kind of goal or reward. Furthermore the idea gets abroad that here is a group that gives full discussion to a problem, even tho it takes a number of meetings, and then does something about the problem. People like to find and act upon solutions to their problems.¹

Adequate discussion of a question usually leads to a reasonable decision and a correct course of action. A vote taken after such discussion has value because it indicates the real attitude of the group. When the discussion has as its aim the crystallization of community sentiment and the initiation of some action that will bring advantage to the community, the meeting will not of course be used for purposes of propaganda—that is, as a means of converting people to some preconceived ideas of a few sponsors. Such procedure would be foreign to the whole atmosphere of group discussion, which presupposes an impartial, unbiased examination of the facts of the problem before the formulation of conclusions or the acceptance of any solution. But after adequate discussion and the taking of a vote, the meeting may well end with the purpose of furthering the policies that have been agreed upon.

¹Sometimes the group sponsoring the discussion meetings wishes to remain clear of all responsibility of action. Under such conditions the meeting may be adjourned, an
Some people interested in discussion methods and procedures contend that votes should not be taken at group-discussion meetings. Because everyone voting must take one side or the other of a question, they say, the voting divides the group into two opposing camps, a division which is contrary to the best interests of the group, as it tends to produce incoordination and to destroy harmony. Furthermore, they say, the voting method tends to reduce the number of sides which may be taken on a question to two—for or against—whereas the group should be encouraged to view every problem from as many angles as possible.

There are of course many discussion subjects upon which to vote need or should be taken—subjects that aim toward broadening the views of the group or increasing their fund of information on the subject. But other questions facing the community and demanding action might well be voted on. After any effective group discussion, almost every intelligent person will have reached some rather definite conclusions, and there can be no harm in permitting him to express them by a vote. As a matter of fact, much benefit may result, for the composite vote represents the best composite judgment or attitude of the group. Also, immediately after a free and impartial discussion there is usually much good will. A majority vote in such an atmosphere will usually be accepted.

Certainly no vote should be taken, however, unless the question has first been exhausted by a full and complete dis-
discussion. Hastily arrived at conclusions must be avoided; vote should be the logical outcome of a painstaking process of selection and elimination.

Democratic group discussion is developed slowly. According to the testimony of farmers themselves, the present day rural organization of whatever size or type is subject to two weaknesses. First, group policies are determined by the few. In some groups a minority of members league themselves together to force thru by steam-roller methods their "plan." There is no desire on the part of the individuals that there be a meeting of minds or that all members contribute anything but a "yes" vote. One-man organizations are common. In most groups the majority take no part in discussions apparently of vital interest to them. The second weakness is the placing of too much dependence on speeches and suggestions made by "experts" and others outside the group.

Any sudden development of democratic participation by all the members of an organization in the business of the organization should not be expected. If an honest desire for change is present, such a change may be brought about by a slow evolution of the present group methods, and, as a result, without revolutionary changes in the form of the organization. Everyone should be given a part in the work of the group and in determining group policies; reliance should be placed on the individuals within the organization rather than on outsiders; and only a relatively small amount of unquestioned or unopposed material should be presented by expe-

Small groups furnish best starting point. Small organi-
tions may be defined for the present purposes as those in which the average attendance does not exceed twenty or thirty. On this basis the following organizations would in many communities be described as “small”: farm and home bureau units, farmers’ clubs, community young adult groups, women’s clubs, 4-H clubs, and Future Farmers of America clubs.

In communities where such groups exist in addition to large groups which include most or all of the members of the small groups, an attempt should be made to introduce the technics of discussion to the small groups first. After some experience has been gained by the members of these organizations it will be a relatively easy task for them to adapt democratic discussion methods to their larger group meetings. Wherever possible, progress in the development of democratic group discussion should be made from smaller to larger groups.

Large organizations require different methods. Organizations which have average attendance of fifty or more may be designated as large organizations. In this category may be included community units, community clubs or centers, and subordinate Granges.

Where the members of a large organization are not also members of small groups, the growth of the use of discussion must be gradual. The larger groups will probably begin with such methods as the open forum, panel, and cross-examination, and will as quickly as possible progress from these methods of primed discussion to pure discussion.

Large groups may even find it to their advantage to
organize small groups in their communities and start them
new groups, at birth, in the path of democratic discussi

A valuable addition to other group activities. Rural gr
conducting discussion meetings and discussion competitio
often combine this type of activity with other group acti
ies. Usually a rural group unites for social and recreatio
as well as intellectual or economic reasons. It is a mistak
organize a group with the idea that it will engage in but
single activity. If a group does nothing but play game
dance, eat ice cream and cake, engage in athletic contest,
conduct routine business affairs, its members will soon fe
desire for a richer program of activities. A well-rounded ru
program must meet the intellectual, physical, and soc
needs of the community. It should appeal to both sex

Many programs, now in existence, will become well-
rounded and more adequate to meet community deman
by the addition of or a more effective use of group-discussi
technics.¹

¹For an analysis of present group organizations and their use of discussion meth
see "Local Group Organization Among Illinois Farm People," by D. E. Lindstrom,
PART II. ORGANIZING THE DISCUSSION MEETING

“If it is true that one cannot discuss effectively until one knows, it is just as true that one cannot know effectively until one discusses in one form or another.” — Frank Walser

SELECTING THE DISCUSSION TOPIC

MOST RURAL GROUPS use one of six or seven methods of obtaining a subject for discussion. They may ask some advisory leader for a topic—for example, the county farm adviser, home adviser, or 4-H club leader. They may ask the University Extension Service for help, or they may write to the U. S. Department of Agriculture for suggestions. Sometimes the chairman is delegated to select the proposition; sometimes a committee may draft the question. An outside speaker may be permitted to select his own topic if the speech is to be followed by an open forum.

A few groups use still another method of selecting their discussion topic. They supply all members with paper and pencil and ask them to write down the five or ten problems of vital interest to them as individuals, marking the most vital problem number one, the next most vital number two, and so on. After all the papers are collected, the topic thought to be most vital to the group is selected for the first meeting or series of meetings. Quite a bit of agreement will be found among members as to what they consider their vital problems.
Advantages and disadvantages of selection by outside. It is sometimes an advantage to have someone outside the group select the problem for discussion. The wider range of vision and perspective of the adviser often enables him to suggest a question that really should be discussed by the group. With the help of an advisory leader, planned series of related topics may readily be set up to be discussed over a period of six or twelve months. Furthermore an advisory leader will usually be careful to propose only those questions upon which plenty of literature is available.

On the other hand, there may be disadvantages in external assistance in the selection of topics. The subject proposed is frequently not vital to the group; or, even tho it is likely to be so technical as to necessitate the reading of large amounts of factual, statistical, and explanatory material. If members do not do this reading they cannot take part in the discussion.

Selection by group members assures interest. The selection of a topic by the members of the group assures the choice of a problem having real interest to them. It provides a local starting place for the search for background material, a search that may logically spread to the farm or 1In his book, “The Process of Group Thinking,” pages 179-183, Elliott, H. S., points out certain “conditions for creative discussion,” which may be summarized as follows:

1. A vital problem for discussion. The problem must be of eminent interest to every participating individual. The more people interested, and the more each person is interested, the more readily will discussion take place.

2. A sincere desire to find a solution to the problem. This sincerity must extend enough to guarantee a willingness, on the part of all, to work cooperatively toward solution.

3. An essentially equal representation of all the points of view on the subject. Mutually satisfying results can come from a meeting in which all interested parties are not fairly represented.

4. A basic, binding group interest. Only if a group has some tangible common concern—even if it be no more than the realization that to go on without coming to some agreement will hurt all concerned—will it give the time and effort necessary to the reaching of a mutually contributed to and a mutually agreeable solution.
ORGANIZING THE DISCUSSION MEETING

If a group chooses its own subject it will usually begin at the smaller end of a larger question. Interest may in this way be generated in the larger topic. The agricultural exports of Russia and Argentina may have little immediate interest to the farmer. The problem of how to get more money for a bushel of grain may be an immediate vital problem. The study of the localized question may, however, ultimately develop to include the study of world market conditions and their effect on prices in the home county.

WHAT IS A GOOD TOPIC

Since the selection of a good discussion topic (proposition, question, or subject) will determine in great measure the success of a meeting, it should be well chosen. A question or topic that meets the following standards will usually prove to be a good one.

1. Of interest to the people of the group or community. If some actual present problem is confronting the members of your group or community and if it is a vital question, select it.

2. Capable of arousing sustained discussion over a period of weeks or months. Meetings will probably be held quite regularly. If possible, a question should be chosen that may be used for more than one meeting. Many groups during 1934-35 spent from six to ten months on a discussion of phases of the Agricultural Adjustment Act. Such treatment of a subject tends to give members valuable training in
methods of thoro investigation, reading, and weighing of facts. It provides for the formation of habits of delayed judgment. When, on the other hand, a different proposition is announced for each meeting there may be a tendency on the part of some members of the group to do only a superficial amount of thinking and preparation on the topic. Furthermore, at the end of each meeting it is felt that some conclusions must be reached if the subject is not to be reintroduced at following meetings. Haste in arriving at conclusions on vital questions should be discouraged.

When for some reason only a single meeting is held on a given subject, the subject should be limited so as to permit thoro discussion. Care should be taken to avoid any action based on such a discussion (see pages 15-18).

3. One concerning which much has been said and written. A question upon which only a few local opinions are available will be disappointing. Numerous references on the subject should be available to interested members of the group. Members should be able to obtain information on the subject from newspapers, radios, magazines, and governmental agencies.

4. Permits a genuine division of thinking. More than one viewpoint should be apparent. More than one conclusion should appear to be possible. Where there is no difference of opinion there can be no discussion. Care should be exercised also not to try to discuss matters of fact. Facts are not controversial; opinions may be (see pages 107-108).

5. Can be divided into small logical divisions. A group deciding to hold a series of meetings on agricultural legisla
tion might limit one or even two meetings to a history of legislation that has been enacted for the purpose of aiding agriculture in the past, a second to a consideration of present legislation and present needs, and a third to a consideration of other plans or changes in present legislation. Such a progressive treatment of topics ultimately deals adequately with the whole field of the question selected.

In Appendix A, pages 152-153, will be found information on how to secure topical material from various national, state, and local agencies.

THE EXPLOSIVE TOPIC AND ITS SPECIAL PROBLEMS

In most communities there are certain questions that might be called explosive in nature. If two or three persons begin to discuss one of these questions, the sparks are sure to fly. The question may have to do with mortgages, parking facilities, the school board, the new teacher, taxes, uncut weeds, price cutting on garden produce, tenant farming, irrigation, or any other matter on which strong feelings are held. It is a mistake to keep these questions under cover. To do so is like sitting on the lid of a volcano. Group discussion should be permitted on the problems of the community. Both or all of the points of view on the questions should be represented at the meeting. The most experienced chairman should be placed in charge, and he will need to use some of the technics outlined on pages 45-47. The meeting will need no priming. A recreation program or social period before the discussion meeting will give opposing individuals a chance to get together and discover how human the others really are.
It will establish some common grounds of friendship and interest between the factions, and in the discussion that follows, reference may be made to these common bonds.

**SETTING A TIME AND PLACE FOR THE DISCUSSION MEETING**

In setting a time for the meeting, if the discussion is not to be held in conjunction with a regular meeting of some other organization, three matters need to be kept in mind:

1. If formal speeches are to be used, how long will it take the guides or other speakers to prepare their speeches?
2. What other activities are occupying the attention of the community?
3. Can a place be secured for the meeting at the time being considered?

Select, if possible, a date far enough, but not too far, in advance so that the publicity committee will be able to do its work effectively.

Frequently group-discussion meetings are held in conjunction with other meetings. They may be held regularly once a month or every two weeks. If a committee fixes some of the meeting dates for the whole year, conflicts may be avoided and better attendance may be assured. Some buildings, such as public halls, halls of fraternal organizations (Masons, K. P., K. C., Grange, etc.), schools, and churches are heated on certain days for regular meetings. Discussion groups may be able to meet on the same days.

The room in which the meeting is to be held should be just adequate for the number present. Too large a room...
creates an atmosphere detrimental to the best discussion. A room almost too small is to be preferred to a room too large. It is better to have it said that your meeting "overflowed," than that "there were more empty than filled seats."

PUBLICITY FOR THE MEETING

If the question for discussion, the date, and the place of meeting are all carefully selected, there should be a widespread response on the part of the community. To be successful, the meeting must be well attended and should be representative of the whole community.

Some publicity is necessary for the early meetings, to inform the citizens that the discussions are open to all, that they are impartial, and that only by united action as a result of united thinking can local needs and demands be translated into beneficial results.

SECRETARY SHOULD BE CHOSEN

The duties of the secretary are to keep a record of motions, remarks, and votes, and to be prepared to produce such a record upon request. Records are particularly needed if one topic is to be the basis of discussion in several meetings. At first the presence of the secretary may tend to give the meeting too formal an atmosphere, but after a few meetings this feeling will disappear.

TIME LIMITS NECESSARY

A well-managed discussion will have definite time limits. Each speaker, therefore, must be held to certain limits. Time
limits must apply to all who speak, except the chairman. A timekeeper should be appointed for this purpose, and he should be entirely impartial in discharging his duties.

Each organization will determine for itself the time limits for its meeting. Usually sixty to ninety minutes is sufficient for a meeting. Each speaker may be given a maximum of five, seven, or ten minutes. Probably discussion guides will need at least ten minutes.

A group may rule, also, on the number of times an individual may speak. If there is anyone else anxious to speak, no one who has spoken should be given the floor. When no one else wants to speak, a person who has spoken may be permitted to speak again. Permitting an individual to speak an unlimited number of times has a tendency, however, to discourage the more reticent members of the group. They will form the habit of sitting back and letting Mr. X do the talking. Each person should be limited to a maximum of two or three speeches in a single meeting. If the time limit of the first speech is ten minutes, limit the member’s second speech to three to five minutes, and his final remarks to one to three minutes.
PART III. THE CHAIRMAN AND HIS JOB

“It and they that are guided go not astray, but they that lose their bearings cannot find a straight course.”—Ptah-Hotep (4000 B.C.)

The CHAIRMAN has more to do with the success of a group discussion meeting than any other individual. Fortunately chairmen are made. Practice will improve any chairman; the more experience the better the chairman.

The suggestions made in this section are designed to give a running start toward the goal of “expert chairman.” In a sense, the qualifications here outlined are ideal. No one must feel discouraged, therefore, if at the moment he lacks some of these qualifications or if he falls short of adequate training in any one of them.

The prospective chairman should digest this information thoroughly and then attempt to put it into practice.

NECESSARY PERSONAL QUALIFICATIONS
OF A CHAIRMAN

Should be impartial. Strictly speaking, complete impartiality is probably impossible. Anyone who studies a question under discussion, as will the chairman, will hold some opinions on the subject. In order to develop an impartial manner, the chairman may at first ask members of the group to check on him when he gives his summaries to see that he presents material actually discussed. During the discussion
the chairman must see to it that all points of view on the topic are presented. He may even go so far as to present some point himself if no one else does so. Or he may suggest that an expert be called in to present that point. The chairman, where time limits are needed, must hold everyone to the bounds fixed. He must show no favoritism.

Should be good natured. It is not expected that the chairman shall be a humorist, but his contagious good humor will do much to prevent the rise of harmful personal enmities, budding antagonisms, and ill-humor between and among the members of the group.

Should be a rapid thinker. Often a discussion fails because the leader cannot keep up with the rapid fire of contributions made by members of the group. He may not be able to analyze and synthesize what is being said. The leader must be able to keep ahead of the group. He must be able to see what relation a contribution may have to the whole, even before the contributor has announced the relationship.

Should be deliberate. Occasionally a forceful speech will tend to sweep a group off their feet. He may make it appear that his speech ends the search for truth. The leader should not be stampeded. He must maintain the stability of the group. He must assure himself that all viewpoints are given full attention.

Should be patient. Because of his position, the leader has thought thru many of the ramifications of the discussion topic. Many points are therefore “old stuff” to him. Unconsciously he may be led to believe that others are equally informed on the topic. This is usually not true. Whe
therefore, ground over which he has already gone is being covered, the discussion appears to him to drag. He is constantly tempted to speed things up. He wants to ask more questions, make more summaries, obtain rapid-fire contributions. He forgets that a momentary pause may indicate that members are thinking—as he has already done—about some point. Instead of relaxing and waiting for a contribution, he hurls himself forward and attempts to spur on the group. In his impatience he may be tempted to give his own conclusions. Thus the meeting loses its true form and value.

**Should have some speaking ability.** Certainly everyone in the group should be able to hear, distinctly, everything the chairman says. The ability to say a thing simply and concisely is an asset. Attention should be given to the use of correct English. If the chairman can say what he says in correct English, so much the better, but of the greatest importance is his unadorned common-sense speech. Group discussion is not primarily a method of teaching correct usage, altho it will aid in raising the language standards of a community.

**Must be able to keep still.** Because the chairman is usually a leader, he is often tempted to talk too much. Many chairmen talk after every contribution and therefore take up about half the time of the meeting. On the part of the chairman, silence is golden.

**CHAIRMAN'S PREPARATION FOR THE MEETING**

The chairman should prepare for the meeting beforehand. He should know the discussion subject weeks or months in
advance of the meeting. He should acquaint himself with the sources of material on the topic. He should make a working plan for the handling of the discussion. Either from his own knowledge of the group or with the assistance of a committee, he should make tentative determinations of the probable trend of the discussion and of the probable factors that will affect the needs of the group. He will secure needed experts or materials. He may prepare, for distribution, his suggested outline of procedure. He will have in mind questions to be asked at the various stages of the discussion.

Before the time set for the discussion meeting, a good chairman will do the things outlined in the following paragraphs.

Gather material on the topic. See Appendix A, page 14.

Study the material. The major problem, with most subjects, will be to eliminate a vast amount of material and choose only that information which is clear and necessary. Many references will provide sheer duplication of subject matter. Select only the best; discard the rest.

Study according to a definite plan: (1) Discover the factual, historical, and background material. How did the question arise? Why is it important? What is the history of the problem? (2) Determine the fundamental issues of the proposition. What things are essential? What non-essential? What things, if proved, would cause all fair-minded people to accept a proposed solution? (3) Consider the possible solutions of the problems. How do they compare? Has any attempt been made, elsewhere, to accept such solutions? (4) If a proposed solution is accepted, consider what
means should be employed for making it effective, for putting it into operation.

**Outline probable course of discussion.** While the chairman should in no sense try to impose his personal beliefs on the group, he must, nevertheless, have such a clear map of the subject in his own mind that he can aid the group in reaching their own decisions. If an outline of the possible lines of advance be prepared beforehand, the chairman can easily follow the thinking of the members. Because of his superior preparation, the chairman is like an advance scout. He may not dictate the line of march of the troops, but he can indicate the merits of the respective routes. The outline of the discussion should be brief, yet clear and logical enough so that it can be understood by anyone into whose hands it may come.¹

**Supply members with material.** Suggestions on this point will be found in *Appendix A*, page 152.

**Supply members with copies of outline.** The outline given to the members need not be as detailed as the chairman's personal copy. It should be clear, and so arranged that discussion will develop logically about its main points.

¹Walser, Frank, in “The Art of Conference” (Harper & Brothers), page 84, comments as follows on the necessity of the chairman’s delegating parts of his work:

“The chairman has so much to attend to at once, that he should not be afraid to delegate parts of his work to others (remaining, of course, in control of all that is done for him). He can ask one member to note down the various points made, another to ask a number of specific questions concerning, for instance, the details of a concrete situation, and a third, to read a certain page from a reference book or to investigate on the spot and report, or in any other way to supply collected information. These helpers should be seated near the chairman.

“In the work specially reserved to him, the chairman should be constantly guided by two things: (a) the chart or outline written out beforehand and placed on his desk, (b) the precise point of the speaking, at every particular moment, showing where, just then, the interest and attention of the group is focused. He may guide himself according to his outline, yet let the group follow up its interest and initiative. His outline will help him to keep a check on this group initiative, seeing it always in relation to the whole problem, the time available, and the purpose of the discussion . . .”
Prepare tentative summaries and questions to be used at various stages of the discussion. On the basis of your outline the chairman will know beforehand the probable progress of the discussion. He will know where summaries will be needed and where stimulating questions may be used to continue the discussion.

Tentative summaries for the chairman's own use should be put on sheets separate from the outline. At most they can be only suggestive; the actual summary must deal with the specific contributions of the members.

Questions may actually be worked out in advance. They will probably be much superior to any that might be asked on the spur of the moment. Wherever possible questions should be asked in the third person. Example: "What do some people say about the ever-normal granary plan?" See the section on "Oral Questions," page 61-63, for further suggestions on this point.

Arrange for priming methods that can be used if necessary. When the leader feels that there is any possibility the meeting lacking spontaneity, he should have in readiness one or more effective priming devices to stimulate discussion. A number of these aids are treated fully on pages 56-58.

Prepare a series of helpful emergency sentences. Each type of emergency sentence has been discussed above under preparation of tentative summaries. The chairman should be prepared also for such emergencies as the following:

- Talking, whispering, or other noises made by members.

  (1) If we can all cooperate in keeping as quiet as possible, it will not be necessary for members to talk so loudly.
(2) This question is of such vital importance to all of us that we can hardly afford to disturb the discussion with unnecessary whispering or other noises.

Members talking too long.

Mr. X, as I understand it, you have [here summarize what he has said]. Now that this viewpoint has been expressed, we should permit someone else to voice an opinion.

Member attempting to talk too often.

Mr. X, in order that we may give everyone present an opportunity to speak, some of us will have to save our remarks for another meeting.

Member who talks so that he is not distinctly heard.

(1) Mr. X, will you please speak louder [or more distinctly] so that the secretary may get your excellent contribution.

(2) Unfortunately you are standing [or sitting] in a portion of the room in which the acoustics are poor. Will you please speak in a louder tone so that we may all hear you?

Undue levity on the part of some members.

To most of us the seriousness of this problem is quite apparent. Let us maintain enough seriousness in our discussion to enable us to deal adequately with this subject.

There may be times when, even after the chairman has made use of some phrase similar to those suggested above, there will still exist an emergency. After a number of good-natured and indirect warnings, the chairman is justified in speaking, either after or during the meeting, directly to disturbing individuals; but, in the interest of harmony, every attempt should be made to avoid such extreme measures. Sometimes, however, action resulting in momentary loss of harmony may result in eventual group solidarity.
Know the rules of parliamentary procedure. Rules and methods of parliamentary procedure are treated in Appendix C, pages 156-164.

See that appropriate meeting place is provided. Appoint a committee to study the physical conditions of your meeting place. Decide upon the best possible combination of conditions and always use that combination. Too often a group using a building only once a month will come in and be satisfied with whatever arrangement of chairs (provided they are movable) they find. If you can improve on the arrangement, change things around for your meeting.

Lighting. Wherever possible, arrange the chairs so that the members will not have to face a glare of light. Arrange lights so that they are advantageously placed. If leaders and members are to take notes or read from notes, provide adequate light.

Seating arrangements. For a small group the best arrangement is to seat all members about a large table or series of tables placed together. Or, seat everyone in a circle. It is helpful if everyone can see everyone else and no one need rise to speak. For larger groups use concentric semicircle if possible. See that seats are large enough, in good repair and as comfortable as possible.

Size and kind of room. Arrange, if possible, for a meeting place where the seats are movable, and where all parts of the room are visible to the group. Avoid, except in cases of necessity, using connecting rooms where the partition separates part of the group and where the leader must stand.
the doorway between the rooms. Take every advantage of the shape of the room and the lighting facilities when arranging the chairs.

Ventilation. Poor ventilation causes drowsiness or headache and interferes with live discussion. Provide, if at all possible, a free circulation of fresh air in the meeting room.

Heating. The usual mistake is to heat the large room when still empty to a temperature warm enough for a single individual. The room should be too cold for a single person. As the members of the group arrive, it will soon become warm enough for all.

Visual aids. Advantage should be taken of blackboards, charts, and maps. Arrange the chairs so that they will be in proper relation to the blackboard or charts with respect to light.

Aid members in obtaining reference material. Busy rural people will not, as a rule, have time to read numerous volumes in preparation for discussion. The chairman should, if possible, provide short abstracts or summaries of material that will help members to prepare themselves for active participation in the discussion.

CHAIRMAN'S FUNCTIONS AT THE MEETING

Should start meeting on time. Ample warning of the starting time having been given in advance, the chairman should begin on time. In old groups, used to delays, it may at first be difficult to secure cooperation in getting the meeting started promptly. If, however, the chairman persists in
starting on time, it is amazing how quickly the attitude of the group will change. Individuals will soon come on time.

**Should welcome the group.** When the leader assumes charge of the meeting, a hearty welcome does much to bring the group together in a spirit helpful to discussion.

**Should introduce the discussion topic.** In *pure discussion* (see page 14), the leader may simply state the purpose of the meeting and permit the group to formulate its own plan. Or, he may take a few minutes to indicate the scope of the topic and to point out possible avenues of approach. The function of the chairman is to make absolutely clear the line of the discussion. This will prevent loss of time from rambling remarks having no bearing on the subject.

In *primed discussion* (see page 14), the leader may announce the topic and its limitations, then introduce a speaker, permit a cross-examination to take place, guide a panel in some other manner make it possible for previously prepared persons to indicate the various viewpoints on the topic.

**Should state clearly the object of the meeting.** The object may be to give the group information about the topic. When this is the case discussion is merely the medium used to convey the information; it is a substitute for the lecture or the textbook. On the other hand the object of the meeting may be to reach some decision, to get the group to take some action. Or, these two ends may be combined; that is, information-getting may occupy the first part of the session and decision-making may occupy the final part. (See p.
the section "Discussion as an End vs. Decision as the End," pages 14-18.)

Must see that discussion gets started. Getting the discussion started is sometimes difficult. At first it may seem as tho no one wishes to take part. If spontaneous discussion does not result when the chair opens the meeting to general participation, it may be necessary to resort to priming methods (see pages 56-94).

May stand or remain seated. In a small group the informal spirit of the discussion is helped by the chairman remaining seated. If a circle is formed, or if everyone can see and be seen by the chairman, he may remain seated and yet easily control the meeting.

In a large meeting, or under conditions which make it impossible for the chairman to see and be seen, he should stand. Usually he remains standing all the time. If, however, someone appears to be going to talk for some time, the chairman may be seated. When the member reaches the limit of his speaking time, the mere rising of the chairman will usually be sufficient to terminate the remarks.

Should guide discussion. The discussion should be kept under control so that it does not wander aimlessly hither and thither according to the whims of those who participate.

Guiding the discussion is important to the success of a discussion-group meeting. Guidance by the chairman is not inconsistent with impartiality on the part of the chairman. It has been stressed that discussion meetings are not for the purpose of advancing any given school of thought. The path of the discussion should be such that, like a railroad running
thru the center of a rich agricultural and commercial district, it taps by its spur lines regions on both sides of the main line. The path must not be as aimless and confused as a cow path.

The wide-awake leader will have in mind appropriate questions to use in guiding the discussion. Typical guiding questions and occasions on which to use them are here suggested (see also oral questions on pages 61-63):

1. To bring to the fore material on some neglected phase of the topic.
   Can anyone contribute anything on this phase of the subject?

2. To attempt to have the group weigh certain contributions in the balance.
   Just what importance do you think that we should assign to this point?
   Is the source of these statistics reliable? Impartial?
   Is the gentleman just quoted an authority? Does anyone know anything about him?
   How much weight should one give to this newspaper statement?

3. To point out that a certain point has been fully covered in the discussion and that the group should pass on to some other point.
   Is there anything that can be added to what has already been said about . . . . ?

4. To indicate agreement on a point.
   Is the chairman correct in assuming that we are agreed that . . .

5. To note points of disagreement.
   Shall we give attention for a moment to these divergent contributions?
6. To suggest delay in action.

Shall we think this over for a few days before we rush ahead and take some action that we will regret?

7. To bring about immediate action.

Are we not now in possession of all the information necessary to our acting upon this question?

8. To attempt to effect a compromise.

Is it not possible that we might take the best elements of both (or all) of these plans in order to arrive at a solution of our problem?

May it not be that the road to follow lies somewhere between these divergent proposals?

**Must see that discussion progresses.** The discussion must advance. Otherwise the members feel that they are accomplishing nothing of consequence. The advance must not, however, move too rapidly. A few rapid thinkers may see the implications of the topic and wish to jump at once to conclusions that are to them plainly apparent. The chairman must ask himself whether the group as a whole is ready to take a step before he can sanction it. Some compromises may have to be made if all the points scheduled for discussion in the session are to be considered.

**Must keep discussion confined to topic.** It is easy for people to yield to the temptation to talk away from the subject. This is particularly true of persons with pet theories or panaceas. Given the slightest encouragement such people will side-track the discussion and launch into an explanation of their ideas. If the chairman knows the subject, he will be able to hold the discussion to the topic. He will recog-
nize when members are wasting time talking about trivial matters, and will insist on putting first things first. He will be able courteously to discourage idle talk.

Should check any tendency of members to make personal remarks. As organizations are now constituted, much bitterness and lack of harmony is caused by certain members flinging back and forth a barrage of personal remarks and insinuations. The very nature of democratic discussion tends to eliminate this evil, but while the transition is being made to the improved method of true discussion, the chairman must be alert to stifle remarks directed against a speaker rather than against the subject on which he is speaking.

Should control interruptions. Experience will enable the chairman to detect the purpose back of interruptions. Legitimate interruptions really mean more participation by members, and consequently should be encouraged. Other interruptions should be dealt with in a manner calculated to discourage their repetition. Interruptions may be considered legitimate when they are made for the purpose of securing or offering material germane to the discussion.

Should use tact in handling questions. Usually this means that the chairman will not personally answer questions. Questions must be directed at the leader, but he should almost every case refer them back to the group. When is called upon in his role as expert, the chairman may answer a question.

When a question is asked, the leader must first determine its relation to the discussion. Is it germane? Does it be
on the topic? If not, it should be diplomatically ruled out of order. Is it asked to embarrass another member or is it asked in good faith? Does it come logically at this time or may it be postponed until a later phase of the discussion?

If a question is not clearly audible to all members, the chairman should ask that it be repeated; or he may repeat it himself. After repeating he should ask whether or not he has repeated it correctly. Or, if a question is not clearly worded, the chairman should ask that it be reworded; or he may rephrase it. If he rephrases it, he should ask if his rewording is satisfactory to the individual who asked the question.

In a thoroughly cooperative organization the asking of a question may be the signal for someone's answering it. The leader, however, may need to ask for an answer. He may say, "What are the facts called for by this question?"

(See also section, "Learn how to deal with questions from the audience," pages 144-148.)

Should have primary knowledge of parliamentary law. The fundamentals of parliamentary procedure are given in Appendix C, pages 156-164. Other references are listed in Appendix E, page 180.

Should enforce speaking time limits. If a meeting has definite time limits—e.g., ninety minutes—it is apparent that the contributions made by the members during that period should also have definite limits. The group should decide upon these limits, but once agreed upon they should be binding on all individuals. The chairman must see that no one exceeds his speaking time limits, at least without the sanction
of the group. He must prepare a few diplomatic phrases which may be used to stop a speaker: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman, your time has elapsed," etc.

If the chairman rises at the end of a speaker's time, this will often provide a sufficient warning to the speaker.

In some groups the chairman rises as a signal to the group to vote silently, by raising their hands, on the question permitting the speaker to have an additional time period. If a majority raise their hands it is understood that the individual may continue.

Should give summaries during discussion. It is expected that the chairman will be able to look upon the discussion as a unified whole, even tho the members of the group are able to see but a small sector of the subject. The individual who makes a contribution to the meeting often sees that contribution in an exaggerated light. After several persons have spoken, and especially if all of the ideas expressed differ, is difficult for members in the midst of the discussion to know just what progress, if any, has been made. The chairman in giving a summary of what has been said, gathers together all of the threads of the discussion into an apparent pattern. In effect, he says to the group, "We have now reached the place in our journey. Let us mark it on the map, and then we may consider our next move."

Walser, in "The Art of Conference," pages 81-82, treats the time problem in a manner:

"An able chairman will rarely need to ask a member to stop speaking. He may look at his watch or he may say: 'Summing your points, I understand them as ... and if the member appears to wish to continue, 'Now, what is your next point?'"

"The smaller the group the simpler the time problem. In a large group absence of a careful check on the time used by each member is usually disastrous. Several members will want to speak at once, and some, being constantly put off, will find that little is gained in listening for over half an hour to a varied series of opinions, if it is impossible to summarize and thus utilize what has been heard. The final result in their minds will be a vague impression of attitudes, information, and controversy, in which precision and value have canceled one another. . . . "
The summary may be used advantageously to make clear, in a concise sentence or so, the content of a long and rambling contribution. It serves also to indicate the place reached in the discussion and to emphasize the harmony of the group and stress points of agreement.

Should terminate discussion with a summary. At the conclusion of the meeting the members will want to know what has been accomplished and what remains to be done at another session. The leader’s summary should supply this information. It should also give a sense of completeness to the entire meeting, so that no one need go away confused.

Should close meeting on time. A time for closing should be agreed upon and enforced. After group discussion becomes natural to an organization there will be constant demands on the leader to “continue the discussion a little longer.” Often more than one session is necessary for the discussion of a problem, but if all is going well in the first session the chairman may dislike to stop it. However, it is better to stop the discussion when it is lively and interesting than to let it go on into the night and die out because the members become fatigued. Stop it at the time previously set, and the group will look forward with pleasure to its continuance at the next meeting. If the preliminary plans of the leader have been worked out carefully, a meeting should be at such a point, at the time set for closing, that it can be stopped on schedule.

CHAIRMAN’S RESPONSIBILITY IN HANDLING EXPLOSIVE TOPIC

When an explosive topic (see page 25) is up for discussion, the responsibility of the chairman is particularly great. Be-
cause of the tense feelings and tempers associated with such topics, the most experienced chairman, the most skilled in the foregoing technics of guiding and controlling the discussion should be used. If you are chairman when such a topic is being discussed, you may steer the discussion safely by the following procedure:

1. Insist that basic facts, historical facts, and logical introductory material be presented first. After this the group will be able to be reasonable about differences of opinion growing out of the same set of facts.

2. See that all the possible views on the subject are expressed. And, if possible, the different views should be presented by individuals of equal ability, force, and excellence in presentation.

3. Require that all speakers stick to the subject. Under no circumstances permit the introduction of material aside from the point. Extraneous material should be reserved for another meeting on that particular topic.

4. Remain calm, impartial, poised. Be an example of open-mindedness.

5. Guard the speakers from interruption, and permit the hot-heads to blow off steam. One good explosion may resolve the difficulty and clear the air. After a speaker concludes, an opposition speaker should be given the floor. Ask, "Is there someone who wishes to present another view of the problem?"

6. Regulate the pace of the meeting. Sometimes, in order to slow down the progress of developments, give slow, calm, deliberate summaries after each talk by a memb
You may, yourself, ask questions of speakers or of members of the group. Sometimes you may hasten the meeting by making certain that no two speakers for the same side follow one another; that every alternate speaker is in opposition. See that all members contribute who will do so. If necessary, halt the meeting and make a short request for fair play, open-mindedness, and a thoughtful, sane consideration of all possible points of view. Ultimate harmony in the group is the goal which the chairman should keep always in mind.

If it is seen that two or three meetings will be needed to enable all those interested to learn to work together in the medium of democratic discussion, the chairman may postpone the handling of the most disputatious topics until another session. Let the group cooperate, first, on the least explosive phases of the general subject.

CHAIRMAN'S OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP OTHERS

Should build up leaders and chairmen for future positions of responsibility. Every chairman will do well to memorize and put into effect these six simple training commandments:

1. Help individuals with initiative to push themselves forward.

2. Appoint or elect a member to a small office (or create an office for him) in line with his special field of interest. Point out how his small interest is connected with the larger interests of the whole group.

3. Use co-chairmen. Let them preside for short periods during a meeting.

4. Place small loads of responsibility on the individual.
With growth, increase the load. Study each individual and determine his limits of development. Do not overburden him. Help nervous members to overcome stage fright (see pages 148-149).

5. Rotate offices. Prevent a small group from always being reelected.

6. Train the younger members.

**Should use appropriate rewards.** Generous reference by the chairman to contributions of members of the group, the discussion will help oil the bearings of the discussion, that it will run more smoothly.

*Use of praise.* Whenever the opportunity arises, compliment members on their contributions; say, “That is an excellent suggestion,” or “That is a good point,” or “That is a splendid addition,” or “Your facts are extremely interesting,” or “I am sure that what you have said represents great deal of study on your part,” or “Thank you, Mr. X.

*Use of names.* Most people, whether they will admit or not, like it when their names are used publicly in such manner as to reflect credit to themselves. Use this human trait. Try such statements as, “Mr. X has given us valuable information,” or “I am sure that Mr. X can help us,” or I am certain that we appreciate what you have said, Mr. X.

*Reference to contributions.* Most anyone is happy to think that what he says is important enough to be remembered. After Mr. Z speaks, Mr. X and Mr. R may make contributions. The chairman should not forget Mr. Z; he may say, “You will recall that Mr. Z said . . . .” or “That is a d
Must develop skill in handling difficult types of members. In almost any group of people coming together for discussion, there will be at least one or two who can spoil or mar the meeting if allowed to indulge uncurbed their peculiarities of mental reaction to a discussion. The guidance of a capable chairman is needed to prevent such people from running away with the meeting, and to aid them to free themselves from their unfortunate habits of thought and prejudices, to throw off their personal idiosyncracies.¹

**Simplification type.** There is a type of person that always seeks to show that the question under discussion, the factors involved, or the remedies proposed are all reducible to a simple skeleton form. "Do not become involved in complex discussion; simplify it!" is his plea. To listen too wholeheartedly to this member would be to rob most discussions of their true value and reduce all to the sheerest fundamentals. He must be tactfully shown that human problems are usually complex; and that to remove this complexity actually removes or changes the problem.

**The detail type.** As opposed to the simplification type,

¹In regard to the effects of such personal idiosyncracies upon discussion meetings, John Dewey, in the introduction to "Training for Group Experience," by Sheffield, A.D., says: "Every participant in group discussions that have anything more than an academic import is aware how prejudices, fixed ideas, reminiscences of interesting personal experiences, sore spots, and hypersensitiveness to anything that is interpreted as criticism, balk and deflect the course of thought. Fears, jealousies, personal ambitions, sense of prestige, past rivalities and past defeats, defense reactions, are none the less present because they operate delicately and covertly."
the "detail" member tries to complicate every discussion by following out every ramification of every problem. If permitted to have his way, he would soon have the group led in a maze of details and technicalities. Usually the chairman can point out that if the group gives major emphasis to main proposals, the details will take care of themselves.

**The tacker-on.** Usually because of nervousness or lack of preparedness an individual, after having spoken on an issue, keeps on adding statements and uselessly repeating what he or others have already said. This type of person finds it difficult to stop. The group is protected from such time wasting individuals by definite speech time limits. Also, the chairman soon learns to recognize the "tacker-on," and can relieve such a speaker from his embarrassment by interrupting and summarizing his remarks for him.

**The word or phrase phobiasts.** Some individuals have almost violent prejudices for certain words or phrases, evoking violent reactions against the ideas which to them are represented by certain words or phrases. Some such words are communism, radical, patriotism, freedom of speech, pacifism, preparedness, armaments, militarist, foreigner, and equality of the races. Most people have at least a few minor prejudices about words: they may show an aversion to some words and a servility to others. An individual suffering from word phobia promptly labels such a word as, for example, *armaments*—which to him represents aggressive militarism—evil and refuses to discuss sensibly and with an open mind a subject in connection with which the word has been used. Usually he applies a series of too general and sweeping stale
ments to the subject. He will say, for example, "Everyone who believes in armaments believes in war. They would make cannon fodder of all our young men and slaughter all the old men, women, and children." A speaker who has run into such opposition may get out of the difficulty by offering to substitute another word or phrase for the one being used.

The phobiast may also have certain pet words or phrases which he tries to introduce in place of those being used—not because he dislikes the ones he would displace, but because he has become bound to the words he proposes to substitute. Or, he may have a limited vocabulary of words that he sets up as a skeleton outline for all subjects. Thus no matter what the discussion, this type of member attempts to pigeonhole every argument under two or three categories—and the words naming these categories are his pet words.

If you are chairman, you will soon come to recognize the individuals who are more interested in words than the possible thoughts behind the words. You will need to point out that there is usually more than one side to a question. You will wish to emphasize that group-discussion training should tend to free people from narrow, preconceived notions.

The isolationists. Some people live in their own isolated little world and resist all efforts on the part of outsiders to help them enlarge their mental horizons. When a person of this type is in a discussion group, he shows little or no interest in the discussion until it happens to relate to his own special and private interests. He then participates, but when the trend of the discussion shifts, he withdraws again into himself.

When such an individual participates, the chairman
should attempt to show how the sector of the discussion which arouses the interest relates to all other parts of the whole. If enough relationships are drawn, it will perhaps enable the member to broaden his thinking and develop wider interests.

The side-track members. Do you know individuals who have solutions for each and every problem? In a single sentence they can produce, so they think, a solution to some situation that has thrown Congress into deadlock for weeks. They are constantly trotting out and exhibiting their panaceas. A single cure-all is advocated for every illness. Matter what question may be under discussion, this member sooner or later rises to remark that he has the answer. Usually his remarks are made in such a tone of assurance and finality that the group is likely to be side-tracked at Panacea Junction, unless the chairman or some other member points out that it is possible for more to be said on the subject. The chairman may say, “Mr. X has given us what appears to him to be one possible solution of our problem. There are, of course, other solutions, and I know that some of you will wish to suggest some of them at this time.”

The historically minded. The historical background of a question should be presented at the beginning of a discussion, but when once presented satisfactorily there is little to be gained by too frequent backward glances at history. Purposeless repetition is unnecessary; to introduce evidence that has no vital relation to the subject, even tho it be an interesting bit of history, should be discouraged.
PART IV. THE MEMBER AND HIS RESPONSIBILITIES

The chairman cannot bring out of a meeting any more than the members are willing to put into it.

In theory every member should attempt to study the material available on the subject that is to be discussed. In practice few members do study the topic announced for the discussion. Members should at least look over the outline submitted by the leader. During the weeks preceding the meeting they should think about the question, talk about it, and gather random information from radio and newspapers.

Members of any group, who are not already aware of it, will soon discover thru discussion that small things, almost insignificant happenings, deeply affect people. They may discover that a number of people may read the same newspaper article, look at the same picture, or have other similar experiences, and yet all arrive at different ideas on the subject. When the realization of this fundamental difference in people permeates the group, they will be in a position to revamp their ways of reacting to events. Their bases of real values will be more reliable. They will want to change some of their old ideas. They will be more careful in coming to new conclusions. They will prepare themselves, carefully, before each meeting. A few suggestions specifically for members are therefore given here.

Develop art of listening. Listen to learn. Listen to know what answer to give to those who disagree with you.
Listen to find out how far persons express themselves as being in agreement with you.

**Develop a sense of humor.** Someone with a sense of humor can sometimes save a meeting from failure. A light touch when antagonisms appear to be winning the field is often worth more than its weight in sheer logic.

**Learn to express honest opinions.** Some individuals have a tendency to say what they think will please someone else, rather than to say what they really think. Such sham will destroy true discussion.

**Become acquainted with basic technics of parliamentary law.** Every member should know enough to be able to obtain the floor, make a motion, and guide it thru its course to the final announcement of the vote (see *Appendix C* pages 156-164).

**Learn to withhold judgment until facts are presented.** To jump to conclusions on the basis of incomplete evidence is the failing of many persons. Suspend judgment. Get the facts. Then make up your mind.

**Participate in the discussion.** Everyone should feel that his contribution is worthy. Strive to make it worthy. Assist the chairman in keeping the meeting progressing.

**Do not talk too long or too often.** Organize your thoughts. Say what you have to say and then stop. Remember that every other member should have an opportunity to make a contribution. Remember that if some member does not get to take part he may cause disturbances outside the meeting by telling people that he had no chance to say anything.
Develop the vocabulary of group discussion. The right choice of language is important in bringing together the members of the group and in maintaining a spirit of harmony and cooperation. Read the report of a discussion on pages 119 to 128 and notice how often the members make use of the words “I,” “we,” “you.” Throughout your speech or incidental remarks you help weld together your listeners by using such pronouns. This use of the first and second persons is to be advocated in all ordinary discussions where there is not unusually strong feeling on the subject being discussed.

In heated discussions, however, the use of impersonal language, the reference to persons and things in the third person, may help to prevent the rise of antagonisms among the participants. In referring to those who have previously spoken, do not let bitter personal feeling dominate your contribution. Speak of “the person who just spoke,” “the member who just left the floor,” “some people have said,” etc.

For a better understanding of the mechanism by which group discussion is organized and directed, all members should read the suggestions outlined in the preceding Part III, “The Chairman and His Job.” Of course another reason for members familiarizing themselves with such material is that they are all potential chairmen or leaders.
PART V. PRIMING THE GROUP-DISCUSSION PUMP

"Behold, riches come not of themselves."
—Ptah-Hotep (4000 B.C.)

Ideally a discussion group will function spontaneously. After the chairman opens the meeting, the members of the group will freely and impulsively strive to gain the floor so that they may be permitted to speak. This spontaneity will continue throughout the meeting. The chairman will have to adjourn the meeting before everyone is fully "talked out." There will be a general voluntary demand for more meetings in the future.

Practically it often happens that members of the audience sit back and hesitate to volunteer. After the chairman opens the meeting, there is an awkward silence.

Usually it is possible for the committee in charge of arrangements for the meeting to gage the prospective audience and to determine whether or not the audience members will participate spontaneously. If the committee concludes that there will be few volunteers, arrangements may be made for "priming the pump." The methods of priming described in this section, or variations and combinations of them, should prove helpful in keeping alive a group-discussion meeting.

After reading this section of the manual and experimenting with the various priming methods, the chairman should decide for himself which of the numerous methods suggests
best suit the purposes of his particular group. He should classify these methods according to their usefulness and make definite plans to apply them in his meetings. He may, for example, try starting with guides or, perhaps, with the strata test, and then continue by using oral questions.

A chairman or leader must be on his guard, however, to see that those who help get the discussion started are not permitted to dominate the meeting. They must not be permitted to occupy a place of exaggerated importance. When they have accomplished their purpose of stimulating some discussion, they should retire into the group as a part of the group. They should be like the water one pours into a pump to prime it—indistinguishable from the well water when it begins to flow out into the trough.

Discussion priming methods involve two underlying principles:

1. Before anyone can participate in a discussion he must have some background and factual knowledge of the question under consideration. Priming methods aim to give the individual members of the group who do not already have it, enough factual information to enable them, if they will, to join the discussion.

2. Before anyone will participate in a discussion he must be relatively free from timidity, self-consciousness, and feelings of inferiority. Priming methods aim to reduce or eliminate these barriers and to bring about general participation. Under a skilled chairman even the most reticent may take part and, once the “ball has started rolling,” it becomes progressively easier for other individuals to contribute. A
leader must not, however, expect that the quiet, backward individual can be changed in a moment into the most talkative member. The change will be, and should be, gradual. It may take months and years to get full participation from some individuals. One should be satisfied if he gets from these a single sentence at the second or third meeting.

**WRITTEN OUTLINE OR BRIEF**

The chairman or a committee of individuals interested in the topic may, after careful study, prepare briefs or outlines on the proposition. Copies may be distributed or made available a few days before the meeting. The outline should indicate the nature of the main ideas and minor ideas to be considered by the group. Thinking about these points for a week or so will help members to be prepared to discuss them.

**USE OF SILENCE**

The average chairman tends to feel that when no one in the group is saying anything such silence indicates the breakdown of discussion. He strives, therefore, by every method possible to get someone to talk. Probably in the majority of cases, if the group is just beginning to use discussion methods, this procedure is correct. In these instances silence is sterile.

Sometimes, however, and especially in groups thoroughly experienced in democratic discussion, the chairman should utilize silence as one of the technics of group discussion. Silence may mean that the group is thinking. The chairman must be able to detect productive silence and give it due recognition.
Silence is, in its own right, a method of priming the discussion pump. Most people cannot stand silence; they find it almost unbearable. Sooner or later someone must give way under it. Thus if the chairman asks a question and receives no instant response, he may try waiting. He, too, will find it hard to endure silence and will, unless on the alert, reword his question or say a few sentences to break the silence. However, if he can wait, the chances are that someone will make a contribution and that others will follow.

This use of silence is urged on the assumption that the members of the group have a sufficient background of information to enable them to take part in the discussion, and that if given time to think they will participate that much more effectively. When, however, sufficient real information to make this method productive is lacking in the group, some member may be inclined to break the tension of silence by a "wise-crack"—a type of remark which, by twisting thought away from the subject under discussion, destroys the value of silence as a priming device. The chairman should guard against this, if possible, by breaking the silence himself before this point is reached—he may call on a member who is likely to have something to say or he may throw out an appropriate remark himself.

The effectiveness of periods of limited and natural silence in stimulating real thinking in a discussion group is pointed out by Walser thus:

"To introduce into the discussion the habit of detachment in order to attain the perspective of a larger outlook on life should become a

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normal and natural step. It may begin by permitting members to step
out of the room for a short moment or merely to break the sustain-
concentration. Groups which forget or avoid this may lose the be-
fruits of discussion, namely the maturing of judgment. . . .

"Silence may serve two purposes. I have often known it to
uniting, bringing people to the essentials, in which any body of peo-
who wish to decide something important must be united, and at the sam-
time it allows the slow thinkers, whose judgment may be as good
the quick thinkers, to catch up and make their contribution."

"To beginners, collective thinking may appear to need the con-
stimulus of speech. But new habits are soon learned which show that
this is an illusion. Too continuous talking tends rather to create anx-
and usually also a certain excitement which hinders the deepening
thought.

"Silence, by bringing the individual again face to face with him-
will tend to calm anxiety. . . .

"Embarrassment or uneasiness in the chairman may easily spoil the
creative possibilities of a pause.

"When opposition is excited, the chairman’s quiet way of asking the
silence may make a suggestive contrast. This may be necessary to ob-
fundamental reconsideration of one’s motive and attitude. If the cha-
man can retain his calm assurance in the midst of a stirring clash of
opposing opinions he may gently announce: ‘We might now sum up the
opposing points of view and pause for two minutes to consider how
combine what is essential in each. These opposing points of view are
briefly. . . .’"

To obtain the best results from the use of silence to
stimulate discussion, the chairman should first practice us-
it in small doses, and then should gradually increase the
doses. The use of a watch having a second hand will help
at this point. Most chairmen will be surprised to find that
fifteen seconds of silence is a long period of time. It will be
necessary to learn to estimate the length of the period
silence most effective for a given situation.

*Quoted by Walser from a letter on Quaker business meetings by Hilda Clad
the English Society of Friends.*
ORAL QUESTIONS

The putting of questions orally to a group is the method most frequently used by leaders to stir a group into discussion. There are several kinds of questions. Any of the following are useful.

1. Exploratory questions, limited to a definite sector of the problem.
   Who are the persons favoring the higher tariff?

2. Data questions, intended to bring out definite information on some problem.
   What is the numerical relation between users and non-users of electricity among farmers in this county?

3. Opinion questions, often effective in bringing out what an individual really feels about a question.
   Which group should receive the most consideration in the establishment of fair farm-produce prices, the consumer or the producer?

4. Provocative questions, calculated to provoke thinking, to challenge or stimulate members to respond.
   In what ways does the government have a responsibility to the farmer?

5. Evaluation questions, designed to provoke thought as to the relative values of ideas, opinions, and standards.
   Is our wisest course the erection of a community building like the one at Plymouth or like the one at Northville?

6. Choice or decision questions, planned to bring about definite action by the group.
   What can we do to have the power lines brought into this area?

*Treated by Ewing, R. L., in "Methods of Conducting Forums and Discussions."
7. Summary questions, asked in an attempt to obtain a concise review statement.

On the whole, what is the present condition of the farmer?

Another classification of questions is based on their form. 

Five groups deserve our attention:

1. "Yes and no" questions.

Is the farmer better off today than he was a year ago?

2. "If any" questions, an improvement over the "yes and no" type.

In what ways, if any, is the farmer better off today than he was a year ago?

3. "Why or why not" questions, an improvement over both the "yes and no" type and the "if any" type.

Is the farmer better off today than he was a year ago? Why or why not?

4. Preceding statement questions, also an improvement over the "yes and no" type.

Since the war numerous economic forces have united to profoundly change agriculture in this country. Likewise the attitude of the consumer toward the producer has been altered. Considering these factors together, is the farmer better off today than he was in 1910?

5. Main and subsidiary questions.

Is the farmer better off today than he was in 1910? What basis do we have for calculating this relationship? What actual signs of his condition are to be found in this county? Is the condition general or is it limited to specific products?

Some kinds of questions tend to force the members of the
PRIMING THE GROUP-DISCUSSION PUMP

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group to answer in a way suggested by the questioner. While this type of questioning may guide the discussion it is also apt to fetter the thinking of the group and thus destroy the spirit of democratic participation. Questions such as the following should be avoided.

1. Hortatory questions.
   Don't you think . . . . ? May it not be that . . . . ? Might not . . . . ? Should not . . . . ?

2. Conscience questions.
   Ought not . . . . ?

3. Factual questions without any clue of their relation to the point at issue.
   How does Illinois rank? [Note difference when a clue is given: How does Illinois rank in the production of wheat?]

4. Self-evident "yes and no" questions.
   Does the farmer want fair play?

5. Guessing questions, designed to bring out some idea held by the leader but unknown, perhaps, to the group. Such questions lead members to seek answers that the leader wants.
   What happens when you sell a bushel of wheat? [It is obvious that any number of things may happen, but the group is forced to guess the particular thing the leader has in mind.]

6. Indefinite questions.
   To what extent has the farmer been helped by rainfall?

7. Long and involved questions.

8. Questions not worded in the language of the group.

*Treated by Elliott, H. S., in "The Process of Group Thinking."
WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Before the meeting opens, the chairman may give out a series of written questions. Ten or a dozen questions plainly written on individual slips of paper should be sufficient although, if desired, everyone may be given a question. The first two or three questions of the series may be given to persons who can be counted upon to start a lively discussion on their topics. Once started, the meeting will gather momentum.

The first questions may be so worded as to indicate the answer and to provoke discussion. Leading questions of this type are used to help get the meeting started. After discussion is well under way, or in an experienced group, leading questions should not be asked. Questions that may be answered with a simple "yes" or "no" also should be avoided. The answer to the question is only incidental. Discussion about the answer and about the topic are of primary interest.

If the questions are numbered, persons having them should answer in order. If the questions are not numbered, the chairman may call on anyone at any time, or the members may volunteer at any time during the meeting and in any order. Some or all of the questions may be made in duplicate. This will introduce an element of competition in discussion, particularly if neither of the individuals having the same question knows that the other has the identical question.

When a chairman makes use of questions to start a meeting, he may or may not inform the group that questions have been given out. It will generally be known, however, without any special announcement. After his introductory re
marks, he may say, "We all know of numerous examples of soil erosion within this county. In beginning our discussion, it will help us if we classify the kinds of erosion that occur. Will someone tell us the kinds of erosion we must deal with in this community?"

Here are some examples of questions that a chairman may ask on the topic, "soil erosion control."

1. Why is soil erosion harmful?
2. What kinds of erosion do we have to deal with in the community?
3. What are the best examples of soil erosion in the community? What started erosion in each case?
4. What are the best preventives of wind erosion?
5. What are the best preventives of water erosion?
6. Why must we have concerted action if we are to be successful in combating and preventing erosion?
7. What can the governmental agencies do to help us with this problem?
8. How can we now make a start toward the elimination of harmful erosion in this community?

Questions should be so constructed that some of them deal with present conditions (as in Nos. 2 and 3 above) and others with what may be done about those conditions in the future (Nos. 7 and 8 above). Questions of this type are also well adapted to oral presentation.

ROLL-CALL RESPONSE

If the group is not too large, a roll-call response may be used to guarantee complete participation in the discussion. Every member is instructed to answer to the calling of the roll by giving a brief statement bearing on the topic. The conflicting statements made will often start the discussion.
The subject will, of course, be known to all members in advance. At any given meeting the chairman may help members to prepare for the following meeting by suggesting references to available material or by distributing mimeographed or printed material.

If discussion on the roll-call response statements does not follow freely at once, the chairman may ask members to explain their statements at length. He may ask why some statements seem to indicate different points of view.

For a few meetings, members may make brief statements. Soon, however, they will throw off their timidity and begin to amplify their contributions and to enter into the discussion.

**"LEFT-TO-RIGHT" METHOD**

A simple way to attempt to get everyone to participate in a discussion is to "go around the group." If the group is seated in a circle, the chairman may say, "Starting with John, here on my left, let's have everyone—all around the circle—tell us what people are saying about the idea of electrifying this area."

If the group is seated in rows of fixed seats, the chairman may indicate that members in the front row, from left to right, may participate, and then members in the second row, and so on.

This method has one great weakness. What can the chairman do if someone is so timid he just sits, but does not speak? He may start the individual on some simple "yes or no" questions. *Example:* "Do you agree with what Mr. said?" Then he may go to "opinion" questions. Get the
member to say a few words even if they are just "yes" or "no." Next time he may say more.

RUNNING START

With a very small group, the members of which may be counted upon to arrive on time, the chairman may try the "running-start" method. The chairman attempting to use this method should come with the earliest arrivals, and should take part in their conversation. As others come, they may join the group in that informality that usually precedes the opening of the meeting. As the conversation continues, the chairman gradually draws it around to the topic for discussion, and so bridges the gap between the conversation and the meeting that the discussion is under way without members realizing what has happened.

DISCUSSION GUIDES

Discussion-guide method in operation. Discussion guides are very useful even in a meeting that needs no priming. The guides are individuals who, together with the chairman, are willing to make a rather careful study of the proposition that is to come up for discussion. They read papers, pamphlets, magazines, journals, and books on the subject. They gather vast amounts of information which they classify. They cull and reject unimportant or duplicating materials. After all of this preliminary study, the guides prepare short instructive speeches containing most of the essential information they have accumulated.

Thus at considerable expenditure of time, the guides digest a great amount of material for the larger group. They
do this so that not all the members of the group will be compelled to do it for themselves. If a guide does his work well, the group should know as much as he about the subject, or at least about the fundamentals of the subject, when he completes his speech. The guide himself gains certain advantages such as practice in gathering and evaluating material and in preparing and delivering an effective speech.

In addition to their function of supplying information on the topic, guides may be used as spurs to get the discussion started. During the period when a group is becoming acquainted with discussion procedures, the chairman, after opening the meeting promptly, and announcing that it will close promptly at a given hour and that everyone will be given an opportunity to speak and will be limited in the amount of time he may speak; after these preliminaries, the chairman might introduce the topic and give the first guide his cue so that he may enter into the discussion in an easy and informal manner. (For examples of the chairman’s introduction, speeches by guides, and procedures used in discussions having guides, see pages 119-128.)

After the first discussion guide finishes his remarks, the chairman gives the second discussion guide his cue. The second speaker may begin his talk by some reference to the first speech and develop his own speech from that point.

The second guide may be followed by a third or fourth, or as many guides as are needed. Between each speech however, and during the speeches, ample opportunity should be provided and every technic utilized in an attempt to draw everyone into the discussion. If in the first meeting only
few participate, it may be that in future meetings more will join in. Once the “ice is broken” it will be easy to obtain spontaneous participation.

Weaknesses of discussion-guide scheme. This discussion-guide scheme has several weaknesses. The fact that the guides are so thoroughly prepared may encourage persons to remain silent who can offer only trivial suggestions and who feel that in comparison with what has been said their remarks would be insignificant. A good guide, or chairman, can overcome this feeling.

Another weakness in the discussion-guide scheme is a certain artificiality. Many persons believe that this artificiality will be detected by the group, and that it will prove to be an effective bar to spontaneity in the meeting. Some would use this priming plan but not tell the audience that it is being used; they would pretend that the guides are regular members of the group. Others would begin the meeting by frankly stating that some of the members had done considerable study on the question and had volunteered to help get the meeting started by giving some information, but that everyone is expected to join in the discussion after these guides have finished. Perhaps the second policy is the better one—whenever in doubt, it is better to be frank.

Qualifications of discussion guides. The guides must be wholeheartedly interested in the proposed discussion. They will very likely be persons interested in the topic for its own sake as well as in the improvement of themselves and their communities. A guide need not be a trained speaker, altho training is an added qualification. As a matter of fact anyone
who participates thoroughly in group talks over a period of time may become a tolerably proficient or even an excellent speaker. Study of the materials presented in this manual or of any of the numerous available texts on public speaking, plus the practical experience of acting as a discussion guide in a number of meetings, will tend to develop an effective speaking ability.

**Number of guides.** The number of guides to be selected by the chairman or committee will depend largely on the length of time given to the discussion meeting. Two or three guides, each speaking for ten minutes, should be sufficient for a ninety-minute session. This arrangement will permit fully sixty minutes for participation in the discussion by members of the group. During the first few meetings of a series there may well be more guides, each giving a short speech of about five minutes duration. With practice the speeches may be lengthened.

Another factor affecting the number of leading speakers to be selected is the familiarity of the group with the topic under consideration. In a series of meetings on the same subject it is likely that after the first session the number of guides may be reduced. In the first meeting, however, a great amount of background material must be presented and perhaps more guides are necessary. Furthermore the members of the group may at first find it difficult to enter into the discussion, whereas later they may cooperate so spiritedly as to leave time for speeches by only two or three guides.

Finally, in practice, the number of guides is often limited.
by the number of persons who are willing to assist in this important phase of group discussion.

ROUND TABLE

The round-table method of stimulating discussion is limited to small groups. A table or a number of tables put together, around which all those present may be seated, is essential. Each person should be able to see everyone else without shifting his position. Papers or notes may be passed around the table for inspection as a member speaks.

The idea in using the round table as a priming method is that if the members of the group put their feet under a common table, accord and harmony are more likely to result. The psychology of the situation is like that of the friendly dinner table. Boards of directors, luncheon clubs, and conferences attempt to utilize the round-table method. If a round-top table is used, it is apparent that the chairman will have a no more dominant place in the circle than any other member. This equality of position may lead to freer participation in the discussion.

The simple circle of chairs, without a table, is often used as a substitute for the round-table procedure. It is to be recommended, but only as a substitute.

LEGAL OR CROSS-EXAMINATION METHOD

The cross-examination technic, suggested by legal practice, has been treated briefly by Lindstrom and Huston in a mimeographed publication “Conducting Group Discussions.” One of two persons who has studied the proposition to be discussed undertakes to cross-examine the other. The cross-
examination should be as informal as possible. There is danger of this method becoming too formal. Beware of too much rehearsal of your parts.

Example

(Topic—The Livestock Cooperative Marketing Association)
Q. You joined the cooperative, didn't you, Steve?
A. Yes.
Q. How long have you been a member?
A. Just about a year.
Q. Have you kept a record of all of your cattle deals for, say, the past five years?
A. Longer than that. I have records of all my farm transactions since 1920.
Q. Then you can tell exactly whether or not you gained by joining the cooperative?
A. Certainly. I did gain.
Q. How much did you gain?

—and so forth, until the chairman takes over the discussion and invites everyone to contribute his views on the cooperative marketing association.

FORMAL FORUM OR OPEN FORUM

The forum medium of group discussion is but a more formalized adaptation of the guide method of priming the meeting pump. Usually an expert, or someone who understands the question, is asked to speak. His speech may be from twenty to forty minutes in length; there are no arbitrary limits. Presumably the speaker (a glorified guide) will cover all phases of the topic. Certainly he should not attempt to indoctrinate the group with propaganda or with a single unopposed view of the topic. Following his speech he may act as chairman of the meeting and attempt to stimulate dis
Or, the regular chairman may resume his duties. Sometimes there may be more than one forum speaker. Sometimes two speakers, or three, representing various phases of the question may be used.

An example of a common use of the formal forum is furnished by religion discussion groups. Often the young people of some religious group organize a general meeting for the young people of all the churches in the community. They invite a representative, clerical or lay, of the Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant faiths. These representatives explain their respective religions and afterwards answer questions. The chairman usually has an easy task in getting the group to make comments or to ask questions.

The forum type of discussion is now widely used. Its merits are usually apparent. Inasmuch as the speaker is supposed to be an expert, it follows that he probably knows more about the subject than anyone in the group. When he completes his speech, therefore, it is to be noted in practice that almost never does anyone rise to add contributions to what has already been said. This is a natural tendency. One feels well enough informed to add anything to what the expert has said. Furthermore there is the fear that what is said will be wrong, and that the individual will thereby en himself to criticism. And, let it be said, many experts do not deal kindly with persons who oppose them in public settings. Too often they protect themselves, at the expense of democratic participation, with sarcasm and ridicule.

If members of the group can add nothing to the discussion, they can at least ask questions. This is usually what happens...
in an open forum. About half a dozen people ask questions, thus giving the expert a chance to make six more speeches. But members hesitate to ask questions, first, because to do so may prove their ignorance; and second, because to ask questions after a speaker has presumably fully covered a topic may be interpreted as an implied criticism.

Questions are sometimes asked in forum meetings for the sole purpose of embarrassing the speaker. Such questions will hardly help the spirit of discussion.

Despite these obvious defects in the forum method of priming discussion, as this method is commonly used, the forum is an effective stimulant to discussion if carefully prepared for and carefully conducted. Much depends upon the chairman—the information he can give to the lecturer beforehand upon the knowledge and opinions on the subject held by the members, his skill in drawing out the reactions of the audience to the topic of discussion after the expert has spoken and his use of technics before and after the lecture that will cause members to feel that their opinions are not only welcomed by the chairman and lecturer and other members of the audience but are vital to the complete success of the meeting.

Some suggestions upon making the forum method effective are given by Sheffield1 as follows:

"1. Provide a chairman, other than the speaker, for the discussion. He should know how to define the issue for discussion as set by the speaker. Otherwise discussion will scatter. Where people ask the speaker questions, the chairman will know how to guard the process from men drawing out additions to the lecture—namely by turning the group from questions to reactions to what the speaker has said.

If possible, make out beforehand an analysis of the matter as it stands in the delegates' [members'] thinking, and ask the lecturer to speak on particular questions.

If the lecturer is at home in discussion, get him to cast his speech into 'situation approach' form. He can then, after stating the problem, pause to ask testimony from the experience of the group. His own conviction can then be offered not as argued for, but as presented for a fair comparison with possible alternatives.

If the lecturer has come with a set speech already prepared, introduce it as representing one point of view on a question requiring discussion.

Upon completion of the lecture, let the speaker seat himself among the hearers, so that he will not be expected to dominate the discussion.

Some practical advice upon providing sufficient time for the audience in open forums to absorb the information given by the expert or lecturer is given by Walser as follows:

It is inadvisable to absorb too many facts at one time, and preferable to ask for summaries and a general organization of these facts, with pause in which to digest them. In order that the expert's or lecturer's contribution may be the most suggestive and creative, it may be necessary to pause several minutes at the end, before beginning the questions or before discussion. Much of the vital and vivid force of the expert's contribution is lost when the receptive, listening attitude of the group changes too quickly into the critical.

A period of audience participation preceding the lecture is often an effective way of stimulating the group to take a more active part in the discussion that comes after the lecture. The members may contribute current-event statements pertaining to the topic, ask questions, or tell about information they have found which bears on the topic discussed at the last meeting. This last is particularly helpful if a series of sessions are being held on some broad subject.
The fact that the members have already taken part, to some extent, the complex they may have against participating after an expert has spoken. For both the pre- and post-discussion periods the regular chairman, not the lecturer, should be in the chair; the lecturer should be seated with the group.

Because thru long training we have learned to take an inferior place in relation to the speaker on the platform, it is to be desired that following his address, and before the local chairman opens the forum part of the meeting, the speaker takes a seat in the body of the audience. This places him on a level with everyone else. The chairman should have made careful mental or written notes of the speech and should have carefully phrased some questions. He opens the discussion and as far as possible confines contributions to members of the group. The expert should speak as little as possible.

When two forum leaders are used in a forum program and if they represent opposite sides of the question, there is some possibility of disputatious repercussions. Since the ultimate purpose of group discussion is to promote harmony thru thorough understanding, every precaution should be taken to prevent an open break of the group into two opposing camps.

The influence of the forum type of discussion on the people of a community where a forum has been in operation for a length of time, is described by one observer as developing “more tolerance toward other views, more sympathetic interest in the lives of others, regardless of race or religions; me
knowledge of ideas other than those expressed in partisan newspapers, in churches, in schools or in the home. Here men and women think for themselves, feel a new self-confidence, a new self-respect, a new responsibility toward themselves and toward society. In truth, here is the new democracy."

**THE PANEL**

The panel type of discussion is perhaps best applicable to groups of thirty or more. Certainly it is well suited to meetings attended by more than a hundred. Naturally in such a large group, not everyone will be able to participate. The guides, or the panel committee, are all selected and prepared beforehand, and there is a certain formality about the arrangement that tends to prevent spontaneous assistance in the discussion by those not on the panel committee.

Panel discussion is not a subterfuge. It is frankly artificial. The plan is as follows:

A selected group of guides seat themselves on the platform or, if there is no platform, at a table on the same level as the audience. Or they may simply occupy a cluster of chairs—preferably arranged in a semicircle. The guides should all face the audience.

The panel or guides start a discussion of the question. Each contributes something. They may interrupt each other with questions and statements. There may be any number of persons in a panel, but usually four to eight, including the chairman, is a convenient number.

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The purpose of the panel discussion is to bring out fact and background information on the question. Before panel members can enter into a discussion, they must have studied much of the available material on the subject. The purpose, when before the group, is to give their knowledge to the entire group so that at the conclusion of the panel discussion, everyone may be well enough informed to enter a general discussion.

The chairman of the panel serves also as chairman of the meeting. As in the more informal group, his duty is to stimulate individuals—on the panel or in the audience—to contribute something to the discussion.

Inasmuch as there will probably be only limited discussion from the group, the information received by listening to speeches of the panel guides will dominate the mind of the listener. This means that if there are four excellent guides favoring the proposition and four ineffective guides opposing the proposition, the group will leave the meeting with arguments in favor of the proposition uppermost in the minds. This would be a great mistake. The purpose of discussion meeting is not to spread propaganda for any position. The relative strength of the guides should therefore be considered in making up the panel. There should be excellent guides on both sides. Both sides (or all sides, often there are more than two sides to a question) should be about evenly matched. Thus the general group will realize that there is much to be said on either side of the question. Also, there will be more stimulus for the group to participate in the discussion. It is important that the panel mem
The principles of panel discussion procedure are clearly set forth by Auble in the following paragraphs:

"The panel is made up of a chairman, a panel [committee] of four to eight members, an audience, and a topic for discussion.

"The entire panel [committee] is seated in a semicircle facing the audience, the chairman in the center. All remain seated and no speeches are made, but a free-for-all discussion takes place between the members of the panel exactly as though no audience were present. The chairman coordinates and interprets the discussion, attempting to weave the separate strands and items of thought into a complete design in which each finds its place. There must be no debate, no conflicts; instead the spirit which dominates the discussion is that any and every view is a contribution and has a place in the complete pattern. The activity of ringing unity out of the various ideas and viewpoints is the peculiar function of the chairman: the function of the individual members is to supply their own ideas on the subject being discussed. When the general pattern of the discussion is clearly seen, opportunity is given for the entire audience to contribute. Finally, the chairman summarizes the discussion and indicates the general benefits accruing from the discussion activities."

"The chairman is one of the most important factors in the success of a panel discussion. His duties are as follows:

"To stimulate contributions.

"To repeat or reformulate contributions enough to give the audience and panel time to rethink for themselves the point just made.

"To supply illustrations, if necessary, when a panel member states a principle, or to generalize when a panel member gives a specific illustration.

"To give recognition by name for each contribution made.

"To guide by asking questions and by emphasis, but should not dominate the discussion to a specific predetermined outcome.

"To interpret the contributions in their relation to each other, and to the topic being discussed.

"To summarize from time to time and at the close of the discussion."

THE SYMPOSIUM

The symposium is something of a cross between the open forum and the panel. In the symposium two or more speakers present, in twenty- to thirty-minute addresses, a given problem from different points of view. Following the speeches, the procedure is the same as that in the open forum.

THE DEBATE

In a debate two or three speakers take the affirmative of a proposition against two or three negative speakers. Each speaker gives a previously prepared “constructive” speech five to twelve minutes in length. After all of the constructive speeches have been made, each speaker, or one selected from each side, gives a five- to seven-minute “rebuttal” speech.

After the debate, the chairman may open the meeting of the type of discussion that follows the lecture in the forum method.

Debaters are like guides, except that those on one team, affirmative or negative—must be in agreement on their stand on the question.

A debate usually gives an excellent presentation of the question. Usually the question is a demand for action upon some proposition. The group is aided in learning to recognize such discussion aids as “good” arguments, logical reason, the use of testimony, and statistics.

The weakness of the debate method lies in the fact that the nature of debating demands the presentation of only one side of a subject. Most questions are not so simple, hence are not successfully treated by this method.

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1For an excellent treatment of the debate as a priming method, see Wile, Ewbank, work cited on page 10.
ASSOCIATION TECHNIC

Groups like to work with anything that resembles a paper and pencil game. In priming a discussion by the association technic, the chairman or leader prepares a list of about 30 to 50 words or phrases suitable as subjects for discussion and distributes copies to all members. The lists should contain the following or similar directions:

Directions: Consider each word or phrase for five seconds. If the word or phrase calls up a disagreeable association draw a line thru it. You may draw lines thru any number of words or phrases. Reconsider the list. Now check (√) all of the words or phrases calling up pleasant associations. Leave unmarked the neutral words, or words calling up neither distasteful nor pleasant associations.

After sufficient time has elapsed for all to complete the list, the chairman begins by asking for a show of hands to see how the vote stands on the first word or phrase in the list. There are three possible reactions: negative, positive, and neutral. Someone is asked to tell what kind of associated thought or picture a certain word brings to his mind. Naturally there will not be enough time to discuss the entire list, so the papers can be kept for future meetings.

The following list of words and phrases is suggestive of those that can be used to stimulate discussion of agricultural problems:

1. Chinch bugs
2. Soviet wheat
3. High tariff
4. Stock market
5. Soil erosion
6. Good roads
7. Cooperative marketing
8. Health
9. Farm beautification
10. Argentine wheat
11. Cheap electric power

Adapted from Watson, G. B., in "The Measurement of Fair-Mindedness."
To spur the discussion onward, the chairman should try to trace to its source every opinion held by the group on a certain word. This will get the members into the habit of analyzing their opinions on various matters. In this connection they may be asked to state the order of importance of such agencies as the following in influencing their opinions:

1. Books 7. Opinions of relatives
2. Cartoons 8. Present or former teachers
5. Moving pictures 11. Sermons
6. Newspapers 12. Textbooks

Then an attempt should be made to get the members to define the degree of intensity in the association or attitude aroused in them by a given word or phrase—how do their individual feelings relate to the group attitude when the word is placed in the setting of a concrete problem?

When actually faced with a definite problem, the members of a group may reverse the attitudes they took on purely theoretical problems. For example: If we assume that a group of twenty marked the list of words and phrases shown on page 81, we might find that the vote on No. 6, good roads, was: negative 0, positive 20. Yet if the group was asked to go to the polls on election day and vote for good roads in the county, they might vote it down unanimously. Why? Because while the ideal of good roads is all right, the practical aspects of increasing taxes to build good roads is another matter. No one should be misled by this apparent inconsistency.
The advantage of the association priming method lies in part in the fact that the members of the group are led by easy steps into the discussion. It is like the swimmer who first sticks his toes in the water, then his legs, and finally wades out into the water. Notice the steps taken by each member in this method:

1. He participates by accepting the paper and pencil.
2. He participates by following directions.
3. He participates by thinking about each word.
4. He comes to a conclusion on each word.
5. He acts by marking the word.
6. He participates by raising his hand to indicate how he acted.

It seems reasonable to suppose that having gone this far, the members will tend to go a step further and participate in the discussion in support of their first actions.

TRUE-FALSE TEST

Differences of opinion that will furnish the basis for lively discussion can be brought out by a well-directed "true-false" test. Sheets containing about twenty to thirty complete-sentence statements are distributed to each member with instructions to mark each with his opinion as to its truth or falsity (see example on next page).

After everyone has completed the test, the chairman should ask for the vote on each question. Or he may ask on what question the group would like to obtain the vote first. Usually the latter method precipitates a discussion on one of the most controversial statements. Statements having a balanced number of votes; that is, about half T and half F, will provide the best material for discussion. A lopsided
RECORD YOUR OPINION OF THE TRUTH OR FALSITY OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS

Directions. Encircle the marginal letter-symbol best expressing your opinion of each of the statements given below.

If you feel that the statement is wholly and unqualifiedly true, so that no one with a fairly good understanding of the subject would sincerely and honestly believe it to be false, encircle T (true).

If you feel that it is partly true or true to a great extent, encircle PT (partly true).

If you are quite undecided, feeling that it is an open question or that you are not prepared to express an opinion, encircle D (doubtful).

If you feel that it is partly false or false to a great extent, encircle PF (partly false).

If you feel that the statement is wholly and unqualifiedly false, so that no one with a fairly good understanding of the subject could sincerely and honestly believe it to be true, encircle F (false).

THE STATEMENTS

T  PT  D  PF  F
1. Farmers are better off today than they were in 1932.
2. Rural people are healthier than urban people.
3. Chinch bugs are harmless insects.

vote, such as might occur on No. 3 of the above example, indicates general agreement by the members of the group. Such statements do not lend themselves to spontaneous discussion.

DISCRIMINATION TEST\(^1\)

Another form of test which may be used to stimulate discussion is the discrimination test, a form closely related to the true-false test. In the discrimination test the members of the group are given lists of statements which they mark according to what they consider to be the extent to which the statements are applicable (all; most; many; few; none).

\(^1\)Devised by Watson, G. B.
After the members of the group have marked the statements on the lists submitted to them, discussion will begin on those statements showing the greatest divergence of opinion.

*Example*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All</th>
<th>Most</th>
<th>Many</th>
<th>Few</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. ______  ______  ______  ______  ______  intelligent farmers believe that the drought helped increase the prices of their products.
2. ______  ______  ______  ______  ______  farm women should have a voice in the enactment of future agricultural legislation.
3. ______  ______  ______  ______  ______  persons wishing to begin farming should be required to pass examinations.

(etc.)

**THE STRATA TEST**

The strata test, which is another opinion test, is so called because it is designed to draw out of a group their opinions regarding the *level* at which a condition or the subject of a proposition is desirable, or likely to occur, or essential.

If, for example, the price of wheat, which is a rather broad subject, is to be discussed, interest can be stirred by centering members' thinking around what they consider normally a reasonable price-level and why.

*Example*

1. At what level should the price of wheat normally fall?
   - $2.00
   - $1.50
   - $1.20
   - $1.00
   - $0.90
   - $0.80
   - $0.70
   - $0.60
   - $0.50
   - $0.40
   - $0.30
   - $0.20
   - $0.10
   - $0.00

2. What should be the *minimum* price-level? Why?
3. What should be the *maximum* price-level? Why?
4. What is the *cost-of-production* level? Why?
5. What is the "*parity-price*" level? Why?

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1. Listed by Elliott, H. S., as "ladder test."
The chairman may come to the meeting with the topic arranged in stratified form, or he may draw the ideas for the arrangement from the group after it has assembled. The arrangement may be put on the blackboard.

When the topic is thoroughly understood, the chairman asks members to indicate, by raising their hands, the level which represents their opinion. The number of members indicating a given level may be written opposite the word or figure representing that level. Unless there is general agreement for a given level, which does not often happen, the voting will bring forth lively discussion.

**BUDGET LIST**

When the subject of discussion is one in which costs and expenditures are important considerations, the presentation of a budget list to the members of the group will usually bring forth spontaneous expressions of opinion. The budget list, as its name suggests, is a series of items with corresponding estimates of values. The budget list may be prepared beforehand by the leader or contributed item by item by the group. Discussion of such a list may arise, first, upon which items should be included, and then upon the relationship between the several items.

If, as in the following sample budget, certain items are placed at figures that are obviously wrong, that fact will be

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1 Called "items test" by Elliott.
instantly detected by someone, and there will be general participation by those seeking to correct them.

(Example)
Annual Farm Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taxes</td>
<td>$230.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>300.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repairs and replacements</td>
<td>150.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machinery</td>
<td>400.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>700.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothes</td>
<td>400.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical care</td>
<td>50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automobile</td>
<td>350.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacation</td>
<td>200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuel and light</td>
<td>75.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Which items should be questioned? Why?
2. Which items are essential? Why?
3. What items should be added? Why?

ORDER-OF-IMPORTANCE TEST
(Low-Point Ranking)

The leader prepares a list of statements and asks each member of the group to consider them and to mark them in what he thinks is the *order* of their importance. Discussion will follow when, for example, some members rank statement “F” (in example on following page) between 1 and 3, and other members rank the same statement between 6 and 9.
Below are listed some ways in which farmers have been helped. Rank them according to their degree of helpfulness; marking the most helpful "1," the next most helpful "2," etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Statement, phrase, or word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Drouth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Floods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Cooperative organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>The farm bureau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>The Grange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>U. S. Department of Agriculture bulletins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>University Agricultural Extension Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Improved agricultural machinery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Good roads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Better educational facilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COMPARED STATEMENTS

The leader prepares two or more statements of such a nature that they may be compared as to various points of strength and weakness. It is well to put each statement on a separate blackboard, so that the data for and against each may be listed below the statement. Once the data are assembled, they may be used as the outline of a discussion.

For example, a discussion on cooperative marketing might be started by the leader submitting to the group the two following statements, which represent different though not necessarily opposed views upon the subject:

1. Cooperative marketing of livestock is advantageous to the livestock producer, for by that method he receives the full benefit of savings resulting from volume operation.

2. To develop and operate a cooperative livestock market successfully is more difficult than to develop and operate a privately owned market successfully.
The discussion of these statements and the accumulation of facts and opinions on them might well occupy one discussion meeting. A starting point for the next meeting might also be gained by the development from the above statements, thru discussion, of another couple of opposed statements:

1. The volume of livestock business in this community justifies the establishment of a cooperative livestock market.
2. The inflexibility resulting from the nature of control inherent in cooperatives should discourage any consideration of establishing a cooperative livestock market in this community.

CASE METHOD OF CLINICAL PRACTICE

People are inclined to talk about their own personal ideas or problems if they may do so under the guise of talking about an impersonal "case." In the medical profession it is common practice to omit personal references when talking either with patients or about them, and to consider them or their peculiarities as "cases." This method prevents embarrassment and invites full "scientific" participation in matters that otherwise would be difficult for those concerned to discuss.

Farmers in Illinois, for example, might hesitate at first to talk about some problem that bothers them. If, however, an almost identical problem is troubling the farmers of California, the Illinois group will enter unreservedly into a discussion of the California problem. Even tho everyone knows it is the same problem, it is much easier to talk about it in impersonal terms. The farther away the problem appears to be, the easier it is to discuss it freely.

After the facts of the case have been considered, it will be possible to shift from the distant case to the similar case at home.
CASE METHOD WITH MULTIPLE CHOICE

A variation of the case method, which gives the group an opportunity to express the line of action they would choose in the event of a certain described situation, may be worked out by the chairman. The "case" is first put by the chairman, then all the possible lines of action which one might pursue are listed. Analysis of possible lines of action will lead naturally to a discussion of which one of the proposed actions is best, and then to the ways and means of bringing about such action.

For best results the preliminary discussion should be carried on in the third person. Then after it is well started and firmly grounded on facts, it may be allowed to become more personal.

(Example)

A farmer has always secured his machinery from one dealer. He has been entirely satisfied in these dealings. He has made a tentative oral agreement, but has not yet signed a contract, to purchase a large order of necessary equipment. He reads in the newspaper that the corporation whose implements he is going to order is secretly using its influence politically to do something that would be detrimental to farmers. What should he do? Why?

1. Disbelieve the newspaper?
2. Not sign the contract and say nothing?
3. Not sign the contract and tell the dealer why?
4. Sign the contract, but tell the dealer he will buy nothing in the future?
5. Tell other farmers?
6. Write to the corporation?
7. Write to his Representative?

STUDY CIRCLE

A study circle meets to compare notes and to discuss material that all of the members or selected members, work
under some definite plan, have prepared. Topics may be distributed, a single book may be read by all, or everyone may be free to read as he pleases on a general subject.

Sometimes the following plan is used: When the circle meets, one member or a limited number of members will read from a "study book" or report on a topic. Other members take notes and join in the discussion that follows. One topic is adopted for study during a year or half-year period. The circle is not open to the general public.

By opening the circle to the public and by permitting free discussion on the previously announced topic, it may be possible to use a study circle as the foundation of a successful discussion group.

**ORAL REPORT OF BOOK OR ARTICLE**

The oral-report method of priming discussion is closely related to the study-circle method. Certain persons are assigned to make a study of certain sources of fact and opinion and give reports to the group. These reports form the basis of the discussion that follows them.

**VISUAL AIDS**

Moving pictures, slides, maps, charts, and pictures—things the group can see—are excellent aids to discussion.

The chairman, or someone called in for the purpose, may show a reel of a film demonstrating, perhaps, the ravages of an insect pest. He may then ask for discussion on preventive measures. Another film may demonstrate approved methods of combating the insect pest. The discussion following may
deal with the possibility or practicability of applying such methods in the local community.

**TABULATION OF GROUP SUGGESTIONS**

Tabulating group suggestions on a blackboard or a large sheet of paper is a method of stimulating discussion similar to the "importance test" described on pages 87-88, except that by that method the list is prepared by the leader before the meeting and consists of a grouping of topics around a proposition already agreed upon, whereas by this method of tabulation the series of topics are suggested by the members of the group and consequently form a varied or random list.

After a number of topics have been proposed and written on the board, suggestions are in order as to their relative importance. By informal vote the most important topic is marked "1"; the next in importance is marked "2", and so on. Then the chairman may open the discussion on the first topic by asking, "Why is this the most important?"

Another way for the chairman to open the discussion of a proposition is to ask for *cause, remedy, and prevention* topics. For example: If the discussion is on farm mortgages, he may say, *first,* "What are the most important reasons for farm mortgages?" *Second,* "What may be done to remedy the present farm-mortgage situation?" *Third,* "What may be done to prevent the growth of the mortgage situation?" Each question is so worded that the answers (items) to it form a major division of the entire topic under discussion. The items in each division may be ranked according to their importance.
PRIMING THE GROUP-DISCUSSION PUMP

THE CAUCUS

Another method sometimes used to stimulate spontaneous discussion at times when for any reason discussion has died down—from lack of issues, or when a deadlock has apparently been reached between adherents of different opinions—is the caucus.

Many chairmen of rural meetings have discovered, accidentally, that under conditions of deadlock a short recess followed by a reconvening of the members produces amazing results. Usually, during the recess the adherents of a given viewpoint withdraw to one corner of the room to reconsider from their viewpoint the problem under discussion. In other corners, adherents to other viewpoints gather. Thus the caucuses are formed. In the small informally gathered groups discussion is spontaneous; and when the caucuses break up and the large group reconvenes, the spontaneity engendered is often carried over to a considerable extent into the regular discussion meeting.

The caucus is often valuable not only for promoting pure discussion, but for clarifying or crystallizing opinion on disputed points and smoothing the way for agreement. In each caucus the adherents of the viewpoint therein dominant may attempt to clarify the points imperfectly understood. They may raise further questions or discover additional arguments in support of their opinions. They may gain a clearer idea of their strength or their weakness. Having gained these clearer ideas of the issues it is easier to discuss them and discover methods of compromise.
When discussion lags for lack of issues, the chairman might announce that a recess will be taken so that the members may discuss the question informally and find new issues to present to the group as a whole after the recess. During the recess there will be a tendency for groups to form. As pointed out above, small groups are more spontaneous in their reactions and hence may produce valuable ideas which will be carried over and expressed in the larger group upon reassembling.
PART VI. DISCUSSION-TEAM EXCHANGES AND TOURNAMENTS

"He that wrestles with us strengthens our nerves, and sharpens our skill. Our antagonist is our helper."—Burke

EXCHANGES

The probable benefits of group discussion when confined to a single community have already been listed. Additional advantages are to be found in intercommunity discussions. During a number of months of community discussion-group meetings, it is usually possible to judge who of those participating are the most effective speakers, guides, and chairmen (see pages 97-99). Occasionally the best chairman and the best two or three guides from one community might arrange an exchange with an equal number of effective discussion leaders from another community. (Incidentally such an exchange of leaders might well furnish an added incentive toward a larger attendance at the group meeting in each community.) The exchange meetings would be conducted in the same way as the regular meetings except that the chairman and a few of those who make contributions would be visitors. The group in whose community the meeting is held would be the host to the visiting group.

Thru these exchange meetings several helpful objectives may be realized. Both groups will probably learn more about conducting and participating in group discussion. This is
important. The semi-competitive element involved will tend to bring out the best in all those participating. With a greater number of people participating, new ideas and facts concerning the questions under discussion will be brought out. Opportunity will be offered for the establishment of lasting, helpful personal friendships. And finally, the bonds of intercommunity friendship and good will are likely to be strengthened.

TOURNAMENTS

After considerable training in group discussion, the chairman and the best two or three guides in a particular group should be qualified to try their skill as a team against a team from another community, county, or state.

The benefits of such tournaments are two-fold. First, those taking part receive intensive training and practice that will be helpful to them as individuals. They will be forced to develop themselves and to improve their effectiveness as thinkers and speakers, and hence as potential leaders in their communities; and they will gain many friends. Second, individual improvement will be reflected in the benefit to the local group. Everyone will learn more about participating in group discussion. Better discussions will result, thus tending to aid all members of the community.

A program of a discussion-team tournament includes two phases—the local phase and the county, district or state team phase.

The local phase. The portion of the program which can be described as the local phase is probably the more dif
to develop and carry thru. When the best chairman and three superior guides are selected as one team, it is then often difficult to find three more guides who can provide good enough opposition for training purposes, and are willing to do it.

Altho the three guides and the chairman constitute a team, it is not necessary that all four be agreed on any particular point of view, as are the members of a debate team. The members of a discussion team should represent, so far as possible, all the viewpoints on the subject under discussion. If there be three sides to the topic, each guide may represent one side. It is more conducive to discussion if the guides have different outlooks. Furthermore, differing points of view enable them to present more information to the large group than if they were all in agreement.

Women members should have the same opportunity as men to participate on a discussion team. In many cases it is a distinct advantage to have a mixed team of men and women.

The selection of the local team—one chairman and three guides—may be done by a committee or by a vote of the entire group. (See "Obtaining Judges," page 104.) If a vote is taken, the low-score-ranking method should be used. The members of the group are instructed as follows:

Select the best guide and rank him or her No. 1. Rank the second best No. 2. Rank the third best No. 3, and so on until all those participating have received a numerical rank. The individual doing the poorest will receive the highest number.
Let us suppose that six persons try out and that there are ten people judging. When all the ballots are collected and the rankings tabulated, the result might be like the sample on this page.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>J</th>
<th>K</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Final ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helen</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It appears at once that the three best speakers are Paul, John, and Mary. Paul has the lowest total score; he is nearest to the best possible score, which in this case would be 10, as there are ten judges. His score would have been 10 if judges B, F, and J had agreed with the other judges and ranked him first.

When this system of judging is used there may be any number of speakers and any number of judges.

Occasionally the above-described method of judging will result in ties. If, for example, in the sample ballot judge K reversed the order of ranks of Harry and Jack, these two would be tied with totals of 49. Ties, however, happen only rarely; and when they do occur, they may be offset by asking judges to give percentage grades to the speakers as well as rankings. The ballot of a judge rating speakers both by rank and by percentage would be similar to the sample ballot shown on the following page.
EXCHANGE MEETINGS AND TOURNAMENTS

Judge's Ballot for Ranking Speakers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Percentage grade</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helen</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The percentage scores of those speakers who have tied, as set down by each judge, would then be added separately, and the speaker having the highest total percentage points would be given preference in the selection of team members.

Percentage scores, even tho used by individual judges to arrive at individual rankings, should never be used to determine final rankings unless there is a tie in the ranking scores. When percentage grades are used, it is sometimes helpful to make an arbitrary rule that the poorest speaker shall receive a fixed grade (e.g., 75 percent) and that the better speakers shall be graded between 75 and 100 percent. When announcements of team selections are made, only the names of those having rankings high enough to be members of the team should be made public.

After the team is selected, intensive preparation becomes the order of the day. Altho the members of the team may have divergent ideas about the subject being considered, they may be mutually helpful to one another in the preparation of their contributions. Now, more than ever, the principles of effective speaking outlined on pages 105-151 must be studied and put into practice.

The inter-team phase. At the time and place agreed upon, the two participating teams, each made up of a chair-
man and either two or three guides, may meet with as large a general audience as possible.

The chairman of one team may act as chairman of the meeting, and the other chairman as co-chairman. If the teams have met previously the positions of chairman and co-chairman may be reversed. Or arrangement may be made so that each chairman may act during half the time of the meeting. Usually the chairmen are not judged, but they may be judged if desired.

The chairman opens the meeting with a brief introductory statement. He must acquaint the audience with the topic under discussion. After his remarks, the meeting is thrown open to general discussion.

Now one of the guides asks for and receives the floor. His speech is held to definite, and agreed upon, time limits. Each guide as he speaks on the topic—either in an order decided by drawing lots, or by the growth and development of the subject—takes any side, angle, or viewpoint that he may choose. No two members of the same team need support the same side of the proposition, altho they may do so. They may entirely disagree with one another.

During a speech or, more frequently, after it, the guide must expect to answer questions and in effect act as chairman until he gives up the floor. Part of his success as a guide depends upon his ability to stir up comments and to bring about audience participation in the discussion.

The actual chairman only takes over his duties when the discussion led by a speaker lags. After all the speakers have participated, opportunity is given for further general discussion. At this time any guide may be called upon
clarify his position. He may be required to defend the position he has taken. If desired, he may be judged on this speaking as well as on his "main" speech.

After the group discussion is over, the chairman may, or may not, suggest the advisability of the group passing motions (or such special motions as resolutions) to place itself on record on some proposition. The chairman should summarize the ideas presented by all the speakers. In every respect the chairman of this meeting acts like the chairman of an ordinary group-discussion meeting.

Participation in a group-discussion tournament may be by teams or individuals; that is, a community team may be chosen to go to the district or state tournament, or a combination team composed of the best chairman and the best guides from the several teams may be chosen. Thus, in the following sample ballot for rating discussion leaders the Lincoln community team would be chosen if selection is on a basis of teams, whereas if selection is on a basis of individuals, the three-speaker team would be composed of speakers C and A from Lincoln community and speaker Y from Washington community.

**Sample Ballot for Rating Discussion Leaders**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member of team</th>
<th>Order of speaking appearance</th>
<th>Percentage grade</th>
<th>Individual rank</th>
<th>Team score</th>
<th>Team rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(L. community)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. A</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss B</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. C</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(W. community)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. X</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Y</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Z</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teams selected in the above manner may meet in a county, district, or state discussion tournament. See Appendix B (pages 154-155) for suggested rules for a discussion tournament.

JUDGING IN DISCUSSION TOURNAMENTS

It is often advisable to secure a single expert judge for discussion-team tournaments. If a teacher of public speaking from the state university or from a near-by college is the judge, it may perhaps be arranged for him to give the guides helpful suggestions and criticisms after the discussion. An hour spent in this manner should help the guides to improve their presentation of material to general audiences.

Altho a competitive element must enter into any tournament, it is usually advisable to minimize it in the judging procedure. The judges may be instructed to indicate only winners and losers, marking the winners "++", all others "+". Thus within the two groups no differences in ratings would be recorded; and only those speakers or teams would be announced publicly that have been selected to represent the community, county, or district.

No matter what method is used in the public announcement, each judge, in working out the grade and rating of an individual, must use some such device as the low-score method. Some standard basis for reaching decisions, such as represented by the sample rating-form on page 103, should be adopted for all participants in a county or state tournament. On the sample rating-form certain definite symbols indicate the degree of excellence of the speaker on various
Rating Form for Group-Discussion Team Tournament
(Use a separate sheet for each participant.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPEAKER'S NAME</th>
<th>John Doe</th>
<th>RANK</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GROUP REPRESENTED</td>
<td>Washington county</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERCENTAGE GRADE</td>
<td>80</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use following symbols to rate individual points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbols</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+++</td>
<td>definite superiority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>++</td>
<td>excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>weak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>definite failure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal appearance</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voice qualities</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enunciation</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Force (clearly audible)</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis of audience (seems to understand people)</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization of speech material</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge of subject</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>++</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clarity of presentation</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ability to connect up remarks with preceding contributions</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good humor (absence of antagonistic attitude)</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ability to handle questions</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ability to get back on subject after being interrupted</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ability to stimulate discussion</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conclusion</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Date)

(Signature of judge)
essential points, and on the basis of the marks made the judge ranks the speaker what he deems fair. In the above sample the judge ranked John Doe fifth and gave him a percentage grade of 80.

The judge will fill out one rating form for each speaker. Before submitting his decision, he may transfer the ranks and percentage grades to a form similar to that shown on page 99. If there are several judges their individual ballots will be tabulated by the chairman or the tournament committee on a composite ballot such as is shown on page 98, or this composite ballot may in turn be reduced to some such form as that shown on page 101. This final form indicates not only the individual ranks but also the team ranks.

OBTAINING JUDGES

Different groups have different ideas about judges. Some believe that a rural team, talking on an agricultural subject, should be judged by farmers. Others feel that judging rural discussions is a splendid opportunity to acquaint business and professional people with farm problems, so they invite merchants, bankers, lawyers, or other professional men to act as judges.

Still others feel that it is important that judgment be given on the ability of the participants to use discussion technics; that subject matter is of secondary importance. These groups attempt to secure the services of trained speech teachers.¹

¹A list of speech teachers in Illinois universities, colleges, and high schools has been prepared by the division of speech at the University of Illinois. The names of those speech teachers in your district can be obtained by writing to the Extension Service in Agriculture and Home Economics, University of Illinois, Urbana.
"First of all, let our method of speaking be settled; for no journey can be attempted before we know to what place, and by what road we have to go."—Quintilian

The fundamental principles of constructing a good speech are not especially difficult to grasp. Careful study of these principles and of those pertaining to the delivery of the speech (pages 142-151) and application of them in practice will enable most of those who participate in group discussions to improve their ability and become reasonably effective speakers. If you are to act as a discussion guide, or if you expect to present in a discussion meeting your ideas on a given topic, you should study carefully the instructions given in the following sections on the goal of the speech, the divisions of the speech, the different supporting materials, the outline, the introduction, and the conclusion. If, after studying these principles, you wish to make even more thorough preparation, you may find in Appendix D, pages 165-179, aids which will help you in analyzing your audience and deciding how best to present your material.

Decide first on goal

Altho, when the time comes to give your speech, you will probably start with an introduction either extended or brief, at the time you first begin to think about your speech you should disregard the introduction and concern yourself with
the speech proper, the body of the speech. In doing this you must first decide upon the goal toward which you wish to direct the group. It will be easier if you will determine first, your broader and more general objectives and second, your more specific and exact goal. You follow somewhat the same procedure in taking a trip—you may say, "I am going to Europe; to Paris, to be more exact."

The general aim of your speech may be:

1. To inform, instruct, or enlighten the group; or
2. To secure assent or action from your listeners

Your more exact or specific aim will be determined by what you want to tell your listeners, or by what you want them to do. For example:

1. To enlighten them or to instruct them as to the best ways of preventing soil erosion; or
2. To persuade them to adopt certain practices that will check soil erosion on their farms

This whole matter of determining your general and specific objectives must not be left to chance. To assure yourself that you definitely know your goal before you start, you should write it out in some such simple form as this:

General aim—To instruct
Specific aim—To tell my listeners how laundry soap is made, or

General aim—To secure action
Specific aim—To get the group to sign a contract

Be sure to write down the general and specific goal of your speech before going further.

Sometimes your final aim will be to secure action, but trying to reach that end you will use instruction as a m
to an end. If, for example, your specific aim is to persuade the group to take some action toward the elimination of the chinch bug, you may find it necessary in the first part of your speech to give instruction regarding the life history of the chinch bug. This information may be necessary before the listeners can cooperate in any action to eradicate the chinch bug.

If the general goal of your speech is to instruct or inform, most of your speech will consist of statements of fact. *Statements of fact are statements that the listeners will believe as soon as you utter them, without proof or argument.*

The following are statements of fact:

- There are 60 seconds in a minute.
- Texas is the largest state in the United States.
- Asbestos is not inflammable.
- A bushel of wheat weighs more than a bushel of oats.

If the general goal of your speech is to arouse action or to persuade, your speech may contain numerous statements of opinion. *Statements of opinion are statements that a listener may or may not accept as true.* Whether he accepts your statements of opinion as true depends on his past experiences. He may disagree with a statement of opinion.

The following are statements of opinion:

- Farmers were better off in 1933 than they were in 1934.
- Tractors should replace horses.
- It is going to rain.
- Crops should be planted according to the phases of the moon.

Of course if a listener accepts a statement of opinion as true, then that statement is for that listener a statement of
fact. If he refuses to accept the statement as true, it is for him a statement of opinion.

How will you know whether or not your listeners will accept your statements as statements of fact? Your analysis of your prospective audience should disclose the answer to this question (see Appendix D, pages 165-179).

DETERMINE MAJOR AND MINOR POINTS OF EMPHASIS

Now that you have decided upon your exact speech aim or your definite speech goal, you will need to determine the one or two main ideas that you will advance to accomplish your specific purpose. The treatment of the main ideas constitutes the body of the speech. See “Three Main Visions in All Speeches,” pages 112-113. See, also, the body of the sample speeches given on pages 119-128.

The main ideas are statements of fact or opinion. These statements must bolster up or support the exact purpose of your speech. Minor or subsidiary ideas usually support the main ideas. If the main ideas and minor ideas are properly amplified by more concrete details, you should not find it difficult to achieve your aim. In an 8- to 12-minute speech you will probably have time to develop not more than one or three main ideas. A well-rounded development of main ideas is better, as a rule, than a skimpy treatment of several.

The following is an illustration of an exact speech on some supporting main ideas, and some supporting minor ideas.¹

Definite speech aim—To show how the population tends to migrate.

(Body)

Main idea (1). There is a migration from the farms to the cities.  
Minor idea (1). Before the depression the net average migration was 600,000 a year.  
Minor idea (2). In 1933 the net average was 227,000.  
Main idea (2). There is a migration of industry from the cities to surrounding smaller towns.  
Minor idea. This migration is greatest during times of prosperity.  
Main idea (3). There is a movement of urban workers into surrounding rural territory.  
Minor idea. This migration is greatest during depression times.

USE EXAMPLES, OPINIONS, STATISTICS

You are now ready to study your speech material and to select those things that will best aid you in accomplishing your definite purpose in this particular speech before this particular group on the given occasion.

Look for examples and illustrations, opinions or testimony, and statistics. These will be used to support both your main ideas and your minor ideas.

Examples. An example is a typical, representative, or illustrative case, fact, or occurrence. When illustrating some general principle or statement by a particular example you should choose one that is truly typical and which, if not familiar to the listener and within the realm of his own experience, is similar to cases experienced by him and simple enough to be readily understood.

In the following quotation the first sentence states a general condition. The subsequent statements are specific examples:
The Illinois price of corn rose steadily during 1934. The average price in January was 41 cents a bushel. In February it rose to 42 cents. During June it was 51 cents, August 68 cents, October 73 cents, and December 88 cents.

Opinion or testimony. Opinion or testimony consists of statements made by an expert about some action or thing. By "expert" is meant an authority in the field in which the opinion or testimony is given. A farmer might, for example, be considered an expert when he gives his opinion on the forecast of crops, but he may not be an expert when he gives his opinion on the question of whether or not the United States should join the League of Nations. The value of the opinion or testimony depends upon the degree of expertness of the person making the statement.

When you are looking for opinion or testimony quotations, keep three things in mind.

1. The individual making the statement should be well known as an authority to the members of the group. Your audience knows that Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh is an authority in the field of aviation. If you quote him on some problem of flying, the audience will tend to accept the statement.

2. When, as sometimes happens, the best authority you can quote is not well known to your listeners, you will need to say enough about him so that they will realize that he is a great authority and one whose statements should carry weight.

John Doe, himself a successful farmer for twenty-five years and for the past ten years chief of the . . . . Division of the United States Department of Agriculture, says . . . .
John Doe, recognized in the United States and abroad as the outstanding agricultural economist, writes in his latest book, . . . .

3. If you are considering using a certain statement of opinion in your speech, you should try to find out whether the person who made it is prejudiced. Has he some personal, selfish motive for making the statement, or is he unbiased and honest? Be fair to your listeners. Do not give them a one-sided view of a situation because of carelessness in the selection of opinion statements. Assure yourself that the expert has a reputation for honesty and integrity. Be certain that he was in a position to see, hear, or otherwise observe that whereof he testifies.

John Doe, designer of many dams and an engineer on the Boulder Dam, believes that it is not feasible to construct a dam of greater height than the Boulder Dam.

Statistics. Statistics are useful to the speaker because they summarize and condense facts in a form easily grasped and understood by the listener.

Statistics must be accurate, authoritative, clear, and simple. Do not use statistics unless you are certain that the figures are correct. The statistics should have an authoritative source—a source recognized by the listener to be authoritative. Particularly in oral presentation of statistics, clearness and simplicity are essential for adequate interpretation. Use few statistics and be certain that those you do use are easily understood and instantly comprehended. Whenever possible use round numbers rather than exact numbers.

Figures released by the United States Census Bureau show that there are 261,000 owned homes in the city of Chicago. Of these...
homes 4 percent are valued at less than $3,000; 13 percent are valued at $3,000 to $5,000; 26 percent at $5,000 to $8,000; 21 percent at $10,000 to $15,000; and the remainder, or 17 percent, are valued at $15,000 or more.

Statistics may be seen as well as heard. Visual use of them should be guided by one rule: if by showing the group a chart, map, diagram, or schema you can add to, and not detract from, your speech, show the chart or diagram. The charts may be so small that they can be passed out to the members of the group, or they may be so large that each single map may be seen easily by all of the listeners. The charts and diagrams should be simple, accurate, and authoritative.

After you have made use of your map or diagram put it away, otherwise the members may look at it and think about it instead of giving attention to the rest of your speech.

THREE MAIN DIVISIONS IN ALL SPEECHES

The determining of the goals of a speech, decision as to the points to be emphasized, and the choosing of supporting materials, such as examples and opinions, have to do mainly with the body of the speech, which, strictly speaking, is the speech. Experience dictates that there be, in addition to the body, an introduction and a conclusion. In the sample outlines (pages 114, 116-119, and 126) these three divisions are shown. The introduction and the conclusion receive detailed consideration on the pages following the outlines and speeches.

Altho all speeches may be divided into the three main divisions—introduction, body, and conclusion—the relative weight given to these divisions varies greatly. When a series
of speeches are to be delivered on the various phases of a proposition, the first speaker must give more attention than any of the following speakers to the background of the subject. The introduction of his speech will consequently be long in comparison with the other divisions, and will be longer by far than the introductions of the following speeches. A final speaker may have no introduction other than a sentence or so to connect the body of his speech with the preceding speeches. It is for the final speaker to place emphasis on the conclusions, making that division of his speech longer and more inclusive that the conclusions given by other speakers.

WRITE OUT THE OUTLINE OF THE SPEECH

After you have decided what you want to say to your audience and have gathered adequate material for a speech, you should make an outline of the complete talk. Actually write out the outline. Write down the aims of the speech. Then write the introduction, body, and conclusion. Be certain to indent properly so that the relation of the various parts of the speech is apparent at a glance. The major points should stand out from the minor and supporting points.

Short-form (topic) outline for experienced speaker. The short-form type of outline is for speakers who have spent a period of apprenticeship in the construction of more complete outlines. In the hands of the advanced speaker this outline is to be recommended. Even tho this is all that the speaker writes on paper, he is able, because of his long experience, to carry in his mind the details of the more complete outline. Actually, then, while the trained speaker often writes out
only a small part of his outline, he does make a complete outline mentally.

The following outline is for the first speech at a meeting called to discuss the advisability of finding a new meeting place or building a new community hall. The first speaker, in keeping with the steps of problem solving (page 11), will give the history and the setting of the problem, leaving the matter of solutions to later speakers.

(INTRODUCTION)
History
(BODY)
1. Growth
2. Hall "run-down"
3. Unsafe
4. Rent

(CONCLUSION)
Summary

It is obvious that a speaker using this outline must have known a great deal about the subject before he decided to speak about it, or he must have been forced to do a great deal of preparation not indicated here.

Complete-sentence (long-form) outline. For those who are not experts in speech construction the extended, complete-sentence type of outline beginning on page 116 is to be advocated. It has these advantages: the speaker must give time and thought to its preparation; it shows at a glance the relationship of all of the parts of the speech; it gives superior training in the assembling of speech materials. It is true that it is time-consuming, but this disadvantage is offset by the fact that in constructing such an outline a speaker is
required to digest the materials of his speech so thoroughly that
the amount of subsequent preparation may be lessened; furthermore the speech itself is apt to be better organized
and more thoroughly thought out than it would have been had
a shorter form of outline been used.

Many group leaders will find that despite their recommendation to inexperienced speakers that they use this type of
outline, some, feeling that they do not have time to make a
thorough preparation, will resort to a less exacting method of
outlining; for example, the topic outline (page 114) or the
intermediate type of outline (page 126). Leaders should try
to make such speakers see that they are thereby placing a
deliberate bar in the path of their own and the group's ultimate achievement. The short or topic outline may, of course,
be used by the inexperienced speaker as a method of getting
started with his outline—as a form to be expanded into a
full-sentence outline—or by the experienced speaker; but it
is not a form that will give the inexperienced speaker the
preparation that he needs for a good speech.

An example of a long-form or complete-sentence outline
is given on pages 116-119. It is an expansion, a filling out,
of the preceding topic outline.

When writing the long-form outline, make notes in the
margin to indicate what appeals (to property, affections, etc.,
see pages 168-169) you have used. Try to have as many ap­
peals as possible in each speech. See that you make use of
familiar material, and that it is concrete.

The notation familiar may be used for anything in your
speech which falls within the past experiences of your lis­
teners. The present or future can be understood only in relation to our understanding of the past. From your knowledge of your prospective audience (see Appendix D, pages 165-179), you know something of their past experiences. In your speech use material that will be familiar to them. If you are giving information on something new, use illustrations of a familiar nature. If you must talk about figures in the millions or billions try to simplify them by reducing them to figures within the experience of the listeners. For example: "three billion dollars . . . . this sum would be sufficient to buy a $2500 home for every family in the United States."

The word concrete may be used as a marginal notation to signify the use of definite, exact material. Examples are concrete illustrations of the abstract or general. Be as concrete as possible, for the concrete is easier to understand than the abstract.

(Example of Complete-Sentence Outline)

(AIM)

General aim—To instruct.

Specific aim—To summarize for the group the conditions of the present meeting place. (This might be the outline of the introduction of a long persuasive speech. The partition would then follow this summary. The body would deal with a plea to do something or to adopt some solution. In such case it would illustrate the use of instruction as a means to the end, which is to persuade.)

(INTRODUCTION)

Approach sentence

I. We have but to look around us to see why we are here.
II. For 22 years the organizations we represent have been meeting in this rented hall.

22 years ago this was a new building.

Implied comparison

22 years ago this room was adequate, in most respects, for the small group meeting here.

Partition

III. Coming up to the present we find that:

A. Our organization has outgrown this hall.

B. The hall has been allowed to "run-down."

C. It is unsafe to meet here, and

D. The rent is too high.

BODY

I. During the past 22 years our group has increased in size.

Minor idea

There has been a tremendous growth of the group.

A. Originally this was a small group.

Use of authority

The records of the secretary show that there were only 30 members.

Statistics

B. Regularly every seven years this group has doubled in size.

Use of authority

At present the secretary's records show a total membership of 259.

Familiar

C. In addition there have been organized under our guidance, yet separate from this body, the other groups represented here tonight:

Familiar

1. The young Adult group.

Concrete

They have 60 members.
2. The Future Farmers of America.
   This group has 26 members.
3. The 4-H Club.
   This group has 109 members.
4. The Citifarm Club.
   This group has 80 members.

We represent, after deducting for duplications, a combined group of 284 persons.

II. This hall has been permitted by the society from which it is rented to deteriorate.
   A. It has been decorated but four times in 22 years.
   B. The chairs and tables provided for this room are not kept in repair.
      There are not enough chairs for even a small meeting.
   C. The stove is inadequate for proper heating.
   D. There are no provisions for ventilation.
   E. Janitor services are not adequate.
      Usually our own members must clean the room.

III. It is no longer safe to meet in this place.
   A. The stove permits the escape of carbon gas.
      Several members have become sick because of this.
   B. The blocking of the back stairway the company located on the second floor makes this a deadly fire trap.
Main idea
IV. The rent is too high.

Minor idea
Rent for this hall has been increased every third year since we began making three-year leases.

Property appeal
A year ago, according to the treasurer's books, it was increased $2 a month.

Concrete

(CONCLUSION)
Summary statement of problem
The problem faced by this group is one of an unsatisfactory, dangerous, and expensive meeting place.

Rhetorical question
When our lease expires at the end of two years shall we continue to stay in this hall?

COMPLETE SPEECH IN A DISCUSSION SETTING
At the discussion meeting the speech outlined above would be given at the proper time and would be preceded and followed by remarks leading up to it and away from it. The following partial report of a discussion meeting is presented here in order to show what the setting of such a speech would be in the meeting and how the ideas included in the outline would be expanded and elaborated on actual delivery. One must project his imagination ahead to the occasion and think of all these things when preparing a speech.

(Incomplete Hypothetical Stenographic Report of a Meeting Held in Lincoln County)

Chairman: It is now seven-thirty and therefore time to start our meeting. I wonder if the reason we get here on time is because we know that if we come late there will be no chairs left for us to sit on? (Laughter)

You all know why this special meeting has
Announces purpose of meeting.

Explains that discussion is for all members.

Limits length of speeches.

Points out closing time and shows that it will be adhered to.

Indicates first step in problem solving (see p. 11).

First guide addresses chair.

Is recognized by chair.

STARTS SPEECH. (see Outline, pp. 116-119)

Humorous statement serving to introduce a point to appear later in the speech. Use of the familiar.

An impromptu addition. Very often when a speaker gets a laugh he immediately adds something that will bring been called. We are here tonight to give you a chance to discuss this meeting place. For years, many of you have talked, in private, about this hall. On the part, at least, of the fifty who signed the petition for this special session there seems to be strong dissatisfaction with this hall. Tonight we are going to give everyone a chance to voice his or her opinion on this subject. Each speaker will be permitted to talk not longer than seven minutes. In the hour and a half at our disposal we shall probably not be able to settle our problem completely. Undoubtedly we shall need one or more meetings after this one. With this in mind we can approach our problem with due deliberation. We can give adequate time to all viewpoints. We need rush nothing thru without carefully considering it.

In order that we may know exactly what the problem is which faces us, let us confine our remarks at first to a comprehensive statement of this mutual problem. Who wants to fire the opening gun?

John: Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: John.

John: I am gratified to see so many of our members here tonight. I really do not see how so many of you are able to squeeze into the back of the room. I am going to suggest that every half hour those of us who have chairs change places with those of you who do not have chairs. (Loud applause from those standing. Laughter from those seated.) In the meantime I would suggest that those now standing in an attempt to imitate packed sardines should divide yourselves into two groups. Half of you can breathe in while the other half breathe out. (Laughter)
This is really no laughing matter. If we had an adequate meeting place we might all be comfortably seated. However, lack of seating facilities is only one of the reasons we are met here tonight. You have but to look around you to see a dozen reasons for this emergency meeting. We are faced with an ever-increasing problem concerning this meeting place. Perhaps it will be clearer if I go back to the beginning and recall the growth of our troubles about this hall.

For twenty-two years, at least one of the older organizations represented here tonight has been meeting in this room. During all those years we have paid rent for this place. As you look at it now, you would have to stretch your imagination to believe that twenty-two years ago this was a new building. Right now it looks worse than an old barn.

Those of you who are standing would hardly believe that about fifteen years ago this room was adequate, in most respects to take care of the regular and special meetings of our organization.

It is really to our credit that we now have this problem of an inadequate meeting place. We have constantly increased the size of our group. At the time we began to meet in this hall our total membership was thirty. At that time I was secretary-treasurer of the organization. I well remember how cozy this room was. Naturally it was quite adequate for our small group. I guess that we thought at the time that we had about as good a hall as anyone. But it's like the old gray mare—she ain't what she used to be.
Combining visual stimuli with auditory stimuli. Excellent.

Use of reverse chronology is somewhat confusing. Better to point to twenty-one year period and then trace forward to the present.

Another personal remark as a direct result of having made the previous one noted above.

Calculated to bring listeners into active cooperation with speaker. Excellent technic if not overdone. Use of authority. Actual quotation not needed at this point.

Novel shift of emphasis.

We’ve been a growing organization. You can all see that chart over there on the west wall. That indicates our growth. Count back seven years. What do you find? During that time our membership doubled. Note how the line of the graph rises. Now count back another seven years, and then another seven years. That’s a total of twenty-one years. Do you notice that since then we have doubled our membership every seven years? At the end of the first seven years we had 61 members. At the end of the second seven years we had 123 members. Now according to the chart we have 259 members. This number does not tell the whole story.

As you know we have an affiliate relation with the Young Adult Group. My boy, Phil, is secretary of that group. He says there are now 60 members in the group. Then there are the Future Farmers of America. If I am not mistaken, they have 26 members. Am I right on that figure? (Answer from several, “You’re right.” “That’s right.”)

Another group that meets with us is the 4-H Club. They have 109 members according to Miss Joybell, their leader. Then, finally, there is our Citifarm Club that uses this room. There are 80 of us, but as you know half that number are farmers, and so are also members of this group. Thus you see that even if we do not count in the duplications, that is, the 40, we still have a total membership of 434 persons. That is a big figure. We should be proud of it. But on the other hand the bigger the figure the more insistent are the demands for a new meeting place.
At present we have more than twice as many members as we can crowd in here even if we use all available standing room. Not only is our membership too large for the size of this hall; it is also too good. What do I mean by that? Just this. The place is in terrible condition.

This is the second thing that I want to talk about. We all know that it has been and is being permitted to run down to such an extent that we are all ashamed to have any outsider visit our hall. There isn't a one of you but would be proud to have a stranger visit your cow barn. But you wouldn't want him to come up here, would you?

In twenty-two years this place has been redecorated but four times. I shall not call your attention to the plaster over in this corner, nor to the laths showing thru the plaster on that wall. You have seen these things every meeting since that big rain last June.

Now I'd like to say a word about chairs. Some of you who are standing wish you could sit down. Well, I'll bet that some of you who are seated on broken or flimsy chairs wish the floor was clean enough to sit on. Once upon a time—and this is almost like a fairy tale—these chairs were fairly good chairs. That table, and those over there were pretty good tables. But tables and chairs don't live happily everafter. They disappear. They get broken. And they are not replaced or repaired. Just count the chairs we have left. Chairs are supposed to be included in our rent. Why there aren't enough chairs here for a quorum.

I just said that if the floor was clean, you might prefer to sit on the floor. It isn't clean because adequate janitor service is not pro-
vided by our landlord. It just happens that our women folk didn't sweep tonight, but usually they are the ones who have to come early and tidy the place up for our meetings. I guess some of you think I'm getting all heated up about this situation. Well I am. Certainly that stove over there couldn't heat me up. You know, and I know, that at most of our meetings those who sit up here have to wear their coats. The stove is not big enough to heat this place.

Furthermore, and this is my third point, it makes this place unsafe. You can't smell that coal gas now. You're used to it. But you did notice it when you came in from out-of-doors. Last month Nancy Doe, Mrs. Mile, and Mrs. Jones all became ill because of the fumes from that stove. When you remember that there is no method of ventilating this place you will agree with me that it is positively dangerous to hold meetings here.

There is an even more important reason why we should no longer meet here. This place is a fire trap. Do you realize that the back stairway is no longer open? That it has been blocked up by a company occupying the second floor of this building?

Let me picture for you what would happen if a fire broke out right now in the front of the building on the first floor. Flames would quickly engulf the front stairs—our only means of escape. Soon the smoke would begin to billow in at that door. All of us would rush for that door. Dozens would be trampled underfoot. Your wife, your children would be crushed. Even if they did get out of this room what would happen? If they go down those stairs—the same stairs mind you that...
Concise summary sentence.

Gross exaggeration. There is some janitor service; there are some chairs, etc. However, exaggeration is perfectly understood and accepted by listeners. That "this is the only meeting place" warrants treatment in speech. Except for this condition it is impossible to conceive that a group would continue to meet in such quarters. However, group knows this fact.

First summary in statement form.

Second summary in form of rhetorical questions. Unusual and, because of general agreement of group on problem, unnecessary. Nevertheless it opens way to a following speaker and eliminates necessity of extensive intervening remarks by chairman.

we have gone down hundreds of times—they would be walking into a veritable fiery furnace. If they did not go down those stairs the only other way to exit is through those windows. That means a sheer drop from a third story window. Need I say more? This is a fire trap.

The fourth point I want to discuss has to do with our rent. You would think that with no janitor service, no chairs, no heat, and with the other equipment and furnishings in their present run-down condition, and in a fire trap like this, our rent would be low or that it would be continually lowered as conditions get continually worse. You know this is not true—indeed the opposite is true. Our rents have been increased every time we have renewed our lease. A year ago when we renewed our lease for three years our rent was increased two dollars a month. We had to pay it because this is the only meeting place we could possibly rent.

Fellow members, I have tried to present a fair picture of this meeting place problem which faces us tonight. You can all testify that I have not exaggerated. This place is too small, and it is unsatisfactory in every respect. It is positively dangerous for us to meet here, and it is expensive beyond all reason.

Now that we know the whole situation what are we going to do about it? Are we going to continue to pay out our good money for this place? Are we going to continue to be ashamed to have a visitor come to our hall? Are we going to keep on risking our lives, and the lives of our women and children, in this fire trap?
Second guide addresses chair. Sam: Mr. Chairman.

Is recognized by chair. Chair: You have the floor, Sam.

Starts his speech. Sam: Mr. Chairman,
I want to be the first to answer John's question. The answer is that we should do something about providing ourselves with a new and satisfactory meeting place. Our committee on meeting places has reported that this is the only possible place that may be rented. We must, therefore, buy a place.

I propose that we purchase the Liberty Theater building.

(Body—intermediate type—of Body and Conclusion of Speech of Second Guide)

(BODY)

I. The building can be made available when our lease expires.

The owners of the theater are considering building a new structure at another location. They will build if we buy their building.

II. The building with some remodeling would offer every facility for our group.

A. Size
B. Modern equipment
C. Safety

III. The cost is well within the available means of our group.

(CONCLUSION)

I. Act now and deal directly with the theater owners.
II. Later we may have to deal with some other than the theater owners.
Chairman: You have heard Sam’s proposed solution to our problem. Is the purchase of the theater building the only solution that we have?

Frank: Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Yes, Frank.

Frank: I believe that there is another solution, and that it may be superior to that just outlined.

(Proposes building Community Center building. Points out examples of five such buildings with which he is acquainted. Indicates that cost is not too great for organization. Also introduces idea of having stores or offices on first floor of new building so that some source of income will be provided.)

Henry: Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Henry, do you want to ask a question?

Henry: Yes.

Chairman: Go ahead.

Henry: If the theater people are going to lease their old building and move into a new one, why can’t we rent their old building instead of buying it?

Chairman: Will you answer that question, Sam?

Sam: Mr. Chairman, I guess that I failed to make it clear that the theater owners will build a new building when and if they can sell their old one. Until someone buys their old one, they cannot build a new one and so the old one will not be for rent. Unless some real-estate dealer takes the old building, we are the only group that might purchase it.
Chairman to Henry: Does that answer your question?

Henry: Yes, thank you.

Will: It seems to me that Sam’s answer provides us with another possible solution to our problem. Why can’t we negotiate with a real-estate dealer? Couldn’t we agree to rent the building over a long period of years if he will buy it?

Chairman: Who can answer this question? (etc.)

(Following a summary by the chair, and the passage of a motion instructing the committee on meeting places to talk with the theater owners, to investigate a number of community center buildings and consult with their several architects, and to report at the next meeting, the meeting adjourned.)

WHAT TO STRIVE FOR IN THE INTRODUCTION

The function of the introduction is to prepare the way for the development of the chief ideas of the speech. The nature of the audience, the occasion, and the subject, as well as the qualifications of the speaker, will of course determine the length and kind of introduction to use.

The introduction of a speech may be likened to the doorway of a house. The purpose of the doorway is to give one convenient and perhaps pleasant access to the body of the house. The purpose of the introduction is to lead the listener into the body of the speech.

Specifically, the introduction should do four things:
secure and focus the attention of the group; establish a
mutual feeling of good will between speaker and listener;
provide an outline or explanation of the aims of the speaker
and concentrate thought on these points alone; establish a
firm interest in the main ideas of the speech. And it should
do all this as quickly as possible.

Secure and focus the attention of the group. When you
rise to speak there may be some noise among the listeners.
In addition to your manner, your voice and choice of words
and phrases may be utilized to gain attention and silence.
You must be firm, deliberate, courteous, good-humored (not
necessarily humorous), and animated. If tact is used in the
opening sentences, it should not be difficult to win the group.

At certain times the atmosphere of the occasion is such
that it in itself draws the speaker and the group together.
This is true when a person is one of several speakers on a
topic. In a discussion group the introductions of all the
speakers after the first may be brief—perhaps merely a
sentence establishing a connecting link with the preceding
speech.

Establish mutual feeling of good will. At all times a
pleasant manner is to be desired. Be good-natured, courte-
ous, frank, and interested in the audience and the subject.
Often the demonstration of a sense of humor will sweep away
audience barriers and permit the establishment of the desired
intimate speaker-group relationship. If speaker and listeners
can laugh together, they can also think and act together on
a common basis.
Provide an outline or explanation of aims. After you have secured the attention and interest of the group, it is sometimes necessary to—

1. Give a history of the question. If, for example you were talking about a dairy herd improvement association it might be wise to begin by telling how such associations came into being, and what forces operated to create them.

2. Explain why the subject is now of such great importance as to warrant its discussion instead of some other topic.

3. Define the terms in which you state your subject. If the subject is poultry management, make clear just what is included in the term poultry and the term management. It may be that some of your listeners have a different conception of these words.

4. Narrow the question. Point out clearly that certain distantly related matters are not to be brought into your discussion.

Establish firm interest in main ideas of speech. After having gained the attention of the group and in general prepared their minds for the main idea or ideas of your speech, it becomes necessary to give them the main idea or ideas. In other words, in the introduction you tell the group what you are going to talk about in the body (discussion) of your speech. Often this is all you need do in the introduction. For example, if a group of speakers are discussing rural electrification, the third speaker might rise and say.

Mr. Chairman: I should like to say a few words about the financing of the electrification of this area. There are two main points . . . .
Bring remarks quickly to the point. The introduction to a speech should be as short as possible. You will need to fight constantly to keep it short. Get to the point of your speech. Make every second count. Each second is equivalent to two words.

WHAT TO AVOID IN THE INTRODUCTION

Apologies. Some people apologize for not being prepared to speak, but go right ahead and try to speak. If you are not prepared, do not speak. If you are prepared, you need not apologize for anything. Be prepared.

Foreign chains of thought. A speaker once began his speech by saying: “Japan is a land of songless birds, tailless cats, and odorless flowers, but that has nothing to do with my subject. I wish to talk about Abraham Lincoln.” This introduction was striking, and it gained the attention of the audience, but it focused attention on the introduction itself rather than on the speech to follow. It led the listeners to think about Japan, and not about Lincoln. After ten years the introduction is recalled, but not one single point of the long speech that followed is remembered.

Prolonging the introduction and delaying the discussion. The introduction, as stated above, should be as brief as possible. Sometimes no real introduction is needed, particularly when the discussion has been in progress for some time before you take part. Do not go too far back in the history of the question, or pile up numerous stories, or otherwise unnecessarily extend the introduction.
Reversing the chronological order of the introduction. When a speaker wishes to give a brief history of the question in his introduction, the logical order is that which begins at the beginning of the series of events to be narrated and continues step by step onwards toward the present. Sometimes, however, a poor speaker in giving a history of the question begins not at the beginning but at some event which has occurred relatively recently and which has caught his attention first. Instead of coming onward to the present from that point, he is reminded as he proceeds of something which occurred earlier. He digresses to tell about that, and as he talks he may think of something even more remote. This type of introduction is unsatisfactory because either it jumps about from point to point and leaves the reader confused about the chronology and cause-and-effect relationship of the events, or it takes the back trail and ends not with the present but with the beginning.

Omitting vital parts of the introduction. Some people cannot tell a story without forgetting some vital point or without having to go back and put in something they forgot to put in at its proper place. These same individuals may carry this fault into their public speaking unless they use extreme care in preparation.

Complaining about time limitations. Do not begin by saying: "I have only ten minutes to deal with this vital problem of agriculture. This is hardly enough time for me to scratch the surface of such a broad subject. . . . ." You but waste your precious time when you complain about it. Begin your speech! Consider only essentials.
Flattery. If you wish to praise the audience for something, do so. But do not overdo it. Exaggerated praise becomes insincere flattery. Audiences easily detect insincerity and become opposed to the speaker who does not “ring true.”

A too critical attitude. Do not criticize the previous speakers or the arrangements for the discussion meeting. Do not find fault with the audience or the occasion. Strive for harmony in the introduction so that everyone will be ready to join with you if you see fit to offer justified criticisms in the body of your speech.

Exaggerated emotion. It is seldom that one can begin a speech with an exaggerated display of emotion without its being detected as counterfeit. If emotion belongs in your speech, work up to it in the conclusion.

Long, complex sentences. Altho there are many notable exceptions, most speeches begin with relatively short, simple sentences. The simple sentence is easy to grasp and understand. When you first begin to speak, your voice, rate, style, and manner of thinking are strange to the listeners. It is difficult for them to comprehend you if you use long, complex sentences. Start with short sentences, and as the audience becomes acquainted with your speaking style, you may use more complex sentences.

Personalities. So far as possible, hold yourself to your subject and do not make personal attacks. This does not mean that you may never mention those persons who oppose your point of view. As a matter of fact, you may refer to
them, but not in such a manner as to raise the issue of personalities at the expense of the subject matter.

EXAMPLES OF DIFFERENT INTRODUCTIONS

The introduction that emphasizes the speaker. Your subject is the important thing. Do not push yourself forward. Use the personal style of introduction only rarely. It usually shows unpreparedness, egotism, nervousness, or an attempt to waste time. Following are some examples of poor introductions:

I have not had time to prepare fully.
I have never done any speaking, so.
I hardly know how to begin to deal with such a great subject.

The introduction that emphasizes the occasion. Again, your subject is the important thing. Do not waste the time of the audience by lengthy references to the occasion. The introduction that refers briefly to the occasion is, however, usually acceptable. Do not permit it to become lengthy. Following are two examples of suitable introductions referring to the occasion:

(1) On this, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of Blanksburg, your minds are occupied with the achievements of the past quarter of a century. You glory—and rightly—in those achievements. But I know also that you already are looking forward to the advances of the next two and a half decades. In great part the advances of Blanksburg will reflect the future advances in agriculture in this area. It is well, therefore, that we consider some of the agricultural problems.

(2) Your enthusiasm on this occasion is a clear indication of your willingness to consider thoughtfully and sanely the problems which today confront the farmer.

The introduction that emphasizes the subject. If you
begin at once to talk about your subject, the chances are that you will make an historical or chronological introduction. You may demonstrate the immediate importance of the topic by showing that it is being widely discussed or that much is being written about it, that those discussing or writing on the proposition are prominent individuals. You may show how the subject is related to the place, the occasion, or to you as the speaker.

Some speakers make the mistake of going too far back into history in their introduction. An historical introduction should be short. Give only the highlights of history as related to your subject:

1. Preceding the turn of the century farms were being settled at the rate of fifty a week. This rate continued with slight decrease until 1914. Our problems in agriculture were primarily national. An ever increasing urban and rural population gave farmers a ready market for as much as they could produce. With improved methods of rapid transportation more and more was produced and distributed. Then came the war. Production was doubled; tripled. Prices of farm commodities set new stratosphere records. Agricultural problems assumed an international aspect . . . .

2. During the past three months 15 percent of the newspaper headlines, 5 percent of the articles in our leading magazines, 8 percent of the national broadcasts, and 22 percent of the discussions of both houses of Congress have revolved about the subject we are to consider here today. Surely a question of such importance warrants our careful consideration . . . .

The introduction that emphasizes the meeting place. The history of the meeting place, some of its excellencies or shortcomings, or certain of its physical features may be utilized in your introduction.

1. Since the dedication of this building forty years ago numerous groups have gathered here to discuss and act upon problems vital
to the welfare of the community. Beneath this roof many important decisions have been reached. The spirit dominating those meetings in the past has been one of earnestness and of sincere desire to seek the best possible course of action. We trust that our deliberations tonight may reflect this same spirit of earnestness and harmony. As we think on this proposal for united action, . . . .

(2) When someone turned off the lights a few minutes ago, I was reminded of our own agricultural conditions. Sometimes we are in the dark; sometimes we see the light. Tonight I hope that before we adjourn this meeting we shall have gained a great deal of light on the question that forms the basis for our discussion.

The introduction that emphasizes the striking or dramatic.

Last Monday morning a truck driver failed to heed a stop warning. He drove his truck onto a state highway not many miles from here in front of an approaching car. Most of you read in your papers about the tragedy that followed. On Monday afternoon at the new ———— building being constructed in ————, several tons of steel girders were being hoisted to the top floor of the building. Whether by carelessness or not I do not know, but a chain became loosened, the steel plunged downward, tore loose the end of a scaffold on which three men were working. You read, also, about that. And in our own community not long ago one of our neighbors was hauling corn at night—hauling it home to feed some of those fine steers he feeds every winter. I regret to say that he had forgotten to hang a light on the back of his wagon. When Miss ———— came hurrying along the road on her way home from school, the first warning she had of danger was the sight of a wagon just in front of her car. Fortunately no one was killed in the crash that followed.

These are not unusual occurrences. Last year there were a hundred thousand deaths from such accidents in our country, ten million other serious injuries, and a financial loss from such accidents amounting to more than eleven billion dollars. That is what happened last year. That is what is occurring this year. We may expect the same or worse year after year unless you and I and people in other communities do something to stop accidents.

The introduction based on a quotation. Examples:

(1) "The future of the American farmer is in his own hands. He must bring his problems out into the open, discuss them with
his fellows, and then present his decisions clearly and with united voice to his government.” This statement by John Doe indicates, I believe, the spirit of this meeting.

(2) ‘The farmer must more and more rely on the federal government.’ ‘Farmers must band together as do industrial workers.’ ‘The farmer is being forced to depend on his own individual efforts.’ These three statements, each by eminent authorities, appeared in our local papers last week. Let us analyze each of them and see what conclusions we may draw as to the future of agriculture.

The humorous introduction. The introduction containing humor is not recommended for constant use. Humor is not always appropriate, and furthermore, one who uses it too frequently gains a reputation of being trifling, of lacking in earnestness. Humor may be extremely valuable in easing tension or ill will in the meeting. When used for this purpose, the humorous introduction may be continued until the speaker feels that good will has been restored, and that the members of the group have relaxed and are willing to listen to a continuance of the discussion.

The “connecting” introduction. The introduction making a connection with an immediately preceding speech is particularly valuable in discussion speaking because it tends to unite the various speeches into a whole.

(1) One of the preceding speakers pointed out that the consolidation of the one-room schools in this district would permit us to hire better teachers for our children; that duplication of effort would be prevented, thus reducing costs.

If this were the complete picture I would vote “yes” for consolidation. But I do not recall that anything was said about the cost of transporting our children to these consolidated schools, or the impossibility of travel by bus over many of our roads during certain seasons of the year, or the expense of maintaining these buses. These things and also the fact that buses could be used only part of the year should also be considered.
(2) The preceding speaker told you that in this county he "presumed that there were more than a dozen one-room schools." I have here the report of the county superintendent of schools in which it is stated that there are eleven one-room schools, of which only eight are open. This means that our problem of consolidation is only two-thirds as difficult as the figures formerly presented would indicate. Now let us look at the problem in the light of these figures, which we have reason to believe are accurate.

THE CONCLUSION

If in the introduction you tell what you are going to talk about; if, in the body of your speech, you do talk about these things; then in the conclusion you may wish to summarize or say "I have talked about those things." In addition to providing an opportunity to summarize, the conclusion also offers you an opportunity to make a plea for belief or action. Such a plea will most certainly be found in a persuasive speech. In the informative or instructive speech the summary is the usual means of terminating the speech.

The conclusion must be prepared with great care. The introduction and the conclusion are the most important parts of a speech. You want to leave the audience with a good impression of your subject and of yourself. The conclusion is like the rear end of a perfectly streamlined vehicle—it terminates beautifully and without disturbance; it rounds out the thought.

What may be included. A good conclusion may do these things:

*Complete the speech.* Just as there is something jarring and inharmonious about a piece of radio music that is suddenly turned off without being permitted to continue to the
end, so is there something "incomplete" about a speech with no conclusion or with a poor conclusion. Just as we instinctively wait for the singer's final note, so we feel satisfied only when the speaker rounds out and completes his speech.

**Summarize.** If in the body of your speech you say that we should organize a cooperative elevator because it will permit us to obtain better prices for our grain and because it will reduce our shipping and storage losses, you might conclude like this:

In conclusion, I have shown you that a cooperative elevator would permit us to obtain better prices for our grain; that it would reduce our shipping costs; and that it would prevent our individual storage losses. I ask you, therefore, to vote "yes" on this proposition of organizing a cooperative elevator.

It is clear that the summary type of conclusion makes use of reiteration. It is a repetition, in the same or slightly different words, of the *main ideas* and the *exact purpose* of your speech.

**Refer to the occasion.** Such a conclusion is particularly fitting if you have referred to the occasion in the introduction.

We celebrate today the twenty-fifth anniversary of Blanksburg. We celebrate because those who preceded us built wisely and carefully. Will those who celebrate here a quarter of a century from now be able to say that we planned wisely? Will they rejoice that today we met and acted wisely on this plan of agricultural cooperation? They will if we accept this proposition. They will if we vote in favor of this question. We must vote "yes."

**Refer to the audience.**

**End with a rhetorical question.** In the example just given you might, instead of ending with the sentence, "We must
vote ‘yes’” have substituted the rhetorical question, “What shall be our answer?”

*Use a quotation, stanza, or poem.*

*Make a personal declaration.* This type of conclusion may be illustrated by the following assertion:

In view of these conditions which I have just reviewed, and of the facts presented by other members of the group and discussed here tonight, I shall stand squarely behind the proposition to bring electric service within the reach of the farmers of this community.

*Anticipate the probable arguments of the speaker who is to follow, and briefly dispose of them.*

I know that some who speak after me will tell you that money is scarce; that we either cannot afford to send our discussion team to the interstate finals at Kansas City, or that we can use the funds in the treasury to better purpose. They may tell you that we should vote to hold the interstate meet at Chicago because it is nearer home. Against such claims I raise these questions: Will anyone show us that we cannot afford to send our team to Kansas City? Will anyone say that in the long run we can better help our organization than by spending a small sum in this manner? Will anyone deny that our team members will gain added experience and viewpoints by visiting another state? And, finally, when it is now known that the national discussion tournament finals are to be held in Chicago, is it not reasonable to vote against holding the midwestern tourney at the same place?

Certainly if we have the money to send our team; if they may hope to gain experience by making a trip outside the state; and if we are certain of having the final contest in our own state, we should vote to hold the sectional discussion meeting in Kansas City.

*What to avoid in the conclusion.* *Including too much material.* Plan your conclusion carefully so that you say what you want to say and then stop. Too often speakers lack, as someone has said, “terminal facilities.” They do
not seem to be able to stop. To continue after you should have stopped is to ruin your speech.

_Inclusion of material not given in the speech._ If you have not discussed a point in the body of your speech, it has no place in the conclusion.

_Making a plea for something not discussed in the speech._ If you are making a speech in favor of building a recreation and meeting place, you might bring in the fact that altho the taxes on the new building would be high, they could be met by paying dues. In your conclusion, when you make your final plea for the cooperation of the group in the enterprise, it would be a mistake to include a plea for lowering taxes in your community. If you want to have the taxes lowered, make a separate speech on that subject.

_A conclusion that is too short._ A conclusion has a definite function, and if it is too short it cannot accomplish its purpose. If necessary, reduce the length of the body of your speech so that you may have time for an adequate conclusion.

_Apologies._ You should so prepare and deliver your speech that no apologies are necessary. If you are ashamed of your speech and have to apologize, then of course the audience will not think much of your speaking ability. Study and prepare, and you need not be ashamed.

_Tacking on an "I thank you."_ Mediocre speakers and those who have not carefully prepared end their speeches quite often by saying, "I thank you." If they had prepared their speeches, they would realize that the audience should thank them for disclosing such a wealth of information.
PART VIII. PRACTICING AND DELIVERING YOUR SPEECH

“It is not enough to know what we are to say; we must say it in the right way.”—Aristotle

ANY NORMAL PERSON can speak, but not everyone is able to speak effectively. The effective speaker holds a distinct advantage in any group when policies are to be decided upon and decisions made. Even tho an idea may be sound and worthy, it will carry little weight with a group unless it is so clearly and forcefully presented that it is understood by the members of the group and its significance is appreciated. Naturally each person who participates in a discussion wants his own ideas to receive the full weight of consideration due them. He should therefore always endeavor to present his remarks as well as he can and to improve his ability with practice.

PREPARING TO DELIVER YOUR SPEECH

There are a number of methods that you may use in delivering your speech. You may read a manuscript, memorize, or speak extemporaneously. The first two methods require complete writing out of the speech. This takes a great deal of time. When you read from your manuscript, you lose contact with your listeners. When you try to memorize your speech, you run the risk of forgetting. By far the best is the extemporaneous method of delivery.
Master the outline and practice oral delivery. Follow these directions to gain proficiency in extemporaneous speaking:

1. Take the outline of your speech in your hand. Read it thru aloud. Stand while doing this. When you give the speech you will stand—begin practicing now for the actual speaking situation. If your group is small, you will practice while seated.

2. Repeat the reading of the outline two or three times. Now the connection and relation of the various parts of the outline should be clear.

3. Go thru the outline again, but this time add whatever thoughts you have on each of the points. If the actual final speech is to be ten minutes long, time yourself so that this practice delivery does not take more than ten minutes. Whatever the final length of the speech, you should always practice within that time limit. Never permit yourself to have an extra few minutes.

4. Repeat this procedure four or five times a day at different intervals during the day. After two or three days, that is, after ten or twelve repetitions of the outline, you will know the outline so well that you will not need it before you. You will find that without conscious effort you have practically memorized the outline. This is one of the essentials of good extemporaneous speaking—a memorized outline.

Keep up your practice for a week or two before the actual delivery of the speech at the group meeting. This means that you must not delay the preparation of your speech until the last moment. Practice the speech anywhere you happen to be—in the fields or in the barn—just so that it does not disturb
anyone. Always say it aloud. Always pretend you are before your actual audience.

5. Use somewhat different words each day to express the ideas of the various points in the outline. Look up synonyms—and use them. Add to your speaking vocabulary. If you do not try to use the same words each time you will not be led into the temptation of attempting to memorize the speech. By using a variety of words you are always assured that when you finally deliver the speech you will not be embarrassed by forgetting a certain word—there will be any number of words to use. This guarantees a smooth, efficient speech.

As you continue to add to your vocabulary and to practice the delivery of your speech, you will be surprised how soon you gain a feeling of assurance and how easily and effectively you deliver your speech.

With the extemporaneous method of delivery you are not confined to your notes; neither are you in danger of forgetting—as you would be if you tried to memorize your speech.

To summarize: The extemporaneous method of delivery requires the thorough preparation of the outline of the speech. It involves memorizing the points of the outline in their correct relationship. It calls for adequate practice of the speech. It does not call for the memorizing of the speech. Except in unusual cases, it eliminates the need of notes.

Learn how to deal with questions from the audience. If you are to be able to deal effectively with questions that may be directed at you while you are speaking as a guide or chairman, you need to anticipate them when you are preparing
your speech. Particularly when you are preparing for extemporaneous delivery, make time allowances for possible interruptions. If, for example, you have ten minutes total time, allow about three minutes for interruptions. But have material with which to occupy the three minutes or any part of it in case there are fewer interruptions. Tell the group at the beginning that you will provide opportunity for their questions during and after your speech. In addition, tell them they may interrupt at any time. Most persons will wait for your pauses. After your first point, you might say, for example, “Are there any questions at this point?” Or, “I shall pause a moment to give you a chance to ask questions or to add to the discussion. Who will be first?”

Prepare to meet interruptions by following these suggestions:

1. As you go over your material think of all the questions you might be asked. Very often some one in the group will ask questions in the hope that you will not be able to answer and that you will be embarrassed. Try to think of every possible question. Practice the answers to every question orally. Improve the answer. Repeat.

2. Have your friends and team mates listen to your speech. Ask them to interrupt you frequently. Get used to interruptions.

3. Know what to do when you are interrupted. In view of the purpose of discussion to promote the interchange of opinions, interruptions should be welcome if it is not imperative that you continue your speech at once in order to preserve its continuity. You can judge whether or not you should
permit others to enter the discussion at that time or whether you should complete your speech before they participate. Remember the purpose of group discussion.

In determining whether or not an interruption is justifiable, you should try to decide why you are interrupted. It may be because someone wishes to embarrass you, because someone just wishes to talk, or because someone wishes more information.

When interrupted by someone eager to embarrass you, you will never be embarrassed if the chairman is efficient and if you are expecting interruptions. Answer the questions courteously. If the interrupter persists at numerous points thru your speech, pleasantly indicate to the chairman that the “gentleman” might better permit you to conclude your speech, because before you are thru he will find that you have dealt adequately with most of the questions he might ask.

When interrupted by someone who wants to talk, you usually will find that such a person asks a question and answers it, and proceeds to talk—all without pause or giving opportunity for you to answer the question. If he answers his own question, quickly point it out and continue with your speech. Or point out to the chairman that the questioner has answered his own question and that you have the floor. Sometimes a person will ask a question and then, after you have answered it, will at once begin to refute your answer.

As parliamentary procedures become familiar, however, the members of a group realize that only one person at a time is entitled to the floor. Those who have something they
wish to say usually learn to wait for an opportunity to answer your remarks after you are thru speaking. During the period when members are becoming acquainted with the technics of group discussion, an able chairman can do much to protect the speaker against untimely interruptions and to impart to the members a desire to conduct their discussions in an orderly and efficient manner.

When interrupted justly by someone who wants more information or more detailed information than you have included in your speech, turn as many questions as possible back to the audience. (If your purpose is to stimulate all the members of the group to enter into the discussion, never answer a question—provided you can get someone in the audience to answer it.) Then answer, if you can, the questions that cannot be answered by the other members of the group.

In answering information questions first restate the question so that everyone knows what it is; second, inquire of the questioner to determine whether you have stated his question correctly; third, answer the question; fourth, illustrate or give examples of your answer, if that is possible; fifth, give the group a reference or two and tell them that they may read these for further information on the question; sixth, show how your answer to the question fits into your speech or into the discussion as a whole (this is important); seventh, ask the questioner if you have answered his question satisfactorily (“Does that answer your question?” “Is that the information you wanted?”); eighth, summarize your speech up to the point of interruption or go back a few sentences so that the group will be able to recall what you have
said in order that they may understand what you are about to say.

If you cannot answer some of the questions that are asked, do not be embarrassed. Frankly admit, after having ascertained that no one in the group can answer the question, that you cannot now answer the question. Say that you will try to find the answer. Do so. Give the answer at the next meeting. You will not be embarrassed if you have not tried to give the impression of pretending to know all there is to know on the question. Your modesty is your protection.

Group-discussion speaking is not an excuse for you to show off. Do not try to bluff. Do not try to pretend that the question is unimportant or irrelevant.

OVERCOMING NERVOUSNESS OR STAGE FRIGHT

If you are bothered by nervousness when you speak before a group, just remember that most of the others feel the same way when they speak. The experienced speaker who appears so calm and sure of himself merely has his nervous system under control. Probably he too feels a certain amount of trepidation before he begins to speak. He has no doubt gained his calmness and sureness of control—and any other person may gain similar control over his nerves—by a series of self-strengthening steps.

The following measures are helpful in overcoming nervousness:

1. Realize that stage fright can be overcome.

2. Remember that every effort made to overcome nervousness always decreases the remaining dis-ease.
3. If you are extremely nervous, begin to enter into public discussion situations by raising your hand, and by saying "yes" or "no" when given an opportunity to vote.

4. On every possible occasion take part by using such short parliamentary phrases as "I second the motion," "I nominate Mr. Clark," "I move that we adjourn."

5. Make use of every opportunity that is offered you to read the minutes of the meeting to the group, to read letters from absent members, or to read short extracts about the subject under discussion.

6. Build up your self-confidence by asking carefully phrased questions on the discussion topic. In doing this you place yourself in a commanding position, because someone has to answer your question.

7. Contribute short sentence statements to the discussion. For example, say "I agree with the statement just made."

8. Gradually increase the extent and scope of your remarks. Always give careful attention to the preparation of your contributions.

9. Remember that you need not worry about your hands or your feet. Somehow they will take care of themselves. However, when you begin to participate in discussions, you may find it helpful to take hold of the back of a chair or hold a book in your hands as you speak.

THE USE OF NOTES

In general do not use notes while speaking. There are several reasons why notes should not be used:

1. Notes tempt you to rely upon them rather than upon thorough preparation.
2. When you read from notes, your listeners usually feel that you have not given much thought to the preparation of the speech. If you have not thought the preparation important, why should they think that what you say is important?

3. While you read from notes you cannot be looking at the group. Good speakers always watch their listeners.

4. Often notes are lost or mixed up, causing embarrassment.

5. The use of notes usually results in the inclusion of too much quoted material. Say what you think in your own words. Under no circumstances include more quoted matter in a speech than 10 percent of the total speech.

6. The presence of notes in the hand attracts the attention of the listeners. You want their attention on what you say rather than on some pieces of white paper!

7. If you have notes in your hand, you will find it more difficult to use the hand in making helpful gestures.

There are times, however, when the use of notes is justified, even helpful. When you are quoting an authority or statistics, you must be certain of the accuracy of your quotation; the use of notes containing the statements or figures assures you and the group of an accurate quotation. If you wish to say something (outside your prepared speech) about the remarks of a preceding speaker, you will do well to write down his points so that you may remember them. Also write down the answers that occur to you at the time.

A word about the handling of notes: If you need to use notes do not try to hide the fact. Do not try to secrete a small paper in the palm of the hand. But do not go to the
other extreme and use large sheets of paper. Excellent for
brief notes is a card 4 inches by 6 inches in size. Such cards
cost about fifteen cents a hundred.

Do not pull notes out of your pocket. If there is a table
or stand nearby place your cards on it until you need them.
After using them replace them on the table. For a short
speech, you may hold the notes in one hand throught. If you
think that you may want to use notes, practice with some
cards when you are preparing your speech. Learn to gesture
with the cards in your hand. Some people can make very
effective gestures with cards in one hand.

Do not “play” with the cards. Do not roll them, tear
them, or bend them. Such movements will distract the
attention of the members of the group.

Whether a speaker delivers his speech from written notes,
writes his speech and reads it from the manuscript, writes it
and memorizes it, or delivers it spontaneously—he should
always remember that his speech is designed for a specific
audience, on a particular occasion, and on a given topic. All
that can be done to bring the speaker, subject, and audience
into a closer and unified relationship during the particular
time when the speaker is speaking must be done.
APPENDIX A: HOW TO GET MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION TOPICS

Think. Before you do anything else recall everything that you know concerning the subject. You will be surprised at the amount of knowledge you have on the subject.

Talk and listen. In conversation with your friends determine what is generally known about the question. If almost everyone knows about certain phases of the subject, you may then decide to direct your attention to the less well-known aspects of the proposition.

Observe. Note the conditions in your community that have a bearing on the question.

Read. Find out what the newspapers and magazines have to offer on the subject. Ask the local librarian to suggest references. Ask your local farm or home adviser for printed or mimeographed material.

Write to the agricultural extension service of the state university for pamphlets. Write to the state department of agriculture or the state library for material.

Send to the Extension Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C., for bulletins. Other government agencies besides the U. S. Department of Agriculture publish bulletins on a wide variety of subjects, lists of which may be secured directly by writing to the U. S. Department of Labor.

References on discussion methods and speaking are given in Appendix E, page 186.

In Illinois: Extension Service in Agriculture and Home Economics, College of Agriculture, University of Illinois, Urbana.

In Illinois: Library Extension Division, Illinois State Library, Springfield.

Look over the lists of additional references usually printed at the back of pamphlets and books that come to you. Write directly to the publishers or distributors for the titles that you think will be helpful to you. If further information is needed, consult your local bookstore or write to the agricultural extension service of the state university. If you are looking for statistics and other factual material, do not overlook the wealth of information contained in the Census reports and the various yearbooks and almanacs, most of which will be found in any good school or public library or in the editorial offices of local newspapers.
APPENDIX B: SUGGESTED RULES FOR A DISCUSSION-TEAM TOURNAMENT

1. A discussion team shall consist of a chairman and three discussion guides.

2. Any rural community may enter one or more teams.

3. Each county will make its own rules for the selection of its team. Two or more teams must be entered in the county tournament, from which one team is to be selected. The selection may be done by rating each chairman and guide and selecting the lowest-rating chairman and three lowest-rating guides. Each session in a county tournament shall be limited to 90 minutes, and each guide may speak not more than 10 minutes.

4. In Illinois the judges for all county tryouts may be selected from a list which may be secured from the Extension Service in Agriculture and Home Economics, College of Agriculture, University of Illinois. All judges shall use a standard rating ballot which can be secured from the Extension Service.

5. Teams showing the highest ability in county tryouts are eligible to participate in the State Final Tournament to be held at the State University during Farm and Home Week. No team may participate in the State Final Tournament without first having participated in a county meeting. If substitutions in any team are necessary because of illness or 1See pages 87-88 and 97-98 for explanation of the low-rating system.

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otherwise, the next low-rating guide in the county shall be selected. Teams in the State Final Tournament shall be matched by the drawing of lots.

6. One team will be selected at the State Final Tournament and will be composed of the three outstanding individual guides and the one chairman demonstrating the greatest skill. The low-rating system will be used and one University judge will make the selection.

7. A team entering the State Final Tournament shall pay all its own expenses.

8. The State Final Tournament shall be in charge of a Discussion Tournament Committee.

9. The topic for the Tournament shall be: "..."

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1Group-discussion tournaments should be handled by a committee composed of one or more members from each local organization having a team entered in the series or of members of some other organization sponsoring the competition. It is often advisable to begin with some kind of a county organization, under a county committee. State or national committees may be set up if more widespread participation is desired.

In any case the proper committee will decide upon the topic for discussion and the rules governing the various phases of the tournament.
APPENDIX C: THE FUNDAMENTALS OF PARLIAMENTARY LAW

Five principles. Five broad principles underlie all parliamentary law. The details of parliamentary procedure will be much more easily remembered if these five principles are kept in mind:

1. Only one subject may be attended to at a time.
2. Every proposal presented for consideration is entitled to full and free discussion.
3. The rights of all members are equal.
4. The will of the majority must be obeyed, and the rights of the minority must be preserved.
5. The personalities and desires of the separate members should be so merged that although the members participate as individuals the participation is always directed toward the best interests of the group as a whole.

Steps in handling a motion. The business of a group is transacted by means of motions. Different motions have different forms. The correct statement of each motion should be memorized. There are eight steps in the progressive handling of a motion:

1. A member rises and addresses the chair.
   "Mr. Chairman" or "Madam Chairman."

2. The chairman recognizes the member.
   "Mr. X" (or by nodding at the member).

3. The member makes a motion.
   "I move that . . . ." (e.g., "we build a community-center building").

4. Another member seconds the motion.
   (Without rising) "I second the motion."

5. The chairman states the motion to the group.
   "It has been moved and seconded that we build a community-center building. Is there any discussion?"

6. The group discusses the motion.
   Members wishing to speak on the question rise, address the chair, and await recognition.

7. The chairman takes a vote on the question.
   "Is there any further discussion?" If no one claims the floor, the chairman says (repeating the motion), "All in favor of the motion that we build a community-center building say 'Aye.'" After those in favor respond "Aye," the chairman continues, "Those opposed say 'No.'" Those opposed then say "No."
   Voting may be done also by a show of hands, by rising, or by ballot. Example: "All in favor of the motion [state motion] please rise." After the standing members have been counted, the chairman says, "Please be seated. Those opposed please rise." After a count is made, the chair says, "Please be seated."

8. The chairman announces the result of the voting.
   "The motion is carried; therefore we will build a community-center building." If the motion is lost, the correct form is, "The motion is lost."

Four classes of motions. Motions are classified, in order of precedence, under four heads: privileged motions, subsidiary motions, main motions, and incidental motions.

1. Privileged motions. These are motions that take precedence over all other motions.
To fix time to which to adjourn .......... LD
To adjourn (without qualification) .......... ND
To take a recess ......................... LD
To rise to a question of privilege .......... I, NS, ND
To call for orders of the day ............ I, NS, ND

2. Subsidiary motions. These are motions that arise only because of the existence of some principal motion to which they are subsidiary.

To lay on the table .......................... ND
To take from the table ........................ ND
To call for the previous question ........... ND, ¾ vote
To limit debate ................................ LD, ¾ vote
To extend debate ................................ LD, ¾ vote
To postpone definitely ........................ LD
To refer to a committee ........................ LD
To postpone indefinitely
To amend

3. Main motions. The purpose of these motions is to bring a question before the group.

Main motion .................................. I
To reconsider .................................. I, ND
To reconsider and have entered on the minutes .... I, ND
To rescind .................................... ¾ vote
To expunge .................................... ¾ vote
To adopt a resolution
To adjourn (with qualifications)
To create orders of the day (special) ........... ¾ vote
To amend constitution ........................... ¾ vote

*These abbreviations mean:
I—May interrupt a member who has the floor.
ND—No discussion permitted.
LD—Limited amount of discussion permitted.
NS—No second required.
¾ vote—Two-thirds vote needed to carry.

*Unless otherwise noted, a motion may not be made when a member has the floor; a motion requires a second; full discussion is permitted; a majority (more than half) vote is required to carry it.*
4. Incidental motions. These are motions that arise incidentally out of the business of the group, and have no precedence among themselves.

To suspend rules ....................... ND, ⅔ vote
To withdraw a motion ............... NS, ND
To object to the consideration of a question I, NS, ND, ⅔ vote
To rise to a point of order ............. I, NS, ND
To rise to a parliamentary inquiry ...... I, NS, ND
To appeal from the decision of the chairman I, LD
To call for a division of the house ...... I, NS, ND
To call for a division of a question ...... ND

Motions in order of frequency. Some motions are used in every meeting; others are used infrequently. The following outline lists motions according to their frequency of use and suggests the correct form of statement for most of the various motions.

1. Main motion.

(M) "I move that we send our discussion guides to Appleville on December 20."

(C) "It has been moved and seconded that we send our discussion guides to Appleville on December 20. Is there any debate?"

(Cd) "All in favor of the motion that we send our discussion guides to Appleville on December 20 say 'Aye': those opposed, 'No.' The motion is carried and we will send our discussion guides to Appleville on December 20."

These abbreviations mean:
I—May interrupt a member who has the floor.
ND—No discussion permitted.
LD—Limited amount of discussion permitted.
NS—No second required.
⅔ vote—Two-thirds vote needed to carry.

Unless otherwise noted, a motion may not be made when a member has the floor; a motion requires a second; full discussion is permitted; a majority (more than half) vote is required to carry it.

In the following outline "(M)" indicates that the form given is the correct one for the member to use after having been recognized; "(C)" for the chairman to use after hearing a second; "(Cd)" for the chairman to use after the discussion of the question.
2. Motion to amend

a. By addition or insertion

(M) "I move to amend the motion by inserting the words 'and two chairmen' after the word 'guides.'"

(C, Cd) "It has been moved and seconded to amend the motion by inserting the words 'and two chairmen' after the word 'guides,' so that the motion if amended would read 'that we send our discussion guides and two chairmen to Appleville on December 20.' Is there any discussion on the proposed amendment? . . . . Those in favor of the amendment, which is that the words, 'and two chairmen' be inserted, say 'Aye'; those opposed, 'No.' The amendment is carried, and the motion now reads that 'we send our discussion guides and two chairmen to Appleville on December 20.' Is there any discussion on the motion as amended? . . . . All in favor of the motion that we send our discussion guides and two chairmen to Appleville on December 20 say 'Aye'; those opposed, 'No.' The motion is carried, and we will send . . . ."

b. By striking out or eliminating

(M) "I move to amend the motion by striking out the word 'discussion.'"

(C, Cd) "It has been moved and seconded to amend the motion by striking out the word 'discussion,' so that the motion if amended would read, 'that we send our guides to Appleville on December 20.' Is there any discussion on the proposed amendment? . . . . All those in favor of the amendment, which is that the word 'discussion' be eliminated, say 'Aye'; those opposed, 'No.' The amendment is lost. Is there any further discussion on the original motion? . . . . Those in favor of the motion that we send . . . ."

c. By striking out and inserting or substituting

(M) "I move to amend the motion by striking out the word 'Appleville' and inserting in its place the word 'Plymouth.'"
Hearing no second: "Is there a second?" Upon hearing none: "The motion is lost for the want of a second. Is there any further discussion on the motion? . . . . Those in favor of the original motion. . . . ."

3. To refer to a committee

(M) "I move to refer the question before the house [or group] to a committee of three to be appointed by the chair."

(C, Cd) "It has been moved and seconded to refer the question before the house to a committee of three to be appointed by the chair. Is there any discussion? . . . . All in favor of referring the question to a committee say 'Aye'; those opposed. . . . ."

4. To adjourn (without qualifications)

(M) "I move that we adjourn."

(C, Cd) "It has been moved and seconded that we adjourn. All in favor say 'Aye'; those opposed, 'No.' The motion is carried. The meeting is adjourned."

5. To adjourn (with qualifications)

(M) "I move that we adjourn in an hour," or "I move that we adjourn to meet on Wednesday at seven o'clock."

(C, Cd) "It has been moved and seconded that we adjourn in an hour. Is there any discussion? All in favor. . . . ."

6. To adopt a resolution

(M) "I move the adoption of the following resolution: Resolved, that this organization go on record as favoring the construction of the concrete highway proposed by Representative John Doe."

(C, Cd) "It has been moved and seconded to adopt the following resolution: 'Resolved, that this organization . . . . '"

7. To rise to a point of order

Member, without waiting to be recognized: "Mr. Chairman, I rise to a point of order."

Note that this motion includes the size of the committee and the method of its selection. These two points should always be covered in such a motion.
Chair, without waiting for a second: “State your point of order.”
Member: “My point of order is that the amendment just proposed is out of order because it is not germane.”
Chair: “Your point of order is well taken; the amendment just proposed is out of order.”

8. To rise to request information

Member, without waiting to be recognized: “I rise for information,” or “Mr. Chairman, I should like to ask the member a question.”
Chair, without waiting for a second: “State your question,” or, addressing the speaker who is being interrupted, “Do you wish to answer a question?” or “Are you willing to be interrupted?”
Member: “How much will it cost to send the guides to Appleville?”
Chair: “The question is, ‘How much will it cost to send the guides to Appleville?’ Can you [or anyone] answer the question?” Or, if the chairman can answer the question, he does so.

9. To rise to a parliamentary inquiry

Member, without waiting to be recognized: “Mr. Chairman, I rise to a parliamentary inquiry.”
Chair, without waiting for a second: “State your inquiry.”
Member: “Is an amendment in order at this time?”
Chair: “It is.”

10. To object to the consideration of a question

(M) Without waiting for recognition: “Mr. Chairman, I object to the consideration of this question.”
(C, Cd) Without waiting for a second: “Objection has been raised to the consideration of this question. All in favor of considering the question rise. Please be seated. Those opposed rise. Please be seated. There being a two-thirds vote in the negative, the objection is upheld and the question cannot be considered.”

11. To withdraw a motion

Original proposer: “I wish to withdraw my motion.”
Chair, without waiting for a second: “Mr. X wishes to withdraw his motion. If there is no objection, the motion will be withdrawn.”

If another member objects, he says, “I object.”
Another member may say, “I move that the member be permitted to withdraw his motion.”
Chair, without waiting for a second: “It has been moved that the member be permitted to withdraw his motion. All those in favor . . . .”

12. To take a recess

(M) “I move that we take a recess until 10:30,” or “I move that we take a recess for fifteen minutes.”
(C, Cd) “It has been moved and seconded that we take a recess for fifteen minutes. All in favor . . . .”

13. To limit debate

(M) “I move to limit each speaker’s time to seven minutes,” or, “I move to limit discussion on this proposal to one hour.”
(C, Cd) “It has been moved and seconded to limit the time of each speaker to seven minutes. All in favor of the motion please rise. Be seated. Those opposed rise. Please be seated. The motion is carried, and each speaker’s time will be limited to seven minutes.”

14. To extend the limits of debate

(M) “I move that the speaker be given an additional ten minutes,” or “I move to extend the speaker’s time fifteen minutes.”

15. To call for the previous question

(M) “I move the previous question.”
(C, Cd) “The previous question has been moved and seconded. Those in favor of closing debate on the question before the group and taking a vote upon it immediately, please rise. Be seated. Those opposed please rise. Be seated. The previous question is carried. We will now take a vote on the motion before the group. All those in favor . . . .”
16. To appeal from the decision of the chair

(M) Without waiting to be recognized: "Mr. Chairman, I appeal from the decision of the chair."

(C, Cd) "There has been an appeal from the decision of the chair. Those in favor of sustaining the decision of the chair say 'Aye'; those opposed, 'No.' The decision of the chair is sustained."

17. To lay on the table

(M) "I move to lay the motion on the table."

(C, Cd) "It has been moved and seconded to lay the motion before the group on the table. Those in favor say 'Aye'; those opposed, 'No.' The motion is carried, and the proposition before the group is laid on the table."

18. To take from the table

(M) "I move to take from the table the question concerning the erection of a community-center building."

(C, Cd) "It has been moved and seconded to take the question concerning the erection of a community-center building from the table. All in favor say 'Aye'; those opposed, 'No.' The motion is carried. The secretary will please read the motion concerning the community building."

19. To postpone indefinitely

(M) "I move to postpone the motion indefinitely."

(C, Cd) "It has been moved and seconded to postpone the motion before the group indefinitely. Is there any discussion? All in favor of postponing the motion indefinitely . . . ."
APPENDIX D: ADDITIONAL AIDS FOR GUIDES AND EXPERIENCED MEMBERS

Discussion guides and members with some experience in speaking may wish to make a more thorough preparation than that involved in gathering material, making outlines, and practicing the delivery of the speech. Such speakers might well make a careful analysis of the prospective audience and of the basic drives which so largely determine the actions of people. Especially in situations where the speaker expects to confront an audience opposed to the proposition or to the speaker, a knowledge of audiences and their reactions, and of methods commonly used by speakers to conciliate audiences, is valuable.

ANALYSIS OF PROSPECTIVE LISTENERS

Only when you have some knowledge about your listeners can you speak to them effectively. You would not, for example, use the same language, ideas, or illustrations in speaking to a Sunday school class of seven-year-old children that you would use in speaking to a group of bankers. You would talk differently to a rural group of men than to an urban group of women.

If as a guide or as an expert you expect to speak to a group, it is essential that you know certain things about the group. Whether you are attempting to win your audience to your side or are simply giving information alters not in the least your need for knowledge about your listeners. The
more you know about them, the better able you will be to
make yourself understood.

Analyze, therefore, the audience to whom you are to
speak. Your analysis may fall under some such divisions as
these: (1) age; (2) occupations; (3) general intelligence;
(4) needs, wants, desires, and ambitions; (5) political loyalties
and attachments; (6) religious beliefs and affiliations; (7) social
and economic status; (8) knowledge of, and reaction to, the
problem or question under consideration; (9) acquaintance
with, and reaction to, the speaker.

Age of group members. What you may get your lis­
teners to believe or to do will in some measure depend upon
the age of the individual members making up the group.
Youth is more open to suggestion, more likely to accept the
new or untried than is his older brother. Age demands more
emphasis on reasons, analysis of proposed plans, and probable
results than does youth. Between youth and old age, people
are in a transitory stage. The transition is not a progressive
and gradual one; it is an oscillating, somewhat chaotic stage
in which a person may step on the accelerator as one who is
still young, or may as ardently shift to the brake pedal as
one who is mature. To retain our automotive figure, the
person in young middle age may shift from first to reverse
or neutral or high without regard for logical sequence. In a
group of persons in this transitory stage, furthermore, indi­
viduals will probably be making entirely different shifts in
their attitudes toward a subject as you are presenting your
views to them. All that this means is that it is more difficult,
in some respects, to talk to a group than it is to talk to one
ADDITIONAL AIDS FOR GUIDES

The difficulty, the variety of response, should serve to stimulate a speaker to learn as much as possible about the age strata of his audience.

Occupations of group members. As a farmer you probably feel more adequately prepared to speak to a group of farmers than you would to speak to an audience of longshoremen, bankers, aviators, or doctors. If we know something of the kind of work a man does, we know or can determine the things that are likely to interest him. The occupation of a person often stamps him so deeply that try as he may he cannot hide it. Take, for example, the sailor whose rolling walk signifies s-e-a-m-a-n. Not only does the occupation stamp its characteristic mark on the physical man; it also leaves its indelible influence on his mind. It molds his outlook on life, his beliefs, and his actions to its pattern. In many respects, therefore, lawyers are very much alike—and the same may be said for the iron mongers, shoemakers, professors, postmen, policemen, and members of other professions or occupations. Study the characteristics of people; analyze your audience to determine what kind of people are there represented; apply your knowledge of their occupations in speaking to them.

General intelligence of group members. In certain respects age and intelligence are closely related. The higher the intelligence of the audience members, the more complex, subtle, involved, abstract, detailed, or specific may be your speech. In dealing with the average large group, however, you must assume that you are talking to people of average intelligence. Some of the things you say may be incompre-
hensible to those below average. Other things will be too simple and hence lack stimulation for those above average. It is best to err on the below-average side and use such technics as reiteration, simple illustration, and concrete examples.

Usually, only for very special groups will you need to make an extensive analysis of the intelligence plane of your audience.

Needs, wants, desires, and ambitions of group members. For two thousand years speakers have been making lists of the things their listeners need or desire. Usually such lists indicate the most powerful influences that may be brought to play upon human beings. Because the protection of one's own life is of first importance to all normal people, such a list usually starts with self-preservation and includes these six other powerful driving forces: property, power, reputation, affections, tastes, sentiments.

To make use of these tremendous forces is not difficult. To make the best use of them is difficult and requires an understanding of the way in which they constantly affect our thoughts and actions.

How a speaker may make use of these seven dynamic drives is briefly outlined in the following paragraphs. (See also use of these drives in sample outline, pages 116-119.)

Self-preservation. Show the listener that your proposal will save his life, protect his health, improve his health, give him freedom from disease, accident, pain or injury, or prolong his life.

Property. Demonstrate that your plan will save the prop-
Adicional Aids for Guides

Property of the listener, reduce his taxes, increase his income, add to his possessions, or maintain the integrity of his present holdings.

Power. The listener must be made to see that his influence will be increased, that he will gain control of certain desirable spheres of activity, or that he will suffer no loss of his present influences. Appeal to his desire to be something or somebody; to be able to do things that he would like to do. Appeal to his ambition and his desire to influence or control others. Social prestige, professional position, spiritual or moral influence, and political power are examples.

Reputation. All men are anxious to maintain the high opinion, esteem, and good will that others have regarding them. Appeal to their desires to be thought brave, honest, good, generous, intelligent, or to avoid the opposites of these favorable characteristics.

Affections. Appeal to the listener's concern for his children, parents, friends, or sweetheart. Affection may be had for divine as well as human beings.

Sentiments. Appeal to such intellectual and moral qualities as patriotism, freedom, duty, liberty, equality, independence, and brotherhood.

Tastes. Taste is in the realm of esthetics, and is concerned with that which is beautiful in nature or in human relationships. When endeavoring to sway your hearers thru their tastes, appeal to such cultural objectives as music, poetry, drama, painting, and sculpture. In general there is a high correlation between intelligence and susceptibility to the influence of appeals to taste.
Political loyalties of group members. There is an old warning: "Never bring religion or politics into your speaking." There is good foundation for the warning. Usually we have had enough experience to keep away from these subjects when talking with a stranger. But when talking with a person we know, and one with whose politics we agree, we may find politics an excellent topic.

The speaker should ascertain the politics of his prospective listeners. In most homogeneous communities a majority will claim the same party affiliation. If you, as the speaker, show your honest appreciation of this same party, you have gone far toward winning the group. If the party happens to be your own, your task is easy. If it is not your own party, you should be broadminded enough to find in it some good things to talk about. If, however, you cannot speak with sincerity, omit all political references.

Religious beliefs and affiliations of group members. The ramifications of many questions ultimately lead one to some apparent religious issue or to religious beliefs regarding moral, political, social, or economic issues underlying the questions. Many times a speaker is amazed to find his cause hurt by a presumably insignificant remark that has been erroneously interpreted by his listeners in the light of their religious beliefs. Knowledge of the religious feeling of the group might have saved him. Often a speaker makes the mistake of assuming that because the adults of his audience do not go to church they, therefore, lack religious beliefs or affiliations. Such an assumption is wrong and dangerous. The chances are that as children these persons did attend
worship services, and that they were molded into definite religious patterns which still guide them even tho they themselves scarcely realize it.

**Social and economic status of group members.** In almost every community people are divided into groups because of their differing social and economic positions. Farms differ in productivity. In certain areas the farmers are less fortunate than their neighbors across the road or in the adjoining township. Because of inheritance or their own labor, certain families come to assume higher places on an artificial social scale. The child growing and maturing in one of the “best” homes sees life and its problems thru eyes that his less fortunate contemporary cannot imagine. Experiences as divergent as the arctic and the equator separate those of different economic and social privileges. What is the status of those in your group? What have been some of their experiences? You should obtain this information before preparing your speech.

**Knowledge of and reaction to the problem or question under consideration.** People may know little or much about the question being considered. Further, what they do know may be accurate or inaccurate. Based on their knowledge of the subject, the members of the group may be opposed, favorable, or neutral in their immediate reactions to it. Some of them have already made up their minds, and nothing you can say will change them. Others may change their minds. Still others will reserve judgment until they have heard extensive arguments pro and con. If you can find out what your listeners know about the subject and just what their
attitude on the subject happens to be, you are in a position to plan your speech in such a manner as to inspire those who are favorable, carry those who are neutral, and win over those who are opposed. Your objective should be to have as nearly 100 percent of the group as possible with you at your destination, Agreement Center.

Any great difference in the attitudes of the three groups making up the whole group will of course have to be reflected in your speech. If, for example, 80 percent are opposed, 15 percent favorable, and 5 percent neutral, you will have a much more difficult speaking task than if 75 percent are favorable, 20 percent neutral, and 5 percent unfavorable.

Acquaintance of group members with and reaction to the speaker. While it is generally far less important for a speaker to know what the group thinks about him than to know what it thinks about the problem under discussion, he should, nevertheless, ask himself before he goes far with the preparation of his speech what his audience will think of him. One of the well-known facts of human nature is that people tend to believe or to agree with a person they love, admire, or respect; that, conversely, people may even take a stand against a subject in which they really believe because they personally dislike or distrust the speaker advocating the subject. The group may be for you, against you, or neutral. If they do not know you, the chances are that they will be neutral.

**HOW TO DEAL WITH DIFFERENT KINDS OF AUDIENCES**

Your analysis of the individuals in your prospective audience will indicate that they fall into one of three general
groups. You may find them (1) hostile or unfavourably inclined, (2) mixed or neutral, (3) friendly or favorably inclined. As previously stated, these three major divisions may represent the feeling of the audience for you as an individual or for your subject.

**Audience against the speaker.** At once we must assume that the speaker is known by the audience. Something that the audience knows, or thinks it knows, causes the opposition. Under some circumstances it may be wisest for a speaker, under such conditions, not to speak; to have someone speak in his place.

No matter what the reaction of the audience to the proposition, it will be colored by its reaction to the speaker.

Before the date of speaking, do something, if possible, to change the opinion of the individuals who will compose your audience.

The chairman, in introducing you, may do much toward changing the opinion of the group, or at least toward obtaining for you a fair hearing. You may have to win his cooperation and explain to him what he might say.

The introduction of your own speech must be specifically designed to assure your audience of your sincerity. It may show that the beliefs of the audience are wrong. You must be extremely diplomatic. It may explain your past actions (that is, those actions which have earned for you this antagonism) and attempt to put them in a different light than that in which the audience now sees them. It may be an acknowledgment of error in the past and a plea for forgiveness and for fair listening to the important question you now have to
present. It may admit a knowledge of the opinion of the audience; but ask that this opinion be set aside for the duration of the speech so that such an important subject may receive an unbiased hearing.

Your task is more than that of the ordinary speaker. Actually you must give two speeches and must have two specific aims. In your introduction, or what is really your first speech, you must win the confidence of the audience. In the remainder of your speech, or what is really a second speech, you must show them the justice of your cause. Such a dual purpose may complicate matters. You may do more harm by supporting a proposition, if the audience is opposed to you personally, than by not supporting it. In fact, under some circumstances, you may actually help a cause by recognizing its undesirable features and emphasizing these. There are people who will do just the opposite of what is advocated by someone they dislike.

The greater the opposition to yourself, the greater the adaptations you will need to make in your introduction. Probably the greater the opposition, the longer will be the introduction.

Audience undecided about the speaker. More audiences are undecided about a speaker than are definitely against him. Usually, when the audience is neither for nor against a speaker, the speaker is either relatively unknown or, if known, has stirred up no particular feeling for or against himself—in this particular community at least. If the speaker is unknown, the audience may waver between an attitude of suspicion and one of ready acceptance of him as a member of
the group. Momentary impressions will swing the pendulum either for or against the stranger.

If there is anything to be gained by emphasizing points of common interest and friendship—and there often is much to be gained thereby—prepare your introduction accordingly. You may, however, prefer to present only your side of the question under discussion, permitting the listeners to determine their attitude solely on the facts of the case.

**Audience favorable to the speaker.** The usual attitude of the audience toward the speaker is one of friendliness. As a rule, by a process of selection, only those speakers in good standing with the audience have an audience to address. It must be assumed in such cases that the members of an audience have some knowledge of the speaker which causes them to be favorably inclined toward him. If, under such circumstances, you can find out what it is that causes this friendly attitude, and if the reason is in some way connected with the point of your speech, you may be able to use it appropriately as a starting point and thus, by bringing the audience at once into a receptive frame of mind, get quickly into the main part of the speech and save time which might otherwise be spent in overcoming an unfavorable attitude. Strive for the good will of the audience; show them that you depend on their support. But do not overdo it, or do anything that will diminish their friendliness.

You may, in your introduction, use the good will of the audience toward you so as to bring about, also, a favorable reaction to your subject. Or you may shorten your introduction and plunge almost directly into your subject, relying
on the friendliness of the listeners to guarantee you an attentive hearing during your speech.

**Audience against the proposition.** Opposition to the proposition means that the audience has thought about the question and has arrived at a conclusion contrary to that held by the speaker. If the members of the audience have held this contrary opinion over a long period of time, the task of the speaker is extremely difficult. If, on the other hand, the opposition to the proposition has been acquired relatively recently, the work of the speaker is lightened. Under either condition of opposition, the introduction to the speech may well be longer than the speech itself. It is futile to talk for a proposition until everything possible has been done to reduce antagonism to it.

Ask yourself why the audience is opposed to the question. Go back into their past experiences if possible and determine when and why they began to oppose. Why have they continued to oppose? Is it because they have had no presentation of the other side? Or, have they heard only weak and ineffective presentations of the other side? If the latter, your task is doubly difficult, for the original “set opinion” has been strengthened by constantly being pitted against weak arguments. Such a series of “victories” may have so invigorated the opinion that it is able to withstand the strongest arguments. Often old firmly fixed ideas, even tho wrong, are clung to with a bulldog grip. The individual is said to be strongly “conditioned.”

Your task is to first “un-condition” and then “re-condition” the listener, or condition him favorably. You
know approximately how he received his original idea. Go back historically in your introduction and soundly explore that early conditioning. Point out weaknesses or shortcomings. Indicate that perhaps the original idea was accepted on insufficient grounds. Show that the listener endangers himself (appeal to motives) by continuing to hold to an erroneous opinion. Show him that a wise man may change his mind. Give him a number of opportunities, not just one, to excuse himself if he changes his mind so as to agree with you. If he cannot present an excuse to himself and, more important, to his associates for changing his mind, he will not change. Make it possible and easy for him to reverse his position and still retain his self-respect and pride.

Audience undecided about the proposition. If the audience knows very little about the subject, you are indeed fortunate. Whatever they learn will be what you tell them. This places a heavy responsibility on you, for even tho you are biased in favor of one side, you must give the listeners both sides of the question. You must impress them with the fact that after you have given both sides of the proposition they, of their own free will, have made up their minds to favor your side. If you do this, it will be extremely difficult for any later speaker to change the minds of the listeners. If, on the other hand, you present only your side, another speaker may present the other side and show by comparison that your side is weak. It should be your aim to send the listener away not only won over to your side, but so well acquainted with both sides that he can defend his opinion.

Your introduction for a speech to be given before an audi-
ence undecided about the proposition will probably be quite long and of an informative nature. You will probably give the historical background material necessary for an understanding of the facts.

If the audience should be mixed—half in favor and half opposed to the proposition—you will be compelled to address yourself almost exclusively to the opposition group. Follow the suggestions given above for winning an audience that is against the proposition. You will have the advantage of the support of the favorably inclined group. They will cheer, applaud, nod approvingly, or otherwise show their support for your side. This enthusiasm will have a tremendous effect on the others in the group. In spite of themselves, they will want to be on the applauding and demonstrative side. The importance of this "crowd effect" should not be overlooked by the speaker.

A group part of which is opposed and part in favor of a proposition may provide this advantage: if you have carefully prepared your speech, you will probably find that it not only tends to win over the opposition but to strengthen the opinion of the favorable listeners. Those already supporting the proposition are even more determined that they are right.

Audience supporting the proposition. The speaker may not make any converts by talking to a group already favorable to his cause, but he will increase the zeal of his supporters. He may think of his listeners as his mouthpieces. After the meeting they will go to the most remote corners to repeat and amplify his statements. His influence will spread arithmetically.
As a speaker, you must give as much care to the preparation of your speech when planning to talk to a group favorably inclined as you would in fitting yourself to speak to a hostile group.
APPENDIX E: LIST OF REFERENCES ON DISCUSSION METHODS

The following list of references has been prepared on the basis of general usefulness to rural groups.

DISCUSSION

THE ART OF CONFERENCE, by Frank Walser. 305 pages. 1934.
CREATIVE DISCUSSION, by A. D. Sheffield. 3d. ed. 68 pages. 1927.
DISCUSSION: A BRIEF GUIDE TO METHODS. Sup't. of Public Documents, Washington, D.C. Bulletin D-1. 9 pages.
DISCUSSION METHODS FOR ADULT GROUPS, by Thomas Fansler. 148 pages. 1934.
HOW TO LEAD DISCUSSION, by L. C. Bowman. 31 pages. 1934.
METHODS OF CONDUCTING FORUMS AND DISCUSSIONS, by R. L. Ewing. 30 pages. 1926.
The PROCESS OF GROUP THINKING, by H. S. Elliott. 229 pages. 1932.
TEXTBOOK ON PARLIAMENTARY LAW, by A. B. Hall and A. F. Sturgis. 1929.
ROBERT’S RULES OF ORDER, REVISED, by H. M. Robert. 1915.

SPEECH

PUBLIC DISCUSSION AND DEBATE, by A. C. Baird. 1928.
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