

Spring 5-14-1968

Newspaper Article, Editorial Comment, May 14, 1968

The Reflector

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Editorial

COMMENT

Progress has little regard for human beings; whether it comes in the form of an Urban Renewal Project or a computerized tax form. The proposed undertaking in Starkville to rid the area of the "the social blight" may benefit the entire community, because an area will become a model subdivision. Mississippi State will also gain a much needed traffic artery and may secure some property that will round out her lines on the eastern side of the campus. The streets in the area are almost impassable and something needs to be done, but is the present undertaking the proper method for creating a better community?

The people who are being displaced by the Project will be guaranteed low-rent apartments in the area, but they complain about the breaking up of their neighborhoods. Statistics of 130 relocated family units cannot take into consideration the individual who has worked hard for a lifetime to purchase a house and then have the bureaucracy buy it from him. Does not a house, though on the verge of being condemned, sometimes have more than mere monetary value? The dehumanized computer cannot consider this.

The fault does not lie in the local program. The administrators are making every effort to help the individuals displaced find suitable and usually better places to live. Problems are being faced locally with concern for everyone involved. The trouble--with the lack of concern for the neighborhood, inconsideration for the attached value to a house, and the lack of respect for the local merchant who has built his business on his neighbor's trade--rests with the structure of the program as set up nationally. Starkville should then be commended for joining the other cities that flock to the government to get their share of the Department of Housing and Urban Development money.

But one day when people ask what happened to add to the dehumanization of mankind occurring in our civilization, efforts like Urban Renewal may be given partial credit.

Granted, something needs to be done, but what? Minimum building standards and open housing may be a partial answer. If a massive reconstruction effort is needed, then a program such as the present Urban Renewal is necessary, but it should not only appropriate enough money for the construction and destruction involved, it should also fund the social workers necessary to care for the individuals displaced for the good of the whole.