

NORTHERN GREECE IN OUR TIMES*

PROBLEMS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

It has been long recognized that the under-developed resources of Northern Greece, if properly developed, could provide Greece with needed agricultural and industrial materials for a long-sustained economic growth. The objective of my research, then, is to determine to what degree Greece has succeeded in developing the resources of Northern Greece for the benefit of the national economy. In connection with my research, I visited all the Prefectures of Northern Greece and devoted nine months to geographical field work. This is the way I saw Northern Greece from an economic and political-geographic viewpoint.

If one had no access to agricultural statistics, he could surmise by just looking at the landscape that an agricultural revolution has taken place in Northern Greece, for there are many visible signs of this revolution; the Aliakmon and the Axios diversion dams; irrigation networks; the levees along the western bank of the Evros; other flood control and antierosion works such as dykes, small dams, and drainage canals; watering troughs; tractors, threshing machines, and combine machines; well-cultivated fields, large cotton fields, and extensive, well groomed orchards, regular storage and cold storage plants, as well as vegetable oil processing and food processing plants; Zaanen goats, Swytz cows, and modern animal barns; new varieties of fruit-bearing trees, and a plethora of fruit and vegetable stands in the urban centers.

To a large degree, this phenomenal increase in Greek agricultural productivity is the result of the combined efforts of the peasant and the agriculturalist or agronomist.

The Greek peasant is gradually learning the meaning of progressive agriculture. He has come to know that, unlike traditional agriculture, progressive agriculture involves making choices: he has to decide for himself whether to cultivate today or tomorrow, what crops to grow, what source

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of draft power to use, or which fertilizers are best for his purposes. He knows that, in a progressive agriculture, crops are produced mainly for sale, and he realizes that such farming involves a degree of agricultural decisions from other considerations.

Today, money has become the interagent in the process of making many choices. The peasant receives money for his products and then must mete it out in exchange for various goods and services. This is a new skill for one accustomed to living largely by tradition; it is a skill not learned without mistakes. He has moved toward a more productive agriculture because he is now more willing to take the responsibility for his own decisions.

The rate at which the peasant can increase production is affected by his own attitude: by his belief that an increase in production on his farm is really possible, by the extent of his confidence in extension workers and the dependability of research, by his willingness to try new methods, and by the strength of his conviction that his family can achieve a higher standard of living through their own efforts. His ability to progress also depends partly upon what he thinks of government; that is, if he looks upon it as an exploitative or as a creative organ.

The attitude of the Government toward him is very favorable. It believes that he can expand livestock production. It believes that he can cultivate new exportable agricultural items. It has confidence in him as a progressive farmer. It has become cognizant of the importance of the varied requirements for his agricultural and industrial growth. It believes that he has the capacity to manage his own affairs.

The rising confidence of the peasant is now the best resource of Northern Greece. Unlike the economic resources of land, labor, and capital, this psychological resource need not—perhaps should not—be economized. The discovery that he can increase production on his small plot of land without waiting for more land not only builds confidence in him to try another change but also communicates itself to his neighbors.

The State agriculturalists are also responsible for the gains registered in agriculture. They worked untiringly and unselfishly to bring to fruition the dream of the nation, agricultural self-sufficiency and a higher standard of living for the rural people. Several methods have been used to bring the farmers in touch with modern agriculture; result-demonstration plots, travelling schools, out-of-school agricultural courses, meeting of farmers, educational rural clubs, and rural libraries. The Farm Extension Service has done an excellent job; it is recognized as the best in Southeastern Europe. Its work becomes even more significant when one recalls that this work has been accomplished in a region that had experienced ten years of war.

Much more would be accomplished by the State agriculturalists if they had private means of transportation. Since at present they must travel by bus or train, or walk, they are limited in their movements and are unable to serve as many farmers as they should. Let me illustrate: When I was in Drama, the local agriculturalist invited me to accompany him on a trip to a nearby village to see how he was handling the agricultural problems of the villagers. The village was about 20 kilometers away from the city. Lacking private means of transportation, we required four hours to complete an assignment which would have taken only two hours if we had a car. After completing the job, we squandered two valuable hours in waiting for a bus to take us back to Drama.

The agriculturalists have made many contributions to the agricultural economy and community development of Northern Greece, the following two being the most important; 1) the introduction of the "Let's try it" philosophy, and 2) the removal of the element of distrust between themselves and the farmers.

Since Northern Greece is a region of villages, it raises these important questions. How have the villages fared under the impact of the socio-economic revolution that is taking place in the region? What are their major developmental problems? What measures have been undertaken by the Government to help them improve their living conditions?

The village of Afesia* is situated along the edge of a narrow coastal plain in the southeastern section of Sithonia in Halkidiki. Its 700 inhabitants earn their livelihood from agriculture, fishing, and other occupations. Since the physical resources of Afesia are meager, the able-bodied men work in Mount Athos whenever possible, for Mount Athos is relatively under-populated and there is a scarcity of working hands there. The migrant workers labor as farm hands, shepherds, lumberjacks, and stevedores. Those who are attached to monasteries receive about 30 drachmas a day and free meals. Were it not for the monasteries, Afesia would be confronted with a serious underemployment and unemployment crisis.

The problem of scarcity of land is being aggravated by the custom of early marriage. I was told that the only way for a young man or woman to acquire property was to get married, because the parents must provide the new couple with some land upon which to subsist. This custom, in turn, has led to the over-fragmentation of the farms. The size of farm holdings

* See map, p. 47, for location of places cited in the paper.

is less than 12 stremmata (3 acres) per family. The available land is used to produce cereals and grape vines. However, the yield per stremma is very small because of the low fertility of the soil, and this fertility cannot be replenished because the farmers lack the capital to purchase organic and non-organic fertilizers.

Afesia is a good illustration in support of the generalization that "malnutrition is a reflection of poverty and poverty is a reflection of low productivity". Its people are underfed and undernourished. Their diet consists mainly of carbohydrates; they eat fish once or twice a week and meat once or twice a year. The consumption of protein-rich foods amounts to about 55 kilo (110 lbs.) per family per year. The children are very thin, and many of them are sick. There is no doctor present because the people cannot afford to pay him, and even if one were available, they could not pay for the prescribed medicine.

The factors largely responsible for the low economic productivity of this village are 1) small landholdings, 2) overpopulation, 3) scarcity of employment opportunities, 4) lack of means of transportation and communication, 5) long distance from market, and 6) hindering social customs and habits.

There is no anti-American feeling here, for the villagers don't export products. In other words, they don't feel the pressure of competition by the United States in the world market as do the tobacco growers of Eastern Macedonia.

The village of Dendrochori, near the Albanian border, was abandoned by its inhabitants during the Italian invasion and was partly destroyed by the guerrillas. Since many of its inhabitants decided not to return to it after the termination of hostilities, the Government has been obliged to bring in settlers from other parts of Greece. The end of the Guerrilla War created a vacuum in this section of Kastoria Prefecture, a vacuum which had to be occupied by people from other parts of the country.

Before coming to Dendrochori, the settlers were migratory nomads. They did not possess homes or property: their only home was the wattle hut. Now the Government hopes that they will become permanent settlers and practice grazing and farming.

The main problem of Dendrochori is over-population. Since the father wants to prove his virility by begetting as many children as he can, each family has about 6 children. Boys are preferred to girls, for the latter are an economic burden. Birth control is not being practiced for various reasons.

Despite the presence of a hostile environment—poor soil, isolation,

shortage of capital, limited livestock, lack of electricity, and denuded mountain slopes—its inhabitants are very enthusiastic and hopeful about their future. As a matter of fact, the entire village population is satisfied with the present level of living. Two years ago they did not have a house of their own. Now they do. The Government is pushing the resettlement and rehabilitation of this village for economic, political, social, ethnic, and military reasons.

The village of Exohi is about 2.5 kilometers from the Bulgarian border. Its 500 inhabitants are Asia Minor refugees who now engage in the production of tobacco and potatoes. The soil of the region is suitable for tuber crops.

The Queen's Fund ('Vasiliki Pronoia') has taken great interest in the economic and social development of Exohi. The burned church was repaired, the water wells were improved, and other forms of aid were granted to the destitute peasants. During the Guerrilla War several houses were burned, and the Government built new houses for the afflicted villagers. The construction of a new children's home would provide the people with employment. The present house is too small to accommodate the ever-growing number of youngsters who want to learn new ways of doing things. The Fund also contemplates the construction of a new bridge across the torrent which traverses the village. Vasiliki Pronoia has done a very good job in helping to ameliorate the living conditions in the destitute villages under her care. It represents the "Ethnos" in the often neglected Greek mountain villages. When the peasants see the Queen's Fund jeep heading toward their villages, they get the feeling that someone in far-away Athens is really interested in their grave (but to some, trivial) problems.

The village of Dikaia, situated midway along the portion of the river Evros, which forms the boundary between Greece and Bulgaria, is courageously trying to fulfill its role as the shop window of Greek democracy and freedom, despite the existence of irritating deterrents to its economic and social progress.

The main livelihood of Dikaia is agriculture; her main crops are wheat, corn, and beans. The average size of land holdings is about 50 stremmata (12.5 acres), though some peasants own more than 150. The newly constructed wheat storage plant should enable the producers to keep the wheat until prices rise to a respectable level. However, lack of capital is retarding the growth of Dikaia, and capital is desperately needed to meet its needs: a modern, potable water system, the surfacing of streets, the completion

of the church, the control of the torrent which runs through the village, and the installation of a large electric generator.

The Bulgarian land across from Dikaia is under cultivation. The Bulgarians have invested much capital and equipment in the improvement of the land, and their well-cultivated farms can be seen from Dikaia. They have also brought electricity to their own border villages. Obviously, the communists of Bulgaria are trying to demonstrate to the inhabitants of the Greek border villages that communism has the interests of the people at heart. The drive of the communists to influence the border villages has forced the Greek Government to try to do something about improving their economic situation. However, lack of capital prevents the Government from carrying out a major economic improvement program. The insistence of the communist countries to turn their border areas into a showcase for communism compels Greece to invest money in the improvement of its relatively non-productive border areas when that money is admittedly so desperately needed for the rational development of its productive regions.

Some progress has been registered by the plains villages of Northern Greece in the sectors of agriculture, livestock, education, culture, and hygiene. The use of pesticides for large-scale spraying operations has conquered endemic malaria. The provision of good quality water piping has made clean water available to the villagers. In the near future such scenes as women carrying jerry-cans of water, filled at the spring a mile or two from their homes, and the lines of donkeys with water drums strapped on their backs will be a romantic memory. They will vanish from rural Northern Greece. Today, clean and safe steel piping carries water from the spring or well straight into the village or into the homes of the villagers. This form of assistance from the Government represents much health and happiness to the people of Greece.

However, progress has not reached the mountain villages of Northern Greece. Here life continues to be grim and severe. Men and women work incessantly to eke out a bare existence from bare rocks. Some of them attempt to grow barley and wheat on the shallow soil on mountain sides with an inclination of 30 to 40 degrees. Plants also wage an unceasing struggle to wring some nutriment from poor soil. The main support of the villagers comes from the animals (sheep and goats) grazing among peaks, precipices, and plateaus. The mountain regions of Northern Greece test the endurance of plants, animals, and men as they extract a stark sustenance out of valueless and fruitless land.

Since the majority of the mountain areas have strategical significance, I feel that the nation should subsidize the economy of their inhabitants. Teachers, priests, and other officials should receive higher wages than their counterparts in the city or in a larger town; there should be some compensation for physical and cultural isolation. If the areas become depopulated, a zone of political vacuum, varying in width from 10 to 40 kilometers, will be created along the border of Northern Greece. The "Greekness" of this zone must be maintained even though the cost may be high. The political advantages will far outweigh the economic hardships. I feel that what happens in the mountain villages of Northern Greece will determine the future history of Greece. If the nation wishes to perpetuate its dream of political and economic stability, it must quickly remove the triad of poverty, ignorance, and conservatism which is responsible for the political and economic retardation of the Greek mountain villages.

The plight of the tobacco growers in the classical tobacco areas is beyond description. One must visit the region in order to get a feeling for the problem. I shall try to describe the life and problems of the tobacco village of Toxodes, Xanthi, as an example.

The villagers have been cultivating tobacco for more than 80 years. Ninety-five per cent of Toxodes' people earn their livelihood directly from tobacco culture on farms ranging in size from 1 to 8 stremmata. Nor can we forget that these farms are fragmented. Last year the community planted about 3900 stremmata in tobacco. The soil in the adjoining hills is thin, gravelly, and low in plant nutrients; but if this soil is to be planted in any crop, certainly the most profitable one is tobacco. Eight stremmata will return to the farmer approximately 10,000 drachmas if planted in tobacco but only 1,200 drachmas if planted in wheat. Since the prices paid for both superior and inferior quality of tobacco do not differ very much, the tobacco producers are now planting tobacco in the more productive farms for higher yields; consequently many of the less productive hillside tobacco farms have been abandoned. Land in the plains, which should have been devoted to subsistence crops, is now planted in tobacco.

Although the cost of living has risen, the price of tobacco has remained stable. Hence, it now takes more okas (1 oka=2.831 lbs.) to purchase the items that it was possible to buy with one oka in 1939. In 1939 one tobacco grower could have bought the following items with 1 oka of tobacco or 200 drachmas: 1 oka of sugar, 1 oka of olive oil, 1 oka of coffee, 1 oka of rice, and 1 oka of soap—or one pair of shoes. Today with 1 oka of tobacco or 50 drachmas he could buy the following items:

1 oka of meat, 1 oka of olive oil, and 1 oka of apples. If he wishes to buy a good suit, he needs the price equivalent of 35 okas of tobacco. In 1939, it was only 6 okas. Although the prices used to determine what the growers could have purchased back in 1939 may not be precisely accurate, the point remains clear that the tobacco grower was better off before the war than he is now. He is going through the ill consequences of monoculture.

To alleviate the economic plight of the tobacco villages, the Greek Tobacco Organization (EOK), together with the Agricultural Bank, has initiated an emergency economic recovery program. Credit has been given to tobacco growers to undertake the production of other crops or to engage in raising stable-fed livestock. Also, money is being allocated for the construction of tobacco drying sheds, for the purchase on insecticides and spraying machines, for the resettlement of isolated tobacco villages, for the construction of terraces and drainage works, and for reforestation.

A secondary benefit resulting from EOK's construction of tobacco warehouses in the tobacco growing areas is the encouragement that was given to others in the region to build new buildings. This was what the capital investors needed to renew their confidence in the future of the area. The element of psychological fear has been pushed into the background temporarily—I hope, permanently.

Many reasons have been offered to explain the existence of the tobacco problem in Northern Greece—U.S. competition, the Guerrilla War, cancer scare, and the use of filters. I feel that the latter reason is the most important one for the slow increase of Greek tobacco exports. The trend all over the world is to filter cigarettes, and almost anything can be disguised behind a filter—hence, the low demand for Greek classical tobacco. The exports will continue to decline if smokers acquire a liking for fruit-flavored cigarettes. Whether we like it or not, we must accept the fact that Greece no longer can rely on its quality of tobacco to attract customers. Quality does not play an important role in sales. The buyer is interested only in quantity and low prices. It seems that Turkey has learned this lesson very well.

The consensus of opinion among the tobacco growers and other interested parties is that the solution to the tobacco problem lies in the establishment of a State Tobacco Monopoly. The competitors of Greece in the tobacco market (Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Turkey) have State Tobacco Monopolies and are in a better position to compete against her. The creation of such a monopoly would eliminate not only the middle men but also such obstacles as dispersion of responsibility, and apathy. It would also enable the Government to exploit all the opportunities in the market.

With the exception of the cities of Thessalonike and Veroia, the other urban centers of Northern Greece are stagnant. They do not exhibit the vitality of the former: new buildings under construction, heavy traffic movement, expanding commerce, expanding population, and rising capital investments.

The city of Kavala, with its old section dominated by a medieval fort, has been built on hilly land. Its streets are steep and narrow. The important roads have been asphalted, but the secondary streets are either dirt or cobble-stone. The city's expansion is restricted by the character of the land: it can only grow "up-hill".

The dominant cultural feature of Kavala is the row of tobacco manipulation plants along the waterfront. They are not as active as they were twenty-five years ago. Besides the omnipresent craftshops, the city has a modern flour mill and a rice mill.

Kavala's approximately 50.000 inhabitants earn their livelihood from fishing, commerce, and tobacco manipulation. The latter employs most of the existing labor force. It is interesting to note that in this city more than one-half of the population depend upon the tobacco industry for their livelihood. Since there are no other large industries to employ them during periods of low economic activity, they have become the victims of the "feast or famine" character of the tobacco industry.

Very little building is going on. I was told by a local businessman that Kavala capital is being invested in either Athens or Thessalonike. The buildings under construction will not create employment opportunities after they are completed. The city fathers hope that the completion of the road building program will enlarge Kavala's limited hinterland. If for some reason Kavala does not expand its hinterland, it is doomed.

Like the city of Naousa, Veroia has been built along the fall line, and it is hilly. The availability of water attracted craftshops to it in the 18th and 19th centuries. Many new buildings are being constructed; in fact, building activity here is greater than in any other city or town of Northern Greece, except Thessalonike. Although main streets have been asphalted, the side streets remain narrow and cobble-stoned. In the main business district one finds the usual stores and shops, only a small number of which are modern. The rest are small, poorly lighted, and inadequately ventilated.

To provide the unemployed with work, the sum of 500.000 drachmas has been allocated to the city by the Ministry of Public Works for the construction of a sewage system and other community projects. The sewage system in many towns and cities of Northern Greece is inadequate. When

the urban re-development projects are completed, however, Veroia will become a modern European city not only in physical appearance but also in outlook.

Veroia is an important commercial and transportation center. Tuesday is market day. Surely, the market place is a most exciting place to visit. Here one can observe how the Greek peasants are struggling to get what they think is a good (reasonable) price for their products, and how the urban buyers are trying to obtain the products as cheaply as they can. The uninitiated visitor may indeed feel sorry for a stooped, wrinkle-faced peasant woman who is begging the buyer to purchase her few items. She may stay in one location for the entire day without selling her products. When the sun sets, she starts the trek back home, mumbling to herself that her luck may change next Tuesday. She may also go to the local coffee-cup fortune teller to have her fortune told. Those peasants who do not have burden animals walk back to the village for some, perhaps, a two or three-hour walk. The more fortunate peasants may ride back to the village on busses or trucks. The noise, color, and excitement of the market place may be interesting to the foreign visitor, but not to the peasant who, on the basis of "the survival of the fittest", has to compete with many others for the limited number of available sales. The Greek market place reveals Greece's main agricultural-economic problem: too many farmers and too few buyers. The opposite condition should prevail.

Despite the fact that Thessalonike is 76 kilometers away, Veroia continues to exercise her economic, political, and cultural hegemony over the plain of Emathia.

The urban centers of Northern Greece have a plethora of problems, the most critical of which are a relatively large pool of unemployed and under-employed workers; the need for better streets, sewers, and water facilities; the pressing need to rehabilitate the scattered areas of sub-standard housing; an inadequate public transportation system; traffic congestion; and lack of capital. None of the problems cited is insoluble, and with the best efforts of the cities, all can be handled in a satisfactory manner. The large cities currently are exerting increasing efforts to attract industry. Whether or not their growth potential will be fully realized and exploited will depend largely upon the extent to which concerted action on the part of local business and civic leaders can be made effective.

The fundamental problems of agriculture in Northern Greece are the shortage of land and the unsalable surplus of rice, tobacco, and fruits. The creation of land through reclamation, flood control, and clearing may

ameliorate the former, but the latter may be too difficult to solve. The existence of surplus reveals that the increase in agricultural productivity has not been accompanied by a general increase in national prosperity. The increase in agricultural production is a delusion, as the hard-working Greek farmer has learned. The Greek farmer pays about 4% more for his purchases of agricultural and industrial products than he is able to get through the sale of his own products.

The disposal of Greek agricultural products will become more difficult in the foreseeable future because her present buyers are trying to become self-sufficient in agriculture. If Greece wishes to export agricultural items, she must concentrate on the production of high quality and reasonable priced commodities. She must also produce what the customer wants, not what the producers think the customer should have. In the market, the customer is always right. An increase in national prosperity through industrialization will create a market for increased production; however, the transition from a purely agricultural to an industrial and-agricultural one it certainly takes time.

The wide extent of deforested areas, deep gullies, and other remnants of erosion is a cause of wonderment for the visitor. He cannot understand why the Greek peasant, shepherd, lumberman, and politician have permitted the destruction of an important source of income, the forest. He may also suspect that the "unhealthy" condition of the region's forests is the result of an anemic exploitation policy.

Despite the presence of a large number of deterrents to the formulation and implementation of a dynamic forest policy—forest fires, over-grazing, destructive cutting, political opposition or favoritism, conservatism, ignorance—one sees and senses the gradual emergence of a rational forest exploitation program. There are many signs observed in the landscape which point toward the development of such a program:

1. the encouragement of the shepherds by the foresters to use the agricultural land which they possess for the production of forage crops such as alfalfa, clover, and hay (The cultivation of these crops will serve two purposes: it will hold the soil in place and it will provide the animals with nutritious fodder, thus creating a semi-nomadic economy in the forest region).
2. the control of grazing
3. the reforestation of the barren mountain slopes and gullies
4. the construction of new roads to tap the existing forests
5. the application of the principle of "sustained yields" in the exploitation of the forest

6. the establishment of tree nurseries

7. the gradual acceptance by the people that the forest is their friend.

However, the foresters are not satisfied with the progress registered thus far. They are of the opinion that the adoption of their program would not only strengthen the economic position of both the shepherd and the lumberman, but would also improve and enlarge the forests. Their program includes these essential points:

1. the conversion of poor agricultural land to forest

2. the reduction of the goat population

3. the restriction of grazing to certain areas

4. the production of stable-fed livestock

5. the development of an economy consisting of limited agriculture, livestock, arboriculture, and lumbering in the forested regions

6. the use of non-wood fuels by the urban and rural people

7. the provision of private means of transportation to the foresters for the execution of their job

8. the augmentation of the personnel of the regional divisions of forestry.

The most notable development in the sector of mining has been the rational exploitation of the Ptolemais lignite deposits. Its 600 million tons of lignite will provide the thermal electric plants, the under-construction nitrogen fixation plant, and the briquettes and coke plant with fuel more than fifty years. The open-pit mines and the giant excavating and loading machines remind one of the coal mines of southern Ohio in the United States. One who visits this mine gets the impression that a fine start has been made toward the industrialization of the region.

Northern Greece possesses a variety of metallic minerals, but their contribution to the regional economy is very small. There are several reasons for the economic retardation of mining:

1. a shortage of low-cost capital has retarded the replacement of obsolete equipment by the operators

2. a shortage of mining engineers and skilled mine workers is hindering the formulation and implementation of dynamic exploitation program

3. an inadequate minerals research program

4. the unfavorable location of some mines with respect to existing main highways and ports.

In order for Northern Greece to lessen her dependence on the export of one or two agricultural items for a large share of its regional income, it must expand the sector of mining. The present mining development program

calls for the increase of semiprocessed minerals such as chromite and dead-burned magnesite.

The sector of fishing has great potentialities, but these have not been fully tapped as yet. The fishing industry, characterized by an annoying lack of organization, has many other problems and drawbacks:

1. lack of proper equipment to improve the fishing grounds
2. lack or absence of means to artificially propagate fish
3. lack of means of conserving and marketing fish
4. lack of a laboratory and technicians to keep an accurate record of the physical conditions that affect the propagation of fish
5. impotent cooperatives of fishermen
6. absence of measures to aid in the expansion of fish production.

I feel that if this sector gets the attention it deserves, it could supply the entire country with its fish needs. The fishing industry is at the development level that agriculture had reached before the war. Production could increase ten-fold, provided that the necessary measures are executed by the government and the fishermen.

The sector of manufacturing has not kept pace with agriculture because of the emergence of the Athens - Piraeus area as the leading industrial region of the nation. Unlike those factors in Thessalonike, the compelling factors of Athens are more to the liking of the investors:

1. availability of a large domestic market
2. an excellent rail and road transport system
3. research and maintenance facilities
4. availability of "risk" capital
5. low cost of imported raw materials.

The establishment of industries in Northern Greece based upon the processing of imported raw materials is not economical because of the high cost of transportation, and a limited market. The completion of the highway development program under the Five-Year Economic Plan would strengthen the position of the Athens - Piraeus urban-industrial region at the expense of Thessalonike. Even if the Government imposes restrictive measures on the expansion of industry in Attica, Athens will continue to grow, because she is the product of geographical location. Athens occupies the geographical center of the economically effective section of the nation, whereas Thessalonike is situated on the periphery of it. Under the existing economic

and social conditions, Northern Greece can only support industries based on the consumption of locally produced materials.

I agree with those who say that the concentration of industries in Athens and Piraeus does not favor the development of a national economic balance, and that such concentration also encourages people to migrate to the large urban centers. However, I feel that the nation does not possess the means to execute a dynamic program to "keep the boys down on the farm". The industrialization of not only Northern Greece but also the other Prefectures is entirely dependent on government capital and other forms of assistance.

Although it has many of the same assets that have enabled other sections of Greece to build flourishing tourist industries, Northern Greece has had little success in attracting tourists from abroad, or from Southern Greece. Inadequate facilities and the lack of a concerted effort to obtain a share of the tourist trade appear to be the basic difficulties. In view of the rather substantial contribution that tourism has been making to the economies of many sections of Greece, it would appear advisable for Northern Greece to give serious consideration to tourism as a potentially important part of its over-all economic development. I have visited the island of Thasos, and if that island were developed like the island of Rhodes, it would become the tourist "gem" of Northern Greece—and a good place to retire.

The significant progress in the electrification of the region is largely the result of the efforts of DEH (Public Power Corporation). DEH has successfully harnessed the water of the Edessa region and has utilized the lignite deposits of Ptolemais for the production of electricity.

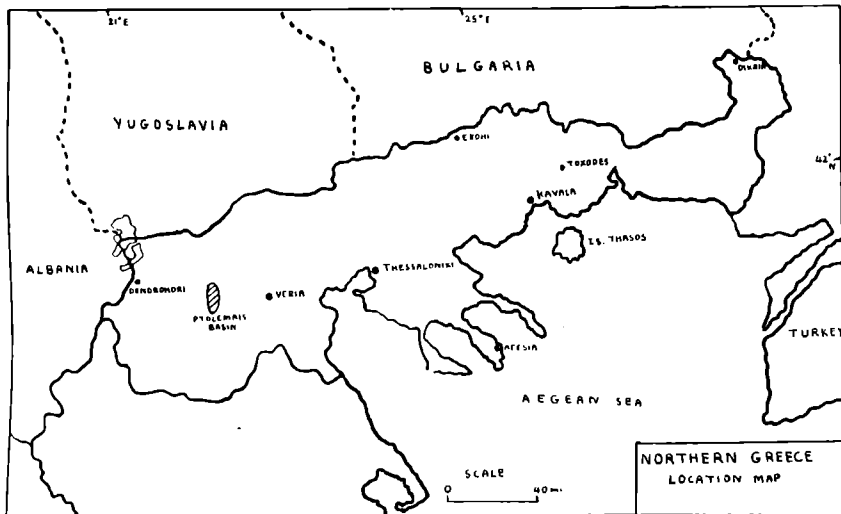
What is the outlook for some of the Prefectures of Northern Greece?

Evros Prefecture possesses the physical assets—vast flood plain, good soil, energetic people—to become the leading agricultural producer of Greece. The completion of the flood control and irrigation program would enable the farmers to expand agricultural production. Unlike the neighboring Prefectures, Evros does not have to depend upon tobacco for its livelihood.

The Prefectures of Xanthi and Rhodopi—because of the absence of large tracts of level land, scarcity of water, and the presence of rugged mountains—will always remain rather poor. In the mountain sections, the people are barely eking out an existence from a hostile land. The Moslem minority, because of its conservative and fatalistic attitudes, serves as a barrier to the development of progressive agriculture in the sections of the plain which they occupy. The cultivation of tobacco will continue as long as it provides the peasants with some income, even though it demands almost all of their

attention. A comprehensive development program for the improvement of living conditions in this region is desperately needed.

The Prefecture of Pella possesses the resources needed for the development of a viable agricultural economy. The southern section is the most productive. The completion of the irrigation program in the Ardea basin would improve Pella's agricultural base. Although Pella can produce



cotton and fruits, it must not make them the only cash crop. The diversification of agriculture could become the main objective of Pella, and more attention should be paid to tourism as a source of income.

The Prefecture of Kavala has no bright future. The available cultivated land is small in extent and not fully developed or utilized as yet. The mountains support some forests. The hinterland of the port of Kavala is restricted to the Prefectures of Kavala and Drama. The present crop of the Kavala tobacco is no longer its major source of income.

The future of the Prefecture of Emathia is bright. It possesses excellent climatic and edaphic conditions for the cultivation of a variety of agricultural crops—cotton, corn, wheat, sugar-beets, and fruits. It has an energetic and intelligent rural population. Its close proximity to the growing urban-industrial center of Thessalonike ensures a market for the products. It has a very good transportation system. The completion of the proposed

land reclamation and irrigation works would make Emathia the "Imperial Valley" of Greece.

The future of the Prefecture of Thessalonike is bright because its capital is the focal point of all Northern Greece. It possesses fertile plains and energetic people. The services offered by the city of Thessalonike will expand in order to meet the demand for them by both the urban and rural people of the Prefecture. The number of industrial plants will increase as soon as the region secures political and economic stability. Only the easternmost section of the Prefecture is destined to remain poor.

I immensely enjoyed my sojourn in Northern Greece. I found the people extremely loyal to their region and firm believers in its future. They stress the fertile soil of the newly reclaimed areas, the valuable agricultural crops produced, the extensive deposits of both metallica and non-metallic minerals, the power and irrigation of its rivers, and the great value these resources will have in the future of the region. Dreams of future greatness are justified since they are now accompanied by definite plans. Northern Greece is now taking advantage of its natural resources. An immense progress has been already made there since 1912 and the future is very bright indeed.

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