Agriculturists are constantly trying to get across to the public the idea that the large and rapid decline in the total number of farms during the past several decades is the result of increasing efficiency and the growth in size of individual farm units and does not mean that agriculture is a vanishing industry or is losing its importance in our economy.

There always have been and there remain today a number of highly efficient and prosperous tenant farms in Louisiana and all other states. But generally speaking, the tenant farmer has represented an economically depressed phase of agriculture. The same thing is true, and on an even greater extent, of the share croppers on tenant and non-tenant farms whose numbers have declined even more rapidly and greatly.

The sharp decline in the total number of farms and farmers obviously has not resulted in a proportionate decline in the acreage of land in farms. The owner-operated units have increased steadily in acreage, taking up practically all the slack that otherwise might have resulted. Today's farms are not only better. They are also bigger.