robbing the soil instead of conserving it. Significant in this respect is the interest shown in the maintenance and improvement of soil fertility at the last conference of landowners and managers at the University of Illinois. Professor Buechel of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas writing in the July number of our *Journal of Land and Public Utility Economics* stresses this point saying that “the central aim of a leasing system should be to maintain a high productivity upon the farm.”

Since the maintenance of the fertility of the soil depends to a large extent upon the fertilizer minerals a public policy must recognize this fact. Van Hise suggests the regulation of the mining of phosphates in such a manner that the low grade material will be available later and not be covered up or destroyed in getting out the better material. He suggests that all phosphate lands in the public domain be retained as public land and that the exportation of phosphate whether mined on public or private lands be prohibited.

Another change in public policy that is much to be desired is in the disposal of city sewage. With the growth of our cities the present disposal of sewage into streams and lakes ought to be unthinkable. Not only are we polluting the streams but we are losing valuable fertilizer materials.

As far as the conservation of the soil on the individual farm is concerned more can be done through education than compulsion. Public policy should encourage education along the lines of agricultural economics and land economics. Agricultural economics was late in making its appearance, and land economics is still newer. Public policy encouraging science will help in the maintenance of soil fertility.

In conclusion let me say that the Institute for Research in Land Economics and Public Utilities is engaged in researches along all of these lines. I bespeak your favorable consideration of the work that the Institute is doing and ask you all in the various ways that may occur to you to lend a hand. We are not a local organization, but national in scope and want to cooperate with all educational institutions and other agencies which aim at the improvement of farming conditions, as well as other conditions, which are connected with the utilization of the land.

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**3B. CROP PRICES AND SOIL DETERIORATION**

G. F. Warren

(Read by title only)