

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP: THE NEW PROFESSION

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Community Leadership: The New Profession by Lucius E. Wilson

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LUCIUS E. WILSON

**COMMUNITY
LEADERSHIP: THE
NEW PROFESSION**

COMMUNITY
LEADERSHIP
The New Profession

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The American City Bureau
New York

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CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	THE EXTENT OF THE NEW PROFESSION . . .	I
II.	WHAT THE NEW PROFESSION MEANS . . .	11
III.	THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND "INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT"	27
IV.	PRINCIPLES THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MUST TEACH	42
V.	HOW THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MUST LEAD	51
VI.	WHY THE SECRETARY MUST PLAN FAR AHEAD	64
VII.	WHAT THE SECRETARY MUST BE	75
VIII.	A FEW THINGS THE SECRETARY MUST KNOW	107
IX.	THE SECRETARY IN RELATION TO THE COMMUNITY	128

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FOREWORD

DURING the great conflict the American people were told that food would win the war; that ships would win the war; and that guns and coal and airplanes and other things would win the war. Now that the fighting is over, it has become evident that, essential as were these material things, it was leadership and ideals and organization and morale that really won the war. It was the spiritual, working through the material, that gave us the victory.

Having attained a dominant influence in shaping the world's destiny, the American people are entering upon the most thrilling period in their history. To the leaders of community thought and action have come inspiring opportunities and profound responsibilities. The strength of the Nation is the composite strength of its thousands of urban and rural communities. And, as in the case of the Nation, the real strength of each community is measured not so much by the abundance of its natural resources nor by its position on the map, as by its leadership and ideals and organization and morale. Of these four factors, the quality of the last three is determined in no small degree by the character of the first. To

community leadership, therefore, must we look for much of the motive power which shall guide America and the world into a new era of peace and progress and human happiness.

Leadership in community life is official and unofficial; it functions through governmental units and through citizens' organizations. It is to unofficial leadership that Lucius E. Wilson has given the title of *The New Profession*. Himself a pioneer in the modernizing of this profession in two important cities, and for the last six years an organizer of similar movements in scores of other communities, he speaks with authority both as a thinker and doer. The success of his book will be measured not by the number of copies sold, but by its effect in inspiring men of ability to enlist for Community Leadership, and in helping to greater efficiency those already enrolled in the New Profession.

HAROLD S. BUTTENHEIM.

Editorial Offices,
THE AMERICAN CITY,
New York, March, 1919.

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The New Profession

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CHAPTER I

THE EXTENT OF THE NEW PROFESSION

THERE are more than three thousand towns and cities in America that have chambers of commerce or organizations resembling chambers of commerce. There are forty large cities, possibly more, with city clubs or civic clubs that are doing the work which should be a part of the program of the chamber of commerce. There is a rapid increase in the number of communities that are endeavoring to advance themselves by such organized effort, and the fine public spirit that is arising from cooperative citizenship is shaping the Nation's ideals.

The salaried executive of a chamber of commerce is usually called "secretary," although his duties are far different from secretarial functions in the ordinary acceptance of the term. He is the real managing officer of his organization and can make or break it. Of course there is a board of directors and a president, as in regularly organized bodies, but volunteer officers and directors cannot be expected to handle the actual administrative work that has to do with from three hundred to five thousand members that may be functioning through dozens of committees. Some other title must be found sometime that is more descriptive than "secretary," but the wide variety of tasks and responsibilities that fall to the chamber of commerce secretary makes the choice of a descriptive name difficult. The man in question must be the vitalizing factor in a sluggish organization and the balance-wheel in a radical one. He must be optimistic without being visionary; a leader rather than a driver; and he must have a working knowledge of many things—how to raise a half-