IN MEMORIAM

ERICH WALTER ZIMMERMANN

Erich Walter Zimmermann was born in Mainz, Germany, on July 13, 1888. He died in Austin, Texas, on February 16, 1961. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Margaret Hoff Zimmermann; two daughters, Mrs. Erika Richman and Mrs. Margaret Childs; and one son, Charles Hoff Zimmermann.

Erich Zimmermann studied for four years in Volkschule and nine years in a "humanistic gymnasium" in Germany, preparing himself for graduate studies at the Universities of Bonn, Berlin, and München. In 1911 he received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Bonn, specializing in the field of political economy. During his advanced studies, he traveled widely in England, Scotland, and Wales to learn English and to collect materials for a doctoral dissertation on British coal exports; and he studied briefly at the University of Birmingham.

Fresh from his university studies, Erich Zimmermann came to the United States in 1911 as a visiting scholar, planning to gather material for a book on the role of the Great Lakes in North American transportation. Traveling widely and delving deeply, he never did complete the original book, but instead laid the foundation for which was
later to be his famous "functional approach" to the study of resources. To finance his travels and to keep body and soul together, Zimmermann taught in a mountain school in Kentucky and later in a preparatory school in New York City. Among his earliest employment in the United States was that of violin tutor, and he showed great talent in both teaching and playing; but a bout with arthritis convinced him that he had little future as a practicing musician.

In the meanwhile he had sent his roots deep into American soil, and he was fascinated by the complex economic and social processes which he perceived. Soon he was happily married to Margaret Hoff, who sustained him through subsequent years as devoted wife, research assistant and friendly critic. Germany's loss of a brilliant mind was America's gain.

For three years he taught Latin, French, and German at the Riverdale Country School in New York. In 1915 he began his university career as an instructor in economics and sociology at New York University, a post which he held for three years. He then accepted a professorship at James Millikin University at Decatur, Illinois, where he taught some 13 different courses, including one listed as "Resources and Industries." His course was a pioneer work, and it was to color his entire teaching career. He had found time in the meanwhile to publish a book on foreign trade and shipping.
In 1922 he accepted an appointment as Associate Professor at the University of North Carolina, where he remained for the next 20 years. There his intellectual preoccupation with the field of resources developed into a book titled *World Resources and Industries*, destined to bring him world fame, to become the international source book in its field, and to be translated into Spanish and Japanese.

His novel inquiry into the study of resources, which he described as "functional" or "operational," transformed the concept of resources from a static, physical-science-oriented inventory method to a dynamic appraisal in which human, natural, and cultural factors all were assigned major roles in the determination of resource availability. His integrated natural-physical-social science theory represented a type of approach which a later generation would have called "holistic," and which contemporary writers would surely label as "systems analysis" and "behavioral science." The book was a classic, providing students of economics with a fresh and almost unique view integrating geographical, historical, technical, economic, social, and political factors into a meaningful interpretation of resources. The book was honored in 1934 with the Mayflower Society Cup, and its author was rewarded with a Kenan Professorship at the University of North Carolina. An enlarged and revised edition of that famous book was published in 1951, and a paperback edition of the first ten chapters was issued in 1964.
In 1942 Erich Zimmermann resigned from the University of North Carolina to become Distinguished Professor of Resources in the College of Business Administration at the University of Texas, where he lived out the remainder of his active intellectual life. In 1947 he was named Distinguished Professor of Economics in the College of Arts and Sciences, thus becoming the only man on the University of Texas faculty to hold a double distinguished professorship.

In 1919 Washington and Lee University honored Erich Zimmermann with the degree of Doctor of Laws. His citation observed:

Grateful students without number call you Master, and officials of State acknowledge your manifold patriotic contributions; but all men who struggle with the human problem know that the importance of your work, the accurate and sympathetic analysis of the potential of earth's varied people.

At the University of Texas his active scholarship continued. He contributed a number of articles to encyclopedias and journals, lectured at home and abroad, served in various capacities as economic consultant for the United States departments of Interior and State. He became a director of the National Bureau of Economic Research, a member of the Brookings Institute research staff on Puerto Rico, and a member of the Advisory Committee for American Participation in the International Congress for Conservation of Natural Resources of the United Nations. He served as visiting professor at the universities of California, Harvard, and Columbia. And he lectured widely to industrial management, bureaucrats, and the general public.
In most of his works he continued to occupy himself with educating the world at large to the importance of resources and to the intellectual excitement of their study. He ended his rich contributions to the scholarly literature with the publication in 1957 of an important book on the conservation of petroleum.

His death in 1961 ended a 45-year career of outstanding teaching and scholarship. His critical and provocative thought, his gentle humor, and his superb classroom craftsmanship delighted three generations of university students and earned him their sincere characterization as a member of a passing breed: "scholar and gentleman."

[Signature]
Norman Hackerman
Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs

[Signature]
Eugene W. Nelson
Secretary of the General Faculty

These resolutions were prepared by a Special Committee consisting of Professors Stanley A. Arbingast, Clarence E. Ayres and Calvin P. Blair, Chairman.
"Shall We Subsidize Our Ships?" Commerce and Finance, XL, 23 (June 7, 1922), 835-836.
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"Resources of the South." The South Atlantic Quarterly (July 1933), 213-226.


"What We Mean by Resources." Texas Looks Ahead, Vol. I of The Resources of Texas, Lorene Drummond (ed.). Austin: The University of Texas, 1944, 1-16.

"Lo Que Debemos Entender por Recursos." Translation of "What We Mean by Resources." Investigacion Economica 5, 4 (1946), 413-435.


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"Resources of Latin America, a Study in Methodology." Some Economic Aspects of Postwar Inter-American Relations. Austin: The University of Texas Institute of Latin American Studies, 1946, 7-24.