

MEMORIAL TO JOHN B. LANSING AND HIS CONTRIBUTIONS

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John Lansing was born in Geneva, New York, the son of a professor of chemistry at Hobart College. His family was of Massachusetts origin. John took his undergraduate work at Hobart, graduating in economics in 1940. He spent the next year at Columbia University and the following year at the University of North Carolina studying sociology. In the Summer of 1942 he joined Rensis Likert and his staff in the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and worked for two years on the national surveys of saving and spending which later developed into the Survey of Consumer Finances. After the war he went to Harvard University to complete his graduate work and took his Ph.D. in economics at Harvard in 1949. He and Marjorie Tillis were married in 1945.

In the fall of 1949 John and Marjorie Lansing came to The University of Michigan to join John's former Department of Agriculture colleagues who were establishing the Survey Research Center in Ann Arbor. He took an equal responsibility with George Katona and James Morgan in carrying forward the series of studies which have become the Center's Economic Behavior Program. During the 1950's he developed a special interest in the travel market and his numerous studies in this area culminated in his book Transportation and Economic Policy published in 1966. John was offered a joint appointment in the department of economics at Michigan shortly after joining the Center staff and he taught in that Department for nearly 20 years. In the Spring of 1970 the Department of Economics asked him to accept the position of Chairman for the next three years and he formally assumed that title on July 1 while maintaining a part-time association with the Survey Research Center.

John Lansing was a man who enjoyed the respect of all who came to know him. His simplicity and sincerity of manner were the outward signs of the faultless integrity which lay beneath. He was a reserved man, reflecting perhaps something of his New England ancestry, but he was also a man of quiet good humor who enjoyed his many personal associations in the Center and the sociability of his immediate work group. He was a conscientious teacher and a patient and understanding mentor to his graduate students. He was a totally admirable colleague. None of us ever heard him speak in anger, he was

unfailingly thoughtful and cooperative, his obligations were invariably fulfilled. He treated everyone, of high station or low, with the same gentle manner and the same equalitarian spirit. His good judgment, his steadiness in moments of stress, his unselfish devotion to the Center--these were traits we all recognized and valued.

While the entire University of Michigan is diminished by the loss of John Lansing, it is the Survey Research Center which is most grievously injured. As one of the earliest members of the Center staff he had become a central and familiar part of everyday life at the Center. Those of us who were his close associates over these many years realize that we have lost a friend whom we cannot replace. We also realize how much we depended on John to carry forward the program of research with which he was concerned. Over two decades he had built an international reputation as an imaginative and productive scholar which made it possible for him to command support for his extensive research program.

It is especially painful to all of us at the Institute for Social Research that John Lansing's life should have been terminated at the height of his career. He had contributed much to his profession and to society and he had much more to give. In recent years he had moved vigorously into a new series of studies of the quality of life in the cities. In 1969 he served as chairman of a Study Conference on Environmental Research for the National Academy of Sciences. His last book, published in October, is entitled Planned Residential Environments. The total number of persons in this country who are capable of carrying out the kind of research with which John was increasingly concerned is so small that we can ill afford to give up the 20 years of productive scholarship which we confidently expected from him.

John Lansing made a great contribution to the building of the Survey Research Center and he will be sorely missed. He enriched the lives of all those around him. We were fortunate to have him with us for the past 21 years and we prize his memory.