



Figure 16.

Comparative distribution of Classes V, VI, VII, and VIII farm operators, 1954.—Maps 17 to 20 give the location of Classes V to VIII farm operators and provide a basis for the following generalizations: (1) In case of Class V farms the number of operators working off farm less than 100 days is mostly concentrated in the South. The number of operators working off farm 100 days or more is more generally concentrated primarily over the eastern half of the United States. (2) There is a heavy concentration of Class VI farms in the South. (3) Part-time (Class VII) farms are more generally distributed over the eastern half of the United States than are the Class VI farms. (4) Residential (Class VIII) farms exhibit heavy concentrations in eastern Kentucky and in the Appalachian area of the Carolinas, Tennessee, and Georgia.

In summary, the heaviest concentrations of part-time farming are found in the eastern half of the United States. They are in the largely metropolitan counties and in specified areas, such as the Appalachian coal and industrial areas and in the more heavily populated or industrialized areas throughout the eastern half of the United States.⁷ These concentrations make a different geographic pattern than that of low-income commercial (Class VI) farms. The low-income commercial farms are concentrated more largely in nonmetropolitan counties around the Mississippi River in Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessee, and in the coastal plains of the Southeastern States.⁸ A larger percentage of total farms are classed as part-time and residential farms in metropolitan counties than in the nonmetropolitan counties.

Inferences about off-farm income and employment.—Several

inferences are suggested by these data. Among them are the following:

(1) The relatively low-income farm operators in Class IV and Class V, generally classed as commercial farm operators, actually differ substantially in economic status when broad areas of the country are compared. Throughout the South, in the Great Plains, and in scattered other areas, a large proportion are actually low-income families that have virtually a subsistence status and have only minor sources of off-farm income. On the other hand, in the Northeast, in the nine or ten most westerly States of the country, and in parts of Texas, Oklahoma, and Florida, the so-called low-income commercial farm operators have more readily available sources of off-farm work and they have substantially larger incomes.

(2) A smaller percentage of Classes I to III farm operators work off farm than is the case of Classes IV and V operators. Apparently off-farm employment—although as readily available—has a higher opportunity cost for them and does not attract as many operators.

(3) Among the Classes VII and VIII farms, the evidence suggests that off-farm income is more substantial outside the South and outside the Great Plains.

(4) Throughout the economic classes the importance of urban-industrial development in providing off-farm income and employment is evident. This probably indicates that urban-industrial development is an influential factor in providing extra income in areas of low farm income.

⁷ Cf. Otis Dudley Duncan, "Note on Farm Tenancy and Urbanization," *Journal of Farm Economics*, November 1956.

⁸ Cf. Vernon W. Ruttan, "The Impact of Urban Industrial Development on Agriculture in the Tennessee Valley and the Southeast," *Journal of Farm Economics*, Vol. XXXVII, No. 1, February 1955, pp. 38-56. The data for the 1950 Census of Population indicated that, "in both the Tennessee Valley region, the Southeast, and the Nation as a whole, the (median) income level achieved rural-farm families (from farm and nonfarm sources) does bear a direct and positive relationship to the relative level of urban-industrial development in the same general area." Pp. 40, 42.