

People Move in Search of Better Lives

CONTROVERSIES over migration of people from the "Frost Belt" to the "Sun Belt" may cool off a little as industrial activity picks up, but people always will be looking for a better place to live.

That is what settled this country. People came here from Europe looking for a better neighborhood. After they landed, they fanned out across the continent searching for new homes. They found most of the native Indian tribes moving about, doing the same thing.

We need not worry about people moving around so much. We should be concerned that our deteriorating moral standards and mistaken notions that government spending can solve all problems have made many once desirable communities virtually unlivable.

Continually increasing crime is largely to blame. Crime may be expected to go higher as long as we fail to implant moral principles, discipline and responsibility into lives of young people.

Even adults who may have little concern about codes of conduct do

not want others to break into their houses and steal, mug them on the streets or commit acts of violence. Yet their indifference to ethical standards may be a major contributing cause of such acts.

Overcrowding, often given as a reason for both migration and crime, doesn't stand up when all factors are considered. People can live peaceably in crowded conditions if they live right.

The great migration of families from farms to the cities in the 1930s occurred because they could not make a living on their small farms. Now people are moving to the suburbs, small towns and rural acreages in search of better neighborhoods. Most of these still work in the cities, although they do not want to live in them.

Statistics have been compiled by the bushel to show where living costs are cheaper, but these may be misleading. The cost of living is about the same everywhere: Whatever you make plus 10 percent.

Even before the fuel and housing situations became critical, surveys

showed that about one-third of those polled would like to move. Job dissatisfaction was a reason, but "quality of life" was stronger.

One of the sad aspects of busing children to crosstown schools has been its negative effect on deteriorating neighborhoods. Now crime is compelling neighbors to band themselves together like pioneers used to do to guard their property and protect their families.

Taxpayers' money has been dished out lavishly to subsidize public housing and help stabilize populations, but with little success. Pulling people out of slums and giving them quality places to live has not worked because the quality of people's ethics remained unchanged.

Objections voiced by leaders in localities that have lost population have stirred talk of government action to discourage migration. This won't work, either, because people don't want government telling them where to live, or how to live.

Better places to live result from people living better lives!