resulting from land subdivision; second, the increased cost of maintaining such improvements as streets, lights, and drainage, sewerage, and water supply systems; third, the increased public service rates for power and light, telephone, gas, and transportation.

"This is an imposing list of charges. That they are actual costs and truly "extra" charges which would not otherwise be necessary may be illustrated by a simple example. Nearly one half of the lots in Los Angeles County are vacant. If this vacancy were spread evenly, every house and structure would be separated from every other by a vacant lot. Now picture a consolidation of the County with the vacant lots eliminated and all the structures moved toward a common center. The people of this imaginary city would then occupy one half of the area which they would have occupied under the first assumption. The area which they no longer need contains hundreds of thousands of vacant lots, miles upon miles of streets improved with various classes of pavements, curbs, walks, lights, drainage and sewerage structures, electric, telephone, and gas lines, and transportation facilities. Is such a condition an economic waste? Undoubtedly, yes. Under the conditions of today practically this amount of waste actually occurs, although it is less obvious.

"Let us now study in detail the costs of these unnecessary expenditures on the basis of the preceding list of charges. The tax rate in Los Angeles County for the last four years has been 88 cents per $100 of assessed valuation. This includes all costs of general county government. What proportion of this 88-cent basic tax rate is not only chargeable to vacant lots but is probably made necessary by their existence? The division of acreage land into lots increases the work of the assessor, tax collector, auditor, planning commission, and, in short, of practically every department of government. These increases in governmental work and expense necessitate an increase in the assessed valuation of subdivided land over that of acreage land. This increase in assessed valuation, when determined, will give a basis for measuring the tax burden of vacant lots. The average assessed valuation per square mile for acreage land is $255,164 and for vacant lots $1,346,064, an increase of $1,090,000. Thus, the average tax on vacant lots is 5.3 times the average tax on the same area of land in acreage, an increase of 428 per cent. These figures, of course, do not mean that immediately upon subdividing, taxes will increase 428 per cent, for this is the average increase over the entire County and includes subdivisions which have been on the market for many years. It does indicate, however, that subdivided land pays higher taxes than acreage land and that much of this increase is due solely to the fact of subdivision rather than to any real difference in value.

"For the 175 square miles of vacant lots the total increase in assessed valuation attributable to subdivision amounts to $190,907,500. Application of the 88-cent county tax rate to this figure shows an additional tax on these vacant lots, as a result of their subdivision, of $1,679,986 annually. This amount is 10.3 per cent of the tax on all real estate, and represents a tax rate of 3.91 cents for each $100 of assessed valuation. This figure of 3.91 cents may sound trifling, but it is of importance for it is 4.45 per cent of the basic county tax. In the Cities of Los Angeles County, similar calculations demonstrate that 5.28 cents of their average basic tax rate is derived from non-productive vacant property. This is 3.5 per cent of their average basic rate, and amounts to total for all cities in the County of $2,013,120 annually. It is evident that the additional taxes paid as a result of subdivision amount in Los Angeles County to more than three million dollars annually, and are necessitated largely by the increased costs of government resulting from the subdivision of acreage land. It may be rightly stated that technically this charge is borne directly by the vacant-lot owners themselves and, therefore, does not create an additional burden upon the owners of improved lots in the community, but in the last analysis the burden falls upon the general public."

In addition to the increased tax burdens incurred through over-subdivision, other evils of but slightly less degree may be summarized as follows:

(1) The cost of construction of streets, highways, etc., was originally financed through special assessment districts and borne on a frontage or acreage basis by vacant and occupied property alike. This condition has been altered greatly during recent months, however. Much of the assessment against these districts has been assumed as a general county obligation, thereby shifting most of the burden to improved properties.

(2) By the same token, the cost of maintenance of these streets has always been a cost chargeable to the general fund and supported by taxes. Obviously,