CREATIVE CONSERVATION

I welcome this opportunity to join you. I am concerned about your problems. I want to be associated with your progress and the future of the 15 soil and water conservation districts in Hawaii and the 3,005 in our land. There is the personal pleasure of meeting friends again. Too, there is the professional pleasure of discussing soil and water conservation with those in the field. I always carry away from these meetings new ideas, fresh viewpoints--perhaps more than I bring.

Your conference, as I see it, provides for a timely discussion of vital issues. The accelerating demands of our time place a premium on effort, which is basic to soil and water conservation, and to resource development, and to the basic welfare of our great Nation.

It is less than profound to observe that a good community can be produced only by good men--or that we get out of life about what we put into it. Yet men of good will and their efforts are, indeed, essential ingredients of a useful, civilized community.

There are other ingredients, of course: skills, planning, and vision--sacrifice, determination and faith--encouragement, investment, and opportunity for self-expression and accomplishment. Therefore, I feel that <u>this is the time</u> to speak for the unity of the countryside in all its values and uses. <u>It is the time</u> to advocate the protection and development of our resources as a whole, in accordance with their capabilities and the goals of the community. <u>It is a time</u> to speak for action that will meet the oncoming demands of a growing Nation. Above all, <u>it is a time</u> to help

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Material used by Norman A. Berg, Deputy Administrator for Field Services, SCS, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., for talk before the Annual Meeting of the Hawaii Association of Conservation Districts, Reef Hotel, Waikiki, November 10, 1967

CREATIVE CONSERVATION

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Material used by Norman A. Berg, Deputy Administrator for Field Services, SCS, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., for talk at the Twenty-fourth Annual Convention, Tennessee Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, October 24, 1967, Knoxville, Tennessee

conservation district governing boards to assume fully their responsibilities of local leadership in soil, in water, and in related conservation and resource development work.

I would like to take a few minutes to quote from three of our present Cabinet men. I promise you a moral when I finish.

Willard Wirtz, Secretary of Labor, had this to say on long-range planning in this Nation:

> "What we are really doing now is flying the most powerful economic engine in history--and I mean to include all our scientific and technological developments--and we are flying it by the seat of our pants. We're flying by luck, by instinct, with almost no instruments at all in the cockpit. I'm not sure that on this basis we are going to be able to keep up, flying this blind, with the amount of technological development being brought about."

John W. Gardner, Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, in his book "Excellence" writes,

> "We must recognize that there may be excellence or shoddiness in every line of human endeavor. We must learn to honor excellence (indeed, to demand it) in every socially accepted human activity, however humble the activity, and to scorn shoddiness, however exalted the activity.
>
> "An excellent plumber is infinitely more admirable than an incompetent philospher. The society which scorns excellence in plumbing because plumbing is a humble activity and tolerates shoddiness in philosophy because it is an exalted activity will have neither good plumbing nor good philosophy.because it is
>
> "Neither its pipes nor its theories will hold water."
>
> Orville L. Freeman, Secretary of Agriculture, points out at every chance,
>
> "The total cost to the Nation of our careless lack of planning in urban, suburban, and rural America is beyond our power to calculate. And it is growing. . .Today, 70 percent of our people live on one percent of the land; 30 percent, on the other 99 percent.

Is that good for the people and the Nation? If not, why not? Should we have a clearly defined policy of urban-rural balance or should we let matters drift? Should we give a high investment priority to building opportunity in rural America, or should we resign ourselves as a Nation to larger and larger cities?

These questions demand an answer.

I promised you a moral from these three quotations. Perhaps as good a way as any of expressing it is to recall what John Glenn said when a reporter asked him how it felt to take the first manned space flight:

> "Well," Colonel Glenn replied, "In those final minutes, when the liquid oxygen is smoking. . .and the gantry falls away. . .and I hear the flight control officer counting. . .4. . .3. . .2. . .1. . . I think to myself what a marvelous bird this space vehicle is. . . literally millions of separate parts. . .valves, pipes, wiring, combustion chambers. . .<u>and every one of them supplied by the low bidder</u>!"

Colonel Glenn, of course, was kidding. The vehicle he rode was the culmination of leterally millions of man-hours of planning, the result of an advanced aero-space technology that has surpassed in fact a generation of science fiction. . .the result of billions of dollars of national treasure.

Every piece in that rocket had to perform perfectly the first time. Like a parachute jump, there is no "second time" if it doesn't. It was produced by hundreds of thousands of brains, all perfectly meshed and pointing toward a single target, a technology that will take us to the moon in the nineteen seventies, to the planets in another generation; someday, even to the stars.

And so John Glenn was kidding--but up until now, we as a society have been dead-serious in the belief that random conduct of our affairs--a system which has worked fairly well in the past--will produce desired results into the indefinite future.

It just won't happen!

Reshaping the total urban environment to make the cities livable can't possibly take place under laissez-faire demography if another 80 to 100 million people pour into the Nation's cities, and this is where they will pour in if present trends continue over the next three decades.

In short, it isn't enough, as Mr. Wirtz said, to "fly by the seat of our pants," or to "nibble away at the far edges of great problems. . ." as George Gallup recently put it.

We are, in fact, on the edge of one of those rare, turbulent division points in the affairs of man which decisively separate one era from another.

It is an uncomfortable period, full of uncertainty, full of gropings--for it is difficult to part with the realities of the past.

We're still asking the question--an important one--"What is man doing to the environment?" But now we're also asking a much more profound one, "What is the environment doing to the man?"

These are questions demanding answers, and the demands come from the urban society that is now in the majority, that now decides increasingly what programs we shall have, including conservation, and how much financial help they shall receive. And these people are looking at the picture from the standpoint of resource users.

Pure air, clean water, stable soils, productive grasslands and forests, abundant wildlife, natural beauty, and the opportunity for man to live in harmony with his natural environment are essential. They are interrelated and mutually supporting objectives.

Conservation today encompasses the full sweep of interrelated natural resources and their management and use. Use, restoration, and preservation are compatible aims. Man is but one element of the ecological whole.

Emerging now is a special challenge to fit the activities and needs of man harmoniously into his total environment. The recognition of this crisis in the countryside has given birth to a new concept of creative conservation.

This concept of "full use" conservation says that as populations grow and people live in greater and greater concentrations, we must consider the total environment.

The Soil Conservation Service has long recognized that erosion, floods, inadequate drainage and water shortages do not stop at property lines or at city limits! Conservation must be everyone's responsibility, if the species now is to survive. But people cannot properly accept a responsibility if they are ignorant of what it is or how they can help.

Elsewhere on this and other programs you have probably heard what conservation district leaders at all levels are doing about their future role in conservation and resource development. Others tell their story of programs and progress from their own particular point of vantage or view.

Mine has been the unique one of counseling with the NACD District Outlook Committee while carrying forward the day by day duties of an Administrator's Deputy dealing with widespread Service activities intimately connected with District work.

Our Service agrees with the District Outlook report that a great and exciting future lies ahead for the District movement if only we are collectively equal to it. Our impression is that local leaders are assessing the future role of conservation districts with realism.

In performing old jobs in conservation and in expanding District programs to meet new needs and in getting additional help on a broad array of new problems they are again showing that they are a major force for action.

The Service has demonstrated for a third of a century that it can meet change with realism and vision. We have kept abreast of new methods--alert to new ways of doing old jobs. Fundamentals that determine success or failure of soil and water conservation have not been neglected.

The term "soil conservation" has been effectively broadened. But not without some confusion.

The founders of our Nation regarded water and air the way the Indian did the buffalo. There was always more where the last supply came from, and nature took away whatever people polluted. However, smog and polluted streams have again sharply reminded our generation that nature's bounty is not infinite. The same realization occurred earlier for soils and still earlier for forests, parks, and wildlife.

However, any serious concern in the United States over any aspect of environment is largely a phenomenon of the 20th century. This is so chiefly because too few before had taken account of the fact that the resources--and even the space of the American continent were limited. When men saw that space and resources were indeed finite, the concept of "conservation" was born.

At first the word meant primarily the wise exploitation of material resources with some regard for the future. Then some men began to include in it preservation of the natural environment for its intellectual and aesthetic as well as utilitarian values. Confusion inevitably resulted and it has increased with the further inclusion of the need to provide for what is somewhat more precisely designated as "recreation" and "natural beauty."

The confusion is partly a matter of words. But more importantly it arises out of a difference of opinion concerning the extent to which non-material values should be recognized and what the non-material values are. It is perfectly possible to dislike billboards without caring whether or not wildlife disappears, and perfectly possible to consider recreation facilities important without believing that the preservation of any aspect of the natural environment is also important. Superhighways, suitably landscaped, are to some people simply nature improved; to others they isolate the tourist from the land he traverses and make nature itself seem artificial.

When our plight is examined, we resemble somewhat a country described by Wilford Owen of the Brookings Institute:

> "At the national level the inhabitants were very rich but at the local level they turned out to be quite poor. And, as luck would have it, they all lived at the local level."

Conservation has become increasingly competitive. . .

. . .as to meaning

. . .as to function

. . .within government

. . .outside government.

Conservation means many different things to many different people! Conservation is many different things to many different people!

Even within the realm of renewable natural resources there are many highly specialized interest groups:

--Those interested mainly in hunting and fishing--1,558,755 migratory waterfowl stamps were sold last year.

--Those interested mainly in flowers or birds. There are now 8,000,000 bird watchers.

--Those interested mainly in hiking, or boating, or nature study, or picnicking or swimming (especailly in the Potomac River).

--Those interested mainly in preserving wilderness and wild rivers.

--And those interested mainly in soil--and water--and plants and forests.

Conservation is all these things and more!

It is a complex matter. It has great diversity. It is little understood in its broad totality because "conservation" now has so many adherents who see it from so many different viewpoints--who view it in many different lights.

Most basic resources are in the ownership and under the care of private citizens. About three-fourths of the area of our 48 mainland States is privately owned.

The conservation practiced on these lands makes it possible for all citizens to ultimately enjoy their own particular form of conservation.

Far too few realize that the principal guardian of our heritage of forests, soil, water, trees, grass, and wildlife is not the Federal Government, nor the State conservation departments, but the millions of individual landowners throughout the Nation.

The Federal and State conservation agencies can counsel and assist the private owners, but the responsibility and the initiative are theirs. Their collective response is the reality of conservation.

Conservation also has a common denominator. Underlying conservation in all its varieties and forms--and upon which all kinds of conservation depend completely--is the land itself and its soil and its water and its plants.

From these basics spring all forms of conservation. Without them conservation by any definition has no form or substance. Without them conservation is only a meaningless word.

Conservation begins with soil, water, and plants. They are the base.

These basic resources form the common bond joining the varied interests of all resource users, whatever may be their specialized definition of what conservation means.

Upon this base is built a policy of cooperation between the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the owners and operators of three-fourths of the American land--a policy that recognizes the legitimate ends of resource use for the benefit both of the individual and of the larger society.

At this point you can well ask--what does this all mean to me?

What does this portend for conservation districts for communities, for collective action, for organization such as the Soil Conservation Service?

The late, great Adlai E. Stevenson said something once that has recently become pertinent to me. In March of next year, God willing, I'll attain that age of which he spoke so eloquently,

> "What a man knows at fifty that he did not know at twenty years, for the most part, is incommunicable. . .The laws, the aphorisms, the generalizations, the universal truths, the parables and old saws--all the observations about life which can be communicated readily in handy verbal packages--are as well known to a man at twenty as at fifty. He has been told them all, he has read them all, and he has probably repeated them all before he graduates--but he has not lived them all.
>
> "What he knows at fifty that he did not know at twenty boils down to something like this:
>
> "The knowledge he has acquired with age is not a knowledge of formulas, or forms of words, but of people, places, actions--a knowledge not gained by words, but by touch, sight, sound, victories, failures, sleeplessness, devotion, love--the human experience and emotions of this earth and of one's self and other men. Perhaps, too, a little faith, a little reverence for things you cannot see."

The point I want to make is that we have become, in my half-century, (half has been as a Service career employee), a nation of city dwellers. Each day and each year, more and still more Americans concentrate in the towns, cities, and suburbs. To them life naturally centers where they work,

make their homes--raise their families. And from these centers of population emerge a pattern of mutual interests, problems, and understanding. A kinship is growing up among these people of Honolulu and Hilo--of Memphis and Minneapolis, of Atlanta and Albuquerque. Common concerns derive from such typically metropolitan problems as housing, crime, schools, pollution, recreation, and commuting.

On the Eastern seaboard, airline pilots flying north at dusk from Washington to Boston look down on a coruscating corridor of light, an unbroken, 450-mile long conglomeration of 37 million Americans that is referred to by demographers as the "Easterb Megalopolis." Another area is growing even faster--will ultimately pose bigger problems--this is the potential "Great Lakes Megalopolis," soon to stretch without interruption from Pittsburgh to Chicago, by the year 2000, containing a population of 45 million.

What are the social and economic consequences of current trends toward intensive urbanization for the (1) Nation, (2) cities, and (3) rural areas. Can we afford to continue our present course of trying to deal with problems of cities and rural areas separately? Is there now need for a national policy position on rural-urban balance?

Most people now live in urban communities--core cities and their surrounding suburban areas. The trend, I mentioned earlier, suggests a few major megalopolis (3 to 13). A minority of the U. S. people live in rural communities. Many suffer from declining job opportunities.

Many rural people--especially the younger generation--have found urban communities more attractive and have migrated to the cities. A recent University of Illinois survey of 2,929 of the State's rural high school juniors and seniors showed an astonishing 95 percent want no part of farming as their life's work. In the battle for jobs have the cities been winning? Each year, 3 million more Americans jam into our already overcrowded cities. Why? What is there about the city that attracts people? In a single word--jobs! Although that is simplification. There are, of course, additional human, cultural, and asthetic factors as well as variety and economic values.

For this, though, they pay a heavy price. It's farewell to old friends, family homes, and familiar surroundings. In the cities we face further sacrifices. Increased traffic, smog, inner city decay, loss of individuality, rising taxes, more demands, and less incentive to response.

And what then happens to the countryside? Increasingly, to many it becomes an obstacle in time and space--merely landscape separating cities. It is to far too many a "land in between" to be crossed as quickly as possible via superhighways, fast trains, or faster planes. Among our young and urban oriented generation, there is real danger that rural America will be regarded increasingly as just "undeveloped" space, the "hinterland," only there for nourishment of the urban center.

That American countryside--the expanse of nature separating our cities and towns and rural hamlets--represents the land we have left to grow in, to feed and clothe our people, to play in, and to build on the American dream.

That is all we have--and when divided and divided again for the multiple needs of a Nation growing rapidly in population, in urban development, in highway mileage, in an array of man-oriented uses alien to nature--this natural landscape that once seemed so limitless shrinks before us at every turn--and we are made aware of the challenging crisis in the countryside.

The crisis we face in the countryside is a crisis of quality in a Nation whose people demand quality in the marketplace, but have failed to provide for it in the natural environment.

It is a crisis of quantity in a land whose rich natural endowment has been vandalized to a degree of grave proportions.

This conservation and community crisis is a matter of urgent public concern. At stake is our total environment. The crisis will not go away. It demands action now. It requires increasingly intelligent, purposeful direction at all levels of government. It will demand personal involvement eventually by all citizens.

We are seeing a definite blossoming of concern for these problems and solutions that are essential if we are to enjoy an environment of real quality. Throughout the Nation there is a growing feeling that our generation has a special responsibility, in a world of change, to protect the qualities of environment that have enduring value in our civilization.

Along with the new concept has come an awakening--a greater awareness--in conservation today.

Conservation is moving from the province of the few to the embrace of millions. This is as it should be. Yet we cannot help asking, with considerable anxiety, is the awakening sufficient? Is the awareness adequate?

This is the new America that we face. This is the new resource climate in which we exist. What are the central issues?

First, there are steeply increasing demands on resources.

Second, the kinds of demands on resources are changing. The quality of resources is becoming more important, and the location of resource problems is shifting.

Third, it is apparent that resource matters are growing more complex. We face new problems of conflict and competition. A given resource may have to do double--or triple--duty. Concurrently, the interests of resource "users"--as well as resource "owners"--are assuming greater importance. And somebody is going to have to make decisions--unpopular decisions in many cases--about the allocation of resources to any given uses.

This raises another significant problem--the effect of resource demands on local self-government and our democratic system.

A question that concerns you and me is the role of conservation districts in this more complicated resource picture. What would districts attempt to contribute, what responsibilities would district boards seek to fulfill? How can districts strengthen their capacity to meet the challenge of the times?

The history of districts has also been one of steady and progressive evolution. As new problems have appeared, districts have moved to help solve these problems. At first you worked mostly with individual farmers; next came work with groups of farmers. Later, programs expanded to include whole communities--in watershed projects, resource conservation and development projects, and planning, zoning, and other area-wide activities.

In other words, as the times have changed, districts have changed.

Now, the question really becomes one of the next step. Are districts ready to move ahead? Are they ready to make further adjustments in their programs and to legislative authorities to enable them to do an even better job?

Regardless of how we answer these and other questions, the needs are more than evident. There is need, for example (1) to re-identify the resource assets of each community, county, and conservation district, (2) to project the probable demands that will be made on these resources, and (3) to guide the development and use of these same resources along wise and orderly lines.

There is urgent need for strong leadership in conservation districts, in farm organizations and rural community chambers of commerce--among conservationists, tradesmen, bankers, and newsmen--to identify the array of new issues now facing the countryside and the soil, and devise constructive programs for dealing with them.

The key to the new approach in a nutshell seems to be that of:

1. Involving more people in resource work,

2. Extending district services to additional people, and

3. Placing more emphasis on braod-based resource planning.

At the same time continuing the original purpose of the district as an effective local action organization to get as much total conservation on the land as fast as possible!

This is a fortunate development, for there is evidence that if districts do not assume these responsibilities and carry out truly active and comprehensive natural resource programs that meet today's needs, somebody else will and should!

In many cases, conservation districts could perform some of the work being taken on by the new groups, the result being less duplication, better coordination, and a more efficient and useful program. But if this is to be so, districts must take the initiative. It is not a case of taking on responsibilities already being performed effectively by others; but rather digging into the work that remains undone, and which needs to be done.

No one I know believes that the problems of conservation districts are exactly the same today as they were in 1937--nor that the solutions to them are the same, nor that farming has not changed, nor that the social pattern of our population is the same as it was.

A rural and limited soil conservation concept simply is no longer sufficient in a society that has become increasingly urban, a society in which the interests of the users of resources have become equal to those of the owners of resources.

On many matters ahead I feel that we and our allies in conservation may no longer have a black-and-white kind of decision. The kind of complexity that we face in the future suggests we're going to have to begin choosing from several colors of gray.

At the moment, between three and five percent of prime arable land in this country is covered by asphalt and concrete. That's an area the size of Georgia. And so decisions are being made, but they're being made without full knowledge of the consequences. It is important for us to realize that we must answer some immediate and critical questions. For instance:

> Should a proposed highway location be contested?--or land cleared of trees to produce row crops? Will the benefits of a proposed reservoir outweigh the forced abandonment of a dozen valley farms?
>
> Should the right of eminent domain be exercised to obtain easements for a watershed project?--or for the development of a community playground? What are the risks to the water supply, and to wildlife, in my use of pesticides? Should my district fight to prevent drainage of a waterfowl marsh that would provide a factory site?

Decisions on questions like these are not easy, for right is not always evident, nor are the alternatives necessarily wrong. Issues are interwoven with shades of good and bad. They provoke doubt, and ready-made standards of judgment do not always apply.

We do know that an expanding national economy cannot long endure on a declining resource base. A rising standard of living cannot be sustained in a deteriorating environment. Fulfilling the needs of millions of people yet unborn cannot be assured unless we achieve full use of natural resources and planned patterns of land use without delay. The fruits of an expanding technology cannot be enjoyed unless technology itself is harnessed to meet the goals of the new conservation. This is the challenge leaders at all levels must meet.

Conservation still begins on the land, on each individual acre. As a Nation, we have developed our resource conservation policies on the firm basis of essential involvement at the local level, for we are a people wedded to the concept of individual initiative and grass-roots participation in the public affairs that concern us.

But we must understand, too, that our State and Federal governments also represent the interests of the individual and the local community. And we have wisely and properly drawn upon State and Federal resources to support the local effort. We have done this in the national interest because the summation of local interest is national interest. That is how we have advanced for more than a quarter of a century in the conservation and development of the Nation's lands and waters.

We can do those things in the new conservation that have been born of local initiative and cooperation, and advanced by the dedication and wise efforts of an enlightened State and national government.

Let us never again assume that all is well with the land. There remains a serious backlog of conservation projects to be initiated and accomplished. There are dams to be built and land measures to be applied. There are studies of soil types to be made so that we may be assured of building our country on a sound footing. There are rivers and streams to be protected against siltation and cleansed of pollution. There are lakes to be established and others to be restored. There are ranges and forests to be protected against destruction and wildlife benefits must be recognized, improved, and made more useful for public and private benefit.

There remains a need for more professional conservationists to guide the Nation's conservation work. And there is need for greater financial support at all levels to extend the benefits of this effort throughout the land.

Finally, on a most critical question. Is the congestion, the tensions, the urban sprawl to continually worsen? The USDA says, "No." We are taking direct issue with the notion that continued mass migration from country to city is inevitable. That tomorrow's America need not be a few huge megalopolitan complexes strung together by super highways running through miles of rural land--depopulated, lacking in business and industry, without the tax base to support roads, schools, and other public services needed for adequate living.

The community of tomorrow must be a functional and viable economic area. The alternative--a solution to these problems--lies in the development of new and better planned communities which can serve as the location

for a larger share of job opportunities in rural America. There are many resources upon which we can build. Rural USA contains considerable space with both natural beauty and recreational opportunities--an almost priceless asset. The focus is on total resources and total human needs. This will demand the development of the best institutional arrangements for meeting these needs, for creating human satisfaction that makes life worth living.

This is rural areas development with depth. It is not simply a matter of attracting new job possibilities to rural towns. It involves an array of programs. Improved quality of education, community facilities, job training, social services, cultural and recreational facilities--and an interworking of private as well as public resources--including local leadership with an enthusiasm and zest for the task.

As I hear the Secretary of Agriculture, no one is advocating that we abolish our cities. We are <u>not, emphasis not</u>, suggesting a back-to-the-farm movement. We are interested in what can be called a more rational or planned process of urbanization. As population increases, it should take place in areas where we have and can preserve more open space for both asthetic quality and greater recreational opportunity. They need not reach the size, population, and industrial density that brings traffic congestion, smog--that prices space, land, and privacy beyond the reach of the ordinary inhabitant.

Until the forced influx of people into megalopolis living is stopped--and turned around--the fight to save the cities can never really be won.

Countryside, U.S.A., is a promising alternative that permits us to solve the problems of both city and rural living with one vigorous stroke.

Our collective goal should be that the Nation's future still lies in rural America. The vast countryside can offer relief from the teeming cities and their congested suburbs, can provide ample land and water to serve agriculture and the expanding needs of commerce and industry, and finally the broad acres on which to build garden communities for tomorrow's generations.

A New Conservation Charter for USDA

One of the most important conservation documents of our times is now available. Resources in Action is the product of a Department-wide study under the direct leadership of Secretary of Agriculture Orville L. Freeman. It redefines the resource conservation mission of USDA in light of needs today and for the rest of the century. It outlines timely new policies and goals. It points to ways these policies and goals will be implemented.

The publication has threefold significance.

1. It spells out the nature and dimension of conservation action urgently required to meet the resource needs of American people between now and the year 2000.

2. It demonstrates that, by the very location and character of these resource problems, USDA has major responsibility for conservation leadership, and

3. Finally, it charts for USDA the essential steps we must take in our cooperative efforts with other agencies and units of government, and with citizen groups, to achieve the goals.

The policies and goals, moreover, are particularly geared to the growing concern for the quality of man's total environment. Conservation

of that environment, Secretary Freeman asserts in the foreword, "is a physical task, a social philosophy, and an economic necessity."

This "creative conservation"--"full use" policy is needed to guide the American people in the use of their renewable natural resources in the face of exploding technology and unremitting population pressures. It recognizes the need for involvement of people and their governments in conservation programs at the ground level.

The study blueprints seven major objectives toward which USDA's conservation efforts will be vigorously directed. Each of these contains a clear charge to the Soil Conservation Service; for we, in turn, bear a high degree of responsibility as the Department's technical arm for action in soil and water conservation. These objectives are:

--Upgrading the quality of the environment.

--Strengthening the economy and standards of living in rural America.

--Helping to find solutions to America's water problems.

--Obtaining greater benefits from our forest lands.

--Providing creative opportunities for outdoor recreation.

--Widening public awareness and involvement in resource conservation.

--Helping other nations solve their resource problems.

To achieve these objectives, we must doe more than accelerate the pace of accomplishments in the familiar approaches to conservation. The times call for some specific new working tools. Resources in Action charges SCS, along with other USDA agencies, to:

--Search out and promote the best possible scientific management techniques to meet future resource needs efficiently without damage to the land or to the environment.

--Extend the multiple-use concept of resource planning to all land resources to obtain the best possible patterns of planned resource use and rural development.

--Develop our resource capacity sufficiently to assure abundant supplies of food and timber, as well as clean water, pure air, more outdoor recreation, and a more wholesome and beautiful environment.

--Stimulate more effective local leadership in conservation through State and local governments, by soil and water conservation districts and other conservation groups, and by owners of large and small timber holdings.

Resources in Action goes beyond these wide-brush strokes, however, to delineate in considerable detail many individual policies and goals that become parts of the whole.

For this reason, the document will be "required homework" for all SCS employees.

We hope it will likewise be a useful study reference for the leaders of soil and water conservation districts, sponsoring groups of watershed projects and resource conservation and development projects, and others with whom we work.

Determination and intelligent application of skills will be required from each of us to insure that the Soil Conservation Service does its part in this all-important task which Secretary Freeman has dubbed "Agriculture/2000."

The Administrator has assured the Secretary that we are committed fully to helping USDA fulfill the tremendous responsibility it bears for leadership in resource conservation, both at home and abroad.

The unmatched performance of the successful commercial farm, ranch, and forest enterprises in this country is eloquent testimony to the outstanding job you have done--and continue to do.

But there are other problems afflicting the country now--other challenges, other needs, new priorities.

We, too, know that success and fame are fleeting. What would have been sufficient for yesterday is apt to be too little and too late for tomorrow.

There is an old Greek proverb that says, "Before you score, you must have a goal." So, in closing I suggest we each remember,

"As you ramble on through life, brother
Whatever be your goal,
Keep your eye upon the doughnut
And not upon the hole."

Speaking in Chicago, the Secretary said that agriculture's job is far from done and never will be. For example:

"We expect that remote sensing equipment in spacecraft will be linked with computers to identify and measure land use... detect plant diseases, insect infestations and drought... assess crop stands and vigor and to predict future yields... and determine whether soils are suitable for growing needed crops...We are also hard at work to devise better methods for disposing of farm and processing wastes."

In closing the Secretary said:

"Today's world, much of which is hungry and despairing, needs all that science can give, and more."

Then he told the story of a student who came upon Louis Pasteur bent over his microscope:

"Pardon me," said the student, "I thought you were praying."

Replied Pasteur, "I was."