

## EXCELLENCE FOR TOMORROW

THANKS FOR AGAIN ASKING ME TO BE PART OF YOUR NORTH CAROLINA SCS AWARDS PROGRAM. THE LAST TIME WAS SEPTEMBER 25, 1969. ARE THERE ANY HERE NOW WHO REMEMBER THAT FINE EVENING?

AMONG OTHER THINGS, I SAID, "I AM PLEASED TO BE IN NORTH CAROLINA WHERE THE SERVICE HAD ITS ROOTS IN THE DREAM OF CHIEF HUGH H. BENNETT, AND WHERE SCS HAS SOME OF ITS MOST IMPORTANT WORK AND SUCCESS TODAY. I LIKE TO JOIN IN OCCASIONS LIKE THIS; TO TAKE TIME OUT FROM OUR DAILY CONSERVATION CHALLENGES TO RECOGNIZE SERVICE AND EXCELLENCE. BUT IN A REAL SENSE AN AWARDS PROGRAM IS NOT A BREAK FROM THE ACTION, IT IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE ACTION. IT GETS RIGHT AT THE HEART OF WHAT HAS MADE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION THE OUTSTANDING WORK THAT IT IS TODAY."

"THE SUCCESS OF OUR PROGRAM DOES NOT DEPEND PRIMARILY ON THE SIZE OF ITS BUDGET, OR THE COMPLEXITY OF DATA PROCESSING MACHINES, OR EVEN ON THE NUMBER OF ITS EMPLOYEES AND FIELD OFFICES, IMPORTANT AS THESE THINGS ARE.

"IT RESTS PRIMARILY ON THE QUALITY OF ITS PEOPLE-- ON A COMBINATION OF TECHNICAL EXCELLENCE, A SPIRIT OF INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVE, AND DEDICATION TO THOSE GOALS WHICH UNITE US ALL. WE HAVE BEEN BLESSED WITH MANY SUCH EMPLOYEES IN THE SCS. YOU ARE PROOF THAT OURS IS NOT AN OCCUPATION, IT IS A VOCATION; IT IS NOT SO MUCH A CAREER AS A CALLING. THAT IS OUR STRENGTH, AND THAT IS WHY WE HAVE BEEN ABLE IN A LITTLE OVER ONE GENERATION TO HELP CHANGE THE LANDSCAPE OF A NATION."

THOSE WORDS STILL APPLY NEARLY FIVE YEARS LATER.

I READ IN TIME MAGAZINE RECENTLY THAT THE MOST MYSTERIOUS, LEAST-KNOWN AREA OF MAN'S UNIVERSE DOES NOT LIE IN THE FARTHEST REACHES OF OUTER SPACE. IT IS NOT FOUND IN THE MOST REMOTE JUNGLE OR IN THE DEEPEST SEA. IT IS INSIDE THE HUMAN SKULL. IT'S THAT 3½ POUNDS OF SHEER WONDER CALLED THE HUMAN BRAIN.

MATERIAL FOR A TALK BY NORMAN A. BERG, ASSOCIATE ADMINISTRATOR, USDA SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE, AT THE SCS AWARDS BANQUET, RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA, MAY 24, 1974.

THE BRAIN IS THE MOST IMPORTANT OF THE BODY'S ORGANS. THE HEART IS A PUMP; THE LUNGS ARE AN OXYGENATION SYSTEM. BUT THE BRAIN IS THE MASTER CONTROL, THE GUIDING FORCE BEHIND ALL OF MAN'S ACTIONS. IT IS THE SEAT OF ALL HUMAN THOUGHT AND CONSCIOUSNESS, THE SOURCE OF THE INGENUITY THAT MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR MAN'S ANCESTORS TO SURVIVE AND EVENTUALLY TO DOMINATE THEIR PHYSICALLY MORE POWERFUL ADVERSARIES AND EVOLVE INTO THE PLANET'S HIGHEST FORM OF LIFE. EVERYTHING THAT MAN HAS EVER BEEN, EVERYTHING HE WILL BE, IS THE PRODUCT OF HIS BRAIN. IT IS THE BRAIN THAT ENABLED THE FIRST HUMAN TO USE TOOLS, AND TO DEVELOP MUSCULAR PATTERNS TO MANIPULATE THEM. IT IS THE BRAIN THAT GIVES HIS GENETIC SUCCESSORS THE ABILITY TO BUILD SPACECRAFT, EXPLORE THE UNIVERSE AND ANALYZE THEIR DISCOVERIES. IT IS THE BRAIN THAT MAKES MAN MAN!

BUT IT TOOK MAN CENTURIES TO COMPREHEND THAT THERE WAS A MIRACULOUS MECHANISM INSIDE HIS HEAD AND BEGIN TO INVESTIGATE ITS WORKINGS. ARISTOTLE TAUGHT HIS PUPILS THAT THE BRAIN WAS MERELY A RADIATOR OR COOLING SYSTEM FOR THE BLOOD; HE IDENTIFIED THE HEART AS THE ORGAN OF THOUGHT. PLINY THE ELDER WAS ONE OF THE FIRST TO IDENTIFY THE BRAIN AS "THE CITADEL OF SENSE PERCEPTION." BUT NEITHER HE NOR GENERATIONS OF SCIENTISTS WHO FOLLOWED HIM HAD THE KNOWLEDGE OR TECHNIQUES TO EXPLORE IT.

NOW MAN HAS EMBARKED ON A GREAT VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY. IN DOZENS OF LABORATORIES IN CITIES AROUND THE WORLD, AN INCREASING NUMBER OF PSYCHOLOGISTS, BIOLOGISTS, PHYSICISTS AND CHEMISTS--RECOGNIZING THAT WHAT GOES ON INSIDE THE BRAIN CANNOT BE DIVORCED FROM WHAT GOES ON OUTSIDE--ARE POKING, PRODDING AND ANALYZING THE BRAIN IN AN ATTEMPT TO UNLOCK ITS SECRETS. MAN HAS SPLIT THE ATOM, CRACKED THE GENETIC CODE AND LEAPED FROM HIS OWN TERRESTRIAL HOME TO THE MOON. BUT HE HAS YET TO SOLVE THE MYSTERIES OF MEMORY, LEARNING AND CONSCIOUSNESS. HE HAS YET TO UNDERSTAND HIMSELF.

THE BRAIN IS PERHAPS THE LAST FRONTIER IN MAN'S EXPLORATION OF HIMSELF. CROSSING THAT FRONTIER COULD HAVE THE SAME IMPACT ON HUMANITY AS THE DISCOVERY THAT THE EARTH WAS ROUND. "WE ARE LIKE THE EUROPEANS OF THE 15TH CENTURY," RHAPSODIZES ONE BRAIN RESEARCHER. "WE'RE STANDING ON THE SHORES OF SPAIN OR PORTUGAL, LOOKING OUT OVER THE ATLANTIC. WE KNOW THAT THERE IS SOMETHING ON THE OTHER SIDE AND THAT OUR DISCOVERY OF EXACTLY WHAT THIS IS WILL MEAN THAT THINGS IN OUR WORLD WILL NEVER BE THE SAME AGAIN."

ONCE THE MODERN MAGELLANS ATTAIN THEIR GOAL OF UNDERSTANDING THE BRAIN'S FUNCTIONS IN THOUGHT, MEMORY AND IN CONSCIOUSNESS, THEN THE SENSE OF IDENTITY THAT DISTINGUISHES MAN FROM ALL OTHER KNOWN FORMS OF LIFE MIGHT HELP HIM TURN AWAY FROM WHAT SOME SEE AS A

HEADLONG PURSUIT OF SELF-DESTRUCTION. "IF MAN COULD DISCOVER WHY HE IS UNIQUE, HE MIGHT NOT DESTROY HIMSELF," SAYS M.I.T. PROFESSOR FRANCIS SCHMITT, ONE OF THE LEADING BRAIN RESEARCHERS. "HE MIGHT RESPECT HIMSELF MORE THAN HE NOW DOES."

THAT CAN BE AN EXCITING PROSPECT FOR MY CHILDREN AND HOPEFULLY EVEN MORE PROMISING FOR OUR FOUR GRANDCHILDREN NOW LIVING IN CHARLOTTE.

BUT AS GEORGE ALLEN, WASHINGTON REDSKIN FOOTBALL COACH, SAYS--"THE FUTURE IS NOW,"

THE FUTURE IS IN YOUR LIVES AND CAREERS AS YOU EXPERIENCE THEM RIGHT NOW. PEOPLE IN SCS AND THOSE WE WORK WITH HAVE--WITH A LOT LESS FANFARE THAN MOST OF THE MEDICAL OR AEROSPACE BREAKTHROUGH--MADE OUR OWN EXCITING DISCOVERIES THAT GIVE MAN A BETTER FUTURE.

WE GET ACCUSED NOW AND THEN OF BEING "JUST ANOTHER PROMOTIONAL AGENCY." WE AGREE!

SCS PROMOTED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF LOCAL CONSERVATION DISTRICTS, TO BATTLE SEVERE SOIL EROSION PROBLEMS OF THE 1930's; AND TODAY THERE ARE NEARLY 3,000 STRONG, CAPABLE UNITS OF GOVERNMENT THAT HAVE PUT AN ALMOST UNBELIEVABLE ARRAY OF CONSERVATION WORK ON THE LAND. THEY HAVE HELPED THEIR COMMUNITIES MEET MANY MORE AIMS BESIDES CONTROL OF SOIL EROSION.

WE PROMOTED TERRACES; AND DISTRICT COOPERATORS HAVE PUT OVER A MILLION MILES OF THEM ON THE LAND. WE PROMOTED MINIMUM TILLAGE; AND LANDOWNERS TURNED TO THIS METHOD OF FARMING ON NEARLY 30 MILLION ACRES IN JUST OVER A DECADE, SAVING ON FUEL AS WELL AS SOIL.

WE PROMOTED WILDLIFE ENHANCEMENT; AND LANDOWNERS HAVE IMPROVED 58 MILLION ACRES OF LAND AND WATER SPECIFICALLY FOR WILDLIFE--ALMOST 10 MILLION OF THOSE ACRES IN 1973 ALONE.

WE PROMOTED WATERSHED PROJECTS, AND THOSE COMPLETED OR UNDER WAY HAVE PREVENTED \$317 MILLION IN FLOOD DAMAGES, AND HAVE BROUGHT HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN OTHER BENEFITS IN LAND IMPROVEMENT, NEW JOBS, NEW WATER SUPPLIES, NEW RECREATION OPPORTUNITY, AND THE LIKE.

WE PROMOTED RC&D PROJECTS; AND THAT EFFORT HAS GROWN TO COVER MORE THAN A FOURTH OF THE UNITED STATES WITH NEW IDEAS FOR COMMUNITY ACTION. WE PROMOTED THE USE OF SOIL AND OTHER RESOURCE INFORMATION; AND MANY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ARE HELPING PAY THE COSTS OF GETTING THE INFORMATION FASTER.

WE PROMOTED SEDIMENT CONTROL IN URBANIZING AREAS; AND 16 STATES HAVE ENACTED OR INTRODUCED SEDIMENT-CONTROL LEGISLATION, 33 STATES HAVE HELD OR ARE PLANNING INSTITUTES TO DISCUSS THE SUBJECT. IN NORTH CAROLINA YOU'VE HELPED MANY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS DEVELOP ORDINANCES UNDER THE NEW STATE SEDIMENT-CONTROL LAW, WHILE DOING ALL YOUR OTHER JOBS. THIS IS A TREMENDOUS ACCOMPLISHMENT.

WE'RE STILL PROMOTING: WE'RE STILL IN THE BUSINESS OF PRESENTING OLD AND NEW IDEAS FOR GOOD LAND USE AND GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY--SUCH AS PLANTS FOR IMPROVING SOIL AND NATURAL BEAUTY ALONG SEACOAST AREAS. WE'RE STILL IN THE BUSINESS OF HELPING PUT ON THE LAND THE IDEAS THAT A LANDOWNER OR COMMUNITY DECIDES TO ADOPT. AND IF THAT MAKES US "PROMOTERS," LET'S ENJOY THE NICKNAME AS WE KEEP ON WORKING.

IT'S OBVIOUS THAT IN NORTH CAROLINA YOU HAVE KEPT ON WORKING, EVEN WHEN PERSONNEL, BUDGET, AND OTHER RESTRAINTS HAVE DEMANDED THE MOST OF OUR ABILITIES, INGENUITY, AND CREATIVITY. THERE IS ROOM FOR ENCOURAGEMENT IN OUR BUDGET.

OUR BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 1974 IS ABOUT \$400 MILLION, AND WE WILL HAVE ABOUT THE SAME FOR FISCAL YEAR 1975.

THERE IS ROOM FOR ENCOURAGEMENT, TOO, IN RECENT TRENDS IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL ARENA. WE HAVE LOST SOME DISCUSSIONS AND WE HAVE WON SOME. BUT WE'RE GRADUALLY GETTING ON TRACK. WE ARE LEARNING FROM THE DIALOGUE, AND WE ARE TEACHING OTHERS A GREAT DEAL. THE RESULTS WILL BE GOOD FOR THE COUNTRY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

I SAID AT THE BEGINNING OF MY REMARKS THAT OUR SUCCESS HAS DEPENDED MAINLY ON THE QUALITY OF OUR EMPLOYEES.

QUALITY EMPLOYEES IN SCS--TRAINED IN ALL THE TECHNICAL DISCIPLINES ASSOCIATED WITH MODERN CONSERVATION WORK AND SKILLED IN WORKING WITH PEOPLE--HAVE HELPED THE U.S. LEARN HOW TO FARM IN A WAY TO "PRODUCE AND PROTECT." WE HAVE HELPED AMERICA LEARN HOW TO BUILD RESIDENTIAL AREAS, BUSINESSES AND FACTORIES, HIGHWAYS AND AIRPORTS, AND MINE ENERGY RESOURCES IN A WAY THAT GIVES PEOPLE BETTER LIVING WITHOUT TEMPORARILY OR PERMANENTLY WRECKING THE LANDSCAPE.

THIS ISN'T UNIVERSALLY UNDERSTOOD. WE MUST HELP PEOPLE UNDERSTAND BETTER THE NATURE AND THE AIM AND THE IMPACT OF OUR WORK. WE MUST HELP PEOPLE REALIZE THAT OUR ACTIVITIES ARE MORE THAN ENGINEERING AND ECONOMICS. AND WE HAVE TO SHOW PEOPLE THAT WE ARE RECEPTIVE TO THEIR IDEAS FOR DOING A BETTER JOB.

IT WILL BE ESSENTIAL THAT SCS EMPLOYEES CONTINUOUSLY EDUCATE THEMSELVES TO KEEP CURRENT IN PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AND IN GENERAL KNOWLEDGE.

IT WAS NEVER ENOUGH TO KNOW ONLY ONE PARTICULAR DISCIPLINE WELL. WE MUST ALL BE ECOLOGISTS. WE MUST UNDERSTAND THE AIMS AND THE FUNDAMENTALS OF MANY OTHER DISCIPLINES AND WE MUST SEE OUR WORK IN A BROADER CONTEXT. THIS GOES FOR THE YOUNG CONSERVATIONISTS JUST BEGINNING HIS CAREER AND FOR THE EMPLOYEE WITH 30 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE.



As CHAIRMAN OF THE NATIONAL TRAINING COMMITTEE, I AM PLEASED THAT THE SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE RANKS HIGH AMONG FEDERAL AGENCIES IN THE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES WHO PURSUE SELF-EDUCATION TO BROADEN THEIR OUTLOOK AND TO HELP THEM DO A BETTER JOB. IN FISCAL YEAR 1973, MORE THAN 8,000 PEOPLE IN SCS TOOK SOME FORM OF TRAINING OR EDUCATION AT A GOVERNMENT EXPENSE OF MORE THAN A MILLION DOLLARS. NEARLY 300 SCS EMPLOYEES ARE CONTINUING THEIR EDUCATION AT THEIR OWN EXPENSE. ALMOST 90 PERCENT OF THESE ARE WORKING TOWARD A DEGREE.

OTHER SCS EMPLOYEES HAVE ACCEPTED DETAILS WITH STATE AND LOCAL UNITS OF GOVERNMENT UNDER THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PERSONNEL ACT OF 1970--SEVEN OF THEM IN NORTH CAROLINA. THE TRANSFERS HELP THE SCS EMPLOYEES AS MUCH AS THEY DO THE STATE AGENCIES ASSISTED.

THE FINAL TEST OF EMPLOYEE COMPETENCE, OF COURSE, IS NOT DEGREES, OR THICK PERSONNEL FOLDERS, BUT MEANINGFUL ACCOMPLISHMENTS. YOU NEED TO KEEP CURRENT IN YOUR PARTICULAR SPECIALTY. CONTINUE TO EDUCATE YOURSELVES. LOOK AT YOUR OWN PHASE OF WORK IN A BROADER CONTEXT. WORK WITH MORE PEOPLE.

SCS MUST SERVE ALL THE PEOPLE:

--NOT JUST AN INDIVIDUAL LANDOWNER, ALTHOUGH WE ARE GIVING RENEWED EMPHASIS TO WORKING WITH INDIVIDUALS ON FARMS AND RANCHES.



--NOT JUST A CERTAIN SECTOR, SUCH AS A FARM GROUP,  
ALTHOUGH WE WILL CONTINUE TO WORK WITH GROUPS.

--NOT JUST THE LOCAL COMMUNITY, ALTHOUGH WE  
CERTAINLY ARE GOING TO EXPAND OUR WORK WITH COMMUNITIES.

--NOT JUST A CERTAIN STATE AGENCY, ALTHOUGH WE'RE  
CERTAINLY GOING TO WORK WITH AND THROUGH STATE GOVERNMENT.

WE MUST WORK WITH AND FOR ALL PEOPLE TO HELP MEET  
THEIR INDIVIDUAL AIMS AND THOSE OF THE COMMUNITY, THE  
REGION, AND THE NATION.

WE HAVE TO BE SURE WE KNOW WHAT THE PUBLIC INTEREST  
IS. THAT ISN'T SIMPLE. THE THOUGHTS AND DESIRES OF  
INDIVIDUALS OR ORGANIZATIONS THEY REPRESENT MAY BE  
WELL STATED. BUT ARE THEY BASED ON A STUDY AND AN  
UNDERSTANDING OF THE FACTS INVOLVED? TOO OFTEN THEY ARE  
NOT.

IN SPITE OF THE BEST EFFORTS OF AGENCIES AND  
DISTRICTS, THERE ARE TOO MANY PEOPLE WHO DO NOT UNDERSTAND  
OR SPEAK FROM FACTS. AND THERE ARE A GREAT NUMBER OF  
SILENT PEOPLE.

WE STILL HAVE TO SERVE THEM ALL AS BEST WE CAN.  
WE WILL GET CRITICISM. IT ISN'T EASY TO KNOW HOW TO  
REACT. BUT WE STILL HAVE TO MAKE DECISIONS.

SCS HAS ALWAYS BEEN A "CAN-DO" ORGANIZATION. IN OUR EARLY YEARS THERE WERE NO EXPERIENCED DISTRICT LEADERS, NO SUPPORT STAFF OF VARIOUS CONSERVATION PROFESSIONALS, NO DETAILED HANDBOOKS AND STANDARDS. WE JUST SAW PEOPLE TRYING TO FARM SUBSOIL, AND TRYING TO DODGE GULLIES, AND SURVIVE DUST STORMS, AND TRYING WITHOUT MUCH SUCCESS TO MAKE A LIVING FROM AGRICULTURE. WE WENT OUT AND HELPED THEM. COMPARED WITH TODAY'S COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING, ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT, SOIL TAXONOMY, PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS, AND LEGAL BRIEFS, YESTERDAY'S CONSERVATION CHALLENGE MAY HAVE SEEMED LESS COMPLEX. BUT IT WAS NO LESS DIFFICULT.

THE SCS QUICKLY EARNED A REPUTATION FOR SOMEHOW GETTING THE JOB DONE, NO MATTER WHAT THE OBSTACLES AND NO MATTER HOW DIFFICULT THE PROBLEM. DESPITE SOME QUESTIONS THAT HAVE BEEN RAISED RECENTLY ABOUT THE IMPACT OF SOME OF OUR WORK, WE STILL HAVE THAT REPUTATION. WE ARE GOING TO CONTINUE TO EARN IT BY MEETING EVERY CHALLENGE THAT COMES ALONG WITH ENTHUSIASM, WITH IMAGINATION, AND WITH TECHNICAL EXCELLENCE.

ACCURATE INFORMATION, AND GOOD-LOOKING LAND, WILL BE OUR BEST CALLING CARD. CREATIVITY WILL PREPARE US FOR MEETING CHANGING CONSERVATION NEEDS, AND FOR ADAPTING TO PROGRAM CHANGES. ENTHUSIASM WILL HELP MORE

PEOPLE CARE FOR THEIR RESOURCES WITHOUT UNDUE REGULATION, AND WILL HELP KEEP THE SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE AS ONE OF THE MOST SATISFYING CAREER AGENCIES.

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION IS DECENT, VITAL, AND ABSORBING WORK FOR ALL OF US. SOME OF OUR ROLES IN THE WORK ARE LOCAL, SOME STATEWIDE, SOME NATIONAL; SOME ARE SEPARATE, MANY ARE COMBINED. ALL THESE ROLES CAN BE FULFILLED WITH MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT YOU DO AND WHAT I DO IN THE SCS.

WE ALL HAVE A CHALLENGE TO BE OF GREATER SERVICE IN HELPING MIX CONSERVATION WITH ECONOMICS, WITH HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS, TO FUSE A BETTER STATE AND A BETTER COUNTRY.

WE WILL BE OF GREATER SERVICE IF WE ALL STRIVE FOR THE QUALITY OF EXCELLENCE THAT WE HONOR HERE:

--EXCELLENCE IN GATHERING AND INTERPRETING BASIC INFORMATION FOR ALL KINDS OF RESOURCE AND LAND USE PLANNING...

--EXCELLENCE IN OUR EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES TO MERIT WIDESPREAD SUPPORT FOR CONSERVATION WORK AND AT A LEVEL OF FINANCING THAT WILL MEET THE NEEDS OF THE TIMES...

--EXCELLENCE IN FINDING WAYS TO SERVE THE PUBLIC BETTER WITH THE RESOURCES THAT WE HAVE NOW...

--EXCELLENCE IN SHARPENING AND NURTURING THE STRONG AND VIABLE PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENT THAT WE HAVE WITH CONSERVATION DISTRICTS...

--AND EXCELLENCE IN PROFESSIONALISM AND IN TECHNICAL COMPETENCE. EACH OF US NEEDS TO ACCEPT A CHALLENGE OF PERSONAL GROWTH, OF INTELLECTUAL CURIOSITY, OF DEDICATION TO SERVICE.

SOIL CONSERVATION TODAY MEANS WORKING OUT LAND USE AND TREATMENT IN FULL RECOGNITION OF THE ESSENTIAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SOIL, WATER, PLANTS, ANIMALS, AND--YES--MAN HIMSELF.

THE GREATEST DANGER, AS CONSERVATION AND LAND USE TECHNOLOGY ADVANCES, IS THAT WE MAY FAIL TO INVOLVE THE HUMAN ELEMENT. CONSERVATION MUST BE PEOPLE-CENTERED. IT MUST NOT ONLY BE CARRIED OUT FOR PEOPLE. IT MUST BE CARRIED OUT BY PEOPLE.

TO BE FULLY EFFECTIVE, CONSERVATION AND LAND USE DECISIONS MUST ALWAYS BE MADE BY THE PEOPLE WHO WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR CARRYING THEM OUT. CONSERVATION WILL NEVER BE ACCOMPLISHED BY EDICT. GOVERNMENT CAN, AND MUST BE AN ACTIVE PARTNER, BUT SHOULD DO FOR PEOPLE ONLY THAT THEY CANNOT DO FOR THEMSELVES.

CONSERVATION WILL MOVE FORWARD IF IT IS VIEWED AND ACCEPTED BY LANDOWNERS AND OPERATORS AS A MEANS OF MAKING MORE EFFICIENT USE OF THEIR SOILS, AND BETTER MANAGEMENT OF WATER WITH HIGHER YIELDS PER ACRE OR HECTARE, WITH LOWER COSTS PER TON, WITH BETTER NEW INCOME FOR THE FARMER OR RANCHER.

IT WILL GO FORWARD IF CITY PEOPLE ARE MADE PARTNERS, IF THEY ARE HELPED TO SEE THEIR STAKE IN SOIL AND WATER RESOURCES, AND IF THEY ARE INVITED TO WORK WITH RURAL PEOPLE IN SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION ENDEAVORS.

IT WILL GO FORWARD IF WE REMEMBER THE LONG ROAD WE HAVE TRAVELED TOGETHER AND THE MISSION WE BELIEVE IN. ALONG THE WAY WE HAVE WON SOME BATTLES AND LOST SOME. SOME ARE STILL PENDING. WE HAVE STAYED DEDICATED TO THE SCIENCE AND THE ART OF GOOD LAND USE OVER FOUR DECADES, AMID SOME PRETTY ROUGH TIMES. NO SINGLE SKIRMISH SHOULD CAUSE ANY OF US TO "GIVE UP THE GHOST," AND DESERT OUR GOAL.

THERE'S AN ILLUSTRATION IN THE STORY OF A GREAT BAR OF STEEL THAT SUSPENDED BY A DELICATE CHAIN FROM THE CEILING OF A HUGE STEEL MILL. NEARBY A BOTTLE CORK WAS SUSPENDED BY A SILK THREAD. THE CORK WAS SWUNG GENTLY AGAINST THE STEEL BAR, LIKE A PIECE OF DUST TRYING TO MOVE AN ELEPHANT. THE BAR REMAINED MOTIONLESS. BUT THE CORK WAS SWUNG AGAIN AND AGAIN. IN TEN MINUTES THE BAR GAVE SOME EVIDENCE OF FEELING UNCOMFORTABLE, AND A "NERVOUS CHILL" RAN OVER IT. TEN MINUTES LATER THE CHILL WAS FOLLOWED BY A TREMOR OF VIBRATION. AT THE END OF AN HOUR THE GREAT BAR WAS SWINGING LIKE A PENDULUM IN CONCERT WITH THE TINY CORK.

IN OUR WORK, LET'S KEEP AT IT UNTIL WHATEVER BAR OF STEEL IT IS GETS THAT NERVOUS CHILL. LET'S IMPART THIS SAME SPIRIT OF DETERMINATION TO THE LOCAL LEADERS WITH WHOM WE WORK, BECAUSE:

--THIS IS THE TIME TO SPEAK FOR THE UNITY OF THE COUNTRYSIDE IN ALL ITS VALUES AND USES.

--THIS IS THE TIME TO ADVOCATE THE PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF OUR RESOURCES AS A WHOLE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR CAPABILITIES AND THE GOALS OF THE COMMUNITY.

--THIS IS THE TIME TO SPEAK FOR ACTION THAT WILL MEET THE ONCOMING DEMANDS OF A GROWING NATION.

--THIS IS THE TIME TO FORESTALL PREMATURE AND DISORDERLY COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCE USE.

WE FIND OURSELVES IN AN AGE DEMANDING INSTANT SATISFACTION OF ILL-CONSIDERED DEMANDS--OFTEN HYPOCRITICALLY MADE IN THE NAME OF PROGRESS AND SOCIETY. THEREFORE, I BELIEVE IT IS A TIME TO COME FORWARD, TO BE HEARD. IT IS A TIME TO ASSIST CONSERVATION DISTRICT GOVERNING BOARDS TO ASSUME FULLY THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES OF LEADERSHIP IN SOIL, IN WATER, AND IN RELATED CONSERVATION WORK.

FINDING ANSWERS BEFORE TIME RUNS OUT FOR US, WILL BE POSSIBLE BECAUSE OF THE LOYALTY, CREATIVITY, AND DEDICATION TO SERVICE OF PEOPLE LIKE YOU IN THIS ROOM. YOUR HELP TO LANDOWNERS AND TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN NORTH CAROLINA KEEPS SETTING NEW RECORDS, AND YOUR HELP IS EXCELLENT.

I'VE THROWN A FEW IDEAS YOUR WAY TODAY. BUT I  
KNOW YOU CAN HANDLE THEM, BECAUSE YOU'VE ALREADY  
PROVED YOURSELVES. I THINK WE CAN WORK TOGETHER IN THE  
DECADE 1975-1985 TO BE OF EVEN BETTER SERVICE TO  
AMERICA.