

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

J. Carroll Bottum, Chairman
National Agricultural Policy Committee

We welcome you to the Fourteenth National Agricultural Policy Conference. We are happy to meet at Texas A and M University and to have such a splendid representation from nearly all the states.

Individuals engaged in educational work in the public affairs area have two basic problems: (1) subject matter and (2) methodology. In other words, the first problem is assembling the pertinent information in the proper framework, and the second problem is developing the best techniques for transferring this information to the public and getting it into the public dialogue. Your program committee has again tried to develop a program which assists public affairs workers in these two areas. In addition this year we have made an effort to emphasize the discussion by appointing a discussion leader for each session who is knowledgeable in the area being considered. We believe this program focusing on certain current issues should conserve time and make more effective the work performed by you and the county extension workers and others to whom the proceedings of this conference will be distributed.

The impact of any individual conference is difficult to measure, but as those of us who were at the first conference look back, we can see great strides forward in public affairs. These conferences and other associated activities have played a major role in this development. We all owe a debt of gratitude to the Farm Foundation for the guidance and financial support it has given to public affairs work in the United States.

The work of the Farm Foundation and the National Committee on Agricultural Policy has been sufficiently broad that when the Iowa Center for Agricultural and Economic Development and the North Carolina Agricultural Policy Institute were formed they were able to intensify and complement much of the work under way with the land-grant colleges. These institutions have both increased work in public affairs and helped the land-grant colleges better meet the increasing number of social and economic problems of our society.

We all know that technological changes have been coming at an ever mounting rate. What we sometimes forget is that every technological change requires a corresponding social, economic, or institutional change. These are the areas in which our society is lagging and finding it difficult to make the necessary changes.

We are in a period where the problems in the social science fields are demanding and will receive more attention. Let us adjust and develop our programs so that we may be as effective in the years ahead in these fields as were the land-grant colleges in developing and disseminating information in the technological areas in the past half century.