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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

*J. Carroll Bottum, Chairman
National Agricultural Policy Committee*

The program committee in setting up this conference had in mind two objectives: (1) to provide subject matter material in three important policy areas and (2) to present and to analyze with the group's participation, information in the methodology area.

In opening this conference, I would like to call your attention briefly to three points: (1) the objectives of programs in public policy, (2) the relationship of public affairs to community or area development, and (3) the competence required of extension workers in public affairs.

The objectives of educational programs in public affairs are to develop:

1. An active interest in public affairs problems.
2. An understanding of the facts, issues, principles, and values involved.
3. Ability to make judgments on public affairs issues on the basis of a critical examination of the evidence and logical thinking.
4. A desire and ability to participate effectively in the solution of public problems.

In other words, our objective is to bring to people information in the adjustment technology field as we have in the production technology field.

Because community and area development programs have been so closely associated with public affairs programs, I should like to differentiate between them. In area development the objective is to aid a community or area to develop, using the available resources including the local, state, and national institutions and agencies already established. At a certain stage of this development, a modification of an existing institution or the establishment of a new institution may appear beneficial. This, then, may result in a public affairs issue. Therefore, public affairs issues may arise from community or area development activities. They may also arise from other sources. Area development usually deals with a total program for an area while public affairs programs usually deal with a particular issue. They are closely related but not one and the same.

Beyond the competence required of any extension worker, the public affairs specialist needs to develop five types of competence in particular. They are:

1. An understanding of the decision-making process.
2. An understanding of government.
3. An understanding of economic and physical relationships and the ability to analyze them.
4. A sensitivity to the goals, attitudes, and values of the people with whom he is working.
5. An understanding of group dynamics.

I did not include a sixth competency, creativity, because I am not sure that this can be taught. However, anyone working in public affairs should have the creative ability to develop for consideration new institutions for attaining society's objectives or to modify present institutions to maintain desirable existing conditions in the face of economic and technical change.

PART I

Economic Development

