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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

*Mervin G. Smith, Chairman
National Committee on Agricultural Policy*

Probably more and better preparations have been made for this Ninth National Policy Conference than for any of the eight previous conferences. This was made possible by two new developments, which will also be important factors in expanding and improving the extension public affairs programs in the country during the next year or two.

The first of these developments is the establishment of a program by the Foreign Agricultural Service and the Federal Extension Service to send study teams of public affairs extension specialists abroad. One of these teams has already returned from Europe and will report at this Conference. Two other teams are being organized to go to Asia and Latin America. Additional teams may be organized later. The idea for this project originated at last year's Policy Conference. The National Committee submitted the proposal to the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy, the Federal Extension Service, and the Foreign Agricultural Service. Upon approval by these groups, the program was initiated.

The purpose of this program is to expand and improve our public affairs educational work in foreign agricultural trade and foreign policy. Although all Americans are being affected more and more by international problems and policies, the general public has been slow to take an interest in these vital matters. Extension policy specialists definitely have a service to perform in this area.

Since last year's participants generally agreed that the study groups were very effective, the same procedures will be used again this year. Six separate groups have been organized to deal with the following topics: (1) American Farmers and World Affairs, (2) Inflation and Its Control, (3) New Developments in Farm Price and Income Policy Programs, (4) Zoning, (5) The Highway Program, and (6) Local and State Financing.

The other important factor which has helped improve the conference this year and which will help improve our public affairs programs is the cooperation and assistance we are receiving from the Iowa Agricultural Adjustment Center. After conferring with our National Committee, the Center decided to provide funds for meetings of our work groups prior to this conference. Consultants were called in to these meetings to help draft the resource materials which will be

further developed at this conference. In addition to making more resource materials available we believe this cooperation will enable us to refine the materials and make them more usable by public affairs specialists and other leaders.

Our conference will be started with a broad look at the world situation and American foreign policy. Except for a few general topics which will be discussed later, the rest of our program will deal with the materials which the work groups have been developing. We will meet as separate work groups for a half day. Materials will then be refined in the general sessions where we will discuss the main points of each work group report.

PART I

*International Relations
and Agricultural Trade*

