

CONCLUDING REMARKS

R. J. Hildreth
Farm Foundation

The Public Policy Education Conference is a means to an end—an intermediate end. This intermediate end is better public policy education for the citizens in your state. Thus the conference should not be judged from the point of view of the participants, but rather it should be evaluated from its contribution to improved public policy education in the states.

The contribution of this conference to policy education improvement depends on what happens during the coming year. How will you share what you have learned here? Will the knowledge and insights gained be used in extension policy programs, or will they simply add to your own personal delight and edification?

Will this conference contribute a solid public policy education program in your state? Will you use policy education methodology on the pressing policy issues discussed at this conference: energy, regulation, and the structure of our political economy? Will you dig out the data required so that the citizen-student of policy education in your state can put data and value judgments together to arrive at his policy preferences?

As Otto Doering suggested, a major question is: How do we deal with the area of human choice within the bounds of complex technological data? This problem is true in energy, in government regulation, and in the structure of political economy. It is just as true in all policy, including farm price and income support choices with which we are so familiar.

Let me speak about your role and performance in extension. The ability of any organization to perform is dependent on the performance of the individual workers. The extension professional, field worker, or specialist plays a somewhat different role than the other professionals with whom he works.

Although he is an educator, he operates in an informal non-certified manner. This is quite different from the classroom teacher in a formal system that certifies students. He does not have as much time to collect data and do analysis as the researcher. For the researcher time is a variable while depth of knowledge and

understanding are goals to be met. For the extension worker time is a goal to be met and depth a variable.

Certain professional extension workers possess a rare combination of gifts. They reach a high standard and combine talents not often found together. They understand the details and symbols of their scientific field and speak in terms of the general. They touch the abstract and concrete in the same flight of thought. They understand the present in the light of the past for the purpose of the future. They perform with scholarship, a scholarship useful to citizens and respected on the university campus.