

GENERAL COMMENTS ON N E F T I C

Tebbe I have just a thought or two that I would like to get off my chest while you're here and while I have a chance to do that. I wanted to say first of all that I've been on the receiving end here now for about three days of just a lot of talk and information and ideas and enthusiasm on the part of you men. Now, I realize that we've only been in session two days, but I spent the better part of a third day getting here in company with three workers in the field, so I have had a little bit longer exposure than some others. I wanted to say that I've just learned an awful lot and that I have gained an assurance which I didn't have heretofore because I didn't realize that so many men of the caliber of you men were thinking and working and turning out results in the field of forest tree improvement.

I've lived and worked in several parts of the United States by now, and in no place that I have been, would it have been possible to issue a call for a Forest Tree Improvement Conference in the most inaccessible spot in the region and get anywhere near the response that there was to this call. And, so feeling as I do about the Conference, I do regret that I haven't been in a position to offer anything constructive that would in any way push back the frontier of knowledge and know-how in this field. But, as an administrator or as a land manager, I do have one thing to offer and I do here and now extend to you people a word of admiration, a word of commendation, and a word of encouragement for the very fine work that you are doing. It seems to me that in effect, you are really having a flirtation here, all of you, with developments of very large consequence. And, I have no doubt but what that flirtation will develop into the second and third and finally the ultimate stage of development.

My mind goes back to one of the first papers presented yesterday in which the speaker told of his committee setting down the criteria for superior trees and one of those criteria was that it must display at least a 50 percent larger volume or growth than other trees of the same species and age growing on the same site. Just think what it would mean to forest land owners and managers if they could be rewarded for the cost of the care and management of land by 50 percent increase in production. I have no doubt but what that will come to pass, and in spite of some of the discussion here this morning, I would even predict that before 100 or 200 years roll around, long before that, you fellows will be breeding out of trees susceptibility to insects and diseases and twisting and staining and adventitious branching, and all the rest of it. The stakes are just tremendous in this field, and you're going to have an every-ready market for your product and you can lay to that. You must certainly not become discouraged by the size of the job that you have bitten off or by the distance that you have to go.

I'm just awful glad that I could and did come here, and I'm much pleased to be identified with the Conference as a member of its Executive Committee and if interest in your objectives and your work and willingness to help and facilitate are criteria for a good committee member, I suspect that maybe I'll be a pretty good member. Thank you.

Nutting Although tree improvement as discussed at the meeting is primarily a program for technicians, I have obtained a number of ideas from it which will be very helpful in my own state. As a representative of the Association of State Foresters, I will review what you are trying to do at its meeting in the fall.

I certainly believe the Northeastern Forest Tree Improvement Conference has an important piece of work to perform, and that public administrators should support the program through projects in their own states and sponsor exchange of ideas with other groups. The getting together of the various people interested in tree improvement in the Northeast has been well worth my time. In behalf of the Association of State Foresters, I want to pledge its support and interest.