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"WHERE ARE WE?"

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The subject I have been asked to speak on is "Where Are We?" As I assess it, I think that we, those who are using bird management agents and methods, Federal, State, and other agencies representing research, extension and regulatory, and manufacturers of agents used in bird management, are standing in the middle of a busy intersection and the light has just turned yellow. Some of us have tape across our mouths and cotton stuck in our ears.

I think that we have arrived at this intersection in a number of different ways. Some of us have taken separate paths, some have taken parallel roads, and in some cases we have crossed paths and actually taken the same road together in reaching that point in time where we are today. But I think that the future of bird management today relies a great deal on what we do in the very near future, and I am talking about this year, next year, and maybe the next three years.

I am not going to address myself to the techniques used in bird management, but rather the administrative and perhaps political aspects that we need to consider as people interested in bird management.

There is a new Federal Act that says that many pesticides will be restricted use agents, and to use such pesticides you will be a certified applicator. We see this as presenting a challenge, not as a hinderance. I do not think that this will affect operations, at least PCO operations, to any significant extent. However, EPA has taken another action which I think is very significant. They have taken the role of adversary in exploring the registration of a number of control agents.

In particular at this point, they are examining the use of 1080, sodium cyanide, calcium cyanide, and strychnine as vertebrate pest control agents. Strychnine is the only one involved at the present for bird management practices. However, the indications are that this kind of a review will be made of most, if not all of our pesticides in the near future.

The beginning of this review has demonstrated to us as PCO's, and I think to other groups, that we are lacking a great deal of data to support our cause. In some cases, these data exist already, but due to the fact that we have cotton in our ears, and tape across our mouths, we have been unable to communicate with one another effectively.

I think that we need to begin communicating with one another more effectively so that we can exchange the information that we have available, otherwise I feel that our bird management agents will be severely restricted, if not entirely eliminated, in the coming future.

This past year NPCA had a theme: it was called "Together". I think this is a very appropriate theme for this group, and all those who are involved in

bird management: be it research, regulatory, manufacturing or using bird control agents. When that light in the intersection turns red, I think that we have to be communicating with one another. We have to understand which road we are going to take, and I think that we must take that road together. I really feel that if we go our own separate ways, in the long run, each of us may cease to exist in the bird management area. I also think that we need to remember one other point: "Why Are We Here?" I think that we are here to serve the public. It is true that the manufacturer is here also to make a profit. Pest control operators are certainly here to make a profit, but at the same time we are all here to serve the public, either directly or indirectly. Certainly Federal and State agencies are here to serve the public either directly or indirectly.

I think that if we remember that we are here to serve the public, and that we must work together to achieve that aim, that bird management will continue to be a challenging, exciting, and interesting opportunity.