

## ENERGY RESOURCE CONFERENCE

Student Center  
University of Kentucky

Welcome to the University  
Otis A. Singletary  
President, University of Kentucky

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and our entire academic community -- faculty, staff, and students -- I am genuinely pleased to welcome each of you to the University of Kentucky and its Second Annual Energy Resource Conference. By proxy of Mayor Pettit and Governor Ford, I am empowered further to issue their very warmest greetings to the City of Lexington and the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

The Governor and the Mayor also have asked that I convey their earnest best wishes for the success of this conference, and their deep appreciation to the coal, oil, and gas industries of Kentucky for cooperating so helpfully with the University in the planning and presentation of the meeting that is now under way.

As institutions that try to be responsive to society's needs, universities everywhere are concerned -- to one degree or another -- with energy resources, which have become almost literally the building blocks of our civilization. It is particularly appropriate, I believe you'll agree, that the principal state university of Kentucky is here demonstrating its concern with what is today commonly referred to as the "energy crisis". For Kentucky, as you know, is a major supplier of energy. We currently rank first among the states in coal production; we produce a substantial amount of hydro-electric power, and relatively small quantities of oil and natural gas, to say nothing of the high-octane fuels turned out by our distilleries -- some of which, in all candor, are operated without the blessing of the U.S. Treasury Department or other licensing agency. These small and usually isolated operations, are, one supposes, among the last vestiges of truly free enterprise -- certainly within the energy industries!

So, as a university officer who happens also to live in a state whose economic health is closely related to energy production, I have a two-fold interest in the subject of this conference. Actually, however, I encountered the energy crisis long before I became either a Kentuckian or a university president. I first noticed its onset some years ago, I would say, and -- in my own case -- it seems to recur daily at about 7:00 or 7:30 a.m.

It is not my purpose this morning to recite to you the scope and complexity of the worldwide energy dilemma. Most of you wrestle with various facets of the problem every day of your working lives and, I dare say, have been known to collide with it again in your dreams at night. It would be

even more presumptuous of me to suggest to this audience possible solutions to the energy crisis. That, too, is your business.

In view of the skyrocketing demand for energy in the developed lands, the steadily growing need for it in the developing countries, and the increasing per capita consumption of energy throughout a world whose population growth is not yet under control, we can only be sure that the situation will get worse before it gets better. The critical question, I suppose, is how much worse?

I have the utmost confidence that our present technology -- given the time and the cooperation of national governments and their peoples -- can produce workable solutions to the crisis. Will the time and the cooperation be forthcoming?

There is hope to be taken, I believe, in the recent United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm, Sweden. Despite the international bickering typical of such conferences, the delegates managed to construct a permanent U.N. body whose purpose is to make sure that man's inventions are developed compatibly with the ecology; or, in the words of one observer, "that economic progress and social responsibility must be interdependent".

What this seems to mean, in simplest terms, is that everyone is going to have to settle for less than he wants. Or, as Peter Drucker has put it, there must be "trade-offs" between those who insist upon cleaner environment and those who demand full employment; between those who would ban pesticides as dangerous to man's health and those who argue that mass starvation looms ahead if we fail to use pesticides. The list of possible trade-offs is long and formidable. We may, indeed, be unequal to the task -- not insofar as our technology is concerned but insofar as our willingness to compromise is concerned.

To quote Professor Drucker again: "The greatest risk of all is refusing to tackle these problems. We have to try, somehow, to choose some combination of lesser evils. Doing nothing invites even greater catastrophe".

So the University of Kentucky is pleased today that you have come together on our campus to do something about the energy crisis; even though your best effort may be the choice of a lesser evil.

Our situation may be comparable in some respects to that of the elderly man who de-

cided to enroll in an adult education class to belatedly learn to read. After a few weeks of hard effort, he was asked by a friend how he was getting along.

"I reckon I'm doing pretty good," the old man replied. "Now, when I come to a road sign, I can read 'how fer' but not 'where to'."

I expect all of us know "how fer" we have yet to go in the attempt to solve the energy crisis, even though we're not yet sure "where to."

I am pleased to report that possible avenues of "where to" are being explored by our newly established University of Kentucky Institute for Mining and Minerals Research. Though involved primarily with coal research, it will also tackle problems related to other mineral resources.

While the entire matter of energy supply is saturated with uncertainty, one thing we can be certain of is that people the world over are going to demand more, not less, energy in the years to come. One of our popular female authors put the matter bluntly in one of her recent books.

"Once upon a time," she wrote, "all I couldn't live without was my husband. But today what I also can't live without is my hair dryer, my air conditioner, and ... my television set. I've sold out," she continued. "In my universe, power to the people has come to mean an electric blanket, an

electric toothbrush, and the disposal".

It is easy to dismiss the lady's statement as no more than humorous exaggeration. It is not so easy, however, to dismiss the worldwide clamor for better living standards -- particularly among the "have-not" peoples -- and to reconcile this demand with the present consumption rate of our nonrenewable fossil fuels. It is reliably estimated that oil, coal and gas supplies that were accumulated over millions of years will be entirely consumed in the span of 400 years that may be considered to have started about the middle of the 19th century. Consequently, that leaves a supply that may last another 300 years -- the merest flicker of an eyelash in the annals of human history. The candle burns short ... and the night ahead is long.

It is my earnest hope that your discussions and other exchange of information at this conference will be stimulating and productive; that they may even point the way to practical new reserves of energy that -- in a reverse paraphrase of Edna St. Vincent Millay -- will not only last the night but, in the process, will give "lovely light" to peoples who for too long have suffered in the darkness of despair.

May such efforts as those you undertake here today be crowned with the conviction expressed so eloquently by William Faulkner that man "will not merely endure, but will prevail."