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BREAK 1-9: ANYBODY GOT YOUR EARS ON?

So sounds the familiar crackle on your CB radio as you cruise down the boulevard looking for "Smokey Bear." Alas, some do not have their "ears on," fall prey to Smokey and his "picture taker," and go home with a fistful of "green stamps." With respect to education in wood science and technology, are we not in an analogous position? Rereading *Wood and Fiber* 10(4), I was struck by the real opportunities suggested by the various authors and pondered how rhetoric could be translated into action. It seems to me that real cooperative action between education and industry could produce solutions to many of the woes befalling both educational institutions and the wood-using industry.

I wonder if those in education take maximum advantage of the industrial resources available. How often do we utilize industrial personnel in the classroom? Do we reevaluate our curricula periodically, and if so, are those from industry asked to make constructive input? Do we expose our students to industrial role-models for them to emulate? Does the profession come alive in our classes and laboratories? Do we seek help from industry on educational problems or are we smug and righteous about our ability to "teach OUR students"? It seems to me that we simply *must* involve the industry in the educational process if we are to produce qualified graduates.

On the industrial side, is time taken to interact with educational institutions in a direct manner? Is financial support through scholarships and other programs given? Does the industry "go to bat" with legislators for the institutions supplying their manpower? Are industrial personnel actively involved in recruiting prospective high school students for our undergraduate programs? What about support for science fairs, Boy Scout and 4-H programs, and other youth programs aimed at early education in the forest products field? Do industrial personnel speak to service organizations on the need for qualified wood technologists? Does the industry support the efforts of education by providing competitive salaries and benefits for graduates from academic programs?

The answer to all the above question is no doubt a "big 10-4" to some extent. However, it seems to me that a concerted effort by both parties is needed to be really effective. As Bob Erickson has said, "Can we afford the luxury of such leisurely neglect?" The time is right to "convoy" our efforts and activate our "seeing-eye dog" so we can avoid the "Smokey Bear" of status quo. "Anybody got your ears on?"

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