

In addition, we have initiated, admittedly so far on a small scale, the direct training activities of the type that was referred to earlier in the air pollution field. The question of professional development we think is very critical. As a matter of fact, I think it is fair to say that here we are faced with a particular problem because some people perhaps think it beneath their dignity to look at the solid waste problem. We have to get an attitude changed here. It needs technological input to it. There are tremendous costs to society, both health and aesthetic. Even before we had the advantages of the new act we had begun on a very small scale to bring together the researchers in this field, to identify them, and to start working with them. We had a National Conference on Solid Waste Research. We have done a number of things through the technical and professional organizations to give solid waste research status, you might say, so that people would begin to give it the attention that it deserves. We are very gratified that this change in point of view is taking place. Certainly the new act has been a major factor in this change.

In terms of State activities it is safe to say that with perhaps a handful of exceptions that is very little going on at the State level in this field. There are a few States which have begun programs within the last year or two. Some States have enacted legislation and this, of course, is a base for State activities. We awarded during the past fiscal year grants for statewide solid waste program activities in 14 States. This is for development of comprehensive solid waste plans for the immediate and long-range management problem of the State, including the factors I mentioned earlier such as relationship to water and air pollution, economic development, land use planning, and particularly the advantages of regional solid waste management efforts. And then finally we have begun a program of technical services to provide the types of assistance to State, local, and industry groups mentioned previously.

Now, I think that it is pretty obvious that in a field like this where so little has been done and so much needs to be done, it is very necessary to very carefully select the kinds of activities which should be carried out. Mention has been made earlier in the hearing of the need for standards, criteria, and guidelines, and I'm glad to report to the committee that this is one of our major priority areas. That is, using technical information as it becomes available, building on what we have, which is little enough, but adding to it, to develop the kinds of standards that can be applied not only by State and local governments but also by industry in its development activities for its pollution problems and for abatement facilities and devices. In other words, if they have something to design to or to work toward, this then gives them a better chance for their own R. & D. effort.

In particular I think it is fair to say that one of the key underlying philosophies which we believe the Congress intended and which we are trying to implement, is the injection of a spirit of innovation in this field. I think it is pretty obvious that in no area are there greater opportunities for innovations and new ideas. For this reason the opportunities for working with industry and with research groups is a wide one, and we believe that the basic methods of the research grant and the contract mechanism should be utilized to the fullest extent in the months to come.