

NOTES

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY

NORTHERN FOREST FIRE LABORATORY

MISSOULA, MONTANA

SEPTEMBER 29, 1966

Mr. Brackton

L I am delighted to be here at this Laboratory, whose work has contributed so much to the welfare of Montana, and indeed of this entire area.

I am especially pleased to be here in the company of Senator Metcalf.

L It was Lee Metcalf who, as a Congressman, led the fight against proposed budget reductions in the cooperative forest fire control program over ten years ago.

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↳ It was his bill in the Eighty-Fifth Congress which paved the way for the establishment of regional Forest Fire Laboratories such as this.

↳ There is not a single member of the Senate or the House who has done more to promote research in the control of forest fires.

↳ We must insure that great fires, such as those of 1910, can never recur. We must maintain this heritage so that our grandchildren may also have the chance to follow the trails of Lewis and Clark, and stand in awe at the sight of the Bitterroots unchanged since pioneer days.

↳ The scars that still mar the landscape after fifty-six years are a constant reminder that the work of centuries can be destroyed in an instant, and that the rebuilding may take centuries again.

Consequently, it is very heartening to see this modern forest fire laboratory, with its mission to throw the full weight of modern science into the battle of fire prevention and control.

I am impressed by the sophistication of your equipment, and even more impressed by the spirit of cooperation in which the Forest Service scientists and the University of Montana faculty have combined forces to make such valuable use of these facilities.

Your achievements in the short five years since this laboratory was dedicated speak well for the future of forest fire research.

You have pioneered the use of infrared technology. Your work in improving fire retardant chemicals has helped to cut the costs of firefighting.

But in the long run the basic research done here may have the greatest payoff.

When a project, such as Project Skyfire, is first undertaken we seldom know where it may finally lead. I have an idea Project Skyfire may lead to things beyond a lightning-modification program. By the same token, your laboratory studies of fuel and fire physics may produce leads to new methods of fire control we cannot even imagine today.

I am proud of you and of the work you are doing. I hope you will continue that work in the knowledge that all Americans have a large stake in what you do.

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