

preparing the details of difficult or unusual court cases. He should accompany his officers to the trials of such cases.

Never forget that the officer is human too. He likes to be with his family and friends once in a while. Let him off on some holidays and weekends. The world won't stop if he is off on these occasions. When you hunt, hunt with him; when you fish, fish with him. No association can be better than hunting, fishing, picking berries or catching frogs with your men. Learn to live and work together. There is no one who can do everything well; so when an officer is called upon to perform some civic duty which he is not capable of doing, do it for him. He might be the world's best law officer, but incapable of making a speech to the public. When problems arise with an officer (and this *will* happen), work them out privately. If you solve it, leave it right there. Nothing need be said about it again.

We have a one year probationary period for beginning officers. The Supervisor should know by then if the officer can or will do his job. If he cannot, explain to him the situation and help him get a job better suited to his nature. If you have a man who *won't* adapt to the demands of the job, let him go; if he won't do the job after a year's training, chances are he never will.

The Supervisor is the middle man in a Department. He must accept the policies and directives from his superiors and hand them down to his staff and, most importantly, see that they are put into effect. The Supervisor also has the duty to carry the ideas and feelings of his staff up to the superiors. Often times the best ideas you get are from the local officer. He is the "on-the-scene" contact and knows what will work in a particular area. Trust him.

## THE CONSERVATION OFFICERS' ROLE IN HUNTER, NONHUNTER EDUCATION

by

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### ABSTRACT

The increasing antihunting controversy and a lack of understanding of nature may some day curtail effective management programs, even in "nonurbanized" states. Law Enforcement Officers should play an ever-increasing educators role as citizens show increased interest in wildlife. My purpose is to present ideas, statements and action programs concerning antihunting which the Officer can use in his day-to-day tasks. Specific attention will be given to ideas for use by an individual Officer when meeting with either groups or individuals; both hunters and nonhunters.

### INTRODUCTION

In recent years the antihunting movement has gained much public support and press. The mere presence of this problem has a deeper meaning to wildlife and wildlife management than just the threat to sport hunting.

Many who oppose hunting do so with little knowledge of; death as a natural phenomenon, the ecology of the wildlife species they wish to protect, the longevity of wildlife, the cost of management for game and nongame, who pays the bills for this management, the role hunters' dollars in management, how we preserve rare and endangered species, etc. On the other hand many hunters also have little knowledge of the same concepts. Also hunters fail to understand the views of those against the sport. Some hunters don't even realize that most conservation monies in this country come from their own license revenues.

It is obvious that both sides could benefit from an objective exchange, but this has not been forthcoming. Both sides must realize that "people who object of hunting are not necessarily hypocrites and people who hunt are not necessarily villains" (Caras 1970:42). The Conservation Officer, during his day-to-day dealings with the general public, hunters and nonhunters, can assist in an education which can only result in more effective wildlife programs.

### *Purpose*

Groves et al. (1972) found 63 percent of 140 citizens in Centre County, Pennsylvania undecided about hunting and suggested that some educational programs should be developed. Here are my ideas on how the Officer can play a vital educators role for hunters and nonhunters, (many of which are undecided about hunting). Throughout this paper my reference to "you" or "we" will refer to either the individual Officer or his Supervisor. In addition I will refer to three groups; the hunter, the nonhunter (who may favor, oppose or be undecided about hunting), and the antihunter.

### *Background*

Is there really a threat to sport hunting? This is a tough question to answer, but in general the answer is yes. Why is this happening today? The problem arises from a multitude of factors (i.e., antigun, antikill) but most probably relates to urbanization, especially on the seaboard. In these highly populated areas, such as New Jersey, antihunting sentiment is relatively high (Applegate 1973). This is reflected by the fact that in New Jersey small units such as townships are passing ordinances which ban or limit hunting. But the problem is not limited to urban areas. Shaw (pers. comm. cited in Denny 1973a) noted that 70 percent of 950 college students were antihunter and 25 percent were anti-hunting. William Samuel (pers. comm.) indicates that even in nonurban Alberta, Canada antihunting sentiment is high, mainly in response to behavior of American hunters.

The Humane Society of the United States (H.S.U.S.) has been most active in the abolishment of hunting. They brought suit against Roger Morton, Secretary of the Interior (and as such the head of the Wildlife Refuge System), to prevent a deer thinning harvest on the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge in New Jersey. A Federal Judge ruled that public hunting is not inconsistent with sound wildlife management, but an appeal to this decision has since been filed.

Groups strongly opposed to hunting include the H.S.U.S., Friends of Animals, Inc. and The Fund for Animals. Groups supporting a broader educational program for hunters as well as restrictions to improve the ethics of hunters include: The American Humane Association, The Wildlife Society, and the World Wildlife Fund. Groups endorsing more cooperation between hunters and preservationists include: Outdoor Writers Association of America, The National Wildlife Federation, and the Wildlife Management Institute (taken from statements in "What They Say About Hunting," National Shooting Sports Foundation, 1973).

Thus, there is a threat to sport hunting as we know it today. However, Burger (1973) points out that antihunting compared to other problems facing wildlife is

simply a "pesty gadfly," which distracts our time, money and attention from the real problems facing wildlife. This is all the more reason for an educational approach to the solution of this problem.

#### *Where To Start - A Reading List*

If the Officer, or anyone for that matter, is to convey ideas and information to the public he must be aware of all, or many, of the aspects of the problem. Thus, I feel a basic reading list should be considered by all Officers (see list and summary of content in Appendix). Once read these will provide a sound background for any public presentation, and in addition you can refer both hunters and nonhunters to the readings.

One of the common statements asked of hunters, by nonhunters, is "Why do you hunt?" A simple, "I like the out-of-doors" just isn't enough. Also, the argument that we, as hunters, are playing a major role in wildlife management may not hold water for many hunted species (see Burk 1973). This reading list gives you more than just an answer to why people hunt. At least three of these papers were published by the Humane Society of the United States (H.S.U.S.), a strong antihunting group based in Washington, D. C. (as opposed to the American Humane Association, a pro hunting group based in Denver). The biological rationale of these publications demonstrates the need for understanding and education, because some of their suggestions are ridiculous. For example, H.S.U.S. has recommended the reintroduction of large predators and/or the use of reproductive inhibitors to control or reduce large deer herds (Hoyt 1972). And in the Great Swamp Refuge court case described earlier, members of H.S.U.S. asked people to donate Christmas trees to the Refuge to feed the deer. These proposed solutions to deer control emphasize the need for education. Remember, that those making these suggestions did so with a true interest in the deer, and they believed this was a good method for saving the animals. All suggestions from this group are not ridiculous. A desire for methods to reduce the numbers of unrecovered animals left in the woods might well be heeded.

#### *What Do I Say to Young People?*

1. Don't be pro or antihunting.
2. Present scientific facts on death in animals.
3. Directly relate to them the difference between human and animal life (and anthropomorphism).
4. Discuss all the ways man utilizes and exploits animals.
5. Don't expect most of the television programs to present a clear picture of nature.

Grade School and Middle School aged children are especially concerned with the killing of animals. This is a healthy sign, but must be kept in perspective. I don't feel that a talk to this age group be pro or antihunting. A straight wildlife approach is fine, but a concerted effort should be made to separate what they learn on television from Disney or Lassie from scientific facts. All too often these programs portray wild animals escaping predators, befriending humans, and living forever. A recent Disney production depicted a herd buck sharpening his antlers for upcoming fights with predators who became inactive during a rainstorm. There is no herd buck, they don't sharpen antlers, and predators feed, rain or no rain. It should not be surprising then that younger generations believe "that nature is something set to cornball-clever musical accompaniment and consisting largely of cobras fighting mongooses, sidewinders fighting roadrunners, tarantulas fighting scorpions, eagles stooping on gophers that always escaped, and other contrived and staged episodes designed to titillate an audience..." (Zern 1972).

Children, and adults as well, react more to emotion, sentiment and the use of

anthropomorphism than they do scientific facts. Klein (1973) notes that man tends to humanize other animals such as "the big bad wolf, the sly fox, the gentle lamb, and more recently Mickey Mouse, Bambi Deer and Smokey Bear." With this as a background young children, and again adults as well, do not understand a basic ecological tenet that death is essential to life (Burger 1973). In a subdued approach it should be pointed out that hunters kill animals, but so do nonhunters (cattle, sheep, cars hitting wildlife, research use of animals for man's benefit, etc., see Klein's discussion on animal manipulation). Most of our children grow up in an urban environment far withdrawn from the realities of nature. Ask people in cities: What is the average life expectancy of a white-tailed deer? What do we call a baby deer? What color is a fawn?, Of what value are snakes? What do wild birds eat?, and yes even, Where does milk come from? and you will quickly realize that the television set does not have all the answers (for hunters and nonhunters). Many elementary and secondary teachers do not have the answers either, and so you can become the real "instructor" when talking to these groups.

I've found from personal experience with children in grades 1-3, that a reference to a Disney show (i.e., "remember the large deer you've seen on television") allows you to gain attention and then you can shift to the main points (i.e., "his antlers have velvet which is shed each fall"). This age group is very perceptive, so be well read and know your material.

#### *What Do I Say to Hunters?*

1. Many hunters are not sportsmen, and lead to antihunter feelings.
2. Urge hunters to:
  - a. educate fellow hunters
  - b. initiate clinics which include more than gun safety
  - c. support and practice methods to reduce crippling
  - d. develop public relations committees
  - e. avoid discussion of the kill
  - f. do not publicly display dead animals (especially deer)
  - g. be understanding of the feelings of nonhunters
  - h. obey all laws

When talking to sportsmans clubs or groups of hunters you should emphasize the role that they have played in bringing about antihunting sentiment. It is now time for all hunters to become sportsman, and to cleanse their own ranks (Poole 1971, Burger 1973, Klein 1973). A recent survey conducted by the New York Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit at Cornell University noted that 55 percent of the landowners posted their land because of "bad" experiences with recreationists, and of those 56 percent said this experience was with hunters (Williamson 1973a). Landowners also felt endangered by hunters, and they were afraid that some property damage could result if their land was not posted. Each hunter should be encouraged to develop his own code of ethics. Leopold (1949) noted that "the ethics of sportsmanship is not a fixed code but must be formulated and practiced by the individual, with no referee but the Almighty." "It is up to hunters themselves and those who would be advocates of the sport to bring about a re-emphasis on quality in hunting and to return to hunting those high standards which have won it respect in the past" (Klein 1973).

Now how can this be accomplished? Urge hunters to educate their friends or fellow club members on all the facets of this problem. Remember that all hunters do not have ethical guidance from parents or friends when they are learning to handle a gun. Perhaps we could work hunter ethics as a topic into hunter safety clinics. Urge clubs to sponsor such clinics, spending time on things such as deer biology, why people do not understand hunting, what happens when one hunter breaks a law and why you should respect the rights of private landowners.

It is now generally believed that about 30 percent of the total deer kill is left unrecovered in the woods. This crippling loss is one of the main reasons that groups such as the Humane Society of the United States and Friends of Animals are against hunting, and with good cause. Maybe we could reduce this as much as 70 percent if hunters took accuracy tests (which would be promoted by sportsmans clubs, beagle clubs, etc.), if hunters knew more about the species they hunt, and if hunters did not shoot at game out of range. The American Humane Association believes that hunter safety programs have not gone far enough, and they support complete programs including hunting ethics, proficiency and qualifying examinations (Denny 1973a).

There are other ways where you can advise hunters in such a way as to improve their image. First, urge hunters and clubs to visit the area they wish to hunt before the season to assist the landowner in placing safety zone signs. Or if the hunter owns the land, he could (especially in a suburban area) visit the homes in the area and indicate that; the local hunting club is posting safety zone signs, small game season will open the following Saturday and if problems arise in their neighborhood to contact them (leave name card) or the local Conservation Officer (leave phone number). The local Club might also utilize an Education Committee whose function would be to communicate to the nonhunting public in the area. This might prevent nonhunting neighbors from reacting adversely to an infraction of a law, and it would aid the sport by assisting in the arrest of a violator. This method gets the nonhunter involved and shows him that the hunter and nonhunter are interested in the same things. We can no longer treat the nonhunting public as an outsider, and with proper communication hunters and nonhunters can effectively work together.

Secondly, when talking to hunters, or potential hunters, we should "push nature, not the kill." Various studies (Potter et al. 1973, Stankey and Lucas 1973) demonstrated that although success was important, hunting satisfaction was determined by many other variables such as nature, companionship, and solitude. This information should be conveyed to hunters. It seems that many forget why they like to hunt on the opening day of hunting season.

A third method to improve hunter image involves the needless display of dead animals (i.e., especially deer on cars, animals hanging in front yards and on porches). The hunt should be an enjoyable experience with nature, and the blatant, ego-building display of the trophy can only give more food for thought to the nonhunter. Should we really expect an urbanite who has never hunted to understand why hunters drive around with a dead deer on the roof, the deer bleeding from an open wound? Point this out to hunters, and urge them to place deer in the trunk or in a game bag. Along these same lines, continual discussion and discourse in public of the hunters "kill record" has little meaning to the nonhunter. If we hunt for the reasons that we say we do, then these ego trips shouldn't be necessary.

Finally I would ask you to advise hunters to be understanding of nonhunters. Those who haven't hunted probably have little concept of hunting. Let me cite one example, from a nonhunting student in a "Man The Hunter" college course offered at West Virginia University. The students read a passage which indicated that hunters who would shoot ducks sitting on the water were not really sportsmen. This was obvious to every hunter in the class, but the nonhunter saw nothing wrong with this, since he felt that the goal of the hunter was to shoot ducks. My subsequent explanation that true sportsmen don't shoot sitting ducks would have been dramatic if the ethics described applied to all hunters.

Thus, in summary the Conservation Officer's main objectives are to aid the individual and Club member in becoming a sportsman, with an unwritten, but law abiding and moral (to him) code of ethics. There is one last thing that the Officer might tell the hunter. All hunters should obey all game laws to the

letter and he should assist the Officer in the enforcement of those laws. Any violation of game laws, no matter how insignificant (e.g., shooting one minute before legal time) is fuel for the antihunter's fire, and such infractions show a lack of respect for the game animal.

#### *Combined Statement For Nonhunters and Hunters*

1. Hunters do not legally kill rare and endangered species.
2. Most game species have stable or increasing populations.
3. Hunters provide conservation leadership.
4. Hunters pay most of the conservation bills.
5. Man evolved as a hunter.
6. Men exploit animals in many ways.

There are many areas in wildlife management not fully understood by nonhunters nor by hunters.

For example, many people believe that hunters kill rare and endangered species. Shaw (1972) in a pilot report showed this to be one of the main reasons why college students in Colorado were against hunting, and Caras (1970) devoted an entire chapter to this subject. The fact is that *legal shooting* is of no consequence to rare and endangered species. Before game laws were in existence, gunners led to the demise of many species, and poachers today still contribute to the downfall of some species. But legal hunting actually benefits rare and endangered species by providing revenues for research, as well as habitat improvements. Most endangered species (of which there are 101 with none being hunted) are nongame and this alone should point out the real problem for these species - a deterioration of prime habitat (Denny 1973b).

Most urban dwelling nonhunters believe that wildlife populations are decreasing, and many would attribute this to hunting. The facts do not support this. Almost all game species in the United States have either a stable or increasing population, and nonhunters should be so advised. Hornaday (1915) would surely be amazed at the large numbers of; Wild Turkeys in West Virginia or Texas, Woodcock in Alabama, deer in Arizona, Purple Martins in Connecticut, Wood Ducks in Iowa, Ruffed Grouse in Michigan, or Gray Squirrels in New York, for he predicted the extinction of these animals in those named states because of hunting (published during the days of the market hunter). Nonhunters today are still worried about the possibility of hunting wiping out wildlife, but they ignore the real damage which occurs from habitat loss. Over 34 million acres of rural land may be lost to urban growth by the year 2000 (Hanson 1973). It is very unlikely that legal hunting will decrease any wildlife populations, but there can be little doubt about losses due to "growth" (e.g., dams, highways, buildings, and homes).

There is another point which you might clarify to the nonhunting public. The leadership for any conservation movement in this country since 1920 has come from the ranks of sportsmen. Teddy Roosevelt, Gifford Pinchot, Ding Darling, Aldo Leopold (Burger 1973) and others led the fight for wildlife conservation on this continent. Financial resources for this conservation movement has come from sportsmen. About 62 percent of the 315 million dollars spent yearly on managing our fish and wildlife resources at the state level comes from license sales (Williamson 1973b). Another 15 percent comes from taxes on sporting equipment. To date sportsmans manufacturers' excise dollars are being spent in ever-increasing amounts for nongame wildlife programs. However, state game agencies are feeling the financial pinch and it won't be long until nonhunters will be asked to contribute in various ways to the management of all forms of wildlife. Sportsmans organizations have also led the way in the enactment of conservation legislation over the past 40 years. For a complete review of this history see Trefethen (1961).

Man evolved as a hunter and much of our cultural traditions relate to hunting. While it is certainly debatable whether this makes hunting essential for our well-being (Klein 1973), it may explain man's psychological motivation for hunting. The question of why certain men hunt, and others do not is extremely complex and very difficult to answer. But the reasons given by many antihunters (i.e., hunters are more aggressive than others, hunters are more sadistic, hunting is a substitute for sex) were not apparent when examined by Dr. G. C. Thornton of Colorado State University (Walter 1972, sec. citation from Denny 1973a).

You also might point out the numerous ways (including hunting and fishing) in which men exploit or manipulate animals for his benefit. Klein (1973) suggests that man really doesn't need animal protein, skins or fibers for survival, but we still use them. He notes that if it is morally wrong to exploit animals "from the standpoint of interest of the animals themselves, then all exploitation should fall in the same category." Man manipulates animals for the benefit of man. we raise domestic stock, keep pets, have zoos, poison rats, stuff flounder, ride horses, race dogs, hunt deer, show pigeons, kill bulls, etc. As Klein (1973) eloquently describes, it is very difficult to make ethical distinctions in these practices when we relate them to their value to mankind.

#### *A Summary Statement*

The challenge of antihunting has had a positive effect in showing hunters and game agencies that improvement and education are necessary (Poole 1971, Burger 1973). Conservation Officers come into daily contact with individual hunters and sportsman's groups and thus can serve as a major source of information which will improve the ethical standards of hunters. Better law enforcement would also raise the standards and for this the Officer is going to need greater support from judges with larger fines and greater controls (Burger 1973).

It would be most difficult to communicate with the strong antihunters, but the nonhunter and hunter can be educated. As mentioned this should not be from a "hunt or else" approach, but it should be a factual analysis of the many facets of man as a hunter.

Denny (1973b), Reed (1973) and Burger (1973) have all pointed out that the polarity of hunters, nonhunters or antihunters is keeping us away from the fundamental issues (e.g., habitat loss) which are really threatening our wildlife. Thus, any expediency in making hunters and nonhunters aware of all the facts about the role of hunting, including ethics, economics, improvements needed, and the real effect of legal hunting on wildlife populations, will allow us to move with full speed to more important wildlife problems.

#### *Acknowledgements*

A. Woolf, Rachelwood Wildlife Research Preserve and D. Anderson, Penn State University, provided editorial assistance for which I am grateful.

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#### APPENDIX - A READING LIST

##### A. Books

Leopold, Aldo. 1949. A sand county almanac (a 1966 paperback edition is available from most book stores).

This book is a classic. Even though it was written in the 1940's, the information is up-to-date and the writing style is beautiful. For a better understanding of man's role and relationship to nature, this book is a must. Everyone can, and should, read this.

Ortega Y Gasset, Jose. 1942. Meditations on hunting. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

This book considers many aspects of hunting; why we hunt, what it means for man to hunt, the nature of hunting, the ethics of hunting and much more.

Caras, Roger. 1970. *Death as a way of life*. Little, Brown, and Co., Boston.

Caras tells it pretty much like it is. He defends hunting when done legally and ethically. He also discusses, in detail and with some justification, why people are antihunting.

#### B. Articles - Antihunting

Anonymous. 1973. Special report on hunting. Available from Humane Society of the United States, 1604 K Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. for 2¢ each.

A very emotional 4-page report.

Buyukmihci, Hope Sawyer. 1971. A new look at sportsmanship. Also from Humane Society of the United States.

Good examples of the use of anthropomorphism when discussing animals. Again very emotional.

Gilbert, B. 1972. Hunting is a dirty business. *In* *Dressed to Kill*, Fall 1972, Friends of Animals, Inc. pp. 24-25. (Excerpts from Sat. Even. Post 240(21): 16-17, Oct. 21, 1967).

The title speaks for itself.

#### C. Articles - An Analysis of the Problems

Applegate, J. 1973. Deer and the people of New Jersey. *New Jersey Outdoors* 23(8-9): 3-9.

An easy to read and most interesting discussion of the problems now present in New Jersey, and ones we'll all face soon.

Denny, R. N. 1973a. To hunt or not to hunt. Presented at Governors Conf. on Wildl. and the Environment, March 30-31, Denver, Colorado. (Available from American Humane Association, Box 1266, Denver). A good general survey of the problems.

Denny, R. N. 1973b. Are we successfully meeting today's challenge? Presented at the Northeast Fish and Wild. Conf., June 3-6, Mt. Snow, Vermont. (Available from American Humane Association, Box 1266, Denver). A good general survey of the problem.

Klein, D. R. 1972. The ethics of hunting and the antihunting movement. The author is located at the University of Alaska.

This paper gets into the area where data doesn't exist, and never will — ethics. This paper is well written and is a classic article on ethical considerations.

Samuel, D. E. 1973. *Gone Hunting*.

An unpublished mimeo on many aspects of this problem. Available from author.

Samuel, D. E. 1973. The Humane Society's special report on hunting — a critical analysis (available from author).

This contains an analysis of many of the scientific errors in the original report, especially on "dead deer" statistics and "crippled animal" data.

Zern, E. 1972. I am a hunter. Audubon 74(1): 17-19.  
A general article.

## TIME TO ATTACK

By

*Bobby Joe Smith*  
*Columbia, S. C.*

It is a pleasure for me to be with you today in this meeting of the Southeastern Game Commissioners. I would like to take a few minutes today to talk with you about something that concerns us all in a very significant way, the Anti-hunting Movement.

We can take the Anti-hunting Movement in three distinct ways. First, we can tell ourselves that it doesn't actually exist, that it is a myth or "new kick" that someone or some group has started just trying to get attention. Secondly, we can take a nonchalant attitude and say to ourselves, "If we leave it alone, perhaps it will go away." Or say we just can't afford to get involved. Thirdly, and this is the way I look at the problem, is to attack it head-on. This is what I would like to discuss with you today, some ways that we can attack this problem.

Let's look at some of the people involved in the Anti-hunting Movement. Be they pauper or potentate, they all have one thing in common, very few of them have ever cared anything about hunting in their lives. Some of them are busy just jumping on bandwagons to get some attention. Some of them have been caught for violations by different game department officials, tried and fined in court and are just bitter. We can go on and describe several different aspects of participants of the Anti-hunting Movement, but that would take all day. What I am concerned with and I hope your personal concern is — let's get in and fight it. If we believe in hunting to the extent that we are making careers and devoting our lives to its improvements, I believe it is worth fighting for.

You might ask yourself, "How can we combat the problem?" Gentlemen, I do not say let's sit back and be on the defense, I say let's take the ball, get on offense and play the game to win. Get in the ball game and put some points on the scoreboard for our team.

One of the first things I believe we have to do is educate our personnel. I know some of the game departments throughout the country have accepted this challenge. We in South Carolina have a first-rate educational program for the wildlife personnel and I believe we are in the position to defend the right of hunting as well as any state in the Union.

How many times have you been out working with your partner or some of the men in your department and you stop by a country store or restaurant for lunch or a soft drink and someone approaches you in a negative manner concerning your department or hunting in general. This has happened to all of us I am sure. It happens quite frequently in South Carolina. When this happens, how many times do you shrug it off, try to pass the matter off without causing a scene. We finish our drink, tell the fellow it was nice talking with him, get up and leave. This man feels he's really scored. He's made some points for his cause. Consequently, he has, because the fact that you did not correct him in a gentlemanly manner with all the courtesy you can muster, you in fact agreed with him. How many people does this person contact and say, "I talked with Bobby Joe Smith at this particular store, approached him with this matter and he agreed with me." He thereby has won a member for his movement. Would it not be a little better for you to approach him in the same manner and rather than say you are in a hurry and have to check Joe Blow's farm, or just make up something to get him off your back, to say very gentlemanlike that you want to hear everything he has to say about the matter and you want him to give you the courtesy of listening to your side of the story. Be up on the facts enough and knowledgeable enough to convince this person of what we are doing. If you convince this one fellow who