

# NACD asks more conservation funds

HAGERSTOWN, Md. — Lyle Bauer, president of the National Association of Conservation Districts, called on conservation district officials in Maryland to help convince the new administration, Congress and committees to give greater support to soil and water conservation programs. Speaking at the winter conference of the Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts, Wed-

nesday, Bauer said that through a comprehensive appraisal of soil and water resources conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. "We know how much land we have and the condition of that land. We also know what's needed to protect the land and to keep it viable," he said. "The United States is losing about three million acres of farmland to development and other uses every year," said Bauer. "We're

losing another three million acres annually in productivity to soil erosion." This trend could have a devastating effect on food supplies in the next 20 years especially with increasing population and world food demands, he added. The Agriculture Department will be presenting recommendations for a new approach to a national soil and water conservation program to Congress this month. The highest priority

in any redirection of conservation efforts, said Bauer, should be providing grants to states and local conservation districts to administer. "I believe programs can be more efficient and effective if initiated at the local level than if emanating from Washington, D.C." NACD is opposed to cross compliance programs that would require farmers to practice conservation to participate in other govern-

ment programs. They favor a voluntary approach instead, coupled with loan programs or tax credits or write-offs to farmers who practice conservation. Bauer closed by urging districts to become more active and not to avoid controversy. "Conservation issues are becoming more important to people than ever before. And more people want to solve their problems at the local level," he said.

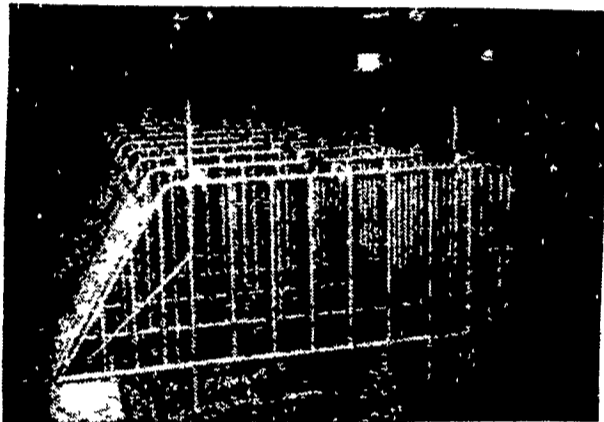


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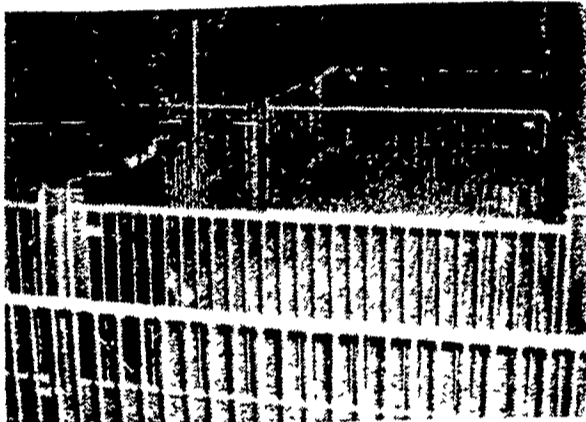
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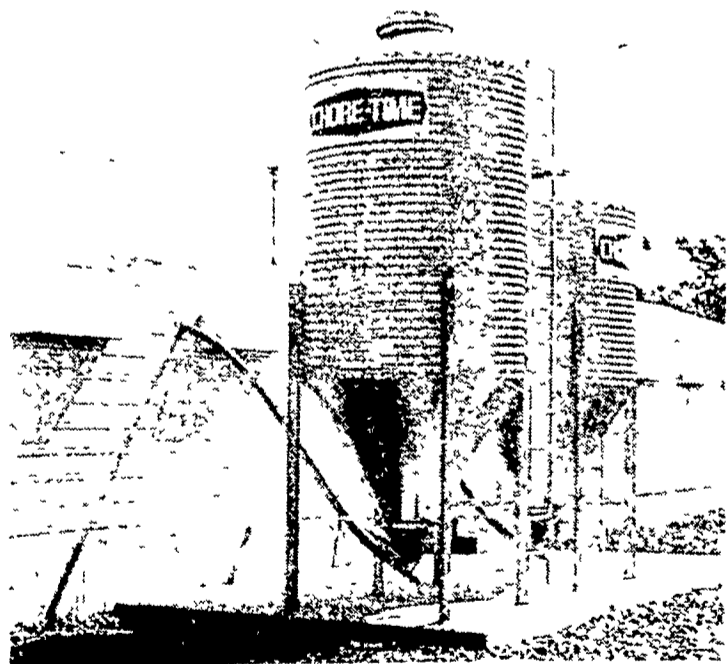
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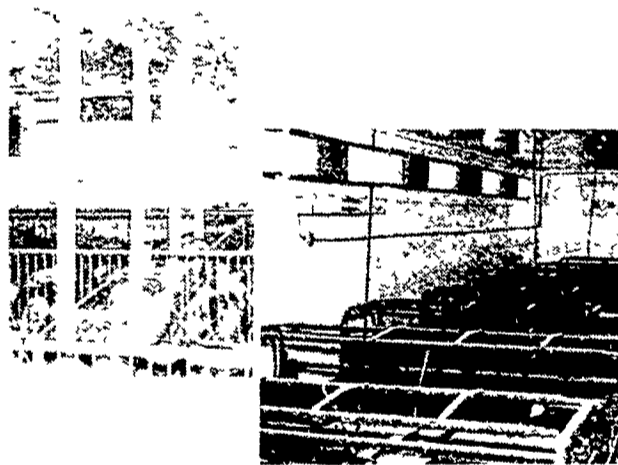
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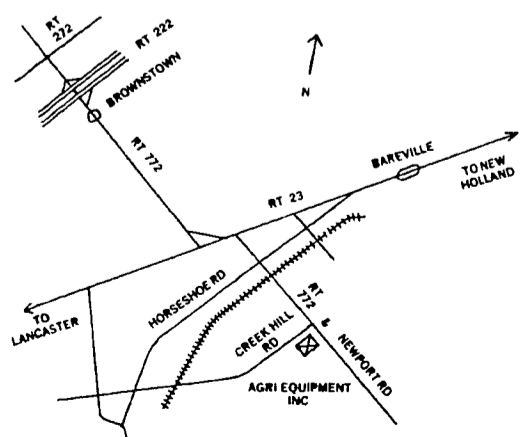
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