

## Excerpt from “A Communication from the Retiring President”

It was your retiring president, as a member of a committee on organization, who, on December 28, 1937 ... introduced a minority resolution which resulted in the birth of the Society.

Not one of the members of that committee would sign the minority report with me. However, certain old “war horses” of the Society who, along with me, saw possibilities in the future for a Rural Sociological Society came in numbers to my support. In fact, I had been placed on that committee because it was known generally that I had been advocating the formation of a society of our own for several years. It was known, too, that there was strong opposition to it.

It was a case of men who were then young, at least younger than they are now, leading a meeting while the elder brethren slept on their own rights.

It is always young men who win the crucial issues. Old men may declare the war and dictate the terms of peace, but young men fight, and young men die for the causes in which they believe.

Sometimes they win. December 28, 1937, was a day of victory for young men.

There are others yet to be won.

**O. D. Duncan**  
**RSS President, 1953**



I foresee a rural society which we cannot study without new concepts, new units of measurement, new ideas of basic rural groups, and new senses and ideas of relationships between rural people and other human groups. We must see agricultural society in the light of a new function in the total society. It remains for others than my generation to derive the formulas and the coefficients by which that society can be interpreted to the world.

Never cease looking for the unexpected, despising not the old nor fearing the new. Each in its selfsame manner has its part in the evolution of human society. The things which we know are never true for a much longer time than it took us to learn them. In the future, social change will be so rapid that what we learn will have become obsolete before we are sure of it. Such is the prospect which we must face with a realistic determination.

**Carry on!**

To learn more about who O. D. Duncan was and his role in creating the RSS, visit the displays in the “History Room” (Monroe Ballroom).