

region had been informed of one another through copies of their prospectuses. The new procedure creates continued opportunities for conversation between interested parties prior to the eventual establishment and operation of a laboratory.

The evaluation process is symbolic of the emphasis on cooperation in the laboratory program. Here is no competition for research funds, but rather the deliberate attempt to create a network of institutions designed to research, develop, and implement educational innovations. Because there will be so few laboratories and because it is critically important that they be born with individual, institutional, and political support, the program requires that the USOE be in a position to perform a mediating role by stimulating and encouraging dialogue, discussions, and debate—and maybe even a little horsetrading—between groups which may submit overlapping prospectuses.

Finally, it seems clear that the USOE fully expects that laboratories from different regions will develop in different ways. The prospectus format for the laboratory program allows for this anticipated diversity.

Given these assumptions, what can we hope for from these new institutions? How will they develop? Who ought to be involved in their establishment? What kinds of research will laboratories do, what kinds of service will they provide, and how far will their responsibilities extend?

Laboratories will conduct basic research related to the field of education in such disciplines as psychology, sociology, history, political science, economics, and philosophy. In addition, these new institutions should encourage multidisciplinary approaches to educational problems. If this kind of research is to be done well, however, the laboratories clearly must have access to a variety of institutions, must be endowed with enough prestige to entice scholars of the highest caliber to participate in them, and must appropriately reward institutions for releasing their best minds for limited periods of time. Those who seek to involve themselves in the creation of these new institutions would do well to study the success of the Atomic Energy Commission's national laboratories in securing cooperation of both scholars and the institutions which employ them.

A second concern for the laboratories will be development and applied research. A major portion of this effort will be directed toward curriculum improvement. But there are other areas such as school organization, teacher education, educational planning, and techniques of administration which will involve major resource commitments.

Effective dissemination will be coequal to the research function in the regionally based laboratories. But dissemination ought not to mean just the transmittal of information. It ought to mean the actual operational incorporation by the practitioner of skills, techniques, and strategies. The dissemination process, then, has at least two elements. The first is developing a commitment to and an involvement in educational innovation. This element—the active, self-induced stimulation and preparation of the practitioner, be he teacher, administrator, professor, or university president, to assimilate and incorporate new ideas and practices—is just as crucial as the second element, which is the process of transmitting information about such practices.

Dissemination can take many forms, but one useful way to think of it is as the engineering of consent. Many different kinds of interests are represented in the educational system. Keeping that system fluid and receptive to educational improvements means building firm, mutually supportive links between those interests. Besides the researchers, then, teachers, administrators, state educational officials, teacher training personnel, regional educational leaders, and the lay public will have to have meaningful access to the deliberations of whatever body governs each educational laboratory.

The service responsibilities confronting regionally based laboratories are large and complex. The techniques, therefore, by which each laboratory conducts its business will be numerous and diverse. To its research program will be added a host of activities involving trial, evaluation, demonstration, and persuasion. Laboratories will train and serve researchers, to be sure. They