

to enact a national institutional grants program should be explored for the purpose of increasing research and other competencies throughout the system of higher education. Attention should, of course, be given to appropriate safeguards for institutional autonomy under such a program and emphasis in this direction can indirectly help the project type of support.

It would be salutary from the point of view of the government and the institutions involved if the governmental agencies would adopt a policy for the rational evaluation of institutions that are potential grantees. An evaluation of the competence of an institution should not necessarily be related to an institution's traditional reputation. Neither should it be affected by the lack of a long-term "Ivy" status. We feel that while some state systems of higher education have a logical claim to be dispensers of certain federal funds, the regional and national character and contributions of American colleges and universities are not restricted to state boundaries, and support should also be considered for regional compacts in higher education and various forms of interinstitutional cooperation. We note in passing that some effort has already been made in this direction.

Coordinated understanding of the growing complexity of higher education will be needed, both by the federal government and by higher education. Many agencies already gather many data. Specific research into facets of higher education from the character of students in a campus environment to the assessment of graduate education to the preparation of administrators is already underway and shall increase. Augmented and improved data reporting from central agencies such as the United States Office of Education or the American Council on Education will aid the flow of information. In addition to many areas of specific research, however, there is also a need of improved general interpretation. Toward this end there may well be investigated a national commission on higher education to serve not as general supervisor of federal relations with or activities within higher education but rather as a general student of the assumptions, operations, and achievements of the higher learning in America. Such a commission should not be a dispenser of federal aid.

Supporting the endeavor suggested in the preceding paragraph, we would propose an expanded development within the universities of the nation of departments, centers, and institutes of higher education whose academic staffs would draw upon the standards and resources of the universities not merely for specific research projects but also for continuous, coordinated general study of the nature and significance of higher education. By such developments colleges and universities would draw upon ancient traditions and modern resources for their own enriched self-understanding. The federal government should find it profitable to give initial but not necessarily permanent financial support to the establishment and development of such departments and centers.

The federal government could at this point in the development of higher education be of great assistance by entering into the arena of the development of the junior colleges. Illinois, which has embarked upon a plan for the extensive development of comprehensive junior colleges, comprehensive not only in the sense of providing terminal programs of both general and vocational nature as well as academic programs for transfer to four-year institutions, but comprehensive also in the areas of adult and continuing education and programs planned to reach segments of the population now experiencing an excessive educational drop-out, is a prime example of states that could benefit in great measure from assistance of this nature. A partial list of projects in this area would deal with the following kinds of subjects: articulation with four-year institutions, compatible record keeping, breadth and comprehensiveness of programs related to social need, depth of programs for the transfer student, quality control, joint planning by four year institutions and junior colleges of basic first and second year courses, and internship programs for junior college teachers and other personnel.

Educational opportunities for adult Americans who might want part-time studies for retooling, upgrading, or general enlightenment will apparently receive increased demand. Consideration might well be given to special federal support, both for programs and staff and facilities. Not all such opportunities would be met on current campus sites, but many are and could be if organizational imagination could be stirred and support generated.

These proposals are offered on the assumption that in each and every case they would serve the national purpose.