

represent the beginning of a new era of Federal assistance for our colleges and universities.

The legislation under consideration (H.R. 6232 and H.R. 6265) would extend three important laws: the National Defense Education Act of 1958, the Higher Education Act of 1965, and the National Vocational Student Loan Insurance Act of 1965. It would also create a new and comprehensive authority for the training of all types of educational personnel—the Education Professions Act.

THE NEED TO CONSOLIDATE

The Federal Government has historically viewed higher education as an instrument of national policy. Most of the resulting legislation has been designed to meet national needs at one point in time and, thus, is highly specific in nature. This legislation has served its purposes well and has allowed a large number of our colleges and universities to do things that they wanted to do at the same time that they were carrying out critical national objectives. But this approach to Federal support is no longer sufficient. The conditions of our time demand that we move toward a new conception of our purposes.

Higher education is no longer important only for specific categories of people or only for specific national purposes. More than in any other place or at any other time in history our citizens and our society depend upon the general vitality of our institutions of higher learning.

We are not recommending general aid to higher education. We believe that Congress and the executive branch have a valid role in identifying areas of emphasis that accord, in the broadest sense, with the interests of the society as a whole.

But many of our present higher education programs contain legislated categories which are too narrowly defined to allow colleges and universities to derive maximum benefit from them. Moreover, the specific nature of some Federal aid categories often operates subtly to redirect and reorient the programs of a college or university in directions which are inconsistent with the institution's purposes.

A possible solution to these problems is to coordinate and consolidate the Federal resources available to colleges and universities and make the availability of those resources more timely and dependable. We need to seek solutions which, while consistent with national interests, simultaneously restructure existing programs to allow local institutions more decisionmaking autonomy. We believe that the legislation under consideration here today is a first step toward that restructuring.

The essence of the proposed amendments can be summarized in three words: "co-ordination," "consolidation," and "flexibility." The proposed law would coordinate similar Federal assistance programs; consolidate programs having related intentions; and add flexibility to existing program authority. I do not say that our bill goes as far as some might wish; but it is a worthwhile addition. It is a worthwhile direction in which to move.

Let me give you a few examples of what I mean: We propose to eliminate the subject matter limitations on school and college equip-