

I think we have done remarkably well in higher education in the last few years. I think we can't afford to let up a minute considering the growth ahead.

I think we have to press as hard as we can. This is greatly complicated by the fact that all of these fields compete with one another for the same person.

Mr. REID. Would you care to comment, finally, Mr. Secretary, on the fact there has been some comment about the categoric educational aid situation compared to the block grant concept. I notice in your testimony this morning you talk about consolidation in some areas. What is your view—on the elementary or higher levels—as to how precisely should the Congress and the executive define grants and what latitude in your judgment is best left to the educational institutions?

Secretary GARDNER. Well, I believe that we cannot define it precisely. I believe we have to reach for a more rational pattern than we have now. We began reaching last year as it became apparent to us that the narrow categorical grants had run wild in some field.

Last year we proposed and the Congress passed the Comprehensive Health Planning Act which combined 15 narrow categorical aid programs. The Education Professions Act is another step in that direction, which combines seven different categorical programs.

In other words, we are moving toward broader categories, toward more flexible authorization, and we do not yet know the point at which we will reach an optimum arrangement. It seems perfectly clear that we will always have categorical aid in one form or another. We put in the Comprehensive Health Planning Act last year which consolidated 15 categories and with very strong pressure this year for a categorical aid program and population planning.

There will always be people who are pressing, often legitimate purposes, for a categorical program to highlight those purposes.

But, in general, movement toward breadth and flexibility seems to be extremely good public policy.

Mr. REID. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Mrs. GREEN. Congressman Thompson, we will be delighted to have you come up and join the rest of us.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you, I am comfortable here.

I am sorry I didn't hear you read your statement, Mr. Secretary. I have had opportunity to look over the act and to read it and also Commissioner Howe's statement. It could lead to almost innumerable questions. I notice in one section, section 435, that there are several instances in which Commissions are to open up programs for proprietary institutions. I am thinking particularly of the work-study section, which I favor because so many of the other programs, such as GI bill and War Orphan's Act and others provide financial payments and assistance to students in accredited proprietary schools.

In line with the more recent developments and other enlargements proposed in your amendments, do you see any objections to the Congress expanding the NDEA student loan program to include needy students in proprietary institutions?

Secretary GARDNER. I would like to have the Commissioner express his views on that.

Mr. HOWE. Well, just as an initial observation, Mr. Thompson, I would certainly not want to do this without the opportunity to plan