

Dr. MEANEY. My name is John W. Meaney. I am a professor of communication arts and assistant to the academic vice president for educational media at the University of Notre Dame. I am also a board member of the Joint Council on Educational Telecommunications, Inc., in which I represent the American Council on Education. Perhaps it would be well to explain briefly what the Joint Council on Educational Telecommunications is and how its membership is made up.

The JCET has, as its constituent members, the American Association for Higher Education, the American Association of School Administrators, the American Council on Education, the Council of Chief State School Officers, the National Association of Educational Broadcasters, the National Association of State Universities & Land-Grant Colleges, the National Education Association, and National Educational Television. JCET serves its members, and all of American education as a coordinating agency by which education may keep abreast of the growing opportunities provided by telecommunications technologies, and by which industry, Government, and the public may be apprised of education's interests and needs in this area.

It is most appropriate, therefore, that the Joint Council on Educational Telecommunications concern itself with the proposals for the establishment of networks for knowledge which are now before this subcommittee, and I am happy to be here today as a representative of the JCET in order to give the support of this organization to the concepts which these proposals embody.

There is a growing recognition, as these proposals evidence, that telecommunications technologies provide vastly wider opportunities for interinstitutional cooperation than have heretofore been feasible. The idea of interinstitutional cooperation is not new, but in the past it has often been slow to develop in practice—probably because it has seemed to go against the grain of many of our institutional traditions and patterns.

In our pattern of budgeting, for instance, it is generally easier and more acceptable to all concerned to give priority of attention to inter-institutional programs rather than to those that are interinstitutional in nature. Perhaps this kind of traditional fact in higher education makes it all the more appropriate to consider now a possible Federal program such as Networks for Knowledge aimed specifically at the stimulation of interinstitutional cooperation.

Certainly the new technology now available reduces practically to insignificance the physical difficulties of such cooperation. We used to have to move people to the information wherever it existed, and that posed a serious problem for many institutions which were geographically rather isolated. Now we can move the information to people and eliminate much of the travel problem. Small colleges can seek the aid of the leading scholars, scientists, and teachers in the fields of their interests, wherever they may be.

The developing institutions can gain intellectual reinforcement for their programs, not only from their own State universities but from other established institutions as well. Consortia can be implemented which transcend geographical limitation and are based solely upon the common interests and goals of the member institutions.

The JCET strongly endorses the idea represented in the networks for knowledge amendment but wishes to point out to the subcommittee