

certain qualifications and emphasis which it feels ought to be taken into account, primarily in the administration of such a program.

First of all, one of the basic conclusions that we have drawn from our observation of earlier educational media support programs at the Federal level—such as the National Defense Education Act, title VII, program for research on new media—is that software is far more important and should have higher priority than hardware.

In terms of the networks for knowledge proposal this experience would suggest to us that it would be very easily and rapidly possible to set up new electronic links between institutions but that these interconnections might not be very efficiently used until the institutions had had the time to plan and prepare within their departments the input and use of exchange materials. Of course there is something of the chicken and egg problem here. How do you stimulate exchange and cooperation until you have the network which makes it possible, and, on the other hand, how do you set up a network unless you first of all have evidence of a readiness for exchange and cooperation? It seems to us that the resolution of this problem would lie in an initial program emphasis on the planning function. Such an emphasis might well extend through much of the 5 years proposed.

Secondly, there is need for a maximum flexibility in the administration of such a program. In this fast moving technological field it is impossible to anticipate and specify by name all of the new media that may make an important contribution within the next 5 years. Some of them are probably not even on the drawing boards yet. Therefore, we feel that two of the most important lines in the draft legislation are those which provide for the planning of "such other projects as in the judgment of the Commissioner will promote the purposes of this title."

Such discretionary authority to promote the purposes of the title could and should, we assume include the utilization of other media and combinations of media, in addition to television and computers. It should include authority to work out cooperative projects not only among institutions of higher education but wherever a valid community of interest seems most likely to get the job done. Some network arrangements should perhaps include, besides colleges and universities, any school systems libraries, museums, State, county, or national agencies, and research laboratories of private industry which are willing to bear their part of the matching fund expense and thus further reduce the cost of participation per institution.

It seems to us appropriate that the networks for knowledge proposal be considered as an amendment to the Higher Education Act of 1965 because our institutions for higher education seem to be ready, willing, and able to take leadership in this type of development. They have important facilities to share. They are showing increasing interest in interinstitutional cooperation. They have a constantly deepening commitment to participate in the affairs of the communities they serve. Therefore, we urge the Congress to begin here, to place this building block as the cornerstone upon which can be constructed a full network knowledge which will have the capacity not only to connect the junior college with the university, but the high school with the college, the kindergarten with the school of education, the hospi-