

Mr. ROGERS. Yes, I understand that, but I would think an institutional accreditation might suffice to qualify for Federal aid to improve specific programs. This is what I am concerned about; and, to allow a private agency in effect, is turning over the legislative authority to say tax dollars will go here or there.

Miss CONLEY. I believe that schools are really accrediting each other; in other words this is peer evaluation. NLN happens to be the organization in which the schools themselves hold membership. Peer evaluation is a very old custom in this Nation. Accreditation has never been an official agency function, approval for licensure State by State has.

Mr. ROGERS. On an institutional basis, regional.

Miss CONLEY. Yes, now frequently.

Mr. ROGERS. Not necessarily a program by program in every instance.

Miss CONLEY. Frequently, Mr. Chairman, a program in nursing education is not accredited because the institution as a whole does not hold regional accreditation. We only accredit programs in accredited institutions.

Mr. ROGERS. But the point I am making is, as long as it is approved by, say, a State agency or a regional agency should it then be denied funds to try to bring it up to standards? And would it be better once it has basic approval as an institution to then allow Federal funds to at least go in there? They can work for accreditation because every institution, I would think, would want to be accredited. In other words, what I am trying to say, should we not really try to help these schools that are not accredited, and then we are in effect, denying them that help by saying you cannot get it until you are accredited, or you have given us every assurance. Well, they cannot give you that assurance until they get some money. They cannot get money, because we will not do it. So, we get caught on the horns of a dilemma in some of these institutions, I think.

Miss CONLEY. May I tell you the two criteria for eligibility for reasonable assurance, sir? I quote:

The college shall have appropriate regional accreditation or have evidence that the institution is seeking accreditation. The nursing program shall be approved by the State board of nursing.

Mr. ROGERS. Well, then, a State agency could do this. There would be no reason why they could not—this is not a very high requirement. I would think a State agency could in effect bring this about and allow funds to go in there.

Miss CONLEY. May I ask Dr. Harty to comment on this, please?

Mr. ROGERS. Yes, certainly.

Dr. HARTY. Sir, I think it would be ideal if every nursing school in the United States were given a large bloc of money if the intent were that, on a philosophical base, money in and of itself will result in excellence or will put one on the road toward excellence. The realities are that there are not enough moneys to do this, and, therefore, the element of priorities immediately enters in. In making priorities in the field of nursing, and recognizing that the purpose for these moneys is to insure that there will be a quantity type of quality, but also a quality type of quantity, it also becomes essential to make choices. When one delegates this task to the National League for Nursing, one is literally saying to the experts in the field of nursing education, give us your counsel regarding where this money would be most effective