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ABSTRACT

This issue of the IRCD Bulletin is comprised of papers focusing on procedures and policies relating to admission to colleges. The first article by Dr. Edmund W. Gordon, "Higher Education and the Challenge of Universal Access to Post-Secondary Education," discusses the democratizing and humanistic functions of colleges in arriving at new admission policies for the emerging period. "Admission Procedures in Transition: Some Interrelations," by Hugh W. Lane, deals with the meaning of admissions decisions, the University as an idealistic institution, and open admission policies. A paper by Thomas C. Mendenhall relates to implications and consequences of admissions policies of institutions of higher education. The final article by Judith Ruchkin revolves around the viewing of the City College, New York dual admissions proposal as a compensatory education program. (RJ)

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Higher Education and the Challenge of Universal Access to Post — Secondary Education

Edmund W. Gordon, Ed.D.

This paper was presented at the January, 1970 Conference of the Association of American Colleges in Houston, Texas and will appear in the May, 1970 issue of **LIBERAL EDUCATION,** 56(2).

Our society today is faced with a situation which no longer allows it the indulgence of viewing universal access to higher education as merely a theoretical question. From a variety of sources, there is growing pressure to expand access to post-secondary education. As man increases his power over his environment by means of technology — the fruit of his mental, rather than physical, labors — there is an increasing demand within the society for conceptual and technical competence. Society turns to formal education as a means of insuring that its members are adequately prepared to participate in and direct the emerging order. The level of essential preparation is increasingly seen as involving some form of higher education.

Higher Education: A Necessity?

In another sense, the pressure for access to higher education can be viewed as a result of overselling the baccalaureate degree as the essential credential for upward mobility. There is an increasing divergence between the stated qualifications, or the credentials required for a career of a given status, and the actual demands made on the worker who holds that status. Ivar Berg, in an article in **Trans-action** magazine entitled "Rich Man's Qualifications for Poor Man s Jobs,"[1] has documented this discrepancy in a number of employment situations. The gap usually lies between the demanded level of academic achievement and the actual competence which is required to do the job. A relationship may even be inferred between this incongruence of stated requirement and actual demand, and the way the current economic structure tends to encourage postponement of movement into the adult participating population. By a variety of pressures, young people are channeled away from early full participation in the economic and political systems and are absorbed into such way-stations as military service or higher education. John and Margaret Rowntree, in an article in the Canadian magazine **Our Generation,**[2] have vividly called to our attention the fact that the military-education complex is now absorbing two-thirds of the total increase of the 18 to 24 year-old potential entrants to the labor market. Most of our young males must face either military service, higher education, or unemployment. A less subtle pressure on higher education is the increasingly intense minority group insistence on being included in what society has deemed both desirable and essential. It was inevitable that they would demand a "slice of the education pie." The society has represented college as essential and as one of the good things in life. The civil rights revolution has made equal access to education one of its central demands. The press of minority groups to be included in the higher education population in greater numbers is part of the revolution. The relatively recent trend toward a more vocal demand for democratization of all aspects of society has been responsible also for political demands to make higher education more relevant and responsive to the community's perception of its immediate needs, and to become more inclusive of the people whose presence will force education to become more relevant and responsive.

Toward Democratization

In response to these various pressures, several approaches to the problem of vastly increased demand for admission have emerged. An early response to the problem was to search for traditional patterns of talent among minority-group students. A pioneer of this approach was the National Scholarship Service and Fund for Negro Students, which made this search a primary activity in its early days. However, when for a variety of reasons this kind of exhaustive search did not produce sufficient new candidates who could measure up to the traditional admission standards, some institutions began lowering admission requirements. Some experimented with modified standards, in order to allow for acceptance of "exceptional" or "special" students, whose status as such might be determined by a high school record, which, although falling below the level traditionally demanded by the college, was thought to be non-reflective of the potential seen by teachers or counselor, or by membership in a minority group, or by previous education different from that of most incoming students, or by some special, perhaps bizarre, interest or orientation which the institution, anxious to be considered no less broadminded than any other, now found itself able to forgive along with other sins against the conformity of traditional college-image freshman classes.

But these approaches relied on the resources, the discretion, and the good will of the college and the various bodies within the college structure which were responsible

(Continued on page 2)

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Gordon (Continued from page 1)

for these decisions at any given time. It was inevitable that there should be more pressure for the implementation of a system which should be fairer, at least in the sense that it would take the decision about every student's future out of the hands of a small body of men. The most obvious such demand, and one to which public institutions are particularly vulnerable, is the cry for open enrollment. Unfortunately, the implementation of this strategy so far, notably at CUNY in New York, has been a political response, and many observers on the political spectrum question its value as a pedagogical solution. They fear that it will throw the doors open wide without doing anything about the program or system into which the hordes will flow. Fear is expressed that academic standards will be shattered or that students will fail in large numbers. The most serious immediate problem with open enrollment is one related to space and facilities; our system of higher education is not large enough to accommodate all the young people we graduate from secondary schools.

A modification of this demand is the goal of guaranteed opportunity for admission to some form of post-secondary education. Attempts are being made in different parts of the country, especially in the form of the community colleges, to implement this goal. But, there are drawbacks ranging from those faced by the mediocre, interested student, who is pressured into vocational courses when he would prefer to sample academics, or the disadvantaged student with a good to impressive record who is admitted by a community college, but cannot possibly afford to attend without financial assistance, to the sifting of students into higher education tracks from which they cannot escape. A different way of avoiding the personal preferences and prejudices of college admissions officers and other officials and, which also avoids overtaxing existing resources, is the use of the admissions lottery. This method, which has been suggested as part of a variety of plans, sometimes in combination with the preferences of college officials and prospective students, involves the pooling of applicants and the random selection of the admission cadre for a given year.

A Chance to Succeed

A more comprehensive proposal, and one which is perhaps at the heart of the best of the variety of intentions behind all the other approaches, is guaranteed opportunity for a reasonable chance at success in college for all students willing to try. Whether by lottery or by open enrollment, all students admitted would be guaranteed access to higher education as long as they were willing to keep trying, and the institution would provide such services as would be necessary to their success. Obviously this is a utopian dream toward which no institution is as yet working, and at the present rate of progress, both political and academic, there seems to be little hope of its implementation in the reasonably near future.

Despite these many efforts, the net results are far from satisfactory. There are slightly more black and Spanish-speaking kids in college today than there were ten or even five years ago. More of these young people are in the traditionally white and more selective institutions, but the proportion of black students going to college today is still grossly inferior to that of white students, and the gap between the proportionate college attendance in the two groups has increased. If we exclude the community college the picture is more bleak.

But, I do not want to address myself to this black-white difference. In fact, in a fundamental sense, my focus is not even admissions policy — it is the question of the function of the college. For this must be answered first before we can speak intelligently about admissions policy. *Let's not kid ourselves.* Even if there were *no* blacks, or Chicanos or Puerto Ricans knocking at our doors, we would be in trouble.

We have more people seeking higher education than we know how to serve. We have more varieties of people seeking higher education than we know how to serve. We have more people demanding of higher education a kind of education most of us are unwilling to provide.

Basic Change Needed

At the same time some of our brightest and most interesting students, white and black, are turning away from the college as the prime source of their education. Too many of our carefully selected students fail or drop out. And if we look at the contributions they have made to the society or to themselves, we see that too many of our graduates are evidence of colossal wastage of higher educational resources. Until we do something to change the college itself, changing its admissions policy can only be regarded as a slightly camouflaged con game. Lower admission standards, broader admissions criteria, open enrollment, and the admissions lottery not only result in further complicating the problems for the college but also result in a revolving door situation for many of these students and inadequate development for many others.

Let me hasten to add that there are some possible advantages to be derived. More flexible admissions can result in a more heterogeneous population of graduates. Some of this new population do make it. Many of our students feel that they derive satisfaction from their experiences in college and resonate to its reward system. The presence of these new students contributes to the changing of these institutions in ways that would probably never occur if they were not there.

But it may be that our continuance to serve traditional functions may be too high a price for the society to pay for what may be less than optimal productivity.

What is the function of the college? There are probably several functions. Chief among them are the stimulation and development of those qualities of intellectual, technical, social and political behaviors which are essential to the maintenance and advance of the society in as broad a segment of the society as its level of development may require at the level of societal development which is required at the time.

In centuries past, that function was adequately served when the development of these qualities was provided for the religious and political elite. Later it was extended to include the financially elite. In this century we have been able to include the intellectually elite and a fair number of the more ambitious masses.

But two things have changed. First, the society's survival is increasingly seen as dependent on the extent to which these essential behaviors exist on a sophisticated level in all segments and for most of our population. Second, just as the 20th century has required that for survival we harness the forces of nature through science for the humanistic development of the society, survival in the 21st century will require the harnessing of the forces of men through science for the humanistic development of the society.

These circumstances place a responsibility on the society to make higher education universally available, and a responsibility on the college to develop ways to achieve conceptual, technical, social, and political competence in that widely varied population.

(Continued on page 10)

Admissions Procedures in Transition: Some Inter-relations

Hugh W. Lane, M.A.

This paper was presented at the January, 1970 Conference of the Association of American Colleges in Houston, Texas and will appear in the May, 1970 issue of **LIBERAL EDUCATION**, 56(2).

The admission decision coupled with the related action on financial aid represents for the individual the determination by the institution as to whether he shall participate in the educational venture for which he has applied.

There are some notable bad practices currently visible among the various actions by admissions and financial aid officers.

A "yes" decision with financial aid attached for an athlete who is not expected to complete the degree program for which he has applied comprises a "covert" employment practice, and often results in a condition not easily distinguishable from chattel slavery for the athlete-student.

A "yes" decision with financial aid attached for the child of a prospective donor or for a student with connections in the legislative process serves the ends of institutional development — often at the expense of another eligible student without similar connections.

For a student with adequate financial resources to attend the particular institution, a "yes" decision with no financial aid attached is a signal that he is wanted.

When a student with adequate financial resources to attend is also offered a financial aid package including a grant, the signal becomes an invitation, competitive with similar invitations from other institutions.

For a student without adequate financial resources to attend, a decision of "yes" with no award indicated is tantamount to a rejection. Such an action adds a count of "1" to the admit figures to be filed with the Office of Civil Rights in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare and thus putatively indicates compliance with Civil Rights proscriptions of federal law while actually adding no counts to the actual number of students of any particular group attending the institution.

A "yes" decision with an inadequate financial aid package attached represents a discouragement for the particular student to attend.

A "yes" decision with a financial package heavily weighted with loan and work-study when delivered to a poor student represents poor educational practice and may also be a disguised rejection of the student.

The truly affirmative admissions decision for a student with inadequate financial resources to attend, is a "yes, admit" with a financial aid package comprised mainly of grant with work-study integrally related to the academic development of the student involved. Thus, laboratory or library job opportunities are preferable to cafeteria jobs and sweeping. The requirement of a loan to be negotiated by a student from a family with no resources is an actual discouragement of the student to attend.

Taken collectively, the totality of admissions decisions made by a given institution defines the nature of the educational task the institution actually undertakes and the student population and the community to be served through the teaching function.

An institution can through its selection procedures refine its student body year after year toward some agreed upon homogeneity. Through the use of tests generating measures along some subset of parameters related to institutional practices with critical scores moving higher each year an institution can refine its student body toward some agreed upon set of student characteristics, be they skills or aptitudes or prior academic experiences. The implication of this progression is specialization of institutional function and elitism of student body composition. Among the visible dangers of this progression are atrophy of the teaching function and the loss of institutional relevance to the general community.

Broader implications of such a progression can be inferred from an examination of the relation between the indices generated by the selection instruments and various available demographic variables or indices of socio-economic status. in theory an institution which serves the total community through its teaching function would be one using selection instruments generating zero order correlational matrices with student measures of ethnic and community origin and socio-economic status.

Meaning of Admissions Decisions

Considering the ways in which the educational system is financed, specifically its lack or essential dependence upon the financial contribution of the student and his family, the admission decision allows the accepted individual to participate in added benefits of considerable economic proportions. To the extent that the parameters upon which the admission decisions are positively correlated with indices of socio-economic status, and the correlation is in general quite high, the admission decisions taken collectively reward the "haves" and exclude the "have-nots." The implications of this are obvious. Our institutions of higher education function as havens for the rich and the near rich. The poor, the black, the Chicano, the Puerto Rican, the Indian, the Applachian, in general the disenfranchised participate sparsely and largely through special programs with group specific dispensations.

To the extent that my remarks to this point paint a true picture, and I would argue that it is mainly true, higher education spells out the biblical admonition "To him who has, much will be given; for him who has not, even that which he has not will be taken away."

The value of these remarks, if there is any is that they allow us to ask in what broad ways the admissions picture could be different and how our purposes and consequent procedures will have to undergo change if a new picture is to emerge.

The required changes are more or less self-evident.

1. We must emphasize the development of human potential rather than the identification of talent.
2. We must move toward open admissions rather than selective admissions.
3. We must include all groups rather than favored groups.

(Continued on page 4)

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Lane (Continued from page 3)

4. Our emphasis must shift to teaching and learning and away from tests and measurements designed to distinguish the deserving from the non-deserving.

5. Our use of tests and measurements must become diagnostic and generate statements about the specific student specifying the conditions under which he can learn rather than normative and merely comparing him with characteristics of other students.

Toward Utopia

To spell out this complete list is to describe the University of Utopia, a far place clearly seen, a vision of full societal participation in the purposes and the benefits of education.

I have been privileged from time to time to visit the nation of Utopia and to observe its University and to discuss the theory and practice of the higher learning with members of its faculty and student body. Many of the issues which consume our time and energy seem not to exist there possibly because education is conceived by Utopians as central to the continuity of their social and political processes and therefore it has the highest priority in planning and expenditure of public funds.

Every citizen, every human being is expected to be involved in the universal education system at the level appropriate to his stage of development. This seems to mean that the University of Utopia has an open admissions policy. It was necessary at one stage of their history to make it a matter of public policy that expenditure for education came first in order that there be a place in the education system for each person born into the nation.

Each level of education in Utopia has a charter covering a delimited area of content and skill and each educational institution is licensed to offer degree programs and to administer certification procedures within its level or levels.

Interestingly enough, psychometrics is the key to educational planning and practice in Utopia. Tests and measurements are the primary tool for guidance and placement and the concept of admissions as we use it has disappeared. Each student regularly participates in a national assessment which rates him relative to the achievement of the goals in a core curriculum composed of basic life skills and citizen responsibilities.

Persons rated as having attained the level of mastery in the collegiate skills and responsibilities are awarded the appropriate degree regardless of the mode of preparation or their age or sex or any other extraneous criterion. There are thus any number of esteemed scholars who never participated in the formal educational system while others spent varying lengths of time as required in the individual case to master the skills and behaviors represented in the core curriculum.

The rule of thumb for placement of those entering college work involves dividing the student population into thirds. Those rated in the upper third along any parameter of skill or behavior are not allowed to participate in formal instruction in preparing themselves for terminal comprehensive examination. The total resources of the University are available to them for independent study and independent study is just what is exacted. The Utopian experience is that every student prepares some area independently while it is not unusual for some students to satisfy the entire collegiate requirement in this manner.

Students in the middle third are organized into advisory groupings with preceptors and advisors assigned to guide them in their preparation for examination. In some areas instruction is available for this group, though the student is moved toward independent study as rapidly as his development warrants

The lower third of the entering student body begins its collegiate education in formally organized courses of study. The best teachers in the system are available to conduct these courses. Interestingly enough, the highest awards in terms of salary and prerogative are bestowed on these members of the Utopian faculty. Students from the upper and middle thirds are often hired under a work-study arrangement as tutors, teaching assistants and study partners for this group. Thus instruction and learning is not confined to the classroom, but is extended to the living sector, the recreational sector, and the laboratory. Students in this lower third can often earn extra money stipends for working closely with the research faculty under fairly close guidance and supervision. Most replications of basic research are carried out in this manner.

With education defined as preparation for comprehensive examination, it came as something of a shock to me to discover that the examinations are published. In this way every candidate for an examination knows roughly what he will face under comprehensive examination. This may explain the relatively large proportion of the population which achieves degree status without formal instruction. This whole area bothered me, but the administration seemed unbothered by it, since the institutions are not economically dependent upon student fees for time served. Many students noted that the systematic study of previous examinations was in actuality a concrete way of apprehending the objectives of the course area under study.

The development of this multi-modal, many-tracked approach to the higher learning is attributed by many to Benjamin Bloom who evidently reinterpreted John Carroll's hypotheses on testing and learning to show that for practical purposes all students can be brought to the level of mastery given proper manipulation of the dimensions of time, method and medium of instruction. Bloom's paper, entitled "Learning for Mastery,"[1] is revered almost as much as the Utopian Bible.

I could not find at the University of Utopia any counterpart for the financial aid officer. In discussion with their administrators I tried to raise the question of the responsibility of the parent to contribute directly to the economic support of the child in college. Utopian educators found this idea laughable and characterized it as counter-educational. "How, indeed," they asked, "can one inculcate independence of mind while enforcing economic dependence upon one's forebearers?" The ruthlessness of their logic eventually blew my mind — for I saw exactly how they had made education the promise of the total society rather than the prerogative of the economically better endowed. Each student, and this includes all persons, is paid a living wage in Utopia. Each learns that he has the possibility of producing alteration of his life style and position and that he is neither propelled nor unduly hampered by the personal accident of birth. Since any individual may truly become the President of Utopia, it is seen as urgent that all individuals be prepared for ultimate responsibility.

The Utopians not only demolished the idea of parents' contribution for me; they destroyed the notion of tuition. So clearly had the society opted to provide the total cost of total education for all its citizens that the notion of additional cost to be recovered was foreign. When I described our own practices, they characterized tuition-parental contribution as a version of the means test, long outlawed in Utopian society. Much of their reasoning seems

(Continued on page 11)

Admissions Policy:

Implications and Consequences

Thomas C. Mendenhall, Ph.D.

This paper was presented at the January, 1970 Conference of the Association of American Colleges in Houston, Texas and will appear in the May, 1970 issue of **LIBERAL EDUCATION**, 56(2).

Any speaker should welcome the deliberate formlessness of the title given this session. Irresistibly it can lead anywhere and everywhere, encourage all kinds of excess in language or opinion. Of course an admissions policy without any implications or consequences is almost as impossible as a mother without love. Yet eight years ago Frank Bowler began to show Americans how access to higher education had to be viewed from a world perspective, thus properly reminding us that we must take the broadest possible view of our own admissions policies and that perhaps the greatest asset of the United States in this regard is that we have always encouraged not one admissions policy but rather a multiplicity of admissions policies. How then can one generalize usefully about such an amorphous problem?

Let me begin by limiting it in time and place, recognizing the while that a constant awareness of a broader dimension to every part of the problem is essential. The United States rather than the world is my province, even though the rest of the world offers invaluable comparisons and even models at some points. I speak primarily of the independent sector of American higher education, especially the liberal arts college, though again the rapidly changing relations between public and private represent one of the most powerful influences in the situation. Finally, my concern is more with the philosophical than the operational side of admissions; yet again there are certain inescapable realities which can all too easily be forgotten: in the end a college admits only from those who apply, and even the most prestigious institution is turned down by somebody each year. Among the many variables that may have operated at these two points are such humble ones as the admission brochures or the wall paper in the interviewer's office!

As for the time, we find ourselves somewhere in the middle of a period of increasing demand for post-secondary education, a period that began with the end of World War II and may level off somewhere in the early 1980's. The increase results from two crosscurrents in college admissions, as Humphrey Doermann has labelled them: "substantially rising numbers of high school graduates and a slowly increasing college entrance rate among high school graduates." The Office of Education has estimated an increase of 64 percent of total enrollments (four year, two year, and graduate) between 1965 and 1975, with the proportion in the independent sector declining from 35.3 percent to 31.5 percent. And D. P. Moynihan has projected that the percentage of high school graduates enrolling in some kind of college (which was 53.2 percent in 1965) may rise as high as 66.7 percent in 1970. Obviously any one of several factors could throw off this rate of increase. If it is maintained, it is of primary implication for admission policies of all colleges, even though the independent four-year college will continue to carry much less of this increase than either the public four-year college or the community college.

The implications of our apparent determination as a nation to provide "meaningful further education," in Governor Rockefeller's words, for the great majority of high school graduates are legion. The first, of course, is a profound change in our definition of what is meant by higher education. When Julian Bond states that "higher education can no longer be regarded as a privilege for a few but must be seen as a right for the many," he is advocating "revolutionary institutes of learning" which can serve as prototypes "from which to build a good society." Others would maintain that universities and colleges cannot hope to remedy all the failings of our society and still perform their important, if traditional, tasks. All would agree that 'meaningful further education' past the twelfth grade must include a wide range of opportunities, varying in length, nature, and purpose, some private, some public, unrestricted by race, color, creed, sex, national origin or economic condition, and all intended to provide any high school graduate with whatever educational or vocational experience his particular training, aptitudes, purpose, and interests would make most useful for him.

Another serious implication is the financing of such a program, the realities of which we as a nation seem determined to ignore. Indeed over five years ago John F. Morse of the American Council pointed out the "unplanned anomaly" in the present pattern of support for education in this country. The United States has led the way to making education through secondary school free for all, and since World War II the opportunity for post-graduate, professional education past grade 16 has been made increasingly available through federal programs to all capable of profiting from it. Yet in the very area now labelled "a right for the many," the years between grades 12 and 16, the undergraduate years, are supported through a make-shift, changing combination of endowments, government support, and student fees which as recently as 1962 were providing 25 percent of the income of higher education in this country. If access to some form of education during these years is to be extended to an ever-increasing range of young people regardless of their ability to pay, this anomaly will have to be replaced by a national program to provide both the capital outlay to begin it and the operating funds to keep it running.

Finally, just the wholesale enlargement of access to some form of education past grade 12, let alone the growing concern to put the university to the service of some kind of social revolution, implies and demands a total review of the present state and future function of the traditional, four-year liberal arts college in the broadened spectrum of

(Continued on page 6)

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Mendenhall (Continued from page 5)

alternatives that must eventually prevail. Such a college of modest size and limited resources cannot hope to offer the range of alternatives that the large multiversity can; yet these are obviously needed to meet the needs of this enlarged college population. Already the liberal arts colleges are having their traditional offerings challenged as irrelevant by some of their students, a tragic commentary not on the disciplines themselves but rather on the failure of the instructor to demonstrate the relevance of his subject or the inability of the student to see it for himself. This is not the occasion either to debate the relevance of the liberal arts or even to prophesy the metamorphosis which the changing times may require of them. But one may at least assert the belief that the liberal arts, properly conceived and effectively taught, do in fact offer something of importance and value for the many rather than just for the few, even though they may not have any immediate vocational utility. The college has no monopoly of instruction in the liberal arts, for they have long been one school or part of the large multi-purpose university. But they are the main, often the only, stock in trade of the college. Such concentration of purpose should make it easier for the college to excel in the liberal arts program, perhaps even to have an influence over and beyond the bare 10 percent of the total number of students who will now be proceeding to some further education past grade 12.

The original explosion in admissions is thus the continued growth in the number of those who are to be given the opportunity for higher education. Among the many long-term implications of this explosion are the following: who are to receive this opportunity? what alternatives are to be included under the name of higher education? how is all this to be paid for? and where does it leave the independent, single-purpose liberal arts college? Let me now move on to some of the more immediate consequences of the admissions explosion, again for the independent college.

The first, in my opinion, will prove to be the modification if not elimination of conventionally-demonstrated academic ability as the determining qualification for admission to many liberal arts colleges. When faced with the numbers explosion of the last ten years the independent college (since it was under no external constraint such as a master plan might impose on the various parts of a state system) has tended to select its students by ability. Even though they often preferred rank in class to CEEB scores, the steady rise in the median SAT scores in their freshman classes illustrates the degree to which such colleges fell quite naturally into this pattern. For the moment many of them had more applicants than they could accept since they could not materially expand in size. The easiest solution to selection was to use demonstrated academic ability as nationally measured, even while one protested along the way that other less measurable qualities were equally prized.

For a variety of reasons this period is drawing to close. In the first place, as Humphrey Doermann has cogently demonstrated, this particular pathway is already crowded. Long ago the tax-supported public institutions indicated that they were not disposed to rest content with quantity and mass education, that they could offer something of value for the quality student as well. The competition for the high-scoring student is ever-expanding; there are probably fewer of them proportionally in the reaches of our society who are just entering the arena of the college bound; and the pool of the high-scoring candidates from families who can pay the rising fees at an independent college is in fact a very modest one, which is already being overfished.

Secondly, the limited significance of these high scores has long been known and is increasingly recognized. Not only do they give only the most superficial, transitory indication of motivation and purpose but also their value becomes increasingly limited with applicants from deprived backgrounds or inferior schooling. Doermann again cites the performance of the Class of 1968 at Harvard who entered "with a median verbal SAT of 664, 29 points lower than the median for the preceding class and 13 points lower than the one before that." Yet in the opinion of those who knew them, 1968 proved "one of the most active and interesting classes in recent years, considerably more so than either the Class of 1967 or the Class of 1966." And its academic performance at the end of its freshman year, measured by percentage of students receiving honor grades, exceeded that of any of its more recent predecessors at Harvard. Or take the median verbal SAT at any college for any class, set it as the minimum for entrance and see how many of the leading students four years later would not have been admitted. This is no argument for ignoring such scores or not using them as valuable indicators when the student is in college. It is reason, however, to use them less exclusively and more judiciously.

Finally, there are compelling reasons of a more general sort for a modification of this simplistic policy of overemphasizing CEEB scores in the admissions process at independent liberal arts colleges. Essentially they derive from the widely-held concern, among faculties as well as students, on the campus and off, to increase dramatically the educational opportunities available to young people out of those segments in our society, especially the black, the Puerto Ricans, and the Indians, where access to higher education has been tragically limited or lacking. A wide-spread participation in this effort by all colleges and universities, public and private, large and small, is necessary to meet the need. To the extent its resources will permit, the independent liberal arts college of modest size must share in this effort for its own good, as part of the never-ending effort to make its student body as representative as possible. The recent resolution of the New York State Board of Regents called for open admissions throughout the State, in private as well as public institutions of higher learning, but went on to point out the financial and academic implications of such a policy.

What are these implications, particularly for the independent college which up to now has used academic ability as evidenced on standard tests and ability to pay as the major elements in the admissions process? In the first place it means a sincere, persistent effort on the part of admissions officers and faculty to free themselves from the spell of high Board scores. This is essentially an act of faith, for the much-touted other factors do not yet possess any comparable system of measurement. Interests, aspirations, aversions, attitudes, and especially purpose and motivation can only be appraised indirectly through achievement and activities of many sorts, a task which incidentally the small college with its more personal admission procedures is better equipped to handle than a multiversity. Much of the readjustment will have to be made by faculty and students. If only the former can divert its interest and energies away from the almost incestuous obsession with perpetuating itself by lovingly grooming its very choicest students for graduate school. If only the faculty can recognize that an instructor's own enthusiasm for his subject and his ability to communicate widely its relevance for the human condition among his students is still one of the greatest sources

(Continued on page 12)

The City College Dual Admissions Proposal Viewed as a Compensatory Education Program

Judith P. Ruchkin, M.A.

This paper was originally prepared for the Seventh Annual Work Conference on Urban Education held at Teachers College, Columbia University, on June 16, 1969.

If the inner city school is a failure by such criteria as student achievement, holding power, and post school employment,[1] then it is imperative that researchers and practitioners in education continually review the rationale as well as content, organization, and clientele selected for various educational programs. It is no less important for legislators to reflect upon the effectiveness of the approximately $12.2 billion public funds spent between 1966 and 1969 to support compensatory education efforts.[2]

At least three distinct approaches remain theoretically possible in the education of inner city (and for that matter for all) youngsters: 1. change the organization, or structure, of the school, 2. change the content of the school program, 3. change the child, or some combination of all of these approaches. Street academies, store-front schools, programs based in churches, supermarkets and the like — usually privately funded — fall in the first category. The success of a prototype school, namely Harlem Prep, or Project UNIQUE,[3] may be attributed to a great many factors in addition to important variations in structure, and has been described eloquently elsewhere.[4]

Curriculum Change

Claims for changes in program and curricular content abound. New urban, Afro-American study guides and centers have joined the new math, new science, new arts-humanities projects. Simulation games for such complex phenomena as nationalism and imperialism are being developed, and experimentally introduced, usually in suburban school systems. From an African Math Program for grades K through 12, to computer-assisted instruction in elementary reading and math, to the Edison Responsive Environment, popularly known as the Talking Typewriter, to a Language Sensitivity Kit developed in Georgia, a veritable cult of curriculum change is being supported mostly by public funds.[5] At their door step impatiently awaiting promising directions are the publishers of educational texts, films, magazines, and related materials, who have been almost as quick in the production of new materials as the curriculum designers in coming up with proposals. But as Professor Miriam Goldberg has observed, relevance in educational material for children may derive from "the exciting, the unreachable, and the far-away, rather than from the immediate local environment."[6] Whether changes in instructional materials positively affect achievement remains an open question.

Structural Change

It has so far been seen, then, that changing the school structure has occurred only in isolated instances especially under the rubric of the public educational enterprise. While changes in the content of instruction have been more widespread within the public school system, most efforts have yet to be introduced on any but an experimental basis and therefore cannot be assessed at present.

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Efforts to Change Children

It hardly comes as a surprise that the bulk of the effort and the $12.2 billion have gone not toward changing the school, but toward altering its child-client. Head Start programs, pre-kindergarten experiences, parent-child centers, infant training efforts, and pre-natal services all focus on preventing the supposed learning or coping deficiencies of the child in his later school experiences.

Unfortunately, the observation that "It is often easier to add extensions than to change the basic structure of institutions,"[7] made at the start of the era of compensatory education in 1965, appears to have been confirmed during the past four years.

In addition, new forces have also been unleashed paralleling the creation of the compensatory educational enterprise. Compensatory education has, in fact, turned out to be a substitute for integrated education, which would have required major organizational changes in large urban centers, and which requires on-going attention to both structural and instructional procedures, where it has been effected. But, just as the failure to bring about school integration has resulted in demands for community control, so has the illusion of compensatory education now become a demand for preferential hiring in industry, and preferential college and graduate school admission. Compensatory education has provided legitimacy for special organizational and individual demands for preferential treatment. After all, if it is generally accepted that the two-year old inner city child needs special help to get ready for school, then the teenager, or adult, too old for these services is also entitled to special programs to compensate for past personal and institutional inadequacies. In fact, since a service oriented concern toward unemployment, underemployment and rising welfare rolls in the midst of the affluent society preceeded many of the early childhood efforts, a series of Job Corps, Neighborhood Youth Corps, and private industry-related training programs was addressed to those no longer within the reach of the public school enterprise. Bernstein, who finds the term "compensatory education" inappropriate for describing programs aimed at pre-school children not yet educated,[8] by the same token might accept efforts directed at older adolescents as fulfilling a more literal meaning of the term compensatory education.

However, it is suggested that the ultimate justification for the host of social, economic, political and education programs really derives, neither from individual or institutional shortcomings but, from the peculiar institution and wrongs of slavery. In any event, the lack of demonstrable success in later school achievement obtained via Head Start and such programs as More Effective Schools — whatever the reason and however questionable the methodologies of the evaluation process — raises issues both about the choice of program and the generation for whom such services were to be provided.

But, given the general political acceptance of the need for special service programs, (to obviate the need for fundamental social change) neither the early childhood efforts, nor other services are likely to be diminished. However, a demand for the inclusion of a new group in a new setting

(Continued on page 8)

Ruchkin (Continued from page 7)

is beginning to be heard. The group of adolescents, who were too old to participate in Head Start and whose peers are enrolled in programs such as College Discovery, College Bound, Upward Bound, Outward Bound, pre-collegiate skill centers, and tutoring programs, are aware of the complex rationale for high risk admission by private colleges, as well as the 100 scholars and SEEK programs of the City University. It is in part on their behalf that approximately 200 members of the Black and Puerto Rican Student Community locked the gates of City College's South Campus on April 21, 1969 and renamed the institution University of Harlem.

There is both appropriateness and irony in the choice of City College as the first candidate for a dual admission policy. The oldest municipal, tuition-free institution in the United States, with an acknowledged academic reputation, long-term accessibility to black and other minority group students (due in part to its geographic locations) has become a logical target for the demands of the Black and Puerto Rican Student Community. The afore-mentioned forces have operated and still continue to bring pressure upon the dual admission decision, which was made by the New York City Board of Higher Education, implemented by the City University administration on East 80th Street, and eventually transmitted to, and survived by, the administration, students, and faculty on St. Nicholas Heights in Harlem.

But, in a sense, the students have merely moved up the date of the 1975 City University Master Plan, which calls for the admission of all high school graduates to the City University of New York system by 1975. However, the Master Plan is now experiencing severe difficulty due most immediately to budgetary restrictions on building programs, limited operating funds, and more powerful faculty collective bargaining as a result of recent unionization.

Open enrollment is not, of course, synonymous with dual admission. But, the idea of a place for every high school graduate within the vast CUNY system of more than 160,000 students has seemingly given prior sanction to the current demands. Recognizing the severe budgetary limitations and not wishing to be 'the last admitted and the first to be dismissed', Black and Puerto Rican Student Community spokesmen seek to become part of the regular admission process and reserve 50 percent of the freshmen spaces therein for the brothers and sisters in the high schools. Although a program of supporting services, not dissimilar in approach from the SEEK program is being sought, it is clear after several years of marching to Albany for alms to expand the SEEK program (among the first to be threatened with curtailment and elimination this winter) that the students find this a humiliating as well as precarious position and have resolved to have no more of this second-class status.

Open Door: A Revolving Door?

The California three-tier system of public education has frequently been cited by faculty members and others opposed to the dual admission proposal. It is argued that with the expanded enrollment in California from 450,000 students in 1959-60 to over one million in 1969, the drop-out rate has also risen. It now takes 550 entering students to produce 150 graduates. While ten years ago 50 percent of the freshmen became sophomores, now only 33⅓ percent reach the sophomore year.[9] The California and mid-western state university experiences are used in the City College context to argue that the open door would become a revolving door for many students. In this connection, it is important to note that the California system's extremely low enrollment of black and Spanish-speaking students (under 2 percent in the third-tier universities[10]) makes that experience a dubious base for comparison.

A less recent study of the experiences of a selected group of 1,519 Negro students, who enrolled in 187 integrated colleges during the years 1952 to 1956, does offer data and conclusions that may be useful in the current context.[11]

As a matter of historical record, the study reveals that among the participating colleges, City College enrolled and graduated the largest number of Negro students: 18 enrolled, 15 graduated and three ultimately finished elsewhere. The authors' major finding was the extremely low net drop-out rate of the students studied, only ten percent, which is striking, especially when contrasted with the 40 percent rate, then current, among white college students.[12] Furthermore:

> "The academic performance of these students is far beyond the level that would be indicated by such predictive indices as college board scores, family income and educational background."[13]

Moreover, Clark and Plotkin found that the students in their sample tended to drop out of interracial colleges primarily for financial reasons, unlike white college dropouts.[14] They found also that women in their sample outperformed the men both on grade average and graduation criteria. The profile of the most successful candidate for admission that emerges from the study is that of a southern, high school-educated female in the top fifth of her high school class, majoring in the social sciences, humanities, or teaching, accepted by an eastern prestige institution, with two parents having attended college, whose father is in a white collar occupation! Without commenting upon the pool of candidates possessing such attributes, it would be useful to bring the study up to date, to correct for the quaintness of the "silent generation" sample that so many faculty members bemoaned then, and would now be glad to welcome again on many campuses, and also to correct its atypically female weighted (54.4 percent) base. Opposition to the dual admission proposal from some circles seems curious in the light of Clark's earlier study, which suggests that selective eastern prestige colleges yielded the lowest drop-out rate. Finally, since the current admissions process is based either on high school average obtained, or a composite grade average and Scholastic Aptitude Test score — the latter being, by far, the larger group — Clark now seems to be contradicting his own conclusion:

> "To rely on the alleged predictiveness of test scores in evaluating these students would ignore a major finding of this study and exclude many capable students from college."[15]

This is precisely the position of the dual admission advocates. Many of the students and their black and Puerto Rican faculty supporters operate from diverse political persuasions and possess varying degrees of identifiable community support. Whether the physical survival of the institution is at stake as well as its academic reputation, as some supporters and opponents argue, is at best difficult to assess.

It is easier to speculate about the agency selected by these potential clients in contrast to the self-appointed professional educators, who have generally provided compensatory programs. While no kindergarten or pre-kindergarten children demanded early childhood training, the educational establishment offered this service, and it has since achieved considerable popularity, although little in the way of measurable improvement in school performance. Buried

(Continued on page 9)

Ruchkin (Continued from page 8)

within the City College crisis, amid the raucous and sometimes obscene rhetoric of the students, is a fundamental question. Specifically, the students recognize the need for compensatory programs and services, and have themselves selected the institution to perform this service, rather than leaving the choice to the professional educators, politicians, and the community at large, whose collective wisdom and success with other compensatory programs remains to be demonstrated. On a simpler level, many oppose the students' demands on the grounds of tactics and rhetoric, although educators might well ponder the immediate and future motivational advantages of such a policy. Nor should the academic researchers, who use the inner city as their laboratory, be forgetful of a possible service obligation to community youngsters.

A Challenge for Colleges

The percentages of different groups of students to be admitted have received careful scrutiny, as expressions of surfacing intergroup tensions have been made apparent by scarcity of available resources. At the same time, the potential for the necessary social bonding, which the increasingly segregated and conflicted public schools (especially in New York City) no longer perform, might appropriately be explored by a municipal institution of higher education. Admittedly, if City College were to undertake this new role — and there is only a minority of the faculty who wish to do so — it would require fundamental restructuring of the system as well as a review of its instructional program. Such fundamental overhaul, also desirable from other points of view, does not seem any more likely to be achieved on the college level than in the public schools, where it has not taken root to date. If Dentler's prediction[16] that the university will return to its medieval mission of scholarship and training of scholar-apprentices is accurate, the choice of a college to perform such social service will prove to have been mis-directed.

However, there appears to be no more, nor any less, evidence for the potential success of colleges and universities in undertaking compensatory education programs than there was in handing the task to nursery school teachers trained to emphasize affective development rather than cognitive skills. If efficiency of program in teaching the target population of adolescents becomes a criterion, colleges may certainly become a logical first choice. It may also be argued that, while the college faculties may not be any more skilled at teaching reading than high school, or junior high school teachers, they may be presumed to be superior in identifying the specific skills and concepts of their own disciplines and manage to transmit these to both proficient and less proficient readers. If Bruner can train elementary school students and high school teachers to extract the structure of various disciplines and then transmit this to high school students in preparation for college, it may be far more sensible and efficient to utilize the collegiate experience for such training.

In summary, the prospects for City College, or any college. to become a new agency for compensatory education do not appear promising, but ought not to be dismissed out of hand without considering the potential strengths as well as obvious weaknesses for directly affecting the academic achievement of inner-city youth. At the very least, some carefully designed experimental effort, to explore the college's potential to educate neighborhood youth as well as educating its traditional enrollment from the city at large, deserves support. Nor does it seem premature to gear up for such a research effort, since it is to be hoped that the political processes, operating on this issue will, as a matter of compromise, provide for the admission of some additional candidates outside of the regular admission process.

Since the time of writing, the Board of Higher Education has moved the date of open enrollment up to September, 1970.

FOOTNOTES

1. Passow, A. Harry, "Urban Education—An Overview", An address at the Seventh Annual Work Conference on Urban Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, N. Y., June 16, 1969.
2. Elsbery, James W., "Change the Premise", **The Urban Review,** April 1969, p. 7.
3. Young, William C., "Project UNIQUE" Integrated Quality Urban-Suburban Education, An address at the Seventh Annual Work Conference, **op. cit.,** June 20, 1969.
4. Carpenter, Edward F., "Harlem Prep: An Alternate System of Education", **op. cit.,** June 20, 1969.
5. "A Selected List of Current Publicity Supported Curriculum Projects", **The Center Forum,** March 1, 1969, pp. 2-3.
6. "Beginning Reading for Urban School Childern: Some Emerging Research Findings", An address at the Seventh Annual Work Conference, **op. cit.,** June 17, 1969.
7. Gordon, Edmund W., "A Review of Programs of Compensatory Education", **American Journal of Orthopsychiatry,** July 1965, p. 647.
8. Bernstein, Basil, "A Critique of the Concept Compensatory Education." An address at the Seventh Annual Conference, **op. cit.,** June 17, 1969.
9. Walsh, John, "California Higher Education: The Master Plan Faulted", **Science,** May 16, 1969, p. 811-813.
10. **Ibid.,** p. 811.
11. Clark, Kenneth B. and Plotkin, Lawrence, "The Negro Student at Integrated Colleges", National Scholarship Service and Fund for Negro Students, New York, 1963.
12. **Ibid.,** p. 7.
13. **Ibid.,** p. 21.
14. **Ibid.,** p. 21.
15. **Ibid.,** p. 26.
16. Dentler, Robert A., "Urban Education and the Future", An address at the Seventh Annual Conference, **op. cit.,** June 18, 1969.

A comprehensive, annotated bibliography, **Higher Education of the Disadvantaged,** has been reprinted by ERIC-IRCD as part of the Collegiate Compensatory Programs Series. This bibliography, originally prepared under a contract from the Office of Education, includes more than one hundred entries and has recently been updated. It covers the following topics: Civil Rights and Access to Higher Education, Programs and Practices, Characteristics of Disadvantaged Students, College Admissions and Guidance, The Negro College and General References.

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Gordon (Continued from page 2)

It is these democratizing and humanistic functions of the college which must become the highest priorities before we can arrive at sensible admissions policies for the emerging period. The tremendous technological development of the society now places us in the position to free the resources needed for this shift in priority. This nation, with a gross national product which will soon reach one trillion dollars, can afford the investment in education which is necessary to raise our gross human product. Without this investment, we simply cannot solve the problems of admission to college or post-secondary continuing education.

Given the resources, the college can then begin to discharge this new function. In the process of doing so the college will need to change in a number of ways. To better serve our more traditional students, John Gardner's advice seems appropriate:

> "The colleges and universities are going to have to undertake a thoroughgoing reform of the undergraduate curriculum. We have now had a decade of lively reform in the high-school curriculum. A comparable movement for reform at the college level is already under way, and we shall be hearing a great deal more about it in years ahead. It is certain to transform instruction in all major fields of knowledge. It will require searching reappraisal of the aims of education in each field. It will require thorough exploration of the possibilities of new teaching aids and methods It will involve a more widespread and ingenious use of independent study. And it must involve a continuing effort to do justice to interdisciplinary approaches. Curriculum reform will be incomplete if its only consequence is that each specific subject is better taught; it must also reintroduce into the undergraduate program the breadth so essential for young people who will reach the peak of their careers in the twenty-first century."[3]

However, to serve this more varied population it may be necessary to:

1. Establish enough community colleges to insure that every high school graduate can be encouraged and enabled to continue formal education after high school on a full- or part-time basis for as long as he feels the need for additional education or for as long as it takes him to quality for a senior college.
2. Transform our four-year colleges into senior colleges serving only those students who have completed two years of post high school study, expanding the number of these senior colleges as needed and utilizing some formula for admissions combining student choice and lottery.
3. Convert all high schools to comprehensive high schools responsible for continuing the education of all children until they have met a level of academic achievement acceptable for admission to the community college.
4. Shift from selection to placement based upon qualitative a[illegible] raisal.
5. Establish independent study centers in the community colleges, where the current crop of high school graduates with learning disabilities and deficiencies may be habilitated for collegiate work.
6. In all of these institutions it will be necessary to shift the curriculum focus from a heavy emphasis on content mastery to an emphasis on mastery of the learning process, that is, problem formulation, data collection and management, data assessment and interpretation, field testing and synthesis. The future will demand not so much an encyclopedic knowledge as skill in information management, the ability to seek out the necessary sources of information and collaborate with others in the solution of problems.
8. For all these institutions to expand in the ways I have suggested, it will be necessary that we experience a shift in attitude away from chauvinistic and racist concepts of class or racial inferiority, away from concepts of fixed intelligence and achievement levels, away from low self-fulfilling expectation, to commitment to the optimal development of varied talents many of us feel lie dormant in these untapped human resources.
9. Finaly, we are obviously a long way away from the achievement of these changes; I doubt that we are even in agreement with respect to them. Yet, it is obvious that we must move and move with a much quicker pace than we have shown to date.

Revised Functions for the University

What, then can be done in the immediate future to start toward this goal? The immediate problem is a radical redistribution of labor in higher education, with the stronger institutions increasing their share of responsibility for educating weaker students, and the smaller and weaker institutions serving more of the stronger students. This is a radical departure, indeed, challenging as it does all the dearly-held traditions of a tradition-oriented field. Yet, while the academic professions point us backward so that we do not lose sight of the values of the past, they are at the same time in the vanguard of the movement toward the promise of the future, and in the revision of the functions of the university, the academic professions have ar opportunity to play a truly revolutionary role. It is time, at last, to ask why it is that those who are credited with being the finest teachers should confine their efforts to those conceded to be the best students, (the ones who admittedly need the least teaching) while those students most in need of expert guidance to unleash their full academic potential are relegated, in most instances, to the second-rate teachers, and second-rate institutions, where little credit is given to teacher, student, or institution for the success they may achieve.

This very important step is a possibility for the determined institutions to begin now. It is heartening that this much power lies in their hands. The crippling factor in any attempt at thorough reform, of course, lies in the alarming lack of resources available for higher education and in the distressing ordering of political and social priorities at this time. But a determined initiative on the part of colleges and universities to effect this redistribution of effort, talent, and resources, could not only serve to bring about a more productive use of existing resources, but also to transform the common public view of such institutions. It would also serve to remove the old aura, the ivory tower mystique which, to be realistic, is so alienating to many citizens. It is time for higher education to take this opportunity to change its own future and at the same time to grasp the opportunity to help mold the future of the whole society. For, the college, which seriously undertakes to serve the wide variety of young people presently available to it, will indeed become a different institution and as the new products of this college are fed into society that will also be different. It may be that in these differences we will find new levers with which to better involve some of our alienated students, as well as to educate some of the new candidates for the rewards of higher education.

FOOTNOTES (See page 15)

Lane (Continued from page 4)

to be rooted in the idea of full individual participation in the governance of the nation. If each man has one vote, it behooves the society to be certain that each vote is an informed one and leaving this to the vagaries of economic level of birth would seem ludicrous to any Utopian.

I looked long and hard for the counterpart of our chattel slave-athlete. What I actually found was a group of students specializing in Physical Recreation, its principles and practice. Spectator sports as we know them were not present at the University of Utopia. Athletics was so broadly based that there was seldom enough spectators to support an industrial approach to athletics. Participatory sports was the vogue. Every student was on some kind of a team or engaged in individual exercise. The Utopians seem to believe that a healthy mind exists in a healthy active body—when that is necessary in the individual case.

Colleges, by the way, were not the only post-secondary experience I noted in Utopia. That is, not all Utopians worked toward formal certification via the degree route. Apprenticeship and on-the-job training were acceptable and in many cases the preferred route to economic maturity. As the Utopians believed in a policy of full employment, they disavowed artificial or irrelevant criteria for hiring or employment.

I don't fully understand how the Utopians have developed this system without rearing a cumbersome unwieldy bureaucracy, but it is interesting to note that the "ombudsman" role is formalized and highly developed. The "Office of Renewal" is devoted to the continual study of Utopian institutional forms and procedures. Continuity is valued by those in this office but their greatest delight is in the devising of streamlined efficient procedures. The best minds in the society are available for work in this Office and every societal form and procedure is subjected to periodic review and revision.

It might be important to note that this Office is situated at the national level and funded centrally and also that it has no permanent personnel. All persons in the society are expected to contemplate its institutional forms and to influence them. It would never occur to an Utopian to leave so essential an area to the experts, so as an alternative all Utopians have developed this particular expertise.

These observations of practices in Utopia are offered not as definitive of desired practice for you in our nation at this time in our history. Rather they are palpable evidence that *our* practices are not the only way it can be done, they are not necessarily the best way we could do it. Let us subject our present practices to ruthless analysis, giving them up if necessary to achieve some better, more harmonious educational goal in which the maximal development of each student commited to our charge is seen as our highest goal and no person born into our society is excluded from the body of students of which we treat.

Need for Continuous Reevaluation

In the decade ahead we Americans will dissect the implications of open admissions to higher education. The lessons from Utopia would suggest that our entire life style is up for review. We must rethink the arrangements of our institutions of higher learning into public/private, well-endowed/poor. We must examine the socio-political implications of the financing of higher education questioning whether parental contribution to the education of the child is consistent with the theory of democratic participation by an educated electorate. Clearly we must reevaluate the potential of psychometrics and educational testing, devising ways maximally to develop individual potential for service to the society while providing both safeguards for individual privacy and avoiding the rearing of another cumbersome impossible bureaucracy unamenable to orderly change and development.

In the intervening period and till this Utopian perspective is achieved, we at National Scholarship Service and Fund for Negro Students and Aspira and in the Talent Search field must continue to pursue our special advocacy of the Black, the Chicano, the Indian, the Applachian, to the southern poor white and the Puerto Rican in order to achieve our share of America. We do this not from separatism but in order to make the promise of this experiment in democracy real.

If we approach these tasks which face us now in 1970, the nineteen eighties may see the achievement of a Utopian perspective in our time and on our scene.

We know that the attainment of this perspective depends not upon you alone. Those who govern us must realize that expenditure for the development of human potential cannot be called inflationary. The taxpayer must become a true revolutionary and demand a return in the form of first things first. The students, our hope for Utopia, must persevere in protest and in learning. Our faculties must encounter the learner where he is and not just where they are. The new perspective will be attained for it must be attained.

Here, on this high hill, upon our Nuibaden, we wait for you.

FOOTNOTE

1. Benjamin S. Bloom, "Learning for Mastery," **Evaluation Comment** Vol. 1, No. 2, May, 1968 (Center for the Study of Evaluation of Instructional Programs, U.C.L.A.)

INFORMATION RETRIEVAL CENTER ON THE DISADVANTAGED

The IRCD BULLETIN, a publication of the ERIC Information Retrieval Center on the Disadvantaged, is published five times a year and usually includes status or interpretive statements, book reviews, and a selected bibliography on the center's special areas. Persons may ask, in writing, to be placed on the subscription list. The center also publishes the ERIC-IRCD Urban Disadvantaged Series and the Collegiate Compensatory Educatior Series, a series of bibliographies, reviews, and position papers. Numbers in this series will be announced in the IRCD BULLETIN and can be obtained by request. Subject areas covered by IRCD include the effects of disadvantaged environments; the academic, intellectual, and social performance of disadvantaged youth, programs and practices which provide learning experiences to compensate for the special problems and build on the characteristics of the disadvantaged; programs related to economic and ethnic discrimination, segregation, desegregation, and integration in education; and materials related to ethnic studies.

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Erwin Flaxman, *Assistant Director*
Edmund W. Gordon, *Director*
Paul M. Smith, Jr., *Associate Director*

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Mendenhall (Continued from page 6)

for the latter's motivation. Both faculty and students must work to realize a less competitive, more humane definition of achievement in college. A bottom half of the class is always needed to make the top half possible. It should be possible to give every student an awareness of quality and a true understanding of his own capabilities, without either continuing to subject him to the disheartening trauma of the top quarter high school student who finds himself in the bottom half in college of swinging to the faceless anonymity of pass-fail.

In participating in the mass entry to higher education the liberal arts college and its faculty have one great advantage. With its strong tradition of undergraduate teaching such a college has the personnel and approach for the guidance and support which their students from limited backgrounds or inadequate preparation require as they enter a more demanding academic environment. Easy access to an experienced faculty, classes of moderate size, or even individualized instruction are all a regular part of the stock in trade of the small college. And properly taught their liberal arts curriculum should be just as meaningful for such a group of students, despite their very proper and strong vocational preoccupation, as it is for any other student.

Finally, if the independent colleges are to open or just widen their own admissions, they must find a broader basis of support which means in fact greater access to public funds. The present inflation has already stimulated the search, but any sizeable increase in the kind of student I have been describing will require major infusions of new financial aid funds. Fortunately the state scholarship programs are starting to grow at an encouraging rate. Usually these funds assist the student in the private as well as the public institution. All too frequently at present they cannot be taken out of the state, a short-sighted and indefensible kind of parochialism which must eventually be changed. If over two-thirds of our high school graduates are to proceed to some kind of education after grade 12, society must somehow underwrite a considerable part of the expense whatever the institution.

Any discussion of admissions policy in connection with the independent colleges ends up with the larger issue of the future of such colleges. What this paper has been maintaining is essentially the reverse: that any speculation about the future of such colleges must begin with their admissions policies. While maintaining a deceptively simple and uniform set of admissions requirements, in Frank Bowles' phrase, the college and universities of this country have never in fact been equal, either in the range of ability among the students that each institution was admitting or in what was expected of them once they were in. This range and disparity are in fact one of the great strengths of our system, despite a reoccurring egalitarianism. If there is any equality to be found it is in their functions. In varying ways all of our institutions of higher learning are or should perform a socially useful function. In the past this continuous concern has produced flexibility and adaptability, the historic strengths of the American system. Right now another extension of these functions is called for.

It is too easy to accept the simple formula that only the best students can in effect take advantage of the best institutions and thus run the danger of letting our colleges —which we seek to make the best for their particular function — represent a too narrow spectrum of our youth. Sometimes the best students have in fact meant those who could best pay. Recently best has tended to be defined by scores on certain tests. Perhaps we should redefine it as those who can best profit from the best our institutions can offer them, even though there is nothing as simple as a bank balance or a CEEB score to help in their selection.

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FOOTNOTES (Gordon article)

1. Berg, Ivar. "Rich Man's Qualifications for Poor Man's Jobs: Are Employers Demanding Too Much Education for the Jobs They Offer?" **Trans-action,** Vol. 16, (March 1969), p. 45-50.
2. Rowntree, John and Margaret. "Youth as Class: The Politcial Economy of Youth," **Our Generation Magazine,** Summer 1968.
3. Gardner, John. "Agenda for the Colleges and Universities," **Campus 1980: The Shape of the Future in American Higher Education.** (Alvin C. Eurich, ed.). New York: Delacorte Press, 1968. p. 2.