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ABSTRACT

Significant trends which foretell the future for postsecondary education, specifically colleges and universities, are discussed. These trends are based on the college-age population, the proportion of the state budget going to higher education, the establishment of new social priorities, the role of the private colleges, the increasing tendency for those who want vocational skills, the promise of federal aid, the slowdown in enrollments, educational innovation and changing power relationships. The cumulative impact of these and other trends cannot be fully anticipated. The recommended central planning agency would coordinate all efforts in postsecondary education in addition to emphasizing a more cosmic and functional view of education. (MJM)

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REENFORCEMENT TRENDS FOR
STATE PLANNING
AND SYSTEMS

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For those who do not know me, I doubt if I fall in the category of Henrik Ibsen who, according to John Cassner, "revealed the most attractive side of his personality in wishing to temper the keen wind of truth to those who could subsist only on benign illusion."¹ At least I intend to suffer an acute attack of integrity and not temper the truth. But remember as we proceed that the truth is relative to the realities of the individual situation.

We are all aware of the great transitions and upheavals occurring in postsecondary education today. We know of the many dissatisfactions and disaffections with colleges and universities--especially with their apparent inability to respond creatively to the needs of students and to the resolution of society's major problems. Many of us are vaguely aware of the increasing proportion of young people seeking occupational training rather than education for its own sake. Some of us are aware that changes in colleges and universities are demanded at the very time that financial resources available to them are particularly restricted, forcing institutions to reexamine existing programs, to reallocate existing resources, and to reassess their relationships to the society. At the same time we seem to be overlooking some of the

great significant trends which foretell, in part, where we are heading in the world of postsecondary education. In this paper I focus on colleges and universities, partly because the society seems to expect more from them than they can deliver and partly because their faculties and administrators seem to be the least informed about the realities and alternatives confronting them. The role and function of other structural forms for offering advanced training will become clearer as we examine the traditional forms.

What are these social, political, and economic trends which have import for those who plan for postsecondary education?

Once the facts are known, few question the validity of figures relating to the size of the post-high school population. Given our value biases in this nation, we refer to this group as the "college-age" population. We know that the young people who may attend college from now until about 1990 are already living creatures. We also know that the birthrate is now at the lowest point in the nation's history.² We are, according to Census Bureau reports, at a rate for zero population growth. What proportion of young people will actually attend a college or university is less certain and what numbers will attend particular colleges or universities is quite uncertain. However, for all save a few exceptional institutions, the great age of expansion is almost over. The private colleges reached this point several years ago. The public ones in most states now face the same leveling or even decreases. The community colleges

will be the last to stop growing. A survey by the American Council on Education's "Higher Education Panel" (April 7, 1972) states that:

. . . although first-time, full-time freshmen enrollments increased by an estimated 12 percent between 1970 and 1971, nearly 85 percent of this total increase was accounted for by public two-year colleges. Increases at other types of institutions were well below 10 percent, and public four-year colleges showed a slight decrease.

Moreover, the Census Bureau reports that the number of children under five years of age decreased 15 percent from 1960 to 1970.³

Thus, adjusting to slow growth, no growth, or even decreases is and will be the order of the day. We will no longer need to worry about setting maximums on college size or worry about the universities not taking junior college transfers. For example, *The Oakland Tribune* reported that:

. . . the University of California's Academic Assembly, representing faculty members from all nine campuses, was thus on solid and practical ground last week when it voted to lower admission standards for transfer students during a four-year test period.⁴

Competition for students will increase to unprecedented levels with the shortage of students, especially since in most states operating funds are granted public colleges and universities on the basis of the number of FTE students.

Within each category of institution exceptions to the general enrollment trends will occur, but the exceptions will be much rarer than most faculty members or administrators are willing

to believe or to face up to. Factors making a difference are the cost of attending college, the location of the college--urban or rural--and the program offered (i.e., appropriateness to student and societal needs).

The second trend may seem less clear to some of you but I am quite sure that, with the exception of a few states, the proportion of the state budget going to higher education will be no greater in 1980 than in the next year or so--whether we have boom times or bad, or Republicans or Democrats in office. Most states are already at this funding plateau. Others will quickly reach it. If funds increase it will result from a larger state income generally, not from a larger percentage of the state revenue. In the 1960s, enrollment doubled and budgets for higher education tripled, and the GNP going to higher education increased from one to two percent. The proportion of the GNP for higher education could not keep that pace, and currently it is not doing so.

For example, in Connecticut in 1962, higher education institutions received five-and-one-half percent of the state general revenue. By 1967 they received 12 percent. But the proportion has been diminishing since 1967, until in the past year it was ten-and-one-half percent, one-and-one-half percent below its highest proportion in 1967. This decreasing proportion of state revenue occurred at the same time that a new medical school was brought up to a \$16 million budget, new community colleges were developing, and aid to nonpublic institutions was increasing.

Other states are in a similar situation. In the study underway at the Center for Research and Development in Higher Education at Berkeley, from which the above figures were drawn, we found that twice as many states had a reduced proportion of the state budget for higher education as states with an increased proportion. Nationally we have dropped about one-half of one percentage point.

Moreover, the Census Bureau recently reported that the states were spending more dollars than they were gaining in revenue. During 1971, revenue of the states rose by 9.3 percent, but expenditures rose even more--by 16.2 percent--leaving a deficit of \$1.6 billion for all states. It should be noted that normally states have an excess of revenue over expenditures.⁵ And if these factors are not convincing, one has only to think on the possibility that the Serrano decision in California may lead to the full state financing of all community colleges in states where localities now pay a major share of the costs.⁶ Thus, slow growth in state general revenue funding for higher education over the long haul is an optimistic prediction.

The major trend which forces less funding growth for higher education is the establishment of a new set of social priorities in which higher education drops from the top of the "top ten" to a much lower position.⁷ Health care, the common schools, and the environment and recreation, among others, are surfacing as high priority concerns in the legislatures of nearly every state. Unless

some national catastrophe befalls us for which higher education is believed to be the principal salvation, the colleges and universities will not regain their favored position of the 1960s--at least not during the next 20 years. The exceptional states are likely to be those with college-going rates well below the national average and/or states which have an extraordinary economic growth pattern.

The so-called "plight of the private colleges" is indeed very real for most of the denominational institutions, even though the problem of some institutions appears to be one of overexpenditure rather than lack of income.⁸ States are beginning to give financial aid to them. However, state scholarship, grant and loan programs, as well as direct grants to private institutions will all be funded from that same single total amount for higher education in the state budget. The proportion of the state budget for higher education, no matter who or what is included, will remain about the same.

A corollary to this trend is the one which makes private institutions public ones. Some private universities have been taken over fully by the state systems. As financial conditions deteriorate, others will attempt to sacrifice their private status for complete public control and funding. States, however, will be more and more reluctant to accept them fully. But short of this, those private institutions which receive any substantial part of their funds from the state will be increasingly subjected to the master planning, program control, and management constraints of the state to the same extent as

the public institutions. Indeed, as the President of the Sloan Foundation has indicated, by definition, if they accept public funds they become public institutions.

The promise of federal aid in substantial amounts to promote higher education (rather than research) has been advanced for 15 or 20 years. Such money, in anything like the sums desired or anticipated, will probably not materialize--not in time to save all the private colleges nor in an amount sufficient to continue the "add-on" method of conducting public college business. The new social problems also turn federal priorities away from higher education. At the moment, federal institutional aid in large amounts seems a remote possibility. A 1972 Brookings Institution report⁹ prepared by Charles L. Schultze, et al., states:

In past peacetime years, economic growth always has generated a sufficient increase in tax revenues to cover increasing government costs. This is not the case now. . . .

The report also predicts that the national debt will increase from \$15 billion to \$20 billion per year until 1975--even if the country achieves full-employment prosperity. Revenues, the report says, will catch up in 1977 *if no new spending programs are started*. To rely on federal aid is to lean on a weak reed. Savings from ending the war in Vietnam are already discounted according to Schultze, and defense costs will rise \$11 billion in the next four years; inflation is not fully controlled, and other priorities assert themselves.

Almost inevitably over time, because of financial conditions, arises the trend of forcing the student to pay more and more of the total costs of his education. Virtually all private institutions have very high tuitions. In many states some politicians would like to see them even higher in the public ones. The many plans being touted for obtaining from the student payment of all costs are gaining support, especially for costs after the first two years. The plan of the Ohio Governor seems dead there for the moment, but the Governor of Georgia was promoting a similar, more attractive plan at the annual meeting of the Education Commission of the States in Los Angeles, which many legislators and governors attended. The idea of a student in a public institution either paying full cost as he attends or paying back the full cost out of future income will take hold. He may receive from government a voucher for part of these costs, but with the onus on him to pay, greatly stimulated, will be a free-market situation in postsecondary education. The student is already examining his personal costs of direct payments and foregone income and in the future the scrutiny will be even more searching. He will spend his money on the opportunity which promises him the greatest return in education or in training as his interests direct him. The next trend tells us something about how some students are thinking these days.

Perhaps the most important of the major trends largely ignored is the increasing tendency for those who want training in a great variety of skills and in career education to attend the proprietary

and industrial schools rather than the traditional college and university--including the community college. The Educational Policy Research Center at Syracuse reports¹⁰ that the rate of increase in enrollment in these so-called "peripheral" institutions has been greater than in higher institutions and in the future it will be much greater. A recent report indicates enrollment in proprietary schools at the postsecondary level is over one million. Industrial and military schools enroll many more than that. Thus we see a trend for the older student to pay for exactly the type and kind of training which he wants regardless of similar work offered by more traditional colleges and universities.

But why should a student from a modest- or low-income family pay the high tuition costs of a proprietary institution when he can attend a community college for much less? A hypothesis on which a study at our Center is proceeding is that the proprietary school depends on the employment and success of its graduates for its income and long-term survival, while the public community college depends on the political process (which may have no relationship to the effectiveness of the training being offered) for their financial support. This hypothesis is partially supported by preliminary data from Chicago gathered in September 1972 showing that although the proprietary and public postsecondary schools started with about the same number of enrollees in secretarial and data processing programs, the proprietary schools graduated from four to six times

as many as the public colleges. Indeed students seem to be finding that it is cheaper for them to attend a proprietary institution on an intensive basis for a year or less than it is to go to the community college for two years and end up with lesser skills directly applicable to job entry.

The Higher Education Amendments of 1972 recently passed by Congress have provisions which will encourage acceleration of these trends toward the proprietary and private schools. The federal aid programs for students provide that they have the right to receive financial aid even if they attend a proprietary trade or technical school. This is a radical departure from recent federal policy and of course has great implications for state student grant programs--and on the further redistribution of students away from college-type institutions.

The slow-down in enrollments by type of collegiate institution has been up to the present time directly correlated with the amount of emphasis which an institution places on the liberal arts. The shift is toward the new types of institutions--the community college and on toward the proprietary training school and technical institute--in other words, occupational rather than liberal training. This shift began over a dozen years ago and is accelerating. Some of the less relevant colleges, both public and private, will no doubt cease operations, as they have so often in the past, when their missions and programs no longer meet the real needs of the society. For example, from the

1830s to the 1850s college enrollments dropped in spite of a swelling population, the colleges were just not considered relevant. The Latin and Greek classical education of that day seemed less than pertinent to the great westward movement. Reform of institutions slowly changed them to roughly what the liberal arts college stands for today. The 1860s brought a real revolution in traditional university education--but it called for many new institutions, namely the land-grant agricultural and mechanical arts colleges. During the 1890s and early in this century we developed the research university from the German model. Some old institutions reformed and adapted, but many new ones were formed. Today's trend mirrors these historical changes. Students are already reassessing the relevance of some collegiate education, its high costs in lost income and tuition, and also the job market--and many are turning away from the college and the university toward another type of institution.

Moreover, the external degree, the university without walls, the work-study program, the new emphasis on part-time enrollment, the videotape cassette and closed-circuit TV, along with a host of other nontraditional means of offering a college education, will have profound influence on what is and is not done within the walls of the higher institution. For many years we have discussed the merit of in-and-out education and of continuing adult education for millions of people whose education is incomplete or whose avocational or career interests have changed.

One of the great opportunities for the future is to meet the educational needs of the millions of young adults who now engage in pure skill training for job entry. Many young people today are not waiting for an institutional, a state, or a national plan to provide that continuing opportunity. They make it for themselves. The new technologies for delivery of education are being quickly grasped by these young adults as well as older persons. Some members of the current legislative master plan committee in California are planning on the assumption that by 1985 the majority of all collegiate instruction will take place off the campus through external means.¹¹

Increasingly, too, we will consider the college degree less and less as certification for particular competencies. External agencies may do much more certifying than in the past and, in addition to degrees or even without them, the postsecondary institutions may be certifying particular skills or knowledge packages. The degree itself may come to mean little as a person acquires a series of lesser certificates which indicate his specific capability to conduct certain kinds of tasks. This condition will be reenforced by the prediction of the U. S. Department of Labor that only 20 percent of all jobs in the 1970s will require any college training.¹² In the face of this oft-repeated forecast, we find about 50 percent of high school graduates going on to college--some with education as a goal, but many seeking a career opportunity.

Two final trends, relating to collective bargaining by faculty and to tenure, may turn out to be at least as important for higher institutions as any so far mentioned. They can have substantial influence on the autonomy of the institution and on the rational development of postsecondary education.

Today, one can hardly keep track of the changing power relationships among faculty, students, administrators, and board members. Yet the future is likely to make the shares of power and the roles of each group much clearer, primarily as a result of unionism and collective bargaining. Contracts will not only reassure a threatened faculty about possible loss of tenure, but will cover working conditions, teaching loads, advising, independent study, and even the curriculum and hours taught. The trade unions have shown time and again that once bargaining starts, regardless of rules and laws to the contrary, anything and everything is negotiable.¹³ The new power relationships will be contractual. Powers eventually left for the president and his staff could be almost purely ministerial--to carry out contract provisions. The overall trends resulting from unionism will be conserving ones. Faculty will protect themselves, more rigidities will confront both administrators and faculty members, and due process provisions of many kinds will be carefully followed. What will be greatly impaired will be change, flexibility, and adaptability, which all of the trends previously mentioned will demand of a collegiate institution successfully responding to the imperative demands of the 1970s and 1980s.

Similar rigidities and conserving influences will characterize many institutions which have a low average age for their faculties and a high percentage of them on tenure. Tenure caused few if any problems of inflexibility or inadaptability of institutions during the years of expansion. Such will not be the case in the future for many institutions. An institution or a department with a high percentage of its faculty members already tenured could not have responded to the many changes of the past ten years, much less the many changes already on the horizon for the 1970s and 1980s.

Robert Blackburn in a book just published,¹⁴ has shown from an exhaustive analysis of available research studies that faculty members on the average seem to be better teachers, better producers of knowledge, and of more value to their institutions as they gain in academic rank and in age, at least up to the late '50s. He also presents evidence that they are adaptable (innovative) to new changes in courses and programs--as individuals. But the research studies on which he bases these conclusions were not of faculties or of institutions in a steady state of enrollment and of financial resources. Nor did the studies address themselves to the problems encountered in great shifts of students from one discipline to another or to the adaptiveness of faculty members when modern language or history or some other course requirements which they teach are dropped from the compulsory curriculum. With few exceptions, faculty members are educated and trained in a single disciplinary area and, however adaptable to

innovative changes in their own disciplinary offerings, they cannot switch from history or education to the teaching of chemistry or biology. Just such shifts in student demand have already beset higher institutions and the conditions will intensify in the future.

Clearly an institution which finds itself with a tenured faculty exceeding 60 percent is courting trouble and if the tenured number is 70 percent or more, the institution may find that student numbers drop rapidly as its programs fail to respond to new and changing needs.

In the face of these trends, several of which are radical departures from the recent past, how do the institutions of higher education and their faculties respond? For the most part faculties still believe we are in a *temporary* setback and that with a change in political parties at the state or national level things will return to the normal of the 1960s. Most administrators are more aware than faculty of the new reality; but both groups also have strong desires for status and prestige, hence we find the phenomena of the junior college trying to become a four-year college, the four-year college a university, and the university a comprehensive graduate-research center. Almost all institutions try to obtain as many students as possible since size represents a measure of "success." Almost invariably the public institution's projections of enrollment, if aggregated for the state, show future enrollments greater than the total number of college-age youth. I have recently revealed some of the trends mentioned above to the college and university leaders in several states. The

response by state college and emerging-university presidents often has been one of outright antagonism--not because they believe the trends to be invalidly interpreted but because, if public policymakers accept them as reality, the institutional goal to become an advanced graduate center is almost certain to be thwarted. Thus the hard realities would be avoided, the policymaker deluded and, as in Greek times, the bearer of the bad tidings summarily executed.

To summarize this point, the time has come when staffs of colleges and universities must be forced to reevaluate their institutional role and function. They must realize that they can educate only those students for which the institution has unique capabilities--not all the great diversity of students. They must relinquish the idea that what faculties desire for themselves in terms of security, courses, and programs is necessarily most beneficial to both students and society. Not all students want liberal arts and bachelors degrees, nor do they wish to be treated as second-class citizens because they reject the academic and intellectual life.

Amitai Etzioni, Director of the Center for Policy Research at Columbia, recently wrote that:

What is becoming increasingly apparent is that to solve social problems by changing people is more expensive and usually less productive than approaches that accept people as they are and seek to mend not them but the circumstances around them.¹⁵

Our trends indicate that young people are not going to be "mended" by the colleges and universities and, rather than being stitched and laced with liberal arts, are turning to institutions more responsive to matching their programs to student needs.

The fact that enrollments in the liberal arts colleges were the first to level off and that the new student in higher education from low socio-economic backgrounds are career oriented rather than social or humanistically inclined, does not necessarily mean the demise of liberal education. Rather, a fair interpretation of these events should lead to the conclusion that Maslow's view of value priorities is correct. Until certain essential physical needs are met, intellectual pursuits are bound to take second place. For the confident and over-weaned middle class or upper middle class student--the traditional college goers--physical and economic needs are well met. That type of student in large numbers will continue to enroll in traditional or modernized liberal arts programs. Recognition that the number of such college-age youth will not be easily increased for many years should not be read to diminish the role of the liberal arts college--whether a separate private institution or part of a complex public university.

If in-and-out education is the wave of the future, then the liberal arts college (not in the super prestigious group) may be well advised to change its requirements and facilitate the processing of entrances and exits to its courses so that more mature students may

be considered as regular students. The adult level of education, most of which is paid for by the student, is rapidly expanding. Much of this work is career oriented, but a great deal of it is directed toward an understanding of the human condition and of the very confusing world in which the human species is found.

On the other hand the "new" student is more interested in how to improve his personal economic status in relation to that of his parents. He is looking for well being--better food, clothes, and health. Patricia Cross of the Berkeley Center has definitively described this type of student, his aspirations, and needs. The priority of this student is not on aesthetics or humanistics on entering career patterns of education. But this is a student that will later become a more economically secure adult seeking, as do middle class students, psychological reinforcement and aesthetic satisfactions--a very likely candidate for continuing education if entry to opportunity is made easily available and the liberal arts are somewhat modernized. As an aside, modernization does not necessarily mean studying "The Gangster in Ancient Literature." It does mean making the study of the liberal arts a satisfying and exciting experience for people who have little more than a vague wanting or desire to fill an ill-defined vacuum in their lives. The liberal arts will be "successful" only insofar as they challenge and capture--not a captive audience in a compulsory set of program requirements--but the imagination and felt needs of uncertain and tentatively experimenting free human beings.

The trends and conditions I have mentioned also point directly to increasing reliance on greater centralization of planning, with the major chore resting squarely on state-level policy planners. Each public, private, and proprietary institution must be considered as one in a web of many different types of institutions making up the composite mosaic of postsecondary education.

The challenge of planning and coordination in the states encompasses all new postsecondary educational forms, delivery systems, and types of programs while promoting innovation, flexibility, adaptability, and opportunity. These imperatives are now recognized by the federal government which has just enacted a new law which should stimulate better and more comprehensive state planning.

The Higher Education Amendments of 1972 require:

State Postsecondary Education Commissions

Sec. 1202. (a) Any state which desires to receive assistance under section 1203 or title X shall establish a state commission or agency which is broadly and equitably representative of the general public, public and private nonprofit and proprietary institutions of postsecondary education in the State including community colleges (as defined in title X), junior colleges, postsecondary vocational schools, area vocational schools, technical institutes, four-year institutions of higher education and branches thereof.

The implications of this provision for state master planning and the consequences for the several types of educational and training institutions are greater than from any other single act previously passed by the federal government. The requirement is for a central

planning agency which is to have control of the development of the master plan for all postsecondary education in the state. It may delegate to other boards and commissions some of the planning function, but in the end it must approve all state plans forwarded to Washington for funding under the Act. The possibilities for obtaining a single plan with coordinated administration at the state level is greatly enhanced by this legislation.

It is no coincidence that the federal demand for more comprehensive state planning for postsecondary education comes at the same time that federal funds are authorized for use to finance students in the proprietary institutions. Nor is it a coincidence that the Education Commission of the States, which grew out of the National Governors Conference, has just authorized a new task force: *Coordination, Governance, and Structure of Postsecondary Education*. The task force membership represents all of the special interests suggested in the federal legislation calling for the establishment of a comprehensive state planning commission. The committee is headed by Governor Scott of North Carolina, a man of keen instincts and experience in the planning of postsecondary education. The charge to the committee is to study and to provide guidelines and models for more effective planning and coordination of all institutions, schools, institutes, and agencies engaged in education or training at the postsecondary level.

The cumulative impact of the trends previously cited, the new state planning commissions, and the committee of the Education Commission

of the States cannot be fully anticipated. Given the experience of the past decade with the increasingly sophisticated staffs of the state planning and coordinating boards in 27 states, one can expect that the world of education beyond the high school will undergo radical transformation. We can estimate that no major institutionalized segment of postsecondary education will be left out of the planning as in the past (e.g., private colleges and proprietary schools), and new delivery systems and technologies with potential for extending education to the home, the office, and other places as easily as in an educational setting will increasingly become a matter of major attention by planners and coordinators. Fortunately for students of all ages, parochial interests of single segments of education are giving way to a more cosmic view of not only which institutions should be legitimized as educational performers but of the very character of the educational content and the processes necessary for both education and training in the challenging era to which we are now committed.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 In the Introduction to *Four Great Plays by Ibsen*. New York: Bantam, 1959. P. xi.
- 2 U. S. birthrate hits new low. *Oakland Tribune*, June 3, 1972, 3-E.
- 3 U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. *Current population reports, population estimates, and projections*, Series P-25, No. 476, February 1972, p. 5.
- 4 Editorial. *Oakland Tribune*, June 12, 1972.
- 5 *The Star and News*, Washington, D. C., July 17, 1972, A-15.
- 6 Education Commission of the States. *Compact*, April 1972, p. 4.
- 7 Jerome Evens. View from a state capitol. *Change*, September 1971, 3(5), 40 ff.
- 8 Columbia Research Associates. *The cost of college*. As reported in a summary distributed by the USOE, fall 1971, n.d., mimeographed.
- 9 Charles L. Schultze, et al. *Setting national priorities, the 1973 Budget*. Brookings Institution, 1972, p. 15.

10 Stanley Moses. Notes on the learning force. *Notes on the Future of Education*, February 1970, 1(2), Syracuse University, 7.

11 Revealed in personal conversations with the author.

12 A statement recently attributed to Sidney Marland in American Council on Education, Higher education and national affairs, April 14, 1972.

13 Felix Nigro. The implications for public administration. *Public Administration Review*, March/April 1972, 120 ff.

14 Robert Blackburn. *Tenure, aspects of job security on the changing campus*. Atlanta: Southern Regional Education Board, Research Monograph No. 19, September 1972.

15 *Saturday Review*, June 3, 1972, 45-46.