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ABSTRACT

The speaker assesses the social and political forces at work on educational policy and offers suggestions for policy changes in the coming decade. Anyone interested in policy must take into account seven external forces that affect policy--demographic factors, the economic return on education, teacher unionization, test data, teacher morale, accountability, and the decline in the public interest in educational policy. Five areas are highlighted for special policy attention--support of certain noneducational programs, of revisions in present federal-state relations, of increased authority for local site management, of changes in testing and the setting of standards, and of the setting of policies for continuing education and for the maintenance of centers of excellence. (Author/IRT)

EDUCATIONAL POLICY IN THE NEXT DECADE

Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies

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Francis Keppel

Educational policy can be likened to tax policy. Each is apparently inevitable and each is distressing in the home. Each promises more than it seems to deliver. Each is used by those with special interests to forward their personal or public causes, in the one case because of the delivery power of the attendance officer and in the other of the tax collector. It is little wonder that the public schools have been described as the best sucker list in America. Sooner or later most reformers seek to influence what is taught and how.

We do not, however, think of our children as just another name on the sucker list. We know them to be individual, idiosyncratic and requiring special attention. This leads me to a sardonic law: that educational policy always seems best designed for other people's children. If you want examples, consider the positions of many in Boston about the desegregation of southern schools in the south in the 1960's, and in the north in the 1970's. Or consider the middle class liberals in favour of city school reform for minorities. Many send their own children to suburban

public schools, which can also be defined as private schools under public auspices, since they can only be reached by the road of high cost houses and high local tax rates.

Please do not misunderstand me. I am not seeking to blame anyone, including myself, for I too have been inconsistent. The point is that educational policy creates tension within each of us. It tends to be discussed, often simultaneously and confusingly, at two quite different levels -- the level of public policy in which the institutions of schooling and higher education are presumed to play a part, and at the highly personal level of the family. This speech deals only with the policy level.

No wonder that educators have tended to use obscure language, a blend of social science jargon, pedagese, and homiletics, which rather numbs the mind. The brisk and lively interchange of ideological debate is missing. To put it bluntly, presentations on educational policy can get pretty dull and complicated, and you might as well be forewarned this evening.

Education is too pervasive in our public and private lives to be discussed effectively in simple terms, though we have all tried to do so. There are simply too many variables. One reform bumps into another, and those who seek to do good spend much of their time trying to out-maneuver each other. Furthermore, social and individual values have shifted direction over time, leaving educational institutions bobbing in their wake.

The purpose of this lecture is to attempt an assessment of where we are today, and to make some suggestions on what might be done for the future. But please do not expect too much. My approach may reflect that of one member of a workshop at the Aspen Institute this summer:

> "It is easier to take a step in the right direction than to know where you are going."

Let us start in the familiar manner: with a hasty review of developments selected from the past. The place to being, of course, is Massachusetts, where in 1642 the General Court passed a law, designed to foil that Old Deluder Satan, requiring all parents and masters to see to it that their charges were taught reading, the capital laws, the religious catechism and apprenticeship in a trade. If those requirements sound partly familiar today, so be it, though you will note that in later years the founding fathers concluded that Satan could weave his delusions within catechisms, and substituted the First Amendment of the Constitution. After the founding of the nation, public education was seen increasingly as a bulwark of democracy, with Jefferson, Horace Mann and many others seeking to persuade parents and public officials alike that investment in basic education was essential to the public welfare and required public tax support. Jefferson's rather brisker view that another purpose of schooling

was to separate the wheat from the chaff, with the talented to be sent on to higher education, is rather less in fashion today, though still in practice observed throughout the nation under more euphemistic labels.

By the turn of this century, a variety of forces were leading to the conclusion that secondary, not just primary, education was the right of every child and should be provided under public support if necessary. Between 1900 and 1940, the number of secondary school students doubled every decade, though at varying rates in the several states. Today, we seem to have reached a kind of plateau, with 75% completing secondary school, and of these slightly over 50% going on to some kind of post-secondary education. It is surely safe to say that Jefferson would be astonished, and perhaps safe to say that the American society is a little breathless after so steep a climb. Certainly, there are many indications that the nation is slowing up, that we may have entered a high valley, in numbers if not in quality.

Most of this growth was the result of local and individual activities which, when combined, gave the appearance of a formal national government policy -- which it was not. Nor was it, by and large, the result of the application of social or political ideology applied to education. To put it too simply, probably, education was simply considered a good thing, and the more of it,

the better. In fact, the educators increasingly took the position -- even though their funding came largely through the political action of appropriation -- that educational policy should be sharply separated from politics itself. I will return to this topic later: for now, let it be enough to say that this tradition is still widespread in both public and professional circles.

The last few decades, however, have brought some assumptions into question. The national effort to use educational institutions to solve particular problems, such as equal opportunity, race relations or your unemployment, has brought disappointment. The programs, it seems to many in and out of education, simply do not seem to work, or at least are not working well enough fast enough. Education may be a good thing in general, but not as good in the particular. It also seems that family circumstances, communities, peer groups, television, and other non-school forces have more influence on learning than the schools themselves. If you do not believe it, I will swamp you with sociological and educational studies which make the point with almost masochistic glee. Common sense, of course, has long said that the schools cannot do everything well -- or even at all -- but in the sixties some economists, reformers and educators joined to promise too much. New protagonists are entering the

debate, reaching conclusions that are unfamiliar to most educational policy makers. Ivan Illich, for example, has concluded that the best solution to the messy problem of educational policy is to do away with the problem: he calls it de-schooling. If one has few or no schools, the society takes over and there is little need for the policy makers. I find this view attractive after struggling with the messy problem for thirty-five years -- attractive perhaps because of its very irresponsibility. Another observer, the economist Samuel Bowles, comes to a somewhat different conclusion. You may have read a summary of his views on the OP-ED page of the New York Times on July 26, 1976:

> "First, despite the concerted efforts of progressive educators of three generations, and despite the widespread assimilation of their vocabulary in this country, schools by and large remain hostile to the individual's needs for personal development. Second, the history of United States education provides little support for the view that schools have been vehicles for the equalization of economic status or opportunity. Nor are they today. The proliferation of special programs for the equalization of educational opportunity has had

precious little impact on the structure of education, and even less on the structure of income and opportunity in the economy. . .

. . . . It is these overriding objectives of the capitalist class -- not the ideals of liberal reformers -- that have shaped the actuality of United States education.

What is the alternative? The contradictions of educational reform cannot be transcended even by a major restructuring of educational priorities because the schools themselves are not the source of the problem. The basis for an egalitarian and liberating education must be found in an entirely new economic system, one in which equality and the full development of human capacities are fostered rather than thwarted by the way work is organized. Educational reformers will not move beyond their present contradictory position until they wed educational change with economic revolution and embrace the cause of participatory workers' control and democratic socialism."

Mr. Bowles, suitably enough, is a Professor at the University of Massachusetts and seems to have located that Old Deluder Satan in a different guise. The problem, of course,

is the familiar one of definition and of values, topics on which educators are prepared to discourse at length.

But not this evening. My task is to assess the social and political forces at work and to try to tease out some suggestions for policy changes in the coming decade. To do so honestly, I should try to build before you an image of American education as I see it. Can it be compared to an army, rationally organized into subordinate units and driven by strategic objectives? Or should it be thought of as a kind of migratory mass movement, led from inside by a variety of groups under many leaders with many objectives, and impelled by outside forces that change from time to time? Of these two overdrawn contrasts, I prefer the latter as more accurate. It may confuse our visitors from abroad, who have arranged matters differently and often see educational policy as an aspect of political ideology and national governmental control. But despite the views of Ivan Illich or Professor Bowles, I doubt whether the American society in the next decade will think of educational policy as a nationally and centrally managed enterprise, or that it will force the present educational institutions into the mold of a particular political or economic ideology. We are accustomed as parents and members of local communities to have our say, or should I say our many says. And no one apparently, wants to be commander in chief. Armies just do not work that way.

Our national government, of course, has some special interests which form a part of the overall policy thrusts. So do our state and local governments, and above all so do our families and students. Anyone concerned with policy in the coming decade must take all of them into consideration, assess the external forces that influence them, and seek to make a blend.

What are the major issues and forces? Have we reached a point where what I have described as the mass migratory movement will have to settle down or change direction? Let me suggest seven considerations, leading to the conclusion that the next decade will be affected by forces that will require some different policies for education compared to those of the past half century. To relieve your anxieties, let me say that I will not discourse on any one of the seven considerations at any length, but rather use telegraphic language. A sharp eye should be kept on what is missing in this list, as well as what may be a wrong interpretation. This is not a topic in which anyone is an expert on all the issues, least of all an educator, but rather a topic on which the well informed citizen is likely to be wiser than the expert.

. The first consideration is demographic. For the first time in our history, the numbers of pupils in schools are reducing and the numbers in post-secondary education are levelling. One of the major growth sectors in our soc_ :y now faces the

problem of the management of decline. Our methods of governance, of planning and of management are not necessarily well designed to grapple with these new realities. And one of those realities is that the demographers cannot predict future birth rates. In a decade our classrooms may be filling up again.

For decades economists have supported the prevailing orthodoxy that "the more schooling, the better", for both the society and the individual. An Aspen paper by the economist Richard Freeman last year, however, stated:

> "The evidence that the labor market for the educated underwent a major, unprecedented downturn in the 1970's is impressive. By all relevant indicators, the economic status of college graduates deteriorated relative to that of other workers, with the employment situation of the young falling exceptionally sharply."

And he is not optimistic for the competitive situation of the high school graduate. He concludes that education is not as good an investment as the economists claimed in the sixties.

Teachers are increasingly becoming unionized, as are many others in public service occupations. It seems reasonable to suppose that this trend will continue on both the school and the college level, presenting the problem of increased conflict of

roles for millions of educators, and the question of how to use collective bargaining to strengthen institutions in a radically changed setting.

. Comparative data from such tests as the College Entrance Examination Boards and the National Assessment of Educational Progress indicates that students are not doing as well as they did a few years ago, particularly in the upper grades. No one seems to know why, though there are many explanations. There is therefore a natural tendency to shoot the messengers that bring the bad news. The fact is that we test a lot -- but we do not seem to make much use of the results. The colleges do not collect such comparative data, perhaps sensibly for their own sake, but listen to any faculty meeting and you will hear plenty of cries of doom and gloom about the standards in higher education (notes that were surely struck also in Platonic days in the Academy).

. While the parents, according to Gallup polls, have kept their confidence in public schooling in recent years (42% becoming more favorable, 31% less favorable and 27% no change), there is indication that the professional educators are becoming less confident of their own efforts than are the parents, and that the general public is also more critical. Professional

morale is therefore an issue - a serious issue. Teachers need hope to succeed.

. . The federal government in 1972 decided to give first priority in higher education to undergraduate student financial aid for those who need it; encouraging the student to decide to which college, public or private, to take his money. In effect this policy relies on a kind of market economy by encouraging colleges to compete for the customer. At the local school level, there also has been increased attention to what is called accountability to the community, and to more choice for parents. An observer of the scene cannot help but notice that some of the new left and the old right combine in feeling that education would benefit by a dose of market competition. Not far below the surface is the sense that educators are not very different from other "bureaucrats", and need needling.

. . Finally, for the first time in several decades, educational policy is moving off the center ring in public and political interest. Perhaps this is because education is no longer taking an increasing percentage of national expenditures, or perhaps because the high hopes in its ability to contribute to social change have receded. Whatever the reason, John Gardner of Common Cause has asked the position of the two Presidential

nominees on eleven "vital" issues - and the only reference to education comes under the heading of Discrimination and uses but one word related to schooling: busing.

You will have noted a few underlying themes in what I have said so far. The makers of educational policy, wherever they find themselves in the mass migration, are all facing the task of finding the best balance or mix between reliance on formal education and reliance on other social policies; between equity and diversity; between stability of institution and change; between modesty of claim and confidence in the value of educational efforts. Each of these, upon analysis, leads to a consideration of the goals to be sought and the best methods of governance to be used. In American education, these are matters that have long been discuseed, but in the practical realities of growth and development have usually been decided in the specific instance rather than in more general terms. The time has come to concentrate attention on the broader issues, and to suggest some possible ways of dealing with the new forces at work.

Let me try to be more specific on five policies.

I. First, let us ask about the role and position of the educator in relation to what are usually classified as non-educational policies. The workshops at Aspen in 1975 and 1976 concluded that educators, rather than separating themselves from

such policies as they have in the past, should consciously seek to create or join coalitions to press for action. With this in mind, the Education Program asked for an analysis of available data on the impact on education of social policies usually considered to be non-educational which if properly developed, might make it possible for education to do a better job. The report pointed out that a "truly complete model of the elements of society and of the economy that affect and are affected by education would be staggeringly complex, far more intricate than any yet estimated, however poorly, by empirical research." Three were selected that would seem to have particular relevance: "how would policies (a) to improve health and nutritition, (b) to eradicate income poverty, or (c) to improve housing or to promote economic or social integration, affect educational outcomes?"

Let me quote the result of the analysis in its draft language, a result which will probably not surprise you, but is a useful comment nevertheless on both the state of the social sciences and of how we have to make up our minds on social problems:

> "To drain away whatever suspense this paper may hold, it seems clear that social science provides no justification for advocating policies in each of these

three areas because of favorable impacts on education. Only steps to improve health care and childhood nutrition seem to have any clear and significant impact on educational performance, and, within the ranges encountered in the United States, these effects are not likely to be great. Furthermore, research on the educational impact of explicit policies to improve nutrition or health care is completely lacking so that the observed positive relationship between health and education may be a spurious as, for example, radicals claim the relation between education and income is. . . . For this reason, the most important question policymakers must address is not how to extract the "truth" from the research social scientists have provided, but rather how to formulate policy in recognition that analysts have given them almost nothing to go on."

After consideration of other factors, the draft report goes on:

"The chances that the egalitarian objectives of educators (they have many others, of course) can be achieved without changing the status quo in health, housing or income redistribution seem very slim. If

educators care about egalitarian objectives, they must act as if such policies would be efficacious."

The Aspen Workshop on this topic agreed with this conclusion and proposed that the educational community lend its support to consideration of the following programs:

(1) Enactment of children's or family allowances.

(2) Development of parent training and parent information programs.

(3) Support of a national health insurance plan, with special attention to health diagnosis program for all pupils for vision, hearing, chronic diseases, et al., though not using schools to provide health services themselves.

(4) Shifting emphasis in school lunch and related programs to quality and nutritional values, seeking also to solve the problem of wastage.

(5) Shifting the burden of welfare costs from state and local governments to the federal, together with support of a negative income tax of children's allowances.

(6) Creation of a National Commission to explore policies related to housing integration with special references to school attendance.

If the professional community of educators joins coalitions made up of other groups to press toward these objectives, education clearly will take a step away from its traditional stance of separation from politics. On this two comments are appropriate. First, the separation has increasingly become more myth than reality, as an ever higher percentage of the population has become involved in expensive programs of public education, and as we learn more about the effects of society on learners and of the limited influence of schooling. Second, involvement in politically-made decisions does not necessarily mean commitment as a professional group to political parties, but rather to specific political causes. My strong preference is to draw a line between the two. The efforts of some leaders of the National Education Association to lead that group to endorsement of a particular Presidential nominee on the basis of his educational policies and record, for example, seem to me mistaken. Quite aside from the risk of being on the losing side is the larger issue of confusing special interest with the larger public interest. One can take this position, however, and still agree to press for specific policies on non-educational programs that seem to promise well fo educational performance, even if evidence from the social sciences is lacking or inconclusive.

II. Second, let us ask about the adequacy of existing machinery of federal-state relations in the planning and carrying out of educational policy. On this topic, the point of departure can be taken from Federalist Paper No. 46:

> "In the compound republic of America, the power surrendered by the people is first divided between two distinct governments, and then the portion allocted to each subdivided among distinct and separate departments. Hence a double security arises to the rights of the people. The different governments will control eacn other, at the same time that each will be controlled by itself. . . ."

Madison's insights remain shrewd, but times may have changed. The Aspen Workshop found itself dissatisfied with the present state of affairs. It found the existing machinery for national policy review and coordination in education to be inadequate. The several l vels of government do not necessarily understand their respective roles even in a general way, and in practice, they sometimes go in different directions and at different rates. The federal government has not sought to take the lead in either review or coordination at any level of education, and there is little disposition on the part of states or insti-

tutions to encourage it to do so. No existing group, such as the Education Commission of the States is filling the role. The familiar American mistrust of planning in government (if not in business) holds sway.

It is little wonder, therefore, that there is dissatisfaction as to the mechanisms of carrying out programs requiring action by all levels of education and government. Examples of the last point are the operations of the Elementary-Secondary Education Act of 1965, Vocational Education, affirmative action, student financial aid, and programs for the handicapped. In recent years, as a result of increased federal regulatory activity, often required by Acts of Congress, on a variety of issues not directly related to education, adversarial attitudes have heightened between institutions, states and the federal government, particularly on the content and impact of the regulations themselves.

The machinery of Congressional hearings is not serving the purpose of consultation or mediation. Special interest groups in education have increasingly established Washington offices to forward their causes and to defend against efforts to weaken their professional or financial positions. Coalitions of special educational groups in effect have greater impact on federal policy and program administration than do the views of the states themselves.

The challenge is to develop a national mechanism to help to solve these problems without nationalizing the educational system. Some of the problems, of course, are ideological and political, and in the end have to be (and should be) decided by the actions of legislatures and elected officials. No mechanism should be asked to substitute for this process. But a substantial majority of issues are procedural and managerial and can be dealt with by seeking bipartisan concensus.

More specifically, concensus should be sought on the proposition that the federal role for all levels of education should be to identify those area of national need which have not or cannot be carried out by states, local districts, or individual institutions, and to stimulate action to meet those needs. For the coming decade, let me suggest that these needs fall into the categories of:

(a) promoting equity through compensatory aid via the schools, and student aid for post-secondary education. The central focus of federal policy, and its largest expenditures, should be to enhance equal educational opportunity;

(b) supporting specific educational programs that now require federal initiative - for the handicapped, for vocational education, and for the arts and humanities;

(c) financing research and development designed to improve the educational process at all levels;

(d) assuring the national research capability in the arts, social sciences and sciences by supporting research projects, by assuring a steady flow of trained scholars and scientists, and by maintaining the institutional stability of high quality research and teaching centers;

(e) adjusting where possible its programs of family income maintenance, day care, health and nutrition, and community development to improve the non-school situation of learners.

Consensus should be sought that the state role is that of primary responsibility for the setting of educational and curricular policy, and the overseeing of institutions and their programs. In the coming few years, the issues of high priority are:

(f) assuring reforms in school financing to achieve equity;

(g) enhancing the use of other institutions (business, government services, museums, libraries) that can support the formal education programs;

(h) insuring greater responsiveness to consumers;

(i) developing explicit policies toward the private sector in education, with the goal of assuring the maintenance of a strong non-public sector in the interests of diversity and competition;

(j) developing new forms of planning, management and accountability for both schools and post-secondary education. The goal should be decentralization to the greatest possible degree, emphasizing local site management;

(k) developing policies for the support of continuing education, giving priority to providing opportunity for all adults to obtain a basic, high school level of education, to providing assistance to specific target groups, and to facilitating adult participation through providing information, counselling and a "brokerage" function.

To achieve consensus on such topics is obviously a tall order, but it seems necessary if education in the United States is to be adjusted to changing circumstances. A new forum is needed, perhaps through changes in the existing structure and program of the Educational Commission of the States, and new

ways of consideration and planning are required. The task may be difficult, if not very difficult, under our form of government - but an effort has to be made.

III. Third, educational policy must face the question of how best to handle what I described earlier as the management of decline.

Three factors over recent decades have combined to reduce the extent to which local institutions have effectively managed their own affairs. During the era of expansion at all levels of education, increasing centralization of key functions such as building, finance and personnel took place at the school district level and at the state level for post-secondary education. Federal categorical programs and civil rights policies brought with them both regulatory and reporting requirements which reduced local autonomy and ability to coordinate and manage. Collective bargaining tended to result in negotiations covering ever larger numbers of personnel.

Running counter to these trends have been increasing demands for local accountability to the clientele served, dissatisfaction with the human results of an ever-more distant location of management decisions, and the growth of impersonal and large schools, colleges and universities.

With the end of the era of growth, the need for tighter expense control has further restricted local autonomy and created a loss of morale in both teaching and administrative staff, because of the lessening extent to which they can influence their professional lives and the programs for which they are held responsible by the public and their students.

The result is simultaneously trends toward centralization of some aspects of institutional management and trends toward decentralization in others. Confusion in both policy setting and educational direction has been the result.

The era of expansion is over, however, and attention can now be turned to more effective unit management. The individual school or college is the institution with which students, teachers, and parents primarily identify. It, rather than the district or statewide authority, should increasingly be held responsible for performance. Greater autonomy will encourage both greater accountability and more competition. To accomplish the goal of more authority and responsibility at the institutional level will require changes in present policies on governance, budgeting, testing, reporting, collective bargaining, and staff development.

Specific analyses are needed of the changes required in state laws and regulations affecting local unit management of curriculum and financing. Also essential are proposals for

staff development which include how to use the resources of higher education and teacher centers, and proposals for relating the thrust of site management to the counter-thrust of collective bargaining. But the general direction of the proposed policy is clear: bring responsibility to what the Aspen Workshops described as "site management", with the implication that we could now aim for smaller units and greater flexibility.

The issue small units deserves particular attention. We are all familiar with the post war baby boom and the recent decline in birth rate. What we may foget is what might be described as the "echo baby boom", smaller than the previous one, but still significant. This will occur in the mid 1980's, with the peak moving into the schools later in the decade and still later in higher education. What should we plan to do with our buildings and institutions as we start on this roller coaster ride? Close and consolidate, as seems to be tendency in many situations today? Or let them become smaller even at the cost of some economies of scale that come with larger units? The Aspen Workshops urge that the ~~former~~ latter course be followed for two reasons. We think that smaller units can lead to more individuality of institution and individuality of instruction if well managed. And we do not see the advantage of selling off facilities that we may well want to get back in a decade.

The system of governance and accountability that should emerge from the plan envisioned here is responsive to many of the shortcomings of our present system:

(a) It is targeted on the attainment of basic skills. The failure of our present system to produce in this area is the source of distress among parents, and over use in testing.

(b) It combines goal-setting with diversity. The proposed system allows and encourages schools to respond to parental desires for diversity without slipping over into the anarchy of a standardless, "anything goes" system.

(c) It establishes a structure of responsibility. Today's school failures result in a system ~~for~~ WITHOUT RESPONSIBILITY FOR failure except perhaps the student. By setting goals, and lodging responsibility at the local system and school level, the proposed system clearly places responsibility with the principal. As educational [illegible], the principal becomes the agent of "account" in accountability; more constructively, the principal is the active agent through whom community and professional ideas for improvement can be directed.

IV. Fourth, a change in policy is needed in the use of tests in the schools, and in the setting of standards of performance.

As a first step, the frequency of testing should be reduced significantly. As said earlier, we do not use the information we now have. However, it is recognized that there is an important difference in the information provided by infrequent cross-sectional testing of large groups of students and frequent, longitudinal testing linked to a few selected individuals. Both are clearly needed. Specifically:

(a) IQ tests should be phased out of use in the public schools. They are inadequate diagnostic instruments. They are, or appear to be, unreliable measures for those segments of the population -- the poor and minority groups -- for which they are most likely to be used in connection with compensatory programs. And they are widely misused and misunderstood instruments.

(b) A major effort should be made to explore the feasibility of criterion-referenced tests for assessment purposes on how schools are doing and as the basis for reporting to their clientele.

(c) The time has come to establish minimum standards in the basic subjects, especially on the junior and senior high school level. This is not a fashionable topic with many parents, at least as far as their own children are concerned, or with some teachers. But the declining

trend simply requires that schools pay attention to the situation, perhaps particularly in writing. A number of states are now engaged in a variety of efforts for what is often called "minimum competency" testing, often at the sixth and ninth grades and as a prerequisite to high school graduation. These efforts deserve encouragement by public as well as educational officials. At a time of decline of numbers there is energy available for a rise in quality.

V. Fifth, in the field of higher education, the Aspen Workshops took note of the increasing trend toward recruitment of new sources of supply of learners to keep up enrollments in the coming decade. The key question is how to select priorities for public support that best serve the public -- not necessarily the institutional -- interest.

The Workshops' recommendations begin with a caution against general actions that apply across-the-board. Though such actions have often been proposed, they do not permit effective targeting on serious problems and groups with special needs. Therefore, it was recommended that:

(1) New tax incentives for individuals should not be employed either as a mechanism for the support or

encouragement of adult participation in education, or for the further support of higher education. Such provisions would either be extremely complex or else they would benefit the middle income group -- a group which should not receive priority support in the Workshops' judgment at this time.

(2) General federal tax incentives for employer-based education programs should not be encouraged at this time. There is little assurance that such programs would be used for the purposes specified.

In the area of adult education, top priority is recommended for public support for programs leading to completion of the high school diploma or its equivalent, through maintenance and development of evening high school programs (now under serious budgetary and other restraints), through basic education for unemployed and underemployed, and (as earlier noted) to parental education in child rearing practices.

Because of the widespread availability of adult education programs outside of educational institutions, the Aspen group gave high priority to the development of "brokerage" and counseling services for adults on local and state levels. Establishment of new institutions or programs should wait upon

clearly established needs that cannot be met by full use of existing facilities and programs.

With regard to other key issues in higher education, the Aspen group noted that colleges and universities have been hard hit by inflation. Believing that diversity of types of institutions is a desirable national policy, the groups examined existing policy in this regard, and concluded that the general thrust of federal and state scholarship programs to make this opportunity independent of parental income or type of college is desirable and, at least according to recent reports, succeeding.

The needs of research universities, however, present a difficult and unsolved political problem. There is continuing need for funds for basic scholarly research, for international studies, for national research libraries, and for graduate fellowships. The strong federal support for research in the fifties and sixties seemed to strengthen our traditional great universities and to create new centers of excellence. The situation is now eroding. Whether the same number of graduate schools can be maintained is uncertain, but it is clearly in the interest of the country to maintain centers where the highest standards of academic achievement and scholarly research flourish. Many of these institutions can and will speak for themselves, but an explicit statement of federal policy is lacking. No machinery

exists for coordinating government agencies to assure such institutional strength, and recent years suggest that the federal government needs a special way to set policy in this area. One way would be to strengthen the negligible powers of the existing Federal Interagency Committee on Education.

This review of five areas for special policy attention - support of certain non-educational programs, of revisions in present federal-state relations, of increased authority for local site management, of changes in testing and the setting of standards, and of the setting of policies for continuing education and for the maintenance of centers of excellence - these five may seem to you quite long enough a laundry list. But there could, of course be many more, of which the need for youth policy, especially in relation to work, would be at the top of my own list. The reasons for the choice of the five mentioned are that they seem to be issues in which there is substantial public and professional interest and on which there seems a reasonable chance that action might be taken in the next decade.

Let me close as I began. This lecture has dealt with policy and organizational matters and has left out the most interesting and exciting part of education - the way we learn, what we learn, and the excitement of learning. I can only plead that the

situation is such that we would be wise to get our house in order as soon as we can to make sure that such learning takes place.