

87. Lessons For Humanity In Global University

September 21, 1990

After years of looking inward, a growing number of colleges and universities in the United States are placing a high priority on international engagement. Global economic trends, the opening of Eastern Europe, and other imperatives have forced America to recognize anew its place in an interdependent world. And many educators are now asking: What is the role of the international academic community in this new environment?

James Duderstadt, president of the University of Michigan, recently declared that one of the chief goals of his leadership is to "internationalize" all university programs. In this same spirit, Frank Rhodes, president of Cornell University, hopes to make his institution the "global" university of the future, by shifting the focus of many of its experts in agriculture and rural development to examining the problems of urban poverty and pollution.

Historically, American higher education has been inclined to isolate itself, an attitude deeply rooted in the culture. In a recent article in *Educational Record*, David Gardner, president of the University of California, observed that, "the United States has a long history of isolationism and suspicion of foreign influences. For generations," Gardner said, "we were preoccupied with the internal problems of settling a vast continent and creating a nation: our self-sufficiency in natural resources and our enormous internal markets made us uncommonly independent of the rest of the world."

Following the Second World War, this spirit of detachment dramatically declined as the nation's colleges and universities reached out to other countries, establishing collaboration for economic development, research, and student exchanges. But in the aftermath of the war in Vietnam, campuses turned inward once again, convinced that America's international engagements were unproductive, even dangerous perhaps.

Now the pendulum is swinging once again. Today, a growing number of international exchanges are occurring, and out of a worldwide total of approximately one million students who study in other countries, 350,000 are in the United States. The United Kingdom continues to be the largest European source, with 6,800 students studying here in the United States in 1988/89.

The Asian connection is one of our fastest-growing international efforts. Today more than half of the foreign students at US colleges and universities are from Asian countries. Further, a new and novel trend is the move by Japan to establish its own campuses here in the US. Washington International University in Virginia, for example, is a Japanese developed institution that expects to open its doors early in this decade. The focus will be on Asian-American studies, and half the students will come from Japan, the other half from the US.

Recently the Carnegie Foundation formalized a collaborative arrangement with higher education officials in the People's Republic of China. Fact-finding visits to both countries have been completed, and early next year, a delegation from China's State Education Commission will meet with US educators to examine two key issues: diversity of institutions and localization of programs, and the relating of higher education to social and economic needs.

The traditional ties American universities have had with Europe also are expanding. With the lifting of the iron curtain, US colleges and universities are now receiving hundreds of letters from prospective Soviet students, and in the spirit of *glasnost*, 35 American colleges have formed a consortium for East-West Cultural and Academic Exchanges. Graduate contacts are increasing, too. For example, University of

Michigan students are helping state-owned businesses in Poland to make the transition to private ownership.

For more than a decade, the State University of New York has had an exchange program with Moscow State University, a program that has now expanded to pair 14 US and 14 Soviet universities. This effort has led to the first bilateral University Pairing Conference which will be held in Moscow in January 1991. Conferees will consider such questions as: What do academic institutions in the two countries have to offer one another? How can we assure that all young people in both countries have access to quality education? And, what must be done to help them become effective leaders at the local, national, and international levels?

All of this effort adds up to a dramatically expanding international agenda for the nation's higher learning institutions. Still, many feel the efforts are insufficient. Most American colleges and universities have not yet developed serious international alliances and many students in this country remain woefully uninformed about global issues. Further, there is a growing concern that in the face of budget deficits, the federal government will reduce support for educational exchanges such as the Fulbright program, at the very time international doors are widening.

At a recent Helsinki meeting of top university officials from the United States and Eastern Europe, participants concluded that America's commitment to collaboration is meager when compared to the actions of other countries. American Council on Education president Robert Atwell, focusing especially on the challenge of Eastern Europe, concluded: "I fear that the US government has responded too slowly and with too little money."

Clearly, American higher education, as a mandate for the 1990s, must expand its connections to the wider world community - through international education, student and faculty exchanges, and collaborative research. The challenge was clearly defined by the National Commission on Excellence in its 1983 report: "The time is long past when America's destiny was assured simply by an abundance of natural resources and inexhaustible human enthusiasm . . . The world is indeed one global village."

Since then, our world has continued to undergo immense transformations, becoming a more crowded, more interconnected place. If colleges and universities cannot help students to see beyond themselves and better understand the interdependent nature of our world, each new generation will remain ignorant, and its capacity to live confidently and responsibly will be dangerously diminished.

89. Teaching's Renewed Role in Evolution of Learning

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President Michael Sovern, of Columbia University, recently announced that his institution would establish 10 endowed chairs for outstanding teachers. "In America today," Sovern said, "the great teachers are an endangered species." He added, "Great research and great teaching fuel each other . . . we must acknowledge that great universities like ours are at risk of tilting in favor of research at the expense of teaching. And we must not let that happen."

Meanwhile, at the other end of the continent, Stanford University president, Donald Kennedy, has called for more contact between faculty and students. "It is time," Kennedy said, "for us to reaffirm that education - that is, teaching in all its forms - is the primary task" of higher education.

These pronouncements by two of the nation's most distinguished academic leaders reveal a deeply rooted and largely unresolved tension in American higher education. According to the dominant view, to be a scholar is to be a researcher, and the publication of one's work in a respected journal is the primary yardstick by which productivity is now measured. At the same time, the emphasis on undergraduate education, which draws its inspiration from the colonial college, is still powerfully appealing to many academics who are often drawn to the academic life precisely because of teaching and of the satisfaction of meeting with young students.

Older faculty members who were recruited primarily to teach are now being required to change their priorities. A professor at one midwestern university said: ". . . the faculty (now) being hired are radically different in orientation from many of their colleagues. Those who have been very service- or teaching-oriented for years are finding they cannot be promoted or receive merit pay in this new situation."

Given these tensions, many are now asking: What is the balance to be struck between teaching and research? Should some members of the professoriate be thought of primarily as researchers, and others as teachers? And how can these various dimensions of faculty work be more appropriately evaluated and rewarded?

The Carnegie Foundation, in a recently released report, entitled *Scholarship Reconsidered*, suggests that the time has come for America's colleges and universities to "move beyond the tired old "teaching versus research" debate and give the honorable term "scholarship" a broader more capacious meaning, one that brings legitimacy to the full scope of academic work "Surely," the report says, "scholarship means engaging in original research. But the work of the scholar also means stepping back from one's investigation, looking for connections, building bridges between theory and practice, and communicating one's knowledge effectively to students."

Specifically, the new report proposes that the work of the professoriate today be thought of as having four separate, yet overlapping functions. They are: the scholarship of *discovery*; the scholarship of *integration*; the scholarship of *application*; and the scholarship of *teaching*.

The first and most familiar element of this model, the *scholarship of discovery* comes closest to what is meant when academics speak of "research." No tenets in the academy are held in higher regard than the commitment of knowledge for its own sake, to freedom of inquiry and to following, in a disciplined fashion, an investigation wherever it may lead. Research is central to the work of higher learning, which inquires into the meaning of scholarship, and is rooted in the conviction that disciplined, investigative efforts within the academy should be strengthened, not diminished.

The *scholarship of integration* underscores the need for scholars who give meaning to isolated facts, putting them in perspective. "Integration" means making connections across the disciplines, placing the specialties in larger context, illuminating data in a revealing way, often educating non-specialists, too. Calling for a scholarship of integration is not to suggest a return to the "gentleman scholar" of an earlier time. Rather, what is meant is serious, disciplined work that seeks to interpret, draw together, and bring new insight to bear on original research.

The third element, the *application* of knowledge, moves toward engagement as the scholar asks: How can knowledge be responsibly applied to consequential problems? All too frequently, service means not doing scholarship but doing good. To be considered *scholarship*, however, service activities must be tied directly to one's special field of knowledge and relate to, and flow directly out of this professional activity. Such service is serious, demanding work, requiring accountability traditionally associated with research activities.

Finally, the *scholarship of teaching* affirms the fact that the work of the professor is consequential only if it is understood by others. Today, teaching is often viewed as a routine function, tacked on, something almost anyone can do. When defined as *scholarship*, however, teaching both educates and entices future scholars. Great teachers create a common ground of intellectual commitment. They stimulate active, not passive, learning and encourage students to be critical thinkers, with the capacity to go on learning after their college days are over. Indeed, as Aristotle said, "Teaching is the highest form of understanding."

Thus *Scholarship Reconsidered*, sets forth a view of professional work that is, we believe, more appropriate to the changing conditions both on and off the campus. The report strongly affirms the importance of research - called the scholarship of discovery. Without the vigorous pursuit of free and open inquiry, the nation will simply not have the intellectual capacity it needs to resolve social, economic, and ecological problems - both national and global. Nor will the academy itself remain vital if it fails to enlarge its own store of human knowledge.

But to define the work of the professoriate narrowly - chiefly in terms of the research model - is to deny many powerful realities. Therefore, it is the central premise of the Carnegie report that other forms of scholarship - teaching, integration, and application - must be fully acknowledged and placed on a more equal footing with discovery

But whether the definition of scholarship can in fact be broadened depends primarily on having appropriate standards by which the work of each professor might be measured. Indeed, one of the reasons the research role has such legitimacy today is that there are accepted ground rules within the academy by which such activity can be assessed, through peer review. The challenge now is to search for equally credible ways by which the full range of scholarship can be evaluated and appropriately rewarded.

American higher education has never been static. It has continuously shaped its programs in response to the changing social context. And as we look at today's world, with its disturbingly complicated problems, higher learning, we conclude, must, once again, adapt.

It would be foolhardy not to reaffirm the accomplishments of the past. Yet, even the best of American institutions must continuously evolve. And to sustain the vitality of higher education in our time, a new vision of scholarship is required, one dedicated not to the renewal of the academy alone, but ultimately to the renewal of society itself.

90. Star Is Born As Education Hits The Big Time

January 11, 1991

Recently, President George Bush named a new Secretary of Education, Lamar Alexander, a former governor and currently president of the University of Tennessee. The selection was widely applauded here in the United States. And the media attention accompanying the appointment reveals just how much the federal role in education has changed in recent years.

Senator Edward M. Kennedy, chairman of the Senate Committee that will hold confirmation hearings on the appointment, said Alexander "has a distinguished record in education and earned bipartisan respect for his role in stimulating education reform in the states." Robert H. Atwell, president of the American Council on Education, agreed that "Alexander was in every sense an education governor . . . He is articulate to the point of being eloquent. He is going to have a high profile, and I assume he will have good access to the president."

Alexander, now 50, earned his undergraduate degree at Vanderbilt University. After receiving his professional degree at New York University Law School, where he served on the Law Review, Alexander worked in the Congressional relations office of the Nixon White House. He then returned to Tennessee where he was defeated in his first campaign for governor in 1974. He ran again in 1978 and, this time, he won.

As governor, Alexander spearheaded Tennessee's Comprehensive Education Reform Act that established merit pay for teachers. But it was his tenure as chairman of the National Governors Association that put Alexander in the spotlight. In 1986, he released a widely acclaimed report, called *Time for Results*, that proposed a national agenda for educational reform while also focusing attention on individual schools.

Following two terms as governor, Alexander became president of the University of Tennessee system. In that role he established a \$5 million scholars' program to improve the university's academic standing. In addition, he appointed the institution's first black and first female vice presidents, and launched a novel project in which retired technicians, scientists and engineers could begin second careers, as teachers.

President Bush, in introducing his new Secretary, said, "No *governor* in this country is so clearly identified with the movement to improve education." The President's emphasis on Alexander's political role in school reform is especially revealing, since historically the nation's chief education officer (until recently called "Commissioner") was a low visibility assignment. Commissioners were usually chosen on the basis of education credentials, and their mandate was to administer a wide-range of federal programs, with little or no responsibility for shaping a national agenda for the nation's colleges and schools.

More than a decade ago, however, during the Carter administration, education was elevated to Cabinet level status with its own department. Teacher unions aggressively supported this move, convinced that the new department would increase education's clout in Washington. They also insisted that a Cabinet level Secretary would have greater access both to the president and to public forums.

Those opposing the new department argued that, since education in this country is constitutionally assigned to the states, Washington's involvement should continue to be low key. Further, they worried that a Secretary of Education would achieve, not only more visibility for education but more control as well, and that politics, not thoughtful policies, would dominate the system.

At first, President Reagan pledged to abolish the department. But when it became clear that promoting education was politically advantageous, the crusade was abandoned. Still we are left with the essential question: What should be the role of the US Department of Education, and its Secretary?

The past two Secretaries took quite divergent paths. William J. Bennett was highly visible and stirred a national debate, albeit more for critiquing than supporting the nation's academic institutions. The most recent incumbent, Lauro Cavazos, while more friendly to the educational establishment, was, at the same time, criticized for being too low key and not politically savvy.

But what about the future? Most educators are hopeful that the new Secretary will be a vigorous advocate for education and push aggressively for more federal assistance. A few critics, however, fear the governor may have been chosen primarily for ideological reasons, and they wonder just how firmly he will back the President's support of school deregulation and parental choice.

In accepting the appointment, Mr. Alexander focused with special urgency on the economic imperative of education and vigorously proclaimed his support for adult learning. The goal, he said, is to make American workers more competitive. In discussing this objective, the new Secretary recalled that, while governor, he was asked just two questions by workers coming to a new plant in Tennessee: "Where can I get a good education for my children?" and "Where can I go back to school?"

It's still unclear what role President Bush wants his new Education secretary to play. What *is* clear, however, is that, here in America, we've had a dramatic shift in the federal role in education. Creating a new department has surely brought more visibility, if not more resources, to the nation's schools and higher learning institutions. And for the first time in our history, Americans now appear to be more concerned about national outcomes than local school control.

It's in this context, then, that many are now asking: Should the federal government direct more aggressively the *policies* of education and be more actively involved in evaluating the results? How the new Secretary responds to these crucial questions surely will shape the future of education, and the nation, for years to come.