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## Student Unrest

In several panel discussions at the recent annual meeting of the American Council on Education, faculty members, administrators, trustees, representatives of public agencies, and students debated the conference theme: "Whose Goals for American Higher Education?" Most of the students used shock treatment ("objectivity is no good," or "the American student has lost faith in the leadership of our colleges and universities"), and some went little further. Others offered positive suggestions. And a plea for faculty cooperation in meeting student complaints is presented in *Champaign Report*,\* a recently published summary of a 1966 seminar of 11 student leaders, from as many different campuses, some of whom were participants in the ACE meeting.

It is easy to fault *Champaign Report* and some of the student presentations at the ACE meeting on such grounds as inconsistency, incompleteness, and bias. Moreover, the student authors and participants represent a minority of all students. Nevertheless, it is useful to understand what a group of bright, articulate, committed, influential, activist student leaders want: (i) they want freedom—they complain that mature interests are offered juvenile opportunities; (ii) they want to be treated as individuals, not as types—an ideal long supported by older critics of educational practices; (iii) they want to learn how to learn instead of being fed information—another ideal long held by older critics; (iv) they want educational priorities and practices changed to give emphasis to what they currently consider important; and (v) they want part of the power in "all policy-making functions," including admissions, budget, hiring and tenure, degree requirements, building and construction, and others.

Which of their complaints are legitimate and which demands should be met? Analysis is required along three lines.

1) The appropriate roles of students and others in establishing and enforcing rules and policies should be defined more explicitly. Students should no more have the same kinds of responsibilities in every area of decision than faculty members, presidents, or trustees have.

2) Rules and procedures should be examined to determine which are truly relevant to the attainment of educational objectives. The legal decision in the "filthy speech movement" at the University of California offers help in this regard: "state universities should no longer stand *in loco parentis* in relation to their students . . . the university has the power to formulate and enforce rules of student conduct that are appropriate and necessary to the maintenance of order and propriety, . . . where such rules are reasonably necessary to further the university's educational goals."

3) Opportunities for constructive student involvement in activities they consider important should be encouraged. Students can bring energy, idealism, and innovation (as they have in the Peace Corps and VISTA) to work on social and educational programs in city ghettos and with underprivileged groups. One of the student participants in the ACE meeting put it this way: "Thirty Columbia students running a Study Club for second graders is not going to solve New York City's educational problems, but for the people involved, it is as educational an experience as there can be . . . the *involvement* is something that many undergraduates feel is as vital to their education as their classes. It is a time for students to test themselves in ways that are important to *them*, rather than in ways important to their parents and teachers. Any college interested in more than the strictly academic success of its students can support this type of activity without hesitation."—DAEL WOLFLE

\* P. Danish, in *Champaign Report*, E. Schwartz, Ed. (U.S. National Student Association, 2115 S Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20008); 50¢.