

Higher Education: Funds Rise While Basic Changes Are Debated

While House and Senate committees wrestled with fundamental changes in higher education legislation, Congress enacted and the President signed into law a bill providing \$5.1 billion in fiscal 1972 to continue existing education programs. Higher education's share of this total is more than \$1.3 billion, an increase of \$374 million over the sum appropriated for the fiscal year just completed.

The bill contained no dramatic shifts from last year's funding policies. Although education appropriations in the last two fiscal years provoked major struggles between Congress and the President, the new measure is much less controversial. In its final form it passed the Senate by a vote of 74 to 5 and the House by a margin of 376 to 15. President Nixon, who vetoed similar bills for the last two fiscal years, warned that the increases included in the bill "will require offsetting reductions elsewhere in the budget to maintain fiscal stability." He did not specify where such reductions would be made. Nixon did note that early passage and signing of the legislation did give educational institutions more time for planning and said this is "an accomplishment of which both the Congress and the Executive branch can be proud."

The funds bill aroused less controversy this year partly because the combatants are deploying their forces on a new battleground. The Administration's legislative plan "to equalize individual opportunities for higher education" and mounting pressures for institutional aid to colleges and universities now make the shape of higher education programs as controversial as their size.

The shift of attention reverses the trend that began in 1969 when the higher education lobby focused its efforts on securing fuller funding for programs already authorized (*Science*, 23 January 1970). These efforts paid off in the overriding by Congress of President Nixon's veto of the fiscal 1971 education appropriation. Nixon had rejected the bill, which added \$453 million to his budget request, as inflationary. The bill

just passed for the current fiscal year cannot be compared to the President's budget request because the latter assumed enactment of legislation that has not been forthcoming.

The largest difference between the Senate and House versions of the appropriations bill was in the area of grants and work-study payments for students of low-income families. The Senate raised the figure passed by the House from \$528 million to \$709 million. The final compromise of \$578 million was closer to the House figure, but much of these funds are advance appropriations for the 1972-73 academic year. Representative Daniel J. Flood (D-Pa.), chairman of the House appropriations subcommittee which reported the bill, indicated that supplemental funds may be provided for that year when Congress completes action on authorizing legislation.

Meanwhile, the financial squeeze on college budgets has evoked anxious pleas for Congress to hurry to the rescue. There is little doubt that the federal government will soon be helping colleges pay their bills. There is little agreement, however, on the form that the assistance should take.

A basic dispute centers on the relative merits of assistance channeled through grants and loans to students and aid supplied directly to the institution (*Science*, 26 March 1971). Spokesmen for higher education warn that assistance limited to student aid would simply force hard-pressed colleges to

raise their tuitions. On the other hand, those anxious for educational reforms and fiscal responsibility in colleges fear that direct subsidies would tend to expand and entrench established practices.

Another issue arises from the Administration's desire to rely on the commercial market for loans, with federal guarantees and sometimes interest subsidies, and to discontinue direct loans now funded from the federal budget. The popularity of the National Defense Education Act's (NDEA) direct loans, however, makes Congress reluctant to cut them. Indeed, the appropriations bill just passed, far from abolishing this program as the President had proposed, increases its funds by \$50 million to a new total of \$293 million. The Administration had hoped, by eliminating direct loans, to make more funds available for aid to students of low-income families.

Agreement Difficult to Reach

Agreement is also difficult to reach on formulas for distributing student aid. The President's plan would, for example, cut off all aid (except for unsubsidized, guaranteed loans) to a student from a family with two children, only one of whom is in college, when family income reached \$10,000. The purpose of his proposed distribution of aid, Nixon said in his February 22 higher education message to Congress, is "to assure that Federal funds go first, and in the largest amounts, to the neediest students, in order to place them on an equal footing with students from higher-income families." But Representative Edith Green (D-Ore.), chairman of the House Special Subcommittee on Education, voiced the misgivings of many Congressmen when she complained that the Administration's approach would, among other things, disregard the needs of students from middle-income families.

When liberal Congressmen defend

Table 1. Educational opportunity grants and college work-study comparison by academic year.

Item	School year 1970-71 actual	School year 1971-72	School year 1972-73
<i>Educational opportunity grants</i>			
Appropriation (in thousands of dollars)	\$165,033	\$177,700*	\$165,300
Number of grants	290,500	296,800	266,700
Average grant (dollars)	550	580	600
<i>College work-study</i>			
Appropriation (in thousands of dollars)	\$178,876	237,400†	244,600
Number of grants	430,000	545,000	536,000
Average grant (dollars)	500	525	550

* \$167,700,000 is from fiscal year 1971 appropriation. 1971 appropriation.

† \$81,000,000 is from fiscal year 1971 appropriation.

middle-income groups from a Republican President's drive to shift aid to the poor, familiar stereotypes begin to crumble. It is precisely the unfamiliarity of the proposed new programs which prompts Congress to proceed with caution. The explosion of college enrollments during the 1960's, the rising costs of higher education, and intensified pressures from underprivileged groups are major factors demanding new approaches to student aid. At the same time, the fiscal troubles of colleges and universities appear likely to project the federal government into a new role in higher education—subsidizing institu-

tions rather than special-purpose "categorical" programs. Funds to support institutions and funds to assure students of equal college opportunities share a characteristic that inevitably makes many legislators hesitant—there is no clear upper limit on the amounts required. The changes being contemplated are so basic and potentially so costly that a consensus on their precise character will take time to gel.

The Senate Education Subcommittee on 30 June reported a bill which, like the President's plan, would increase funds for students of low-income families but at a cost that may prove more

than the Administration considers feasible. The House Special Education Subcommittee has yet to make up its mind and choose from a variety of contending proposals, and agreement between the two Houses on a new law may well wait until the new year.

While education policy is treading water, education funds are increasing slightly in most categories. Because of carry-overs from earlier appropriations and different periods for which funds are made available, the bill itself does not exactly reflect changes in student aid. But the figures for grants are given by academic year in Table 1.

The bill also provided \$196.6 million for interest subsidies on guaranteed loans, an increase of \$53.4 million over fiscal 1971. This additional sum will make possible an increase of \$160 million in new subsidized loans. In addition to the \$293 million voted for NDEA direct loans, \$40 million in repayments will be available for use.

As expected, no funds were appropriated for new NDEA graduate fellowships (Title IV), although \$26.9 million was appropriated to continue stipends to students already awarded grants. The program is being discontinued largely because of the much publicized "surplus" of Ph.D.'s

Congress continued grants for construction of higher education facilities at the fiscal 1971 level of \$43 million despite the fact that the President opposed and the House voted to drop this item. They would have preferred to finance such construction entirely from loans, but the House compromised with the Senate appropriation of \$78 million.

Funds to strengthen "developing institutions" were increased \$18 million to a total of \$51.9 million. Most of the increase was proposed by the President after the House had already acted on the bill, in response to pressure for assistance to black colleges from the "black caucus" in the House.

Assistance for language training and area studies, which had been cut back to \$8 million last year, was raised to \$15.3 million for fiscal 1972. Funds for undergraduate instructional equipment were increased from \$7 million to \$12.5 million, despite the fact that neither the President's budget nor the original House bill provided any money for this program. Aid to land-grant colleges was retained at last year's \$10-million level, although the President would have abolished the program and the House voted to cut its funds in half.

The increases in funds for higher

McElroy Will Leave NSF

William D. McElroy, the director of the National Science Foundation since 1969, has decided to leave NSF early next year to become the chancellor of the University of California at San Diego. Despite the abruptness of his decision, which comes only 2 years into his 6-year term, McElroy insists that his impending departure does not reflect any disaffection with the Nixon Administration. Instead, he says, it was prompted only by an "unusually attractive" chance to return to academic life "which must be taken."

"As most of my friends know," he explained to *Science*, "when I came into this job I planned to stay only 2 or 3 years." He said he was first approached for the California job only 3 weeks ago. "Frankly, I hadn't expected to leave quite this fast, but this new opportunity came along, and it was just too good to pass up."

McElroy has been on leave from Johns Hopkins University, where he served as chairman of the biology department before his NSF appointment. He will replace William J. McGill, who left the San Diego campus in January 1970 to become president of Columbia University.

Two years ago, McElroy took the helm of NSF—an ostensibly non-political position—after President Nixon had vetoed the top candidate for the job, Franklin A. Long, on the grounds of Long's opposition to antiballistic missile systems and his generally liberal disarmament stance. Nixon sought to rectify that gaffe by withdrawing his veto and offering the job to Long again after the veto had become public knowledge. Long declined, and the President turned to McElroy—a diplomatic choice, in that McElroy was a registered Democrat and had worked actively in behalf of Scientists and Engineers for Johnson and Humphrey in 1964.

The same affiliations were expected to arouse some opposition to McElroy among such University of California regents as Governor Ronald Reagan, but to all appearances the appointment slipped by without controversy. The regents gave McElroy their unanimous approval during a meeting on 17 July at San Francisco, and on the same day President Nixon issued a brief statement from the Western White House accepting McElroy's resignation. The text of the resignation letter has not been released, however.

McElroy told *Science* that he will remain with the foundation until the first of February, and that he will depart with the feeling that "NSF is in pretty good shape from a management standpoint, that its budget is doing well, and that its Congressional relations are good."

He first revealed his intention to leave the NSF only last week, during a meeting of the National Science Board at Woods Hole, Massachusetts. The board is presumably now compiling a list of candidates for his replacement.—R.G.

education will not go far to bail out colleges facing financial crises, but they are perhaps as much as could be expected in a year when the federal government has huge fiscal difficulties of its own. More substantial assistance may be provided later, when Congress completes action on the new proposals being considered.

Action ought to be completed before current authorizing legislation expires next 30 June. Indeed, the laws now on the books were originally scheduled to expire 30 June of this year. But Congress, familiar with its own tardy habits, last year tacked onto the Elementary and Secondary Education Act a provision extending authorization for 1 year to any program otherwise due to expire. This provision was intended to permit future funding for programs even if authorizing legislation was not agreed to in time to permit appropriations a year in advance.

Such temporizing reverses a long familiar pattern of congressional behavior. Usually appropriations are continued at the previous year's level, regardless of changes in new authorizing legislation, as a stopgap measure while Congress drags funding debates far into the fiscal year under consideration. Now, changes in education funding lev-

els are being made while changes in education policies are stalled by disagreements.

When the appropriations for fiscal 1970 were not finally enacted until 5 March 1970, more than 8 months after the fiscal year had begun, Congress decided to separate Office of Education funds from the Health, Education, and Welfare Department's budget. As a result, fiscal 1971 education appropriations cleared Congress 28 July 1970 and were enacted over the President's veto on 18 August, 4½ months before enactment of the HEW appropriation. Even so, educators were held in suspense regarding federal aid until the eve of the academic year. By completing action on 30 June this year, Congress has simplified life somewhat for institutions anxious to plan ahead.

But colleges and universities remain in the dark with regard to fundamental changes in federal aid currently under consideration. Many institutions are now forced by budget stringencies to make difficult choices with long-range consequences. These decisions would be easier if they could predict the outcome of the debate in Congress.

The decisions Congress must make would be easier if there were plenty of money to go around. The resulting

legislation, however, would not necessarily be more sound, because compromises which give something to every cherished program are easier when the economy is booming. Under present conditions, Congress can be relied upon to take a hard look at novel proposals. In the long run, such an approach may pay dividends even though it delays help now urgently sought.

It may also shift some of the power over education policy from the appropriations committees back to the legislative committees. At present, programs are authorized at levels so far above available funds that the appropriations committees have considerable discretion in deciding just where they will apply the ax. In 1968 Congress appropriated 60.5 percent of the money it had authorized for education; in 1969 the ratio fell to 46.3 percent, and then to 37.3 and 36.7 percent in the following years.

Whatever new forms of federal aid are finally enacted, the appropriations process will still, of course, have the last word. As a result, the more colleges and universities gain from the new laws, the more they will have to hold their breath as Congress makes up its mind each year on how big a bone it will throw them.—D. PARK TETER

Pentagon Papers: Repercussions for Rand and Other Think Tanks?

Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird added a footnote to the Pentagon papers on 1 July when he ordered Air Force security officers to take custody of all classified documents at the Rand Corporation. Laird's action was based on charges that Daniel Ellsberg had unauthorized possession of government documents in 1969 while on the staff of Rand at Santa Monica.

The immediate effect of Laird's order on Rand operations seems to have been minimal; Rand researchers continue to work as usual with classified materials. But there is apprehension at Rand and at other government-sponsored research organizations that new security regulations could restrict their access to classified information which

they regard as essential to effective operation in the defense sphere. At the very least, the Ellsberg incident brings to public notice the close and increasingly complicated relationship between the military patrons and the "think tanks" they have created.

Rand, which was set up by the Air Force after World War II, is the prototype of the independent, nonprofit research organization devoted primarily to the analysis of military problems, and it is doubtless the best known of the approximately 70 so-called Federal Contract Research Centers (FCRC's) that serve government agencies, mostly in the defense area. Some FCRC's deal primarily with systems management or hardware development and have larger

budgets and staffs than does Rand, but Rand's identification with influential strategic studies and the luster of names of many Rand alumni have made Rand practically a synonym for think tank. Daniel Ellsberg is an alumnus who brought Rand a kind of publicity it would willingly have foregone, but Rand has figured in the careers of many people who have gone on to important posts in government and universities. Rand probably reached a peak of prominence in the early 1960's when it provided the theoretical basis of the systems-analysis techniques which Robert S. McNamara applied in managing the Pentagon, and Rand then also supplied a number of key civilian Pentagon analysts and managers. But the pattern continues: last week the name of James Schlesinger, a Rand alumnus and now an official in the Office of Management and Budget, was being mooted as a successor to Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Glenn T. Seaborg.

Although work for the Air Force remains the foundation of Rand activi-