Book Reviews

Institutions under Stress

Challenges Past, Challenges Present. An Analysis of American Higher Education since 1930. An Essay for the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education. DAVID D. HENRY. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 1975. xviii, 174 pp. $8.95. Carnegie Council Series.

This book is described as an interpretative essay, historically oriented, designed to make us take a hard, realistic look at the condition of higher education during the past 45 years. Its author is president emeritus of the University of Illinois and an important figure in American higher education. One of the early volumes commissioned by the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education, it carries a foreword from Clark Kerr, the Council's chairman.

In continuance of the policy followed in the works of the Council's predecessor, the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, the emphasis of the book is on the institutional aspects of higher education—finance, administration, structure, and political attitudes—rather than on educational philosophy or curriculum development. For some readers, this will be a disappointment. (The Commission volumes and reports were characterized as a "Six Million Dollar Misunderstanding" precisely because they failed to deal with curriculum and content. See the provocative essay by Donald McDonald in *The Center Magazine*, September/October 1973.)

Henry states three themes around which he builds his essay. The first of these is that "adjustment to the social environment has been a prevailing characteristic of higher education institutions from the beginning." In this respect the institutions are seen as remarkably resilient. The second theme is that "crisis and stress in higher education occur in periods of growth, intellectual ferment, and social excitement, as well as in periods of relative stability or of depression." The third theme is that "the most troublesome times for higher education institutions have been the years of public lack of confidence in their social significance."

Henry sees the threats to higher education as being of two kinds, those that come from crises that threaten all social institutions and the nation itself, such as war or great economic depression, and those that arise from public skepticism about the value of higher education. He proceeds to describe the effects of the great Depression of the 1930's, World War II and the changes that followed, the Cold War period, the aftermath of Sputnik, the federal government's interest in scientific manpower, and our current malaise.

Those readers who respond to nostalgia themes will appreciate the collection of facts and figures Henry has gathered on the period of the great Depression. All readers will gain some perspective for viewing the current scene by reviewing the experiences of higher education institutions during that period of crisis. Reductions of income, benefactions, and student fees were accompanied by retrenchment, salary reductions, and conflict. Henry cites a 1937 report of the American Association of University Professors which puts forward a "lesson" that all should learn—that any future expansion should not exceed what can be supported in a period of depression. Obviously, no one remembered this in the 1960's.

The most serious effect of the Depression on higher education, according to Henry, was psychological. The stress of the period deepened faculty-administration disharmony. Faculty insecurity led to the growth of AAUP chapters and subsequent involvement of faculty in governance through faculty senates, councils, and committees. Henry notes that "the agenda for the retrenchment process today are not greatly different from the approaches in the thirties." He further comments,

> The recent drive for unionization, for faculty membership on governing boards, and for other mechanisms to enlarge faculty influence is reminiscent of faculty concerns in the thirties. The steady trend over the years toward the adoption of such arrangements has been given impetus by the new depression.

The Depression of the 1930's heightened the demand for external coordination, Henry notes. There were demands for lowering costs, for eliminating waste and unnecessary duplication. The calls for economy are all familiar today, as are some of the remedies proposed by state governments. Accountability is hardly a new concept to those who were involved in running our public institutions in the 1930's.

Henry concludes his treatment of the Depression era with this statement, which should provide some perspective for all.

> [Colleges and universities] were harassed from all sides—by state bureaucracies that imposed repressive controls, by demands for cutbacks in expenditures, by attacks on their nature and function from the radicals of the right and left, by student dissent and faculty distress, by scapegoat treatment from demagoguery on platform and in press. There is undoubtedly a resemblance between conditions producing the loss of priority status in the current situation and events in the thirties—but the virulence of criticism in the Depression far surpassed what is now encountered.

Henry's treatment of the period of World War II reveals the great dislocations, the enrollment problems, and, finally, the linking of the colleges and universities with the war effort. The reports of the Commission on Implications of Armed Services Educational Programs are described and analyzed. It becomes evident that the federal government had discovered the importance of colleges and universities in meeting future manpower needs. In 1944 Congress passes Public Law 346, the "G.I. Bill," legislation for which the American Legion is given credit.

The impact of the G.I. Bill and the returning veterans on the higher education system is dealt with briefly, but the ramifications are made clear. American higher education will never be quite the same, and the new, postwar expansion commences. A new mood, new ideas, a psychological lift are aspects of the scene.

The President's Commission on Higher Education, established by President Truman, published its six-volume report *Higher Education for American Democracy* in 1947. Perhaps never again will we see such an expression of optimism about the potential of higher education to uplift our society. The report also boldly asserted that every citizen should be enabled to carry his education to the limits of his native capacities. Controversies engendered by the report are described by Henry, including the expectable bitter assault from Robert M. Hutchins.

Another major commission was created in this period to deal with the economic issues facing higher education. The Commission on Financing Higher

Education, with John Millett as its executive director, made a major contribution to the debate in the early 1950's over the needs and policies of higher education.

It would be difficult to summarize the material Henry includes in this volume. It is distilled greatly in his essay, and his spare and dispassionate style of writing does not lend itself to further condensation. The flavor of his treatment of the Cold War and the period of McCarthyism will irritate some. He is altogether too neutral at times, too dispassionate in his description of events and their effects on higher education and academic freedom. Yet his intent is to show the constantly changing picture of enrollments, finance, political pressures, and resilience of institutions, rather than to deal with the social issues and the substantive nature of the forces that produced the instabilities. His calm treatment is unnerving at times, but it also serves a valid purpose.

We are taken through the "tidal wave" of enrollments, in which the number of students in our colleges and universities tripled in the 15-year period from 1955 to 1970. And we see that the growth that occurred could hardly be described as affluence, in view of how rarely it was possible to expand resources and facilities fast enough to meet the demand.

Henry provides us with a brief and remarkably good summary of changing federal policy during this period. With the G.I. Bill, the establishment of the National Science Foundation, and the National Defense Education Act of 1958 and subsequent legislation, there was a clear recognition that higher education had to become a national concern. Most of us welcomed the new concern. We were not prepared for the recent drastic changes in commitment and funding that now contribute to a "new depression" in higher education.

This "new depression," the loss of public confidence in the importance of supporting higher education, forms the climax of Henry's essay. One need not recite the list of factors that have led us to this situation. Obviously, disenchantment with the "Establishment" is one. Big government is mistrusted and higher education has been linked with big government in too many ways to escape the mistrust. In the 1960's it was the vogue to expect government and universities to solve social problems—to participate directly in social action, to engage in social engineering. Higher education must accept blame for its immodesty in that period. Certainly part of the current disenchantment flows from the false expectations that were encouraged.

That the priority attached to higher education by the public has been lowered is without question. The politics of higher education these days is a crucial subject as a result of this reordering of priorities. Henry summarizes the problem this way:

> Perhaps too much has been expected of faculties and graduates, or at least too much too soon. Perplexing problems remain, in spite of new knowledge and enlarged educational opportunity. Issues of war and peace, economic stability, and changing values create new anxieties. In identifying its programs with current urgencies, perhaps higher education has unwittingly encouraged false expectations. The linkages are real enough—to space science, race relations, urban affairs, ecology, energy, world food supply, better schools, the administration of justice, and others. But the time frame and the nature of the interactions have not always been made clear, nor has the fundamental mission of higher education—teaching, learning, inquiring, and applying knowledge—been meaningfully translated in human terms.

Henry is justifiably proud of the capability of colleges and universities to adapt. But he is not unmindful of the undesirable aspects of such adaptability. He notes that education has responded to the manpower demands of a technical age but that it is quite another question whether the education of the individual has improved or whether personal values have been strengthened. There are still those who cry out against unresponsive institutions, but one might question whether we have been too responsive, and in the process been diverted from our more basic responsibilities and purposes. As Henry points out, "The debate should be on how to best advance purpose rather than change; much confusion arises because we tend to debate change instead of purpose."

This is an intelligent portrayal of higher education during a vital 45 years in American life. It illustrates only too well the influences of the external environment on the health of our colleges and universities. The interdependence of society and higher education is obvious.

Henry is a wise and experienced man, one who could help us to plan for the future and to avoid repeating past mistakes. In this historical essay he does not offer such advice. Yet the essay sheds light on what we are now experiencing in higher education, and gives one much to think about.

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Interferon

Effects of Interferon on Cells, Viruses and the Immune System. Proceedings of a meeting, Oeiras, Portugal, Sept. 1973. A. GERALDES, Ed. Academic Press, New York, 1975. xxiv, 662 pp., illus. $31.75.

This book, the proceedings of an international meeting held at the Gulbenkian Institute of Science, includes 42 papers by investigators from many countries. The 53 active participants included many of the leading authorities in interferon research as well as a number of new authors, who added freshness.

The papers cover the following major topics: Cell Hybrids and Uptake of Interferon; Interferon Induction, Mechanism and Its Regulation; Interferon Action at the Cellular Level; Antagonists; Interactions with the Immune System; Non-antiviral Effects at the Cellular Level; and Mechanism of Action at the Molecular Level. A section headed Miscellaneous includes studies on the antiviral effects of double-stranded RNA and purification of interferon by antibody affinity chromatography. The discussions that followed each paper are included, which gives the reader the opportunity to benefit from the interesting exchanges of the participants.

Other than the fact that it required two years to publish it, I found no major shortcomings in the book. In addition to the expected papers on interferon induction, regulation, action, and genetic control, the book includes seven papers on the interaction of interferon with the immune system and six papers on other non-antiviral effects at the cellular level. In fact, the coverage of these topics occupies more than a fourth of the book and demonstrates a fascinating new orientation in interferon research. The penultimate paper, by Paucher, Berg, and Ogburn on the purification of interferon, is especially important with respect to the interpretation of some of the controversial nonviral properties of interferon. The authors point out that it becomes increasingly important to be sure that one is in fact describing an effect of interferon and not an effect of one of the many contaminants present in most interferon preparations. On the other hand, it should be pointed out that if these other effects are due to "contaminants," their further characterization will become increasingly important because the contaminants also seem to be induced substances that play important roles in cell function.

The book can be highly recommended