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## New Horizons for the University

A new phase is imminent for American research universities, in which staggering problems and issues—faltering domestic economic productivity, social inequities, unstable foreign relations, and a sagging U.S. share in the international marketplace—mandate new applications of serious, creative intellectual enterprise. One should not be overly expectant about this, but the university's horizon is indeed widening and the potential benefits are real. Alliances between universities and other sectors of society are multiplying, encouraged by some government funding and tax policies and by private sector coalitions such as the Business-Higher Education Forum.

At my own university the trend is felt at all levels. Locally, we have helped to form business-municipal coalitions to confront urban fiscal problems; expanded education to foster international trade and exchanges; created regional data bases as tools for economic planning and expansion; moved toward comprehensive collaboration with school systems; and formed a subsidiary Foundation for Applied Science and Technology to accelerate movement of knowledge from laboratory to marketplace through partnerships with industry. Moreover, we have joined with AT&T Information Systems in a project to create a fiber-optic campus of the future, giving us the capacity for quantum growth in versatile and integrated transmission of audio, video, and digital information.

Increasingly, universities enter into arrangements like these with more hopeful expectancy than apprehension. It is true that as the partnerships multiply the university is presented with a set of deeply introspective questions such as how to meet the demands of public service while encouraging pure scholarship and preserving culture. The values of autonomous investigation and unfettered research were traditionally held aloof from relevance, applications, outreach, and demonstrable public benefits. But this stance is now being questioned. Admittedly difficult problems may be encountered in business and government partnerships, such as maintenance of the openness of university research and avoidance of conflict of interest, but these issues should be challenges for constructive resolution. The problems of society are imperatives for action, and the universities of America are an immense public resource. Their leaders have no choice but to preserve freedom of inquiry while playing a stronger role—even becoming a force—in public service and the formation of public policy.

We must work to ensure that the challenges and opportunities presented by universities' burgeoning new relationships will actually broaden and enhance their historic role. Among U.S. institutions, the university has always stood apart for its ability to accommodate greater diversity within a commitment to common principles. In the decades ahead no goal will be more important to this nation. Adversarial relations such as those of labor, business, and government often debilitate our efforts to compete. In the countries of Western Europe and Japan, industrial objectives, national economic planning, tax and export legislation, and labor policy are normally merged into singular national purpose. Cultural homogeneity is often cited as the essential ingredient.

Nevertheless, our own cultural and economic melting pot is a source of vigor, ingenuity, and creativity that can help return the United States to economic vitality and international leadership. American business management has a characteristic style, involving negotiation and compromise, sometimes faltering, that often leads to breakthroughs. But the advantages of diversity are nowhere more impressive than in the American university where men and women come together in an atmosphere of collaboration, constructive competition, synergy, enterprise, and openness. There is great need for the influence of this expansive yet integrated kind of leadership in the United States today. Properly managed, universities' growing partnerships with many sectors should add a dynamic new force in the revitalization of America.—WESLEY W. POSVAR, *Chancellor, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15260*