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## The University President

The typical president of an American university or liberal arts college is a 55-year-old man with an earned doctoral degree and substantial experience as a professor. He has held office for 6 years and has another 5 years to go to equal the tenure of his immediate predecessor. He serves as the institution's principal representative to the public, as its internal educational leader, as an officer burdened with too much routine and trivia, and as the member of the academic community most often called on for a variety of kinds of public service. He is the most overworked man on the campus and occupies the most exposed position. Students, faculty, trustees, alumni, friends, and critics are all plural. But he stands alone. For his services he is paid 82 percent more than the average full professor on the same campus, is given an expense account for official entertainment which he must supplement from his own pocket, and he and his family share with official visitors and a variety of supplicants a goldfish bowl known as the President's House.

This description is drawn from a nationwide study of the compensation and working conditions of the presidents and other administrative officers of American colleges and universities\* conducted by Mark H. Ingraham, who has not been a president himself but who has observed many from the viewpoints of a professor, a dean, and a long-time pillar and one-time president of the American Association of University Professors.

How should the current description be changed? Professor Ingraham makes several financial recommendations. Most presidents are not paid enough, but neither are the top professors; the whole salary scale has become so compressed as to decrease "the emphasis on quality which is greatly needed." Some improvement is needed in retirement funding provisions. And many presidents need better working conditions and more and better assistants, and should be encouraged to get them, for too often they have stinted themselves to use available funds elsewhere on the campus.

Ingraham also makes some recommendations that are not primarily financial. Presidents need to get away from their responsibilities more frequently and for longer periods. Vacation and leave provisions are much less generous for presidents than for faculty members, and are far from fully utilized. In the year reported, 18 percent took no vacation and 52 percent took 3 weeks or less. Leave of absence—the equivalent of a professor's sabbatical or leave for research or professional purposes—averaged only 3 days a year. The president's year does not include the breaks and the changes of pace and activity of the teaching and research faculty. His need is therefore perhaps greater than that of the professor for vacations and for occasional leave for study, travel, and intellectual refreshment.

In an institution in which authority and responsibility are as widely shared as they are in a university or college, each participant is likely to overestimate the advantages and underestimate the difficulties faced by other participants in the enterprise. Better understanding and communication of the facts has therefore been one of Ingraham's objectives. In 1965 he supplied the academic community with the definitive account of faculty benefits, other than salary.† The new volume gives faculty members an opportunity to understand better some of the working conditions, the frustrations, and the compensations of their presidents and other administrative officers.—DAEL WOLFLE

\* M. H. Ingraham, *The Mirror of Brass* (University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1968).

† M. H. Ingraham, *The Outer Fringe* (University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1965).