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More than four decades in higher education as a teacher and an administrator has taught me to take the long view. When I came to the Presidency of the University of Notre Dame in 1952, we were embarking on a period of unprecedented national growth in higher education, accompanied by massive public support. In the late 1960's and early 1970's, my mail read much differently as people reacted against the worst of the days of student unrest -- its incivility and intellectual intolerance -- while overlooking its good side -- concern for peace and justice issues. A great wave of student calm swept over the campuses in the mid 1970's, bringing with it a welcome respite from confrontation, but an unwelcome me-generation preoccupation with the trappings of economic success. Today, we are seeing a disturbing negative shift in public attitudes toward higher education, brought about by such well-publicized issues as lack of integrity in intercollegiate athletics, fast-rising tuition costs, and lackluster educational quality. This period, too, will become a blip on the historical screen of American cultural history, but we can profit by discussing some of our current problems.

To take the most important first, I quote from the report on undergraduate education by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, headed by my good friend, Ernest L. Boyer. The report says, "Driven by careerism and overshadowed by graduate and professional education, many of the nation's colleges and universities are more successful in credentialing than in providing a quality education for their students."

This problem is the result of success. Between 1950 and 1980, we expanded higher education in our land from serving 3 million students to serving 12 million and actually achieved an equality of educational opportunity from which we are now, sadly, dropping back. One cannot expand that rapidly without cutting a corner here and there, and the usefulness of the Carnegie report is to remind us of the difficulty of doing what a democracy has to do -- build a society in which each of us in encouraged to use to the fullest what he or she has of the power to think.

While not trying to exempt the best of the nation's colleges and universities from the report's criticism, I do think the quality issue is inevitably linked to numbers and selectivity. The greater the number of students (and the more variegated their needs) and the lower the criteria for admission, the greater is the quality control problem. We continue to need a variety of educational avenues -- highly selective colleges and universities, large state institutions open to any high school graduate, community colleges, and vocational schools. In any such system, there will be variations -- it is unrealistic to hold junior colleges (where 40 per cent of our post-secondary school students are) to the standards of the Ivy League. At the same time, it is building cruelty upon disadvantage to exploit the ignorant. The most difficult and uniquely American problem is to balance <u>equality</u> of educational opportunity and <u>quality</u> of educational performance.

As for the cost of higher education, if you think it is expensive, try ignorance. The Business-Higher Education Forum, composed of chief executive officers of business and industry and presidents and chancellors of colleges and universities, noted in a recent "Action Agenda for American Competitiveness" that "educated and skilled workers are indispensable to America's efforts to enhance its international competitiveness. People invent the new products and processes, build and operate the machines that produce new goods, sell those goods and finally teach the next generation of inventors, manufacturers, sellers and teachers." Now consider that 20 per cent of adult Americans are functionally illiterate (50 per cent among minorities and disadvantaged), meaning one in five Americans is unable to fill out a job application, read a safety warning sign or a student training manual, let alone make sense of an election ballot. Also remember that by the year 2000, 13 years away, one-third of our entering work force will be minorities.

On the other end of the educational spectrum, in an increasingly global society, colleges and universities are weak in international studies courses -- language, cultural, political, economic. There are 10,000 English-speaking Japanese business executives working in America handling billions of dollars in trade, but very few of the 1,000 businessmen in Japan can speak Japanese. If you're selling, you had better speak the potential buyer's language.

Much has been made of rising tuition costs, and, make no mistake, quality education is, has been, and will be expensive. The bad news, according to a study published in the American Council on Education Newsletter, is that tuitions are rising much more rapidly in the 1980's than the prices for other goods and services. The good news is that, over the long term, the growth in tuition costs is only slightly higher than the increase in consumer prices and disposable income has kept pace with tuition increases. At Notre Dame, our tuition increases are principally tied to a successful effort to get our faculty salaries into the top twentieth percentile (and keep them there), as well as to the costs of books and computer equipment and services. As to the last, there is now on my desk a task force report calling for an upgrading of computer services on campus. It will cost $26.6 million upfront with a $9.7 million additional annual outlay. When I took over the Presidency of the University 35 years ago, the whole annual operating budget was $9.7 million ... and no computers had yet made an appearance on any campus.

I might also note that the theory recently put forth by Secretary of Education, William Bennett, that tuitions have increased primarily because federal aid cushions the blow of higher costs to students runs contrary to the facts. As the previously mentioned report in the ACE Newsletter points out, "First, student aid pays for one-third or less of the total price of college attendance, so federal student aid could only

be counted on to relieve a small part of tuition increases. Second, tuitions have not fluctuated in the pattern that this theory would predict." Let me add that the tendency to think of education as just another commodity out there in the marketplace does not do justice to the fact that it benefits the nation as well as the student. While it is true that college graduates make more money over a lifetime, that also means they are paying more taxes over a lifetime. Also, research universities conduct about 12 per cent of the nation's research and development and fully half of our basic research. Without its educational infrastructure, America is a third- or fourth-rate country. That is why cutting $5.5 billion for education in the fiscal 1988 federal budget is penny-wise but pound-foolish. Education on all levels is our best and most productive national investment.

Before leaving the subject of how education contributes to the commonweal, I should like to say a few kind words about volunteerism, words from a person who has volunteered a lot and learned from the experience. We are a nation of volunteers, doing for ourselves much that the state does in other countries. We build hospitals, schools and churches, put on Special Olympics competitions and United Way campaigns, tutor disadvantaged children and serve meals to the elderly. When you add it up, we annually contribute $116 billion in services and another $80 billion in cash to volunteer causes.

We should make service an integral part of education. It is a contradiction in terms to require volunteer service,

but we can start rewarding it, for example by tying it to experiential learning and giving academic credit. I think we can also create a Peace Corps program on campuses across the nation analagous to the Reserve Officer Training Program. Such students would receive a subsidized education in return for a commitment to serve for a specified term in the Peace Corps following graduation. Instead of Summers spent on ships or at military installations, Peace Corps students would work in the countries where they will eventually be serving, learning the language and culture. This would give us a better-trained Peace Corps volunteer and one with more time in the field. If this worked, perhaps the idea could be used to train and deploy volunteers on a domestic, Vista-type basis.

An anecdote will illustrate why I believe the scandals in intercollegiate athletics are the easiest of our problems to solve. A friend of mine was once a candidate for the presidency of a university where football had become more than a game. Uneasy about this, he asked at the end of an interview session with the institution's trustees where they would stand if he were to cross swords with the football coach. His question was greeted with silence, which he took as his answer as he left the room. This university today is in deep trouble with the National Collegiate Athletic Association. The way to clean up intercollegiate athletics is through leadership at the highest levels and, as this story so painfully illustrates, the will has been lacking. We are seeing

hopeful signs that this is now changing, that presidents are taking stands for integrity and backing NCAA legislation designed to protect and preserve the first part of the compound noun, student-athlete. I predict we shall solve this problem faster than we will the issues of quality versus equality of opportunity and cost versus benefit in American higher education.

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