# THE CARNEGIE COUNCIL ON POLICY STUDIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

A Summary of Reports and Recommendations

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The Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education

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for the Advancement of Teaching

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## **Foreword**

One of the deliberate practices of the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education, and also of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, was to issue reports and analyses on various topics when they were of greatest interest and importance. Its findings and recommendations, therefore, became available over a sustained period of time, and in a sequential way, rather than all at once when the work was completed. One consequence of this strategy has been that it is difficult for anyone with an interest in the work of the Council to review its entire effort without access to all of the individual reports. This summary report is intended to overcome that difficulty.

As the title for the volume makes clear, the emphasis will be on the work of the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education, which began in 1974 and concluded its work in January 1980. During that time, the Council issued 15 policy reports and 38 sponsored research and technical reports. Digests of all of these publications are included in this summary report.

Because the termination of the Carnegie Council also marked the conclusion of a dozen years of independent studies of higher education policy that began with the creation of The Carnegie Commission on Higher Education in 1967, our summary report also contains certain information about the work of both the Commission and the Council. Part One, for example, reviews the objectives, strategies, and achievement of both efforts.

The substantive work of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education is not summarized in this volume, however. Summaries of the Commission's policy reports may be found in A Digest of Reports of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education (McGraw-Hill, 1974), and summaries of sponsored research are available in Sponsored Research of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education (McGraw-Hill, 1975).

In offering the summaries included in this volume, the Council would suggest that two cautions are in order:

- 1. Because the digests offer only highlights of the full works they represent, readers are encouraged to refer to the original documents before attempting detailed analysis of the information and conclusions reported in the summaries.
- 2. Because policies of the Council and the Commission may have changed slightly during the period in which they were active, readers should also review all recommendations and conclusions on any given subject before reporting them as final policy of the Council.

Compilation of the summaries included in this report was an enormous task, accomplished only with the cooperation of the many authors and members of our staff who had either written or contributed to the development of the original work. We wish

to express our appreciation to all of them for their assistance. The major responsibility for summarizing the reports and working with members of the staff in the preparation of the final manuscript was assumed efficiently, with good judgment, and with the benefit of a detailed knowledge of the work of the Commission and Council by Scott Christopher Wren, who devoted virtually full time to the project in the closing year of the Council's work. We also wish to thank Nancy Blumenstock, Marian Gade, Sean Cotter, Verne Stadtman, and Claudia White for their contributions to the editing and final preparation of the manuscript.

CLARK KERR Chairman Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education

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## The Carnegie Policy Series, 1957-1979: Concerns, Approaches, Reconsiderations, Results By Clark Kerr

The comments that follow are my own reflections on the work of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education (1967-1973) and the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education (1974-1979). They do not necessarily reflect the views of any other member of the Commission or the Council, although they do draw upon discussion in both bodies and on comments by their individual members.

#### Concerns

The Carnegie Commission and the Carnegie Council concentrated their attention in six areas: 1

- Social justice. The provision of equal opportunity for talent to be discovered and
  advanced is a central function of higher education. It was of urgent national importance in the middle 1960s at the time of the civil rights revolt. It will continue
  to be an urgent matter for at least the duration of this century as minority youth
  rises to 25 to 30 percent of all youth.
- Provision of high skills and new knowledge. A rough balance in the labor market of supply and demand for high skills is essential to the effective operation of society. The Carnegie policy series was concerned with the overall balance of high skills, but particularly, given the period in which it was developed, with surplus facilities for training Ph.D.'s and a deficit of facilities for preparing health care personnel (with a warning in the later years of a potential oversupply of new medical schools). At all times, there was a conviction of the need for adequate and steady support for basic research.
- Effectiveness, quality, and integrity of academic programs. In this area, attention
  was concentrated on basic skills, broad learning experiences, library resources,
  the role of the performing and creative arts, the place of the new electronic technology, the integration of education with work and service, and the integrity
  of academic life. Concern was directed toward maintaining diversity among pro-

<sup>1</sup> For a series of notes on the history of the Carnegie policy series, see Alan Pifer, "Report of the President," in the Annual Report of The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching for the year ending June 30, 1979, and for the year ending June 30, 1970. Brief reviews also appear in the Annual Reports for the years 1971 through 1978 (New York: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching).

grams and institutions, partly so as to provide a wide variety of academic opportunities as new kinds of students entered higher education.

- Adequacy of governance. The policy reports under this heading were directed to the preservation of the independence of institutions of higher education; to the role of the faculty in governance, including through collective bargaining; to the influence of students and the appropriate channels for its expression; and to the need for effective administrative leadership and the conditions that make it possible.
- Resources available to higher education. Attention was directed both toward the human resources of faculty and students, including their changing numbers, characteristics, attitudes, and interests; and toward the financial resources provided from federal, state, and private sources. A special concern was that resources be distributed in such a fashion as to increase the fairness of competition between public and private institutions of higher education.
- Purposes and the performances of institutions of higher education. This concern was evident throughout most of the reports of both the Commission and the Council. The main purposes, throughout, were identified as: (1) the education of the individual student and the provision of a constructive environment for developmental growth; (2) advancing human capability in society at large through finding and training talent, developing new ideas, and enhancing understanding; (3) educational justice for the postsecondary age group; (4) pure learning-by supporting intellectual and artistic creativity; and (5) evaluation of society for selfrenewal through individual thought and persuasion. The most serious failures of performance during the period of the policy series were found to be (1) the decline of funding for basic research, (2) the inadequate although improving provision of equality of opportunity, and (3) excesses in the methods used by some students and faculty members to criticize the surrounding society. In judging the performance of higher education, we also looked at what happened to individual students as a result of attending college, and at the outcomes or effects of higher education as seen in the attitudes, career choices, lifestyles, and incomes of college graduates.

Attachment A sets forth the policy reports that were devoted, in whole or in large part, to each of these areas of concern. The three areas of greatest concentration were (1) provision of social justice, which reflected both the needs of the times and the intense personal concern of several members of the Commission and later of the Council; (2) financial resources, which involved both the current needs of higher education and the origin of the Commission in an early proposal that the thrust of its effort be directed solely to the subject of financing higher education; and (3) academic programs and content, which constitute the central activity of higher education at all times and in all places.

The earlier reports of the Carnegie series were more heavily directed at reform, which was more possible in a period of growth. The later reports were devoted more toward the maintenance of effort and of contributions, which by then was more in doubt. There was a clear shift in emphasis from new directions in the Golden Age to preservation of long-term values in the Age of Survival.

The sponsored research reports by individual authors have generally concentrated on the same areas of concern as have the policy reports of the Commission and Council, as indicated in Attachment B. There were much fewer such reports under the auspices of the Council, primarily because real resources available to the Council were about one-half those of the Commission.

#### Approaches

The central goal of the Commission and the Council was to be effective in making public policy toward higher education and private policy within higher education, and effective in increasing understanding of higher education. The Commission, in particular, as it started its operation, spent a great deal of time discussing how to be effective, drawing on the experience of other study groups inside and outside of the area of higher education. The challenge was to be effective while (1) not actually being able to make decisions; (2) not being on the inside of policy-making agencies situated to give direct advice and constantly urge implementation of recommendations; and (3) not being governmental in origin, which might at least have implied endorsement by public authority. Some of the early guidelines and some of the experience accumulated over the years are summarized below.

Be independent and have integrity. The Commission and the Council spoke about higher education from an informed and friendly point of view but did not speak for it. Neither ever acted as a business agent. As a consequence, both the Commission and the Council occasionally took positions quite contrary to those of important organized segments of higher education. The first report, Quality and Equality, was a dramatic case. It went against the "united front' of all of higher education-a "united front' forged with greateffort. Both the Commission and the Council on occasion made recommendations that they knew in advance would raise opposition. But they did not publicly identify this opposition as such in advance or seek to mollify it-acting instead as though they were innocent of it. They thus dealt with some otherwise "untouchable" topics. A consequence of this general approach was that the reports of the Commission and the Council gained a credibility outside higher education that was quite substantial. A Southern governor (then Governor of Georgia) at a meeting of the Council of Southern Governors once said, and it gained the assent of the other governors, that "the only voice of higher education that we trust is Carnegie." This was an exaggeration, but the sense of public trust was important.

The attitude of the sponsoring organization is important to the opportunity to be independent. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching at all times and in all ways supported the independence of the Commission and the Council, sometimes in the face of insistent criticism.

Be oriented toward the national welfare first and the welfare of all of higher education second. The reports gained credence, in part, because they were aimed at the advancement of American society through higher education and not the other way around. They also related to the welfare of all institutions of higher education, public and private, two-year and four-year. The effort was to support appropriate roles for each of the segments of higher education and not to advance the cause of one segment against another.

Move ahead of historical events. Neither the Commission nor the Council was inclined just to endorse the status quo. The status quo was not satisfactory and, in any event, was in flux. The conscious effort was to study and to make recommendations about current problems that lacked solutions, and to identify oncoming problems that would need solutions later. The effort was to be somewhat out in front of history but not so far as to be irrelevant to current and approaching concerns. This meant devoting attention to the next few years, but never more than about the next twenty. The most effective reports, generally, were those subject to early action. This mitigated against pie-in-the-sky proposals.

Take time to build a consensus. It was always assumed that reports would be less effective, that the audience or audiences would pay less attention to them, in the absence of internal agreement. The first report, Quality and Equality, was discussed at nine separate meetings ending in the "summit session" in Chapel Hill in November 1968. This was a very controversial report, but no member of the Commission later deserted it, even in the face of intense institutional and personal pressure. Most reports were discussed at a minimum of three sessions, and all members participated in the discussion of every report. A final draft was always circulated for detailed suggestions. No member was ever personally urged to sign a report. This was a matter of individual judgment. Signing a report did not mean full agreement with every recommendation or every phrasing in the text. It meant general agreement, and acknowledgment that all points of view had been heard and considered, and that the position of the group as a whole was a reasonable one. There were no dissents and only one abstention in the course of 36 reports. Consensus, of course, only works when the members of the group have similar general goals and compatible approaches to the discussion of problems, and are not committed to the discipline of an outside organization or to using the group as a basis for personal advancement. It also only works when time is available to build personal relations, to create a common fund of knowledge, and to share and react to individual views.

Pay attention to the comments of all members. To begin with, they were mostly help-ful—every draft was substantially improved by the comments of the members; and, beyond that, attendance at meetings would only hold up if each member felt a sense of effective participation. Attendance over the course of the 33 meetings of the Commission and the 33 meetings of the Council was phenomenal. Absences seldom numbered more than two or three. Having meetings in interesting and varied places was not only helpful in sustaining attendance but made possible contacts with representatives of local universities and colleges and offered opportunities to hear their concerns and points of view.

The heavy emphasis placed on the views of members, however, was difficult for the staff. Draft after draft was dissected, analyzed, and revised. This not only took staff time and effort but added the frustration of having to accept criticism time after time, to give up cherished positions and phrasings, to submit to new or changed policy positions from meeting to meeting, and then, in the end, to see 19 or 15 other people sign the report. This was very hard for some short-term staff members to take.

Base reports on careful research. It was important to have a solid base of fact, and, when possible, to provide new information. Reports educate as well as recommend. The "Carnegie Shelf" of publications was often looked upon as standing behind the policy reports of the Commission and Council. Careful research lends credibility to reports and affects the whole effort. Congresswoman Edith Green, for example, relied on Carnegie data that was specially supplied at her request when arguing for a legislative proposal that was in complete opposition to the position of the Commission. She said she considered the Commission to be the most reliable and useful source of data she could find. There was one major error, however. It was made in the base for calculating the level of tuition paid in comparison with the policy recommended (Higher Education: Who Pays? Who Benefits? Who Should Pay?) and this was later corrected (Tuition: A Supplemental Statement).

Concentrate reports on a specific topic or a related series of topics. The alternative to issuing a series of specific reports was one conglomerate report at the end of our work, which was the standard practice in previous reports on higher education. The topic-bytopic approach not only helped us to target audiences, but also made possible an earlier

and recurring sense of accomplishment by the Commission and Council members and by the staff, the imposition of intermediate deadlines for completion of work and for publication, the facilitation of topic-by-topic followup, the building along the way of a reputation for issuing useful reports, and the opportunity to imprint more messages in total than would have been possible if many of the messages were lost in the complexity of a single report.

Have an audience in mind for each report in advance. This was a corollary of the last guideline, but it also meant trying to target a report mainly on the federal government, on state governments, on individual institutions, or on other selected audiences, such as the Supreme Court of the United States in the case of Selective Admissions in Higher Education. This affected both how the report was written and the followup efforts on its behalf. An illustration of the lack of an audience was the report Continuity and Discontinuity, which dealt with relations between secondary and tertiary education—these are two separate worlds, and there are almost no agencies or individuals seeking to draw them together. The failure of that report to gain much attention helped to make the point (though this was, of course, little consolation) that nobody was there to pay attention, and that a great and costly gap existed between the two worlds. One report, Federal Reorganization, had an audience, but it opposed formation of a separate Department of Education to which the President of the United States was already committed. Preferably, not only should an audience exist, but it should be potentially both able and willing to act.

Make specific recommendations. This was the suggestion of James Conant, former President of Harvard, who had led a prior study of the American high school for the Carnegie Corporation of New York. He advised that it was better to make a specific recommendation with which people could agree or disagree but at least debate, than to put forward essentially meaningless generalizations about principles or directions of movement or need for further study. Both the Commission and the Council followed this advice throughout. It was not easy. It would have been easier, given the 19 members of the Commission and the 15 members of the Council, to have agreed on more generalized recommendations. It took discipline within the group, a sense of responsibility by individual members, a large measure of good will and sometimes a degree of courage among the members, and always extra time and effort to be specific. Recommendations should be precise and operational in nature. There also should not be too many of them. There was no effort to invent distant and indistinct Utopias.

Have a good title or a tersely worded theme. We discovered over time how important a title was or, in lieu of a title, some quotable phrase that carried the theme. Less Time, More Options as a title carried the theme of the report, as did More than Survival; and a widely quoted phrase about general education being a disaster area carried our major theme in Missions of the College Curriculum. Most readers remember little if anything about a report very long after they have first read or leafed through it. It is the title or the summarizing phrase that often constitutes the remembered message. So it is im-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>The series included *The American High School Today: A First Report to Interested Citizens* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959); *The Child, the Parent, and the State* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960); *Recommendations for Education in the Junior High School Years* (Educational Testing Service, 1960); and *Slums and Suburbs* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961).

portant to have in mind what that one most important message might be. Controversy and strong statements helped to draw attention to major themes.

Time the issuance of reports carefully. Several reports were timed to come just in advance of decision-making by branches of the federal government, and gained in effectiveness as a consequence. The report on Higher Education and the Nation's Health is a good example. It was published just as legislation was being proposed that became the Health Manpower Act of 1971. The report Dissent and Disruption, on the other hand, was not as effective as it could have been because it came out after student unrest had suddenly disappeared in 1970 and also because it appeared after the issuance of the Scranton Report, with its similar philosophical approach to operational recommendations (The Report of The President's Commission on Campus Unrest. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1970). William W. Scranton, Chairman of the President's Commission, and Kenneth Keniston, a principal staff member, were both members of the Carnegie Commission. The on-going discussion within the Carnegie Commission served as an advance opportunity to discuss the same subject matter as was contained in the Scranton Report. Faculty Bargaining in Public Higher Education also lacked effectiveness because it came out at a time of little activity on the bargaining front and followed a great flow of literature on the subject. It also contained contradictory views between the two essays it included and the Council's policy recommendations.

Followup. This meant getting press attention, which often was quite extensive, and getting reports into the hands of people who could act. We were careful at all times to act within the confines of federal laws relating to nonprofit foundations. We found out, however, how crucial it was, with the growing importance of legislative aides and their improved competence, to make contact with them. A carefully developed mailing list was essential. Generally we sent all of our reports to heads of institutions of higher education, and then to selected government officials depending on the nature of the report. We came to realize the essential roles in public policy played by some reporters, by some powerful legislators, by some well-situated staff members in the White House and in governors' offices, and by some top leaders of higher education. Followup began with advance consultation with persons engaged in making policy. But there was much less consultation of this kind than would have been desirable if more time and staff had been directed to individual reports, or if there had been fewer reports. Consultation should relate to problems to be encountered rather than to specific recommendations to be advanced, since consultation on the latter can compromise the independence of the recommending body.

#### Reconsiderations

In retrospect, both the Commission and the Council had these tendencies:

- 1. To overestimate the willingness of institutions of higher education and the federal government to entertain and undertake reforms such as:
  - Introduction of the Doctor of Arts degree (Less Time, More Options)
  - Introduction of the three-year degree, although much use has been made of time-variable degrees, as was also recommended (Less Time, More Options)
  - Utilization of facilities on a year-round basis (More Effective Use of Resources)
  - Creation of Learning Pavilions (The Campus and the City and Toward a Learning Society)

- The introduction of an urban-grant program paralleling the earlier landgrant approach (The Campus and the City)
- The establishment of "middle colleges" (Continuity and Discontinuity)
- The integration of the new electronic technology into academic life (The Fourth Revolution)
- The creation of a "two-years-in-the-bank" program to provide opportunities for all youths to draw on reserved funds for education, apprenticeship programs, and other ways of preparing for productive lives
- The preparation of Academic Codes of Conduct by colleges and universities (Reform on Campus and Dissent and Disruption)
- The drastic revision of federal student loan programs and establishment of a National Student Loan Bank (Quality and Equality and Next Steps for the 1980s in Student Financial Aid)

Some of these suggestions may still be followed. The least likely is the three-year degree, which runs up against both the decline in the level of prior preparation by students entering college and the desire of colleges to maintain, not decrease, enrollment levels.

- 2. To have too high expectations, such as expectations for:
  - Future enrollment levels, with too little appreciation of the difficulties of drawing additional students from the lower half of the income range even with greatly expanded student aid programs, and too late an understanding of the degree and duration of the decline in the fertility rate (New Students and New Places and More than Survival)
  - Faculty salary levels, which were expected to keep up with the rising cost of
    living but have failed to do so, as colleges, faced with high inflation and increasing costs of supplies such as fuel, have had to save money by reducing
    real levels of salaries (More Effective Use of Resources)
  - Rising real resources expended per student, as happened in the 1960s but did
    not in the 1970s, to make possible higher-quality programs and to offset the
    lack of productivity increases in higher education (More Effective Use of
    Resources).
- 3. To underestimate certain forces in American society and in higher education:
  - The unwillingness of the middle class to support adequate financial aid for low-income groups without sharing in the subsidies made available
  - The impact of hedonism on the willingness of families to sustain the support level of their children in college
  - The degree of deterioration of the American high school and of the qualifications of students entering college
  - The intensity of the competition between the public and private segments of higher education in some states and at the national level, and even among some public categories of institutions
  - The difficulties of overcoming, at the level of higher education, the prior handicaps of many students due to the circumstances of family, community, social class, and early schooling backgrounds
  - The reluctance of the federal government to step in and correct clear deficiencies in its programs, particularly in the student loan program and in support for basic research
  - The willingness of some institutions of higher education to allow their programs and products to deteriorate in order to survive

• The rapidity with which demands for equality of opportunity would be replaced by demands for equality of results.

At the same time, however, our high expectations have been fulfilled in the good support given by many states to their systems of higher education, in the ability to adjust and the resiliency of most institutions of higher education in the face of new circumstances, in the responsiveness of women and upper-income blacks to the new opportunities opened up to them, in the return to normalcy of higher education after the shocks of the student revolt of 1968-1970 and of the OPEC crisis of rising costs, in the capacity of the labor market to absorb vast new numbers of young persons including college graduates, in the recovery of public opinion in its comparative support of higher education among the totality of American institutions after the decline at the time of the student revolts, and in other areas.

The overall mistakes of judgment were to be too optimistic about the future, too charitable about the attitudes and performances of some groups of individuals, and too convinced that all problems have reasonable and possible solutions. Yet the Commission and the Council both retained their fundamental beliefs in the long-run values of academic life and in the rising needs of society for better training, better research, better service to society. The convictions of their members, if anything, were intensified.

#### Results

Results are inherently difficult to estimate when making recommendations. What happened that otherwise would not have happened, or would have happened but at another time or in another way? What that otherwise might have happened did not happen? And was the impact, if any, good or bad? Some reports had little impact. We found the biggest obstacle to gaining results was the inability to make adequate contact with faculty opinion, and much policy is still made by faculties. Numbers were our problem; generally, the fewer the decision-making units, the more effective the reports. There is one federal government; there are 50 states; there are 3,000 institutions of higher education: there are half a million faculty members.

It is particularly difficult for a group to evaluate the results of its own efforts; this is better done, if done at all, by others. (Attachment C sets forth a few evaluations by others of the value of the Carnegie policy series on higher education.) However, it is possible to suggest some categories that might be examined:

- 1. Public policy results proximate in time and content. For example, the Health Manpower Act of 1971 became law after the report on Higher Education and the Nation's Health was issued, and included support for an increase by about 50 percent in the number of first-year places in medical schools, for Area Health Education Centers, and for other suggestions, much as recommended. The Higher Education Amendments of 1972 were passed after release of our Quality and Equality and included provisions for Basic Educational Opportunity Grants, the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, and other programs, roughly as recommended. Shortly after release of a Council report on youth late in 1979, the Administration recommended to Congress a \$2-billion increase in expenditures on youth, including \$1 billion in funds for secondary schools. These recommendations largely paralleled those in our report (Giving Youth a Better Chance).
- 2. Public policy results dispersed in time and in content. For example, the report on