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The Report of

PRESIDENT THEODORE D. LOCKWOOD

October 1975

Trinity College

Hartford, Connecticut

The future is not what it used to be . . .

The Annual Report has served in recent years as a means by which to share with the Trinity community the College's concern with significant issues in higher education. I shall continue that tradition in this year's Report, for it seems clear that we face a range of concerns that are neither transitory nor simple. In trying to identify those issues for discussion in this Report, I first turned for clues to the extensive literature of higher education.

What initially struck me was a new trend in the use of adjectives: a fascination with adjectives and nouns that are not normally in consort. For example, we now read about "reduced growth," "uncertain future," "enduring non-crises," "steady state," and "higher skilling." Presumably all of these combinations characterize the present condition of higher education. If so, then they reinforce every suspicion that our mood has become less self-confident, less cheerful, and more tentative. Given such an outlook, it is not surprising that the ever-ready commission to study our fate should call for a reexamination of everything that goes on in colleges and universities. That troubles me, for it implies that we have not been studying ourselves of late. The reverse is true: colleges and universities have been scrutinizing themselves conscientiously ever since the late sixties. We have found fewer answers than we would have liked, but it would be misleading to assume from the choice of adjectives that only now has the educational community awakened to the fact that problems lie ahead.

This realization led me to inquire about the mood on campuses. How are we to respond to demographic projections which will not only reduce the growth we have known since World War II but may well reverse it by 1985? How are colleges going to live in the "steady state"? In what spirit will they seek to fulfill their missions in that "uncertain future"? Since yesterday's planning documents may not prove as prescient and durable as their authors had hoped, there may well develop a disposition to regard "making it through" the next few years as the highest reasonable aspiration. There are just too many problems, especially when one looks beyond the campus gates to society at large. And the public may well conclude from newspaper accounts that the issues facing colleges lead presidents to feel that, like crime, they are pervasive and irreducible. I despairingly sense too often that people now assume the worst about the mood on campuses.

Such is not the case at Trinity. I would not begin my Report with this reference were I not convinced that we are dis-interested in just "making it

through"; we wish to instill a new respect for undergraduate learning. The present mood *can* be turned from one of an endurance mentality to an ever clearer commitment to the liberal arts contribution, for **the learning which today's students receive must wear well enough to serve them in the year 2000 when they will be at mid-career.**

This problem of mood is, therefore, more important than a textbook disquisition might suggest. As I have implied, it cannot be separated from the mood of a nation. We as a people have been disconcerted by the events of the past few years. When a nation feels flawed, its institutions, including its colleges and universities, feel flawed. It is not paradoxical then that, at a time our public discourse exposes this decline in confidence, a new hedonism is evident on many campuses. Less than a decade ago undergraduates were stridently condemning colleges as "ivory towers" — privileged sanctuaries isolated from and indifferent to the problems and injustices of the larger society. Reform, relevance, action, commitment: these were the catchwords. Today, a strong countertrend has appeared. Sizable numbers of undergraduates (and some of their parents) view the college years as affording (though that is hardly the right verb for the cost-conscious!) a "last fling" — a period which is justifiably immune to the vexations of society. Parties, "beer blasts" and fraternity soapbox derbies displace demonstrations, protest marches and all-college meetings. Within limits, no one is complaining about these new patterns. But the behavior of some students suggests that college days could once again appear to be a respite before confronting the tough issues "out there." At a Commencement elsewhere in the Tobacco Valley in Massachusetts, I heard a senior remark, with a wonderful touch of irony, that "I am ready to go over the top; I really can't remain in college forever; and I think what's out there is probably preferable to going back home to live with my parents for the next forty years, riding my bicycle and shovelling snow."

Lest these remarks be misunderstood, let me hasten to add two qualifications. First, in no sense has the new Gatsby taken over. Many, many students remain deeply concerned about the issues facing the nation and the world. An encouraging example this past year was the persistent effort of the Trinity Hunger Action Project to rally the campus community against the global food crisis. Second, I am not positing the existence of a golden age in the recent past. The intense student activism of a few years ago was often ill-considered; the relentless demand for action sometimes bordered on anti-intellectualism in its contempt for reflection; and the pressure for institutional involvement in social and political change jeopardized the tradition of disinterested inquiry

and open debate which is essential to the integrity of the liberal arts institution. We should remember, however, that hedonism can be just as intellectually vacuous, just as morally shallow, just as destructive of our academic purposes as the more extreme forms of late-sixties activism. Single-minded devotion to the pleasure principle is no more becoming than obsessive preoccupation with political dogma. On balance, Trinity came through the turbulence of the late sixties in good style because most undergraduates maintained their perspective; reason tempered their anger and their idealism. I expect that today's Trinity students will demonstrate similar maturity and good judgment in coping with the many temptations in their midst.

The crosscurrents are many as we seek to understand the mood of a campus. Certainly most important to that understanding is a frank recognition of our newly acquired litigious disposition. Once again the parallel with other arenas is obvious. We all live in that uncomfortable world in which, in the words of our recently appointed Ambassador to the United Nations, Daniel Moynihan, "the politics of resentment and the economics of envy" could well prevail. That attitude leads to more litigation, heightened contentiousness, and even cynicism. Like a sharp decline in the stock market, the blunting of yesterday's hopes engenders an unsettling sense of disappointment. As John Gardner, for so long a perceptive observer of higher education, has written, "The roller coaster of aspiration and disillusionment is amusing to the extreme conservative, who thought the aspirations were silly in the first place. It gives satisfaction to the left-wing nihilist, who thinks the whole system should be brought down. It is a gold mine for mountebanks willing to promise anything and exploit any emotion. But it is a devastating whipsaw for serious and responsible leaders." (*No Easy Victories*, p.4) Although the atmosphere has moderated since the late sixties, there is no sure sign that we have achieved a new consensus on how we should resolve our problems.

In the academic world the whipsaw has begun to cut. Out of necessity and to satisfy burgeoning regulations, the College has more complex procedures than ever before; designed to protect and to assure fairness, they threaten to stymie the very decisions they are meant to assure. Involvement in legal suits has now become an accepted experience on campuses. Reports of compliance with state and federal law assume ever larger bulk. Regulations become lengthier in the name of clarification. All of this is understandable, particularly in a period of anticipated, if not-yet-experienced, contraction. In certain cases the safeguards which these new procedures create are both proper and humane; in other cases they merely reflect an unwillingness to recognize the limitations

within which we must operate. For example, we shall be unable to grant tenure to every faculty member who in earlier days might have been eligible, no matter how compassionate we may wish to be. Perhaps it will be possible, at least on the Trinity Campus, to move to a voluntary and mutual acceptance of those constraints we now face in the independent liberal arts institution. I hope so, for I am convinced that the mood such understanding brings is preferable to exhaustive procedural wrangling: mutual trust is always a better regulatory vehicle than the regulations themselves.

The more one reflects on the mood of a campus, or the mood of a nation, the easier it becomes to accept prophecies of gloom, now fortified by the trendline statistics so popular in every analysis of higher education's prospects. (What a relief it would be to see lines on a chart going along in harmonious proximity instead of crisscrossing in some ominous pictograph!) I do not wish to cast this essay in so bleak a fashion. At the same time I prefer to forestall any accusation that this review of Trinity's situation has the gloss of the publicist. **Frankly, prophecies of gloom have no greater life-expectancy than the silver-lining theses. What we need is a sober, but not necessarily sombre, assessment that can take us a step farther than the feints and flurries of the last five years. What has happened? Where are we? And what do we do?**

I

Historians of American higher education will have abundant material to analyze twenty-five years hence. It may be informative; certainly it will be repetitive; and most likely it will be misleading. For some time we have known that colleges face a paradox. As we responded to financial constrictions which limit our doing what we might otherwise conclude we should, we recognized the ever-growing pressure for change. We asked whether we had the means and imagination to respond effectively and in a manner that would convey great optimism. Often it took the form of that wonderful self-evident truth: unless a college like Trinity can justify our faith in a liberal arts education, the independent undergraduate institution will not survive as a significant force in our society. We just did not anticipate under what conditions the positive answer might occur.

During the Winter of 1975 *Daedalus* surveyed American higher education in two volumes subtitled, "Toward an Uncertain Future." Uneasiness over the economy and consequent doubts about public support of higher education pervade these studies. At times they read like a treatise on Rome from the

Golden Age of the fifties to the Age of Survival in the seventies. More important, these essays suggest that when hard times hit, colleges are less apt to examine their own purposes than to seek solutions from outside sources. I suspect, for instance, that a favorite fantasy among presidents of independent colleges is the vision of vast quantities of new state or federal aid becoming available to their institutions. While perhaps understandable, this hope is misguided in two respects: (1) more funds, though important, will not *per se* resolve all of the dilemmas confronting higher education; and (2) any realistic reading of the political situation makes it clear that expanded public aid to independent institutions is not in the cards for the forseeable future. For that reason the Consortium on Financing Higher Education* has prepared a thoughtful, long-range revision of the bases on which financial aid is made available. No one expects immediate conversion to this approach, but it can serve as a model for future planning.

An alternative to salvation from without is simply to try to "muddle through" — a practice almost as venerable in American colleges as it is in English government. Yet neither response will do, for each fails to recognize that **the key issue has not been — and is not now — a question of survival. Rather, it is a problem of articulating a realistic justification of what we seek to do. That justification must come from within the academic community, not from without;** and it will require a good deal more systematic thought than is implied by "muddling through."

The unpromising financial future has made that tough-minded assessment difficult. The situation is especially distressing for institutions that seek to maintain qualitative standards. The kind of fiscal compromises that simultaneous inflation and recession spawn tend to blur whatever clarity colleges have achieved with respect to recent statements of purpose. Recognizing but not necessarily surrendering to this pressure, we have wondered if the present job market requires an adjustment in our programs at Trinity toward more "skills" courses. Liberal learning finds itself on the defensive again. For some colleges this shift means motel management will replace Molière in the curriculum; for others it suggests concentrating on the traditional preprofessional

* Founded last year, C.O.F.H.E. has twenty-three members: Amherst College, Brown University, Bryn Mawr College, Columbia University, Cornell University, Dartmouth College, Duke University, Harvard University, Mount Holyoke College, Northwestern University, Princeton University, Radcliffe College, Smith College, Stanford University, Swarthmore College, Trinity College, The University of Chicago, University of Pennsylvania, The University of Rochester, Wellesley College, Wesleyan University, Williams College, and Yale University.

studies at the expense of essentially humanistic studies. I shall return to this topic later. For now, my point is simply that it is difficult to agree upon a mission when contrary pressures are operating and financial constraints are real and unlikely to diminish.

The mood in which we approach this prospect becomes critical. At Trinity we know that neither the cynic nor the mountebank will gain credence, but in any forward-looking evaluation it is easy to overlook how much we have accomplished in the past. We have operated a diverse curriculum and offered the requisite services within a balanced budget. We shall continue to do so. It is from this strength that we consider certain aspects of the College in this Report. As I turn to these matters involving students, faculty, and administration at Trinity, it may be reassuring to quote what the Trinity IVY of 1875 declared as the goal of this institution: "So to train and educate the mental faculties as to put them into the most efficient condition, and to qualify a student to enter with success upon the study of any of the professions, or upon any other pursuit in life." Time reinforces this unapologetic and important commitment, however much the mode of expression has changed.

II

At an undergraduate institution the emphasis must always lie with the students. Although we may not always put their "mental faculties . . . into the most efficient condition," **the academic programs are designed "to give each student the kind of understanding of human experience which will equip him for life in a free society,"** to use our current catalog statement. The success of such a mission depends in no small part on the kind of student who comes to Trinity — his or her expectations and our response.

Once again, changes are occurring so rapidly in the movement of students from secondary school to college that it is difficult to be certain about what is happening. A national survey of enrollments last fall produced this informative headline: "Up, Down, and Hovering." For a long time enrollments in postsecondary education have been rising, though at a decreasing rate. Within the independent sector there has been a slight decline — "hovering" may be the right adjective. But all the projections for the future, until 1990 at least, indicate a decline in numbers. Some colleges cannot now attract as many students as they wish. Others, like Trinity, have received more applications for admission than ever before. How are we to interpret this situation?

My own conclusion is that candidates, their parents, and their advisers are

becoming more discriminating in choosing among institutions. Until at least the 1990's even the most popular institutions, such as Trinity, will have to reckon with the implications of recent declines in the birth rate: fewer young people are apt to enroll in colleges ten or fifteen years from now. Of course, certain variables could alter these projections. For example, a rising economy might encourage a higher percentage of secondary school graduates to apply to colleges. Older persons (casually defined as post-22!) may return to colleges more frequently for individual courses or newly pertinent programs. These could offset the decrease in regular undergraduate enrollments.

What has been Trinity's experience?

Our admissions scene has changed dramatically over the last few years in ways that are contrary to these predictions. Over the past seven years we have moved from a situation in which the number of men seeking admission was static at around 1500 to a total applicant pool this year of 2948, the largest in the history of the College. This figure is two percent greater than last year, when we had a record increase of 20 percent. Of these 2948, 1709 are men and 1239 women. In addition, we receive around 500 transfer applications annually, from whom we select no more than 50. Finally, it may be comforting to read in one of the most recent studies of enrollment patterns, *More Than Survival* prepared by the Carnegie Foundation: "The highly selective liberal arts colleges appear to be in a position to hold their own, because of both external factors and ability to respond." (pp. 75–76)

When acceptances go out in mid-April, a traditionally late date which is slowly disappearing at all but the most selective institutions, a problem appears. During the last two years less than 40 percent of those to whom we offered admission actually enrolled at Trinity. For perspective it is well to realize that Trinity has seldom received positive answers from more than 45 percent of those offered admission. Many Ivy League universities get only a 50 percent return. But this "yield" quickly shows how competitive the search for the highly qualified student has become. A talented high school student has a much wider range of choice than five or ten years ago: he or she may consider five colleges of approximately equal reputation and be accepted by all five. The Consortium on Financing Higher Education is studying these "market conditions," the very term betraying our suspicions that the degree of overlap among these institutions has increased dramatically. That makes prediction on acceptances all the more difficult, especially since a student's decision may turn on intangible, even whimsical, considerations.

Where do they go if they do not come to Trinity? The vast majority of those

who go elsewhere attended another independent college or university and most likely one of the following: Brown, Yale, Princeton, Wesleyan, University of Pennsylvania, Cornell, Dartmouth, Tufts, Williams, Harvard, Oberlin, Duke, or Smith — in that order of likelihood. Fifty percent of those who do not come to Trinity accept the offer of one of those thirteen institutions. In turn, we enroll persons also accepted at these same colleges, in varying degrees of competitive success.

What the future holds is uncertain. Our approach may need modification, especially as our competitors have begun to change their approach. I am happy to report that the faculty has taken an active interest in admissions, and their help can be invaluable. Meanwhile, we are considering new ways to serve older students. The Individualized Degree Program has attracted 300 applicants, age 22 to 62; but only 38 are enrolled. Their progress has been encouraging, and we shall experiment with the IDP for at least another two years. In another experiment, Trinity and the Hartford Graduate Center (formerly the RPI Graduate Center) applied for and received a rare federal grant to determine both degree and non-degree educational needs among Hartford residents. These programs may provide important buffers against future shifts in enrollment, particularly as the number of graduate students at Trinity has been declining over recent years. Since the success of our master's degree program will influence our future staffing, we are exploring, along with other institutions in Hartford, the possibility of a combined graduate center to which each institution would contribute programs and personnel. In short, despite a very favorable situation at Trinity, we feel obliged to study carefully the national scene to determine its applicability to Trinity.

Meanwhile, we can observe that the Class of 1979 will certainly be as talented as its predecessors. About one-third of the new freshmen will rank in the upper tenth of their graduating classes. We continue to have slightly more students from public high schools than from private secondary schools (54/46 percent); and the geographical distribution is narrower than it used to be when transportation costs may not have loomed as large as they now do. **As for College Board scores, we find the SATs holding steady at the 1200 level. In sum: Trinity enrolls an able, diverse student body.**

There are two aspects of student life that I should like to discuss: their academic choices and their approach to the job market.

Last summer we did an analysis of the graduating classes of 1967, 1973, and 1974 to see what, if any, changes had occurred in the pattern of student choices, particularly with respect to the amount of concentration and/or

venturesomeness under the new, open curriculum introduced in 1969.

The first analysis compared undergraduate majors by fields. Between 1967 and 1974 there was a decline in the percentage of those majoring in the humanities, mathematics, and the natural sciences; the arts and social sciences rose; but from preliminary studies this summer (including the Class of 1975) it appears that the humanities still remain the most popular area in which to concentrate. However, there may be some trends developing which will alter that configuration. For example, among the members of the Class of 1977 who have declared their majors, only 31 percent list the humanities. It is no surprise that the social sciences, and economics in particular, account in large part for this shift. If the Class of 1977 (this year's juniors) persist with their choices, over 40 percent will seek degrees in the social sciences. In mathematics and natural sciences an oscillation has occurred that relates quite clearly to national trends. During the early sixties at least a quarter of the student body majored in this area; during the early seventies the figure was cut in half; now these disciplines are regaining their former popularity. For instance, incoming freshmen have made over 200 course selections in mathematics.

No doubt the job market, coeducation, and the new curriculum have all played a part in the most obvious shifts. In 1968 only three percent of the student body majored in the arts, and the program was limited. In 1975, eight percent selected the arts. The women have tended to choose the arts in a proportionately greater number than the men; but it is also interesting to note that, as mathematics and the natural sciences attract more majors, the arts experience a slight decline. **Once again, it is clear that many students, aware of the limited job opportunities, are choosing majors which presumably will best prepare them for careers in law, medicine, and business.**

As we reviewed the changes in the choice of majors, we also analyzed in what areas each major took courses not counting toward his or her concentration. The Class of 1967 had requirements in each of the four areas; the more recent graduating classes have had a wider range of courses to choose from and no requirements outside of the major, although advisers generally urge students to seek some breadth in their selections. What we discovered was that humanities, social sciences, and arts majors noticeably decreased the number of courses they took in mathematics and natural sciences and preferred more courses in the arts. Those working in math and science did not register as broad a shift and merely reduced the number of selections within the humanities. In all fields there was a much heavier concentration of courses within the major's own area. There is little doubt that the absence of distribution

requirements after 1968 led to greater concentration within the general area of the major — a shift of 15 percent more intense preparation in the field. These results contradict the claims that an open curriculum would encourage a more experimental attitude and, in combination with the ability to take one course each semester pass/fail, would lead to the same kind of breadth as the Basic Requirements established in 1961 sought. There is also a touch of irony since many students assert that they choose the liberal arts college because they do not wish to follow a narrowly preprofessional course of study.

The Educational Policy Committee has become sufficiently concerned that it is reviewing ways in which to lend substance to the Non-Major Guidelines. A part of the 1969 curricular revision, these guideline areas were to include specific courses which, in their concern, would reach beyond a departmental purpose to broader problems; for example, "Man's Interaction with the Natural World." Advising apparently does not persuade many students to be that venturesome. Yet, the faculty feels an obligation to introduce students to a variety of academic fields. For this reason the Committee has decided to see in what manner the College may give this version of general education the vitality it deserves. Yet, even here we should be cautious. From other studies we learn that many students take advantage of one or more of the options available for overseas study, independent work, internships, attendance at other institutions, and even time off. These may so well complement the normal classroom experiences that the diversity they experience is considerably greater than was true ten years ago. Once again, it is appropriate that we find out more about the progress of students through Trinity to determine whether there are curricular improvements we ought now to introduce.

As already intimated, one of the factors influencing the choice of major and the selection of electives is the job market. An arts major decides to take a course in accounting "just in case." A psychology major studies some computer science on the side as a safety play. Few think of pursuing a doctorate in one of the traditional academic disciplines: there are too few openings on the secondary level and virtually none at the university level. Medicine, law and business have obviously held the greatest attraction, but admission to a professional school is a tedious, frustrating, and terribly competitive process. This year ACTION interviewed 15 seniors; the March of Dimes National Foundation talked to nine; these are variations from the normal search for a position with a company.

Because the prospects have changed so in the last two years — "bottomed out" being the favorite phrase — we have sought to meet with freshmen indi-

vidually, to review their interests and to acquaint them with what seem to be the most promising opportunities as well as the competitive outlook in the traditional professions. For instance, the Office of Career Counseling found that the best single area of employment is for women mathematics and engineering majors. Projections about future manpower needs abound, but past experience suggests caution in making plans based on them.

What is most distressing is that these developments engender a feeling that there is an over-supply of college graduates. Dyspeptic headlines (e.g. "Job Outlook: Awful," *Time*, June 9) cast further doubts. To the young person such a notion throws into question at least one of the purposes of undergraduate study. **When seniors become temporarily discouraged by the high unemployment rate and the specialized nature of the job market, the mood on a campus can be affected.** Not to mention the aspirations of parents. In practice many graduates will be obliged initially to accept jobs beneath their level of ability and degree of preparation. **The prospect of underemployment will corrode some students' faith in higher education, unless we convincingly show that the liberal arts are about how to live, not just how to make a living.**

Despite Trinity's excellent record in placing students in professional fields, no statistics can offset the disappointment of those not admitted to professional school or those unable to locate an appropriate job. We shall have to learn to live with these conditions while seeking to find more effective ways to acquaint students with changing career prospects and to offer alternative styles of preparation through the many options now open to Trinity students like Venture, an off-campus job-related program in which Trinity participates. Fortunately, students have not lost the ability to combine idealism with a heavy dose of pragmatism.

It has become all too easy, in a nation not at all sure that it can meet the challenges of the times, to question the ability of society to absorb all these college graduates. For some that means transforming the colleges into vocational training centers — not unlike, perhaps, the service academies. For others a reduction in the number of institutions seems a logical outcome. Persistently the comments suggest there is some kind of massive maladjustment which serves society poorly and students haphazardly. No wonder so many propose that a polytechnic country like America needs "post-secondary skilling." But that is something quite different from education, and I share the conclusion expressed by Steven Muller, President of Johns Hopkins, that it is time we made clear that undergraduate education goes far beyond the acquisition of skills. ("Higher Education or Higher Skilling?" *Daedalus*, Winter 1975, vol 1,

pp. 151–152). There is obviously a place for vocational training, but not in the liberal arts college.

This reminder is important as we think about the purposes of liberal learning, for the spirit which pervades a campus may be as important as any roster of courses. **Students, especially the talented individuals who attend Trinity, must encounter a mood appropriate to the transmission and creation of knowledge, the formulation of informed judgments, and a sensitivity to values.** Our students have the requisite ability to make significant contributions to both the intellectual and professional life of this country. Meanwhile, as I have suggested, the College must continually review its curriculum to make sure that its programs raise the significant issues, cultivate the appropriate analytical abilities, and help the individual to understand the human condition.

III

When we discuss the quality and experience of students at Trinity, there are certain benchmarks to which we may turn. It is quite a different matter when we speak of faculty. As alumni we retain that vivid remembrance of the truly outstanding teacher. We recreate those wonderful classroom situations in which a spark passed from a professor to a student; we recall that especially pertinent written remark; we remember that informal conversation in front of Seabury which transformed our undergraduate experience. Those recollections define quality for most of us. But how do we determine the success, or limitations, of a faculty as a whole? To those of a consumer mentality, the question quickly becomes one of return for the many dollars spent to send offspring to a Trinity; those who remember Will Rogers may be less complimentary in wondering aloud if we did not have every bit as good a faculty twenty years ago at one-third the cost? Of course, Will Rogers just did not anticipate inflation.

To a president attempting to reassure a public that the independent college like Trinity has conscientiously sought to improve the quality of its instruction, it is forever disconcerting when the skeptic asks for proof. After all, a college must have a response to those conditioned to expect, in all the products and services that they purchase, improvement. With an indiscretion that others might find foolhardy, I think that colleges must respond to this expectation. Can we demonstrate that the quality of instruction is better and therefore justifies the support of the public?

Candor is preferable to cant: there are no clearly identifiable ways to docu-

ment improvement. It would be odd indeed if we could demonstrate, or worse yet quantify, the ways in which a faculty has risen to greater heights. A list of courses taught, publications, additional degrees, or public appearances begs the question, as the faculty committee on Appointments and Promotions would be the first to remind us. In days of yore, we had distinguished teachers: today we have remarkable instructors. What is true, alas, is the difficulty of finding a replacement equal to Wendell Burger, retiring after 38 years of teaching biology.

As older faculty often point out, other factors influence a college's ability to sustain, or to "improve," the quality of instruction. We all realize that now faculty have at best limited mobility — a phrase characteristic of a society in which opportunity is less evident than it has been. Turnover always held out the possibility of improvement; a poor teacher might move on. Even though I am not prepared to yield to that argument, I share the faculty's concern that colleges may, due to tenure and human compassion, find themselves unable easily to remedy those occasional staffing weaknesses which time or accident bring to a department. And certainly the absence of alternatives may cause an occasional faculty member to exercise discretion rather than conviction when it comes to teaching. Long ago Gilbert Murray, a distinguished English classicist, warned us that the caterer could invade the academic world as readily as any other domain. Since this problem so affects the mood of a college, I wish to offer some comments.

From conversations with Trinity faculty, **I am convinced other considerations than simple turnover play a far greater role in determining the quality of a faculty. One of these is the expectation an institution conveys to the faculty:** what does Trinity ask of its professors? Basically we all agree that the faculty represent the highest quality. Even though not everyone has the same charismatic quality in the classroom, all faculty should offer a level of instruction and scholarship that represents the highest standards. But I am quite conscious of those doubters who point to tenure and remonstrate that it can be a shelter for the unproductive, the dullard, the obsolete. Once again, if an institution fails to make clear that it has expectations of all faculty, then a certain intellectual sclerosis can set in. The risks are there. Faculty are correct in asking themselves, and us, what Trinity expects.

This issue surfaces most vividly in respect to tenure and promotion. Many professors nowadays regard the award of tenure and the granting of promotion as automatic after so many years of satisfactory, if not distinguished, service. Colleges are not immune to those forces in society which seek, for whatever

reason, to erect barriers against the adverse decision. As long as the unpromising job market for teachers persists, we shall face assumptions which, if accepted, would jeopardize our goal of providing students with the ablest faculty our resources allow. At Trinity we have faced this issue squarely. Like industry, we are assessing our promotion procedures to assure as much objectivity and fairness as human fallibility permits. For we are determined not to consider tenure and promotion as entitlements granted for no better reason than the absence of negative evidence.

At this point, I wish that I could find a wonderful euphemism for that awful phrase, "further complicating this issue." For I am compelled to explain another factor which influences faculty thinking, and thus morale, on today's campuses: the impact of shifting enrollments on the ability of faculty to respond. If the trends which I cited in the section on student academic choices persist, obviously Trinity will have to consider reallocating staff strength so that students may have the instruction available which they regard as proper. To pick up an unenthusiastic phrase used by the Dean of the Faculty, the curriculum can be largely student-driven. We may deplore; we may call for a different world; but the consumer (i.e. the student) plays an important role which too few are willing to acknowledge. Thus far the faculty has responded in a statesmanlike fashion. But I share the faculty's worry about orchestrating the necessary additions and subtractions. For example, it took the Educational Policy Committee 43 hours of meeting last fall to accomplish this task.

Of course, a college can subvert its integrity if it becomes obsessed with responding to momentary shifts in student preferences. Thus I will state bluntly, with the concurrence of faculty with whom I have discussed this issue, that **Trinity intends to offer certain programs which it regards as fundamental to the liberal arts, irrespective of course enrollments. At the same time we plan to review the wisdom of continuing as broad a range of offerings as we have provided in recent years.** The faculty is now willing to think more critically about which programs are essential to our purposes and which are, though engaging, peripheral. The task will be devilishly difficult, for there is never an easy way to define the outer limits of the liberal arts. No longer can a college afford to equivocate on this issue so basic to faculty priorities.

Assuming for the moment that we can set our academic goals more clearly than was possible five years ago, I think we must lay to rest a myth which is sometimes invoked to differentiate between what is called the teaching college and the research university. Obviously there is a tension between preparation of a course and advanced scholarship; there is also a natural relationship which

mythology distorts. Too often we revert to the popular notion that great teachers never publish and that the jet scholars who advise in Washington and perpetually confer with publishers never teach, or teach indifferently. It is as if the retention of a scholarly temperament did not bear upon the manner in which one teaches. Professor Theodore Ziolkowski of Princeton aptly observed in an article on scholarship (which would not qualify as research, just good sense!): "Yesterday's virtuoso of the lecture halls becomes today's bore, wearily repeating the ideas of his own youth without realizing that they have become passe." The important point is: the inquisitive mind, which we seek to honor, cannot resist poking around, whether the probings lead to recasting a course or writing a journal article. Research so broadly conceived is essential to good teaching.

For that reason I am pleased that the Trinity faculty has been pressing for more funds to be made available for scholarly projects. The Dean of the Faculty established such a fund three years ago to help particularly the younger faculty member pursue his or her specialty. When the Mellon Foundation gave Trinity $200,000 last fall for what it called "faculty self-development under steady-state conditions," we specified that a portion of this money be used for junior and senior faculty research grants during summers *and* the regular year. Not only does this additional money meet an expressed need, but it also assures that the research will be shared publicly with students and colleagues. The hope is that the enthusiasm of the project will have a stimulating effect on the intellectual climate of the campus. **For one of the best ways to grasp the value of intellectual inquiry is to see it take place.**

There is another kind of scholarship which is equally important: the raising of significant issues that may be best explored through group investigation. Hence, the other aspect of the Mellon grant pertains to these broader concerns, illustrated in the past by the discussion which faculty and students had on the topic "Rationality and Its Alternatives." To this end, the faculty will conduct a series of symposia directed at identifying certain issues which speak to the goals of undergraduate education. Interdisciplinary in nature, these symposia involve faculty during the summer and then lead to community discussions later in the fall. The faculty's hope is that this effort will bring fresh meaning and pertinence to the traditional goals of liberal learning. At the very least it will permit us a chance to pursue a problem very much on the minds of faculty today: how do we relate our separate perceptions to issues which refuse compartmentalization? Professor Gabriel Almond of Stanford University conveyed our uneasiness when he wrote: "Universities have

lost their capacity to orient their students to a world which increasingly insists on being viewed whole with all its interdependencies and moral dilemmas." (*Daedalus*, Winter 1975, vol. 1, p. 187)

Once again, the mood of the academic world may provide an explanation. The expansion of knowledge, the subdivision of traditional fields, and the pressure for ever-increasing specialization as essential to problem-solving have led to the erosion of old convictions about the relative merit of certain disciplines and particular courses. Now all curricular options appear to have equal merit. Certainly it has been true in many discussions over recent years that a familiar sleight-of-hand has occurred, as Professor Irving Howe of Hunter College observed: "The *right* of anyone to choose Jacqueline Susann over Shakespeare becomes the assertion that efforts by teachers or critics to insist upon the centrality of value distinctions is a form of oppression." We can duck this issue no longer: a faculty must demonstrate its quality by making distinctions.

Fortunately at Trinity the faculty has moved beyond that self-defeating position. Admittedly it will take time to sort out what is most essential from what is pleasant but no longer affordable. But just as we must state our case clearly to students, so we must make obvious to ourselves the curricular priorities which we feel must prevail. And that brings me to another comment on the mood of a campus.

There has been a growing uneasiness among faculty and others about the degree of risk which an academic institution can take. National priorities have reduced the prominence which higher education enjoyed. It does little good to chastise a public for a distorted system of priorities. But for a particular college this reorientation poses a dilemma: should Trinity, for example, "set" its sail and adjust its tack to the prevailing winds or should it reef its cloth so that it remains faithful to its course despite adverse conditions? Instinct tells me that we should try to steer a course which makes plain to everyone that we genuinely believe in what we do. We should not forsake the liberal arts in favor of vocational training; we should insist on quality even if some accuse us of perpetuating an elite; and we should provide leadership at the risk of stormy seas. Enough for metaphors! My point is obvious: **the present climate is not congenial to risk-taking, but Trinity is persuaded that it must continue to be a pace-setter among liberal arts colleges.** Not to take risks may be the most hazardous approach in the long run.

As we contemplate the impact of these problems, I count on the tough-minded to join in solving them. We as a faculty will make the hard decisions.

On that note, I replied to one faculty member recently, "Not only have the rules of the game changed, the game has changed." Nowhere is this more evident than in the financial transformation through which higher education is currently passing.

IV

To many the game changed with the advent of double-digit inflation. Actually, making ends meet in higher education became a latent problem during the sixties when many institutions built in objectives which were worthwhile but increasingly troublesome to support. Their academic reach began to exceed their financial grasp. Nor did anyone anticipate the shift in national priorities which left higher education in a less favorable position. Many colleges lacked the finesse to manage budgets which began to rise at eight to ten percent per year. All of us have been reluctant to transfer rising costs to the consumer. We have exercised our obligation to control expenses rigorously.

Fortunately Trinity has had a remarkable record of running in the black for the last five years. We shall do so again next year. And — I feel that it bears repeating because it displays an uncommon fiduciary conviction — Trinity has repaid to its endowment the money it had to take down to cover the red ink of 1969–70. I shall not offer in this Report an extended analysis of the budget, but I do wish to comment, once again, about how certain changes have affected the mood of this community. And to mention a few dilemmas we face. That others share them, including the householder, may give them something of a universal quality but that is hardly comforting.

First, inflation has not only raised costs precipitously; it has also reduced the ability of the institution to maintain the preferred balance among its expenditures. Certainly the most dramatic example has been the price of utilities. At Trinity the cost of oil, electricity, gas, and water has risen five-fold in eight years and comprises one-ninth of the total budget. A special committee has spent considerable time this year recommending modifications in our various systems and in our habits: these have helped reduced consumption some 20 percent. But there is no combination which can keep these costs on a slope rising as slowly as other expenses.

That may well be the most debilitating aspect of the budgetary "crunch." An institution cannot improve salaries sufficiently to meet inflation. At Trinity personnel expenses represent nearly 60 percent of the total budget. Faculty and staff are understanding; the faculty is particularly grateful that we have

been able to give, on the average, eight percent raises and not, as at other institutions, simultaneously reduce the number of professors. Admittedly the problem of handling the distortions caused by inflation affects everyone; but non-profit enterprises feel the results more keenly.

Sometimes I wonder if my discussion of inflation's impact on the budget at Trinity doesn't affect audiences the same way "Jaws" does swimmers: people prefer to stay away. The reference is not coincidental but deliberate; for, as some of you may know, at the beginning of the picture the young man who had been with the girl attacked by the shark identifies himself as a Trinity student. Perhaps that cinematic interlude permits me now to illustrate the cumulative effects of rising costs on college operations. The various budgetary models we have constructed for the next five years make one point clear: even if we exercise every restraint conceivable and forego all but essential improvements, we cannot expect our costs to increase at a rate less than inflation. Historically, institutions can belt-tighten for short periods; but, because their expenses are intimately tied to uncontrollable items like utilities, books, insurance, supplies and maintenance costs, market forces ultimately prevail. We have kept our expenses below the rate of inflation for two years through internal adjustments, but these remain at best non-recurrent savings.

We have also examined what variations in expenses can cause over time. For example, with a budget of nearly eleven million, an increase of one-tenth of one percent amounts to $185,000 over five years, or the equivalent of $116 per student. When the experts quarrel about rates of inflation varying as widely as five percent, the impact can become staggering. One more illustration may serve to reinforce frugality in budgeting. Historically, college expenses have risen 8.7 percent annually. For two years we have held the average to seven percent. Over a five-year period the difference between the two rates amounts to $3,143,000. We shall continue to exercise restraint!

At the same time, institutions look to the income side of the budget for relief from what might become truly disastrous cuts. Since tuition and fees represent the single largest source of income (68.9 percent of educational and general revenues at Trinity), we have been studying the future of those increases which have been as inevitable as they are unwelcome. Across the country, "Tuition in private universities has been increasing at the rate of six to eight percent per year. As a proportion of median family income, it is once more at the level of the post-World War II years." (Hugh Calkins, "A Plan for Survival," *AGB Reports*, January/February, 1975, p. 7) There is evidence that these increases have caused some applicants to turn to the public institutions;

there is clear evidence that tuition hikes pose a serious problem for parents and students. As there is little likelihood of immediate federal or state financial aid of a type that would alter this picture, colleges must face the relationship between high tuition rates and their ability to recruit the student body they prefer. It is my conviction that we cannot continue the annual round of tuition increases for many more years, certainly not if the national economy fails to rebound aggressively.

The alternatives are few. One recourse is obvious: to launch a campaign for new funds. Trinity decided to do so, even though the economic indicators were not altogether propitious. What encouraged us most was the resolution of the trustees, alumni, parents, and friends to undertake such a capital campaign. The results of this effort thus far, and of this year's annual fund drive, have had a most salutary effect on the mood of Trinity. **We met our $500,000 goal of annual giving; and we are more than half-way to our capital campaign goal of $12,000,000. This support convinces us that the College retains the warm affection of its alumni and friends and enjoys a high regard among corporations, foundations,** and even those who have only a passing knowledge of Trinity's contributions. The success of these efforts can go far toward assuring the future financial health of this institution.

The other option available — aside from continued cost-cutting — has more theoretical promise than practical applicability: to make far greater use of the admirable physical facilities at Trinity. As many commentators have observed, college and university plants lie idle when they might be income-producing. Some institutions such as Dartmouth have introduced plans to rotate students through the full calendar year with virtually all required to attend for one summer. We have discussed this possibility at Trinity, but thus far are persuaded that our urban location in a comparatively warm clime works against attracting students during the summer. Yet, the fact remains that a total of 1,250,000 square feet is available from June to September. Graduate courses and summer school employ but a small portion of this space. When we realize that the replacement cost of these facilities would be around 60 million dollars, we know that we must consider greater use by other groups so that we generate the resources to maintain — and, if necessary, replace — buildings over the balance of this century. One problem which could limit us is that certain summer uses may not be compatible with our tax-exempt status.

Mention of our facilities prompts a few remarks about the progress we have made in improving the existing plant. Over the last three years we have modernized the electrical system in the main Quadrangle area. This summer we

are spending $500,000 to improve our dining facilities and to construct a 200-seat addition on the west side of Mather. Conversion of the three recently acquired apartment buildings on Crescent Street, part of the plan to improve our residential housing, is proceeding apace. It is encouraging that we can remain on our timetable for completing repairs and renovations too long deferred, but the expenditures only compound the problems of finance I have already described. For example, to repaint the roof of the Ferris Athletic Center costs $10,000. Nonetheless, the Trustees are committed to the proper maintenance of what is, by common consent, one of the most beautiful campuses in the country.

Meanwhile, I am pleased to report our endowment has rebounded handsomely since late last fall. The yield continues to increase each year and represents better than a six percent rate of return. It was tragic that Mr. Clifton Bockstoce, Vice-President for Financial Affairs, could not follow the progress his initial efforts stimulated: his death in March deprived us of a brilliant friend who did much for Trinity.

In closing this discussion of the College's finances, I can be neither joyful nor gloomy. The mood is sufficiently positive that we are quite prepared to use these fiscal challenges to foster a re-examination of functions at the College.

V

This obligation to re-examine operations falls mainly on the administration and trustees. For that reason we have begun a project designed to identify the essential functions of the institution and to determine which can be discontinued. It is not simply a move to realize potential savings; much more important it seeks to relate those functions to the human resources we have available. One of the awesome consequences of the present national posture is our inability to assess, in time, the reasonableness of our expectations for a particular operation as measured against the resources, fiscal and human, we bring to bear upon that operation.

Once a college has a clear mind about its priorities, then it is possible to review the manner in which it tries to fulfill those priorities. The rhetoric makes the task sound easy, but anyone with executive experience knows how difficult it is to accomplish. It reminds me of a story told of Stalin when he issued a series of directives to the communal plant managers: there were numerous objectives, some of them contradictory. Had a manager paid atten-

tion to the entire list, success would have been very elusive indeed. But Stalin made clear that growth was the primary aim, and managers quickly discarded all other recommendations in favor of that goal. Ours is an equally complex assignment, but there never can be any doubt that the quality of the academic programs must rank number one.

Perhaps we are asking for a better sense of the future, so that we may more forthrightly bend our energies to shape that future. If so, I think we must frankly admit that the prime movers must be the administrative officers and trustees. Review with others is mandatory, but the administration is pledged to take the lead in both analysis and implementation. From this effort must emerge an ever stronger sense of common purpose. Traditionally Trinity has shown an impressive capacity to identify the key issues and to move on them. Our ability to anticipate difficulties has only one drawback: the drama is removed and sometimes we underestimate what we have accomplished by preventing a problem from becoming an occasion for political fireworks.

On a related point, we have combined certain administrative operations for next year; we have reduced the staffing of our operations through a process optimistically called "constructive consolidation." In the offing for 1976–77 are further adjustments. The net effect will be the reduction of staff by at least six persons. Simultaneously we are trying to improve the results achieved in various operations. Since this Report speaks so often of mood, I should add that the spirit in which the administrative staff has carried out this none-too-attractive reorganization should reassure all of us that the good of the College remains the primary concern of all.

VI

The privilege of imposing upon an audience an analysis as unrelieved as this requires some summary suggestions as to what we should do. Obviously there is an atmosphere surrounding today's questions which suggests an approaching storm. The brooding quality of so much contemporary discussion tends to raise the commentary from the particular, about which we may conceivably do something, to the apocalyptic, which paralyzes action. And our ability to find answers is no longer self-evident.

Yet, of certain responses I am sure. The College will resolutely analyze its processes and its purposes to make certain that we have a clear understanding of the goals to which this institution can reasonably commit itself. To repeat, our primary obligation is to offer what must be a limited number of academic

options of the highest quality. We are persuaded that such excellence will continue to attract a student body of high motivation and unusual talent.

For these students we must provide an education that sets the pace for liberal arts colleges. To that end, we must review our curricular options and pare down what we offer so that we are convinced as a community that what we provide is of first-rate quality. The simple fact is that we can no longer bring the requisite support to all existing programs. Obviously this self-scrutiny will be difficult; many will be the pressures to distract us from our goal; but the need is real and immediate. In making such decisions, in keeping with our general purpose, we must freely admit in public that liberal arts education may not have a direct economic payoff. No matter what programs we offer, we can no longer glibly equate undergraduate learning with a measurable income advantage. Inevitably most of our graduates will do well, but I am particularly anxious that we not mislead prospective students; nor should we delude ourselves about this issue as we seek to reshape our curricular offerings. Keypunching cannot replace Plato.

The liberal arts college has properly sought to remind us of the human dimension within which we live our lives. The desire to go on learning derives not from career expectations alone but from our appreciation of where we are and where we may go as human beings looking beyond purely material advantage. How many students plaintively remark: "I just want to know who I am and how I may make of life something worthwhile!" Undergraduate learning should provide that sense of direction, that confidence in the future, however chastened it may be by our analysis of the ability of the human community to withstand the assault of events.

That assault of events in itself should warn us that only through a profound understanding of people, their history and their sense of what is worthwhile, can we hope to meet humanely the dilemmas we face. The liberal arts must offer a perspective through which, as individuals, we understand the world in which we live. The liberal arts must bring to the future leaders of this country a sensitivity to the values which exist and which should endure. Learning without an examination of those values is incomplete, whatever the income of an individual or the GNP of a nation.

As we seek to respond to the various problems I have outlined, we shall need a belief in ourselves and in this College. A look at what we have accomplished should reassure us. Trinity has felt the various strains of society; we have responded in imaginative ways. We have adjusted the curriculum to meet the needs of today's students, and we have made available opportunities

that address the differences among students. We have managed our resources with a dexterity that is the envy of most institutions. We have been willing to recognize weaknesses and then to seek to remedy them. And we have acknowledged new trends in learning without surrendering to faddism. In short, we have sought to design our own future in the conviction that Trinity must go its own way.

As for the years ahead, I have become increasingly convinced that a great deal depends upon our capacity to imagine the future and to retain a kind of tough-minded intellectual daring. In coming to the close of an Annual Report, I find myself returning to the question of mood. And that mood, whether on a campus or across a nation, reflects our faith in humanity — or, perhaps, our lack of it.

For this reason I have outlined some of the factors which are influencing the mood at Trinity. As I remarked in the beginning, any reading of the literature of higher education reveals a certain anxiety about the human condition. It is not simply an increase in the number of Cassandras; nor is it merely the kind of disillusionment which inevitably flows over a person after a Watergate or Vietnam. There may well be profound reasons for our present anxiety, reasons that reach beyond the ambiguities of an economic recession or any other affront to our traditional optimism. They may derive from a growing realization that our assumptions about the future of the human condition, whether optimistic or skeptical, do critically affect our ability to respond to the challenges we shall face.

For instance, today's motorist cannot escape the awareness that the supply and price of his gasoline depend on the international posture of the OPEC countries, national legislation affecting energy consumption, the development of new energy sources — and the relation of all of these to the quality of the air he breathes. Similarly the corporation executive must face the complex relationship between his company's objectives and the possibility that we may not be able to perpetuate the patterns of economic growth and abundance to which we have been accustomed. Such problems are in part technical; but we must not overlook their ethical dimension, for it is that which ultimately determines whether we shall have the "good society."

As a nation we cannot underestimate the effect of such considerations on our contemporary mood. It is little wonder that Robert Heilbroner can speak of "an oppressive anticipation of the future." (*An Inquiry into the Human Prospect*, p. 14) I am not surprised to sense a comparability of moods between the campus and the country. Nationally we are torn between reviving our sense

of purpose — rolling up our sleeves with fresh determination — and seeking to assure a pleasant, if uninspiring, security to protect our amenities. In the academic world this tension is also evident although I remain convinced that we have not forsaken those higher purposes to which, in our greatest moments, we have been singularly dedicated: free inquiry, intellectual responsibility, and a humane sensitivity. It is probable that, out of discouragement or as a means to protect education's special interests, some will point disparagingly to human nature and declare future prospects dim: they will seek merely to "hang in."

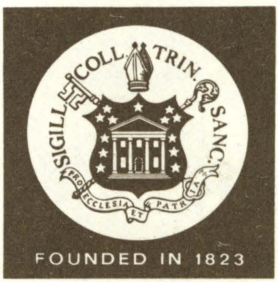
Any tipping of the scales in such a direction, toward a truly pessimistic frame of mind, would utterly transform the mood of a campus, just as it would open the way to authoritarian answers in the state. In that imprecise way in which we must contemplate the future, I sense that undergraduate education must retain an impatience to find solutions even as we utilize our analytical power to delineate the factors involved. We need all the understanding which the academic disciplines can provide, but we also need a willingness to recognize that the values we find in the human condition will determine when and how we apply our cumulative knowledge. It is from this growing concern about our mood that I express the conviction that **Trinity College has the obligation to cultivate an intellectual daring which propels us beyond self-indulgence, our myopic preferences, our so easily contrived misanthropy, to a fortitude which enables mind to shape our destiny.**

Only dedication to a spirit wider than our self-image can give us the will to meet the issues before mankind. Indifference to the social ills of poverty, hunger, violence, and the denial of human freedom might simplify for some the task they would otherwise have to face. But surely such perversity would come back to haunt us. When we add to these persistent "lacks" the balancing of international weaponry, the distribution of technology, and the political melioration of conflict among nations, I realize that my interpretation of the need for a tough-minded courage about the future may seem an unwarranted piece of optimism. Yet, a sense of hope will not down.

Perhaps that is why it is so gratifying to serve a college: the younger people with whom we learn still consider it proper to believe in the possible improvement of the human condition. Therefore, I hope that at Trinity we will continue to focus on the issues and the questions of values so vividly before us in order that today's students may feel their optimism well-founded. Certainly they make no easy assumptions; they take little for granted. Nor should any of us. But, if we are to manage the difficulties we face as an educational institution, or we as a people confront nationally, our vision must be both generous and

imaginative. As always, I welcome hearing from others their interpretation of today's mood. I trust that Trinity's will encompass a reverence for humanity that transcends the immensity of our dilemmas. To such a spirit I dedicate this Annual Report.

Summer 1975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