A Report to the

President of the United States

The President The White House Washington, D. C.

January 1961

My dear Mr. President:

Early in December, some 800 delegates representing several hundred organizations met in San Francisco to discuss educational exchange for the mutual development of nations, the theme of the fourth national conference on exchange of persons sponsored by the Institute of International Education. For three days we — Americans and foreigners, educators and businessmen, government officials and private citizens — considered almost every relevant topic imaginable in four plenary sessions, seven panel groups, seventeen workshops, and nineteen clinics, as well as in informal conversations among ourselves. We talked about foreign aid programs and about the tax problems of foreign visitors; about vocational training and about Africa south of the Sahara; about "culture shock" and the teaching of English; about U.S. students in Southeast Asia and how American volunteers can effectively welcome visitors from abroad.

We should be happy to make the specific findings of the various groups available to you and your advisers. Throughout the conference, however, as we met in groups large or small, talking about subjects of vast or limited importance, we were all constantly aware of certain great underlying facts and issues. It is these that we respectfully draw to your attention.

The first is the over-riding urgency of the job to be done—an urgency that was driven home to us by our distinguished foreign guests as strongly as by the daily movement of world events. We were aware of the difficulty and enormity of the task, and of the truth that none of us, as individuals or organizations, has done the job as well or on as large a scale as it must be done. We Americans were also aware that our government, despite its many aid programs, has not given either sufficient or proper emphasis to educational development abroad.

On the other hand, the fact that so many of us could meet together to share our problems and to help each other was a source of encouragement and hope to us. We were even more greatly heartened by our knowledge of your own deep concern with educational development here and abroad. In the light of your often and strongly expressed interest in this matter, we have prepared the following short document for your use. It does not purport to be a summary of all that took place at the conference, nor is it based on recommendations adopted by the participants. It is simply a statement of the major points that underlay, explicitly or implicitly, our discussions, particularly as they related to possible future U.S. policy.

With this report, Mr. President, we send our best wishes for you and your Administration.

Respectfully yours, KENNETH HOLLAND, President, Institute of International Education

- Education the development of human resources is the keystone of the economic growth and political development of all nations.
- Education must therefore be given the highest priority in the United States foreign aid programs, with a massive shift of emphasis, dollars, and people into the effort. This should be done only on the basis of carefully designed plans that provide for long-term budgeting and commitment.
- The dimensions of the needed effort require the expenditure of large amounts of public funds. It is desirable to create policies and procedures that will "neutralize" these funds politically, partially through utilizing international as well as private non-governmental organizations to administer them.
- The magnitude of the problem is so huge that efforts must be made to multiply the effect of each aid dollar spent for educational development. Great emphasis should therefore be placed upon building and strengthening educational institutions in the nations to be aided, and on the training of teachers.
- To accomplish these aims, it will be necessary for many carefully selected, well-trained Americans to spend substantial periods overseas, for many foreign students to be educated in this country, and for many short-term training visits to be arranged on both sides. The idealistic enthusiasm of young people, American and foreign, must be harnessed and used in this great effort.

• Education – the development of human resources – is the keystone of the economic growth and political development of all nations.

About a billion and a quarter of the world's people live in the 100 countries, chiefly in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, that are economically "underdeveloped." The under-utilization of human and physical resources is the primary reason for their state of underdevelopment.

In the past 15 years, millions of people have attained political independence; millons more soon will. In addition, the technological-scientific revolution of the Twentieth Century now involves every country on this globe. The fruits of that revolution are demanded by the masses of people in every country. The trained and educated mind is no longer merely desirable, but is central to the aspirations of people everywhere for meaningful independence and for economic and social progress. On the world agenda, education is now the first item.

The world's peoples are in revolt against the illiteracy, poverty, and chronic ill health that have been their lot throughout history. In recognition of this, our country and others, as well as international organizations, have extended economic and technical aid to many of the developing countries. To a large extent, however, we have failed to identify education as central to all efforts to achieve economic growth and political stability.

The United States and institutions for international aid should be as willing to put funds into educational facilities as into electric power, communications, or industrial and agricultural plants and equipment. The pace of world development, the depth and swell of rising expectations, and the millions of human beings involved make imperative a total and imaginative program of international educational development in the immediate future.

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The stakes are so high, the requirements so enormous, the scope so vast, the pace that must be maintained so rapid, and the resources thus far available so limited, that the whole problem must be approached with the daring and on the scale that characterized such American efforts as the Marshall Plan and the attack on the depression of the 1930's. Educational development abroad can no longer be considered to be merely on the periphery of our national interest; it is at the very center of our interest.

The United States, Western Europe, and some of the Commonwealth countries must accept responsibility for assisting the emerging nations to develop their educational systems, because the Western nations have the largest resources to accomplish the task. It is not for us to pass judgment on the scale of the effort made by other countries. We are, however, in a proper position to assess our own. Only the smallest fraction of the U.S. foreign aid budget goes for education. Our entire foreign aid program amounts to about \$4 billion per year. Of that, one-half goes for military assistance. Of the remaining half earmarked for economic aid, only about \$150 million goes for technical assistance, and of that figure, only a fraction goes for education.

Yet it is apparent that the mere export of physical capital and of techniques does not necessarily result in economic and political growth. Without schools and teachers — what might be called the access roads — there is little progress. Accordingly, economic development programs should always include suitable educational development projects as integral elements in the overall development of a country. Just as important, the budgets and commitments of various agencies, public and private, must be on more than an annual or short-term basis.

As necessary as — perhaps more necessary than — the allocation of a larger percentage of our aid dollars for educational development is coherent, thoughtful, long-range planning here and abroad. Effective action must be preceded by careful study. Through cooperative master planning by many nations it will be possible to identify the key problems and map assaults on them. Without such planning, all our efforts are haphazard, fragmentary, and ultimately worth very little.

Besides the overall planning that must be done by the international organizations and those countries in a position to offer educational assistance, each individual country to be aided must devote the most strenuous and serious attention to the formation of national plans. There is in addition a desperate need for the formation of joint planning committees for various areas of the world, for studies in depth of the educational needs and goals of the individual countries involved, and for an assessment of the total resources available to the task at hand. As you so well emphasized in your inaugural address, the question is "what together we can do for the freedom of man."

• The dimensions of the needed effort require the expenditure of large amounts of public and private funds. It is desirable to create policies and procedures that will "neutralize" public funds politically, partially through utilizing international as well as private non-governmental organizations to administer them.

Although bilateral programs of educational assistance will perhaps be necessary for the immediate future, funds for such aid should be channeled as quickly as possible and as much as possible through the United Nations and its agencies and through regional organizations.

Much is already being done by private agencies and colleges and universities. In many circumstances, more can be accomplished by such groups than can be accomplished by governments. It is in our tradition, as well as to our interest, to use these organizations to the fullest extent possible.

Within the United States itself, there should be a stronger and more mature working relationship between the government and the private sector. The government should rely less on the direct operations and more on contractual arrangements with private institutions, to which it should give the responsibility and authority to carry out projects, subject to appropriate review and approval but not day-to-day scrutiny. The arrangement should provide for maximum use of private resources without distortion of the proper nature of private institutions.

The government might wish to establish a cultural or educational foundation along the lines of the National Science Foundation, which would arrange programs with private institutions that would meet governmental objectives in a fashion that would avoid undue administrative interference.

It is impossible to overstress the need for increased coordination among the public agencies and for increased cooperation among the public and private organizations engaged in economic development. Although the spirit of cooperation is willing, the instruments for coordination are weak. • The magnitude of the problem is so huge that efforts must be made to multiply the effect of each aid dollar spent for educational development. Great emphasis should therefore be placed upon building and strengthening educational institutions in the nations to be aided, and on the training of teachers.

Each individual country has its own unique concerns, goals, and aspirations. Our assistance plans and programs must be responsive to these.

The emphasis of United States and international educational assistance programs should be based consistently upon strengthening local institutions or, when necessary, helping to create new ones. These institutions should be indigenous, springing from or adapted to local conditions. Many elements of U.S. and other systems of education may indeed be of value to the emerging nations, but the systems themselves cannot be transplanted in toto, nor should they be. Principles can be transferred successfully; institutions cannot.

The ultimate aim of educational assistance programs should be to make the developing countries as self-sufficient as possible, as quickly as possible, in all phases and at all levels of education. To accomplish this it will be necessary to prime the educational pump by providing for the rapid increase of facilities overseas. Buildings and institutions, however, are sterile in themselves. The training of teachers must accompany, if not precede, the expansion of the educational plant. If education is the first item on the world development agenda, teachertraining is perhaps the first item on the educational agenda.

Conditions differ from region to region and from country to country, and priorities must be established within each region and each country. Methods and devices that are appropriate in one country may not be suitable in another. We are called upon to practice what we already know about the art and science of educational institution-building, and to engage in imaginative experimentation to extend our knowledge even further.

• To accomplish these aims, it will be necessary for many carefully selected, well-trained Americans to spend substantial periods overseas, for many foreign students to be educated in this country, and for many short-term training visits to be arranged on both sides. The idealistic enthusiasm of young people, American and foreign, must be harnessed and used in this great effort.

"Educational exchange" is now too narrow a phrase to describe our interests in international education. We have shifted the center of our thinking away from concern with "exchange" and its unrealistic one-for-one connotation; in any event people are not being "exchanged" — they are being educated. Our emphasis now is upon educational planning and growth. We must never slight the importance of the traditional "scholarly" exchange; but we must now double our efforts in what has been called "development" exchange.

As you have stated on many occasions, Mr. President, our economic and educational aid programs overseas will require that many Americans be recruited to serve in a variety of capacities abroad. In this connection, your "Peace Corps" proposal deserves the most immediate serious study and quick implementation. In addition, means must be found whereby it will be possible for older, highly qualified personnel — from the universities, government, and other sectors of the society — to be ready and able to spend the necessary time out of their own country.

The proper preparation of Americans for service overseas should be a matter of high priority for the educational institutions of this country. In addition to teaching the specific techniques and skills necessary, efforts must be made to inculcate and encourage the attitudes of mind and behavior that mark the effective "overseas American." We must mention, however, the specific need for a massive assault on American ignorance of foreign languages.

The importance of coherent planning in this whole endeavor is readily apparent when one considers the problem of foreign students in the United States. The unregulated and unstructured flow of students into this country often results in there being little discernible relationship between the fields of study selected by the students and the needs of their own countries. There is a danger, into which we have often fallen, of training too many students in certain fields while failing to satisfy the demands in other fields. While we must still provide plenty of room for humanistic scholars and the educational goals

of individuals, the first criterion for the selection of foreign students should now be the relevance of their study in terms of the educational, economic, and social development of their own countries. The selection of most of the students coming here must be justified on the grounds that the government concerned is committed to their effective use on their return home.

Given the relevancy of their fields, we must then ask ourselves how good a job we do in selecting the individuals to come. We must make special efforts to identify the potential leaders and intellectuals who can contribute to the long-range betterment of their countries. We must then do all possible to ensure that the proper individual is sent to the appropriate institution in this country.

The United States is uniquely capable of demonstrating the basic dignity of technical training for work in rural development, industry and trade, engineering, and administration. The development of the emerging nations requires that greater prestige be attached to these fields, and the United States is in a good position to show the way.

Implicit in this report is our conviction that carefully planned educational exchange at all levels should be increased with our allies and with all neutral nations. At the same time, we should like also to record explicitly our belief that in spite of uncertainties, barriers of every sort, and annoying mutual suspicions, there is every reason to proceed from the clear premise that our exchanges with Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union have been rewarding and that they should be continued and expanded.

* * *

Until now, we have not mentioned the political or ideological considerations that might be cited in support of our plea for a massive program of educational development and exchange. We are not unmindful of the justifications that may be made on those grounds. We prefer, however, to ask for our nation's commitment to such an enterprise on the grounds that it befits a great and free people to support education for its own sake. We should like to be able to say of our generation of Americans, as Pericles was able to say of his generation of Athenians, "We are alone amongst mankind in conferring benefits on others, not in the calculation of self-interest but in the fearless confidence of freedom."

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