

PRESIDENT'S CONFIDENTIAL REPORT TO THE BOARD OF LINDENWOOD COLLEGE

APRIL 22, 1968

In a series of discussions, Mr. Black and I have come to believe that we must take very few further steps into our future without some serious thought about long-range planning at Lindenwood College. He and I have agreed that my report to the Board today ought to principally sketch the years immediately ahead and the problems that will dominate our work as we move through those years. By way of background, I wish to comment briefly on what has come to be known as the "Private College Crisis" in higher educational circles.

THE PRIVATE COLLEGE CRISIS

Last week I spent two days in Washington where I serve on one of the commissions of the American Association of Colleges and Universities--the Commission on College and Society. It was rather startling to me to see that the executive staff of the Commission had pre-empted the items on the agenda in favor of a discussion on "the plight of the private college." The fifteen or so college presidents found themselves discussing the clear and present danger that private education will lose ground both in qualitative and quantitative fashion in the years ahead. Statements that have been made by Kingman Brewster of Yale, Grayson Kirk of Columbia, President Miller Upton of Beloit, President Richard C. Gilman of Occidental, and others were recounted. The President of Lindenwood College took the view that, while there is a critical problem in arranging for the financial support of the private sector in higher education in the years ahead, to talk about this problem in the framework of words like "plight" "crisis" "emergency" and "predicament" is to establish what could be called the psychology of the discontinued model. Very few people will give substantially to private education if they doubt it will survive the years ahead.

At Lindenwood we have no doubt; we believe a free society has a certain dependence on the private sector for its freedom; we think that private colleges can do some things that public institutions cannot do; we know that there are areas in which the private college has the right to be bold and active where there are limitations on what public institutions can do (religion, for example); and we believe that with strong and imaginative programs the private colleges will not only survive but will become even more significant in their contribution to American thought and culture than they are now.

The private institutions are faced with several hard facts:

- (1) Their costs are rising because of the increase in the basic cost of living and due to the patterned operation by which they deal with their major function, which is instruction. Still in the private colleges one finds most instruction in exactly the same pattern as was to be found thirty years ago--the lecture method, the traditional classroom, the relatively low ratio of faculty to students, the almost exclusive reliance on books for the transmission of information and ideas; the still almost total conviction that even the small institution has to be many things to many people. Faculties do not like Presidents to talk this way, but the facts are that the "productivity" of faculty has not been increased by modern technological advances; in the "learning industry" we still learn the same way.
- (2) One can generalize and say that some years ago top students and faculty gravitated, if they could afford it, toward private institutions while, on the whole, average students and faculty tended to gravitate toward public institutions. Many studies, particularly a study made some years ago by Lynn White, Jr., indicate that before World War II the migration of top faculty people was from the public to the private institutions and that the pattern found Harvard raiding good public

universities such as Wisconsin and Michigan for faculty. Since the World War II migration is no longer that simply explained and the migration of top faculty tends to be reversing itself and flowing toward public institutions where higher salaries and lower teaching loads are becoming more prominent. these things have put the totally

- (3) More than this, there is a new attitude on the part of students about their education, and in many areas of the country the development of strong state scholarship programs which make it possible for a student to receive a scholarship from the state which he can apply at a private institution adds greatly to the problems of colleges in states where such programs are not extant. There is no doubt but that there has been increased status on the part of many of the state universities at which huge sums of money have been made available for physical facilities and instructional costs. One might comment that parental attitudes have also changed and that today's parent is not as protective as was once the case and parents tend to feel that their offspring are ready for "the real world" earlier than was once the feeling. Parents who are also taxpayers often conclude that they have paid taxes for the state system of education and hence their children ought to take advantage of the state universities.

- (4) On top of these general facts there is an even harder fact for the womens colleges. All studies show that applications to womens colleges are diminishing; a study published this week indicates that Vassar is off in applications some 14 percent this year alone. The seven sister institutions combined are off something in the order of 5 percent. The less prestigious womens colleges across the country are off something between 10 and 20 percent. The philosophy behind segregated education for women has come under critical appraisal in the last several years.

The Vassar-Yale negotiations, the Wellesley-M.I.T. arrangement, the admission of men to Sarah Lawrence, the creation of tighter relationships between institutions like Connecticut College and Wesleyan, and the development of very close relationships such as that between William Woods and Westminster--all these things have put the totally separate womens college in a difficult position. We spend far too much time defending ourselves and live with the hard fact that in many areas, according to a study available to our Admissions Office, middle-class suburban high school graduates who are females willing to consider a womans college are only 2 percent of the graduating class. This means, if it is a sound study (and I hope it isn't!), that our market is 2 percent of the students graduating from the kind of high school from which we normally recruit our students.

LINDENWOOD COLLEGE MUST CHOOSE AMONG LIMITED ALTERNATIVES

We have just completed a very thorough exercise at the college during which we discussed the various alternatives open to us for future development. It is clear beyond doubt that we cannot remain as we are. In our informal faculty vote the sum total of those who recommended that course was zero. We gave careful thought to several alternatives; we visited several colleges which are planning to develop coordinate colleges. We even gave consideration to reverting to junior college status.

Any examination of cost analysis at Lindenwood leads immediately to the observation that the upper division with very low course enrollment is our most difficult financial problem. We have something in the order of 67 classes with 6 or less students. The courses must be offered if we are to fulfill our requirements under North Central accrediting standards and provide the necessary breadth of learning in the various scholastic disciplines. We cannot permit a young woman to

major in sociology if there is but one member of that department, so we have two. We cannot permit a young woman to major in economics and have but one economist, so we have two. We have just added a political scientist to the faculty because we feel strongly that this is a discipline of great interest to young women these days. If we did not maintain this upper division, we have little doubt but that we could be one of the finest junior colleges in the country. Very few junior colleges have anything approaching our endowment. The pattern at Lindenwood has long been one in which many students use us as a junior college even though we are not. Rarely have we been able to hold more than 50-55 percent of the freshman class at Lindenwood; we retain only 25-30 percent to graduation.

If this alternative is chosen I must say quite clearly that I believe many at Lindenwood would recognize the logic of the choice, but few members of the administration and very few members of the faculty, particularly newer people on the faculty, would stay at Lindenwood. Your administration and the great majority of your faculty are dedicated to the thought that we are and can be a four-year liberal arts college. There is no serious support at the college for this alternative. As President of the College I conscientiously and deliberately, without prejudice, insisted that this alternative be considered. It has been considered and is not recommended.

The second alternative would be for Lindenwood to become completely coeducational. The effort here would be to take the necessary steps legally to establish our right to educate males as well as females and devote our full resources to that end. On the assumption that we could leap the legal barriers, and fully aware that this would be the simplest approach, we find little enthusiasm for this step on the part of Lindenwood people. The College has a female image; the College has traditions and objectives which are related to the education of women; the College has recently developed, with particular attention to women, a program of which we are proud and which we think will gain broad recognition over the next several years. Therefore,

in a faculty vote on these various alternatives, there were some 10 votes that opted for quick coeducation. In fairness, I read this vote to mean that many members of the faculty do not believe we could leap the legal hurdles and hence the vote could be higher in favor of this alternative if we were sure it would not get us entangled in serious legal difficulties. But I believe many of us feel we would lose something that is worth saving, and that can be saved, by this approach. We do not recommend it.

The overwhelming majority of our faculty favor the establishment of a coordinate men's college (the third alternative), carefully planned with an educational program that will compliment that which we have at Lindenwood. The view is that with careful planning we will be able to develop another college which will be better because we work with it, and we will be better because it is part of our educational system. There is general concensus that such a college should be planned to have a very definite character and program of its own and that efforts should be made to maintain the integrity of Lindenwood's student life and academic program. We studied very carefully the transformation of MacMurray College, and we are very grateful for the extensive cooperation of the MacMurray administration and faculty. They made records available to us and spoke with us in frankness and in complete detail. We also visited Kenyon College which is founding a coordinate womans college and are grateful for information that they have made available. We have collected materials about many other efforts, including that of Hamilton College in New York to establish a coordinate womans college. Our studies indicate that this is the road we should take and this is the recommendation we make.

HOW AND WHEN

We have been talking about the introduction of men to the Lindenwood community for many years. If the Board is ready to endorse a particular approach to this problem we would then move ahead with the next steps, and it would seem to

me that there are several facts the Board should consider in its deliberation of this matter.

(1) We now have facilities that could be temporarily shared with a new mens college during the initial founding years of that institution.

For the years immediately ahead it is very clear that we could make Ayres and Butler halls all available for the housing of men. Thus,

by careful planning in the use of those two facilities, we could

accommodate 150 men in residence. Together with 50 commuting males

this would give us a 200-man compliment of students rather readily

without construction of dormitory facilities.

(2) Our dining hall is adequate for more students than we now have. By

plans which will go into effect next year we could without any doubt

accommodate the male students of a coordinate school for an indefinite

period of time in dining facilities.

(3) Our library, currently being expanded, will be very adequate for a

student body of as much as 1,200.

(4) Our faculty is now operating at a student-faculty ratio of something

in the order of 9 to 1. This is too low for economic operation. Men

could be introduced into the picture, particularly into upper-divisional

classes, with no increase in the size of the faculty. Our preliminary

studies indicate that there would be very great economic gains

eventually if we could build up the upper-divisional enrollment.

(5) Our Science Building, fine structure that it is, has sufficient

capacity for many more science majors than we currently have. With

a new Fine Arts Building soon under construction, we tentatively

believe that emphasis at the mens college could be on mathematics

and the communications arts.

Thus it seems to us at this stage in our planning that we could plan a new men's college, using land on our back campus long held for this purpose, have the work done by an imaginative architect after we have completed our planning of program and have carefully defined the nature of the college and its relationship to Lindenwood, and while we are raising money for construction we could loan facilities to the new college on our present campus. Actually, the costs of launching the new college now seem to us to be less than we expected when we began our planning.

It would seem to me that this ought to all be accompanied by a financial picture. Attached to this report you will see a draft which indicates my own thinking at this time about the long-range financial needs of the college. You will see that we are providing for growth of endowment as well as capital investment in plant. The statement should not be taken as final. I have developed it in my office with the help of my associates, and I am sure that we will make many modifications if you authorize us to proceed with our planning. Nevertheless, I am convinced that it in general reflects the dimension of financial support we will need, which leads me to my final observation.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Lindenwood College has reached the stage in its history in which a major capital campaign must be launched. I would suggest that it be launched so that it will culminate in 1977, our 150th anniversary year. It ought to be staged so that we will have raised certain amounts of money by certain dates between now and 1977 and in all probability professional fund raising counsel ought to help us in at least planning the fund raising schedule and campaign. I must point out that we not only need capital gift income, we need operational income. We must all make every possible effort to win the financial support that our college deserves.

We have a new program which I have every confidence will prove to be sound and worthy. We are attracting very good students, although too few in number. We

are able to bring very outstanding faculty people because of the quality of our program and our educational philosophy at the college. We must do what all other good colleges do: increase annual support for operational purposes. On this I need the help of the Board, and it's clear that, as we consider new people for the Board and the problem of enlarging the Board, the need for this continuous emphasis on financial help, in addition to the likelihood of an extensive capital drive, must be kept in mind. I would request that the recommendations made in this report and the attached long-range financial needs statement not be publicly distributed and, of course, not be looked upon as final views.