

Report from the President

I have the honor of presenting the annual report of Case Western Reserve University for the year ending June 30, 1979.

During the past year we completed the process of setting objectives for the University for the five years ahead. This continued an effort begun in 1974 with the development of goals to be achieved by 1980. Most of those objectives have been realized. Thus, we set our sights on new levels of achievement in teaching, scholarship, research, service and management.

In the discussions leading to agreement about new objectives, the importance of setting attainable short-term goals was a basic premise. Consequently, little formal attention was given to the subtle and abstract interaction between goals for the University, our aspirations for it and our expectations. Because I think our aspirations and expectations have a strong influence on what we do and how we feel about the University, I want to discuss them briefly.

Since aspirations reflect our hopes and dreams for the University, it is appropriate to hold them at a level just short of fantasy. High hopes stimulate an institution and fire its ambition. Without the press and pull of such forces there is little likelihood that great deeds will be done, that bright new ideas will emerge or that bold steps will be taken. But there is a price for this. One of the costs is unrelenting financial pressure. A university in comfortable financial circumstances is likely to have only modest aspirations. Another consequence is frequent frustration, perhaps even chronic disappointment. Aspirations, if realized, have been set too low. When they are at their proper level we must eternally pursue them, never quite reaching, often not even coming close. Occasionally I sense there is disappointment about Case Western Reserve and suggest we should not be discouraged by it. After all, it is the result of high hopes. It is such dreams that will keep the University reaching for new heights. Let us keep our aspirations high so they can help lead our University to greatness.

Expectations, however, must be viewed differently. They are concerned with more immediate results. Also, they tend not to be remote and lofty like aspirations, but realistic and presumably attainable. It is important, therefore, that expectations be carefully developed so that they do not exceed what can in fact be done. Actual circumstances should govern. Measurable elements such as time, resources and organization should be the determining factors in setting expectations.

While I think that our high aspirations for the University are appropriate, I often feel that our expectations are wishful. We may be asking for too much, too soon. Western Reserve University, at the time of federation with Case in 1967, was a substantial but uneven university with many reminders of its earlier "streetcar college" character. Until the 1960's it lacked the coherence and identity of other research universities, in part because its strengths were scattered across professional schools, but also because it was not primarily a residential enterprise. Case Institute at that time had only a short history, no more than a few years of recognized success at the graduate level. It had burst through its limits as a good but local school for engineering and science with the enrollment expansion and research funding generated by the nation's reaction to Sputnik. In combination, these institutions complement and strengthen each other and form the basis for a major university. But the early years of this combination were filled with difficulty. The problems of organizing the new institution, the unforeseen financial crisis, the change in enrollment patterns as public higher education expanded and improved and the uproar over Vietnam were serious impediments to the proper development of a good university. Even under favorable conditions it takes many generations to build an institution with strength and quality and to have it known and recognized as great. In the dozen years of its existence Case Western Reserve has not yet had the time or stable conditions needed for reaching the level of prominence and promise we all expect it to achieve.

In particular, I believe our present expectations for Western Reserve College are unrealistic. In thinking about the College it is important to remember that not until four years ago did its leadership have any authority over faculty and budget in the liberal arts. Before that time responsibility in these areas was divided in ways that made this College and its predecessors unable to function properly, even though the individual scholarly achievements of some of its faculty members were widely recognized. Even now, under far better administrative order, a large proportion of the education received by its students lies under the academic and financial jurisdiction of persons not connected with the College. This is a problem which we are increasingly willing to discuss, but until it is successfully resolved, the capacity of Western Reserve College to reach its full potential is limited.

Indeed, after considering its history, I think it is re-

markable that the College has reached its present level of strength and quality. I am certain, also, that it will continue to grow and prosper, but not at a rate which will yield soon the equivalent of Swarthmore or Princeton.

Thus, let me urge that we keep our ambitions high but our expectations practical. Before we can achieve the next level of success and recognition we must take the time needed to correct conditions standing in our way. We must also, perhaps over an even longer time, concentrate on improving the quality of our programs, our scholarship, our faculty and our students. We are being watched and measured constantly. Only when our house is in order, and after we have shown that we can deliver a broad program of high quality research and education over many years, will the world bestow upon our University the recognition it so urgently seeks.

As the debates about the new objectives went on, there emerged a strong sense that we have failed to make the University widely enough known, adequately understood and properly appreciated. These conclusions seem right but I do not think they indicate failure or lack of proper effort. Great universities, in my judgment, are recognized for their merits, not for their publicity. While it is possible that an elaborate public relations campaign might create an instant image, it is also likely that the recognition earned thereby would not affect the judgment about us by those whose approval is most important. Our peers in other institutions will measure us by our standards and our product, and no gilding of the lily will affect their conclusions. Our prospective students will put more weight on the views of our present students than upon how often we are mentioned in the news. Our success in recruitment of students and teachers rests largely on how well we have excited and satisfied those already here. Failures in teaching, scholarship and campus life cannot be hidden, excused or accounted for through public relations.

I have said before in these reports that we have a remarkable university with an astonishing record of progress, success and courageous action. I have asked why it is so easy to scold about its flaws and so hard to shout about its virtues. I believe that all of us, students, teachers, administrators, trustees, overseers, alumni and friends, are responsible for our visibility and recognition. I do not think we can succeed by assigning this responsibility to a few persons who claim to be professionals in the art of changing public opinion. No doubt, we can do many things better in telling our story and we must see that shortcomings in our efforts are corrected and missed opportunities seized. But we all share the responsibility for making this fine University better understood and appreciated. Let me urge every member of the University to recognize and meet that challenge.

The year we have just completed was quietly successful in most respects. I would call it a year of plain progress. What marks it best is that the University moved forward in its entirety. In virtually every part there were

developments, seldom dramatic but usually important, that taken together made the University noticeably stronger. Elsewhere in this document many of these accomplishments are reported. Several items deserve special notice, however, and I would like to mention them.

The scholarly quality of our faculty is reflected in the level of sponsored research at the University. Despite restrictions on the growth of funds available nationally for research, awards to the University rose by nearly \$9 million over the previous year, a 28 percent increase—with the most dramatic increase occurring at the School of Medicine. This is clear evidence of strong quality and a tribute to the scholarly vigor of our faculty. Students from both of our colleges formed a team which took top awards in a national mathematics competition. The scholastic aptitude scores of entering freshmen, already very high, notched up again this year, defying once more a national trend more than a decade long of declining performance on these admissions tests. The annual alumni funds set new records reaching a total above \$2 million, with every alumni group but one exceeding its goal. And in a year already conspicuous for successful fund raising, the generosity of John McCalla Harris, a graduate of Adelbert College and the Law School, gave the University the largest gift in its history, a bequest of nearly \$8 million to provide endowment support for the liberal arts.

Curricular improvement is difficult to measure and only time can prove the wisdom of such change. Yet, it is important for faculties to seek better ways to organize and deliver their academic programs. There is always great resistance to these efforts. Thus, making change in the academic program is noteworthy for it demands a mixture of imagination, skill and persistence not often found in higher education. It is encouraging to list four significant examples of curricular reform accomplished last year.

-At Western Reserve College, faculty members created the elements of a core curriculum to be available to freshmen entering in 1979. The core curriculum succeeds the venerable distribution system and the more recent "major-minor-minor." Its intent is to require undergraduates in the College to gain both breadth and depth in pursuing the baccalaureate degree.

-Case Institute of Technology, where the core curriculum concept has been in use since the 1950's, began planning during the past year to offer cooperative education as an option for Case undergraduates. The success of "co-op" depends heavily on the willingness of faculty to be flexible in structuring course offerings and on employer participation. Initial reports are favorable in both respects. The program will begin on a modest scale during 1979-80.

-After several years of work, the administration and faculty of the Frances Payne Bolton School of

Nursing have launched a degree program leading to the Doctor of Nursing Degree, a new first professional degree. The program sets a new standard in nursing education, and adds to the reputation of what is already recognized as the nation's finest nursing school. The N.D. program enrolled its first entering class in the Fall of 1979.

- The School of Management has for several years offered special programs designed for practicing managers. During 1978-79, the School's faculty developed a new "Executive M.B.A." degree program for Cleveland area officers and managers with ten or more years of experience. The first group of participants in this program will begin study this Fall.

In each of these instances, a combination of deans and faculty have managed to tap resources that already exist within the institution to extend, strengthen or redefine their academic offerings, and to build important relationships with other institutions and with corporations and governmental agencies. Increasingly, as illustrated by the growing and successful international focus in the programs of the School of Applied Social Sciences, these relationships will be with other nations. I believe that this mixture of imagination, economy and ingenuity will characterize successful curriculum development in higher education for much of the next decade. Case Western Reserve is fortunate to have acquired these skills early.

Similar skills are called for in improving the University's campus, a task made both more interesting and more challenging by the proximity of some 30 institutional neighbors here in University Circle. Since the early 1970's, after the completion of new facilities for the Schools of Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing and Law, we have concentrated on modifications within buildings, achieving considerable success in the appearance and efficiency of several, and on improvements in landscaping. University Circle is an extraordinary setting for a university, and the efforts of the last few years have produced a campus that is more attractive, more comfortable and more enjoyable than those of most metropolitan universities. In contrast to comments of only a decade ago, last year's undergraduate yearbook, *Vis-a-Vis*, noted:

"The campus has many different faces as its students do. Each of us has a memory connected with certain places here. Each of us feels more at peace in one place than in another. Sometimes it all comes together, and the campus spreads itself around you in its familiar roads, its shortcuts, mailboxes, shady spots and potholes. It has become your territory."

Since 1973 the University has not had an operating deficit, although at no time during these years have all of the management centers maintained balanced budgets. Each new year, however, the University's total budget includes less calculated risk and provides an in-

creased degree of financial flexibility. When the fiscal year ended on June 30, 1979, the University showed annual expenses of \$104.3 million and a modest \$45,799 surplus. Small as it is, that surplus is the largest in the University's history.

When I became Acting President in 1970 the budget called for expenses of about \$70 million and a deficit that exceeded \$4 million. Many people, including faculty, deans, staff and donors, have cooperated to change the financial picture from dark to bright. Even so, I often wonder whether the severe financial pressures we feel each year will ever be reduced. Although inflation contributes to the strain, our financial stress comes mainly from two sources. One is our aspirations which cause us constantly to seek better facilities, equipment, salaries and services. The other is our inability to drop unnecessary or unsuccessful programs and activities. I think we may have done more of this than most universities but we continue to carry a considerable burden of excess baggage. In part, this is because we are, as universities should be, humane, and in part because we lack the will to attack our weakness. This, I fear, is the natural condition of human institutions, public and private, whether run for profit or not.

Last year the level of gifts from private sources to the University reached a new high. Almost \$41 million was recorded in cash received, pledges and deferred gift commitments. When these results are compared with those of other institutions, we will once again stand near the top of the list. This is a tribute to the hard work of many people and the generosity of our alumni and friends. It is also a testimonial to the University's quality and character, and in some degree a rebuttal to those who claim we are not widely recognized or appreciated.

We now approach the closing phases of a major fund raising campaign, the \$215 million RESOURCES Program. As the fiscal year ended in June, progress toward that objective was well over \$140 million. The percent of the total campaign goal covered by gifts received matches closely the percent of campaign time spent. But since many of the largest gifts were received early in the effort we will have to pray and work with redoubled vigor if we are to reach our goal in 1981.

This is the last report I will write as President of Case Western Reserve. For ten years I have enjoyed my work as head of this splendid institution. The thoughtful and generous cooperation and support of many people has made this job pleasant and satisfying. I can look back and see that together we have made fine progress in our plan to build a great University. I can look ahead with confidence and optimism to the day when Case Western Reserve is known everywhere for the quality of its teaching and research. I want to give hearty thanks to all who have helped me and the University press on toward its destiny.

Louis A. Toepfer
President of the University

October 1979

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