

CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

During the Second World War, the Office of Scientific Research and Development supplied vast sums of money to universities for the salaries and facilities of their scientific faculties in order that they might more quickly and effectively carry forward research of potential value to our military efforts. The relations of the Federal Government to the private and public universities of our country were thus profoundly altered.

As the creation of the National Science Foundation and the development of the fund-granting activities of the National Institutes of Health and the Office of Naval Research were debated during the succeeding 5 years, three concerns were frequently voiced. Would universities be encouraged to expand their scientific activities with Federal funds that might suddenly be withdrawn and thus leave the universities in a precarious financial condition? Would large Federal grants discourage the grants from State governments and the gifts from private individuals and foundations which had kept our universities free and strong? Would the Federal Government gradually gain control of university policies and administration? Ten years after the enactment of the National Science Foundation Act, it is appropriate to consider those concerns in the light of what has happened during this new era of scientific activity in the United States.

Federal support of science in our universities is now generally recognized as a proper and necessary function of the National Government. Few would deny that more research, more well-trained scientists, more general understanding of science and its role in our culture are essential to our national life. Consequently, few would hold that these vital needs should be ignored by the Federal Government and left entirely to unplanned support by local agencies and generous individuals. Dramatic evidence of this widely recognized responsibility of the Government is found in the progressive increase, from \$3.5 million to \$155 million, in the National Science Foundation budget, approved by the Administration and appropriated by the Congress. It is unthinkable that the National Government will ever withdraw or even curtail its assistance to our universities for these activities of vital importance to our nation. If that were to happen, the continued life of our universities would be gravely threatened. We have taken steps that cannot be retraced.

A traditional custom of our country that is of inestimable value is the financial support by private individuals of universities and museums of

art, hospitals and research laboratories, musical organizations and libraries. This has been done to a degree unequalled in other countries; it gives the giver a desirable sense of responsible partnership in the great cultural institutions of our country. Those who feared that grants from the National Science Foundation for research and fellowships in our universities would suppress such private giving should have been reassured by the fact that some of our largest State universities have steadily received vast sums from countless donors. Governmental assistance has often stimulated private giving provided the burden of taxation has not been too heavy. In any event, it is heartening to observe that during the years in which our Foundation has been providing more and more funds for our universities, the universities have been receiving more assistance than ever before from individuals, private foundations, and industry. Annual alumni giving, endowment campaigns, new foundations, fund-raising organizations, such as the American Cancer Society, have provided a greatly increased flow of gifts for research and education which largely supplement the grants from our Foundation. It is not unreasonable to assume that the Foundation has catalyzed this increased and more widespread support of science.

Because universities render so many vital services to society and comprise so many young men and women, they are subject to countless and conflicting pressures. Students and students' parents, the general public and the public press, philanthropists and trustees make various demands which sometimes deflect the university from its unique and proper functions. Those primary functions are: training the mind and ennobling the spirit, the discovery and diffusion of knowledge. It is natural and proper that the faculties should recognize their responsibility and respect their ability to fulfill these high missions of the university without interference from misguided enthusiasts outside the academic world. In truth, we can say that the National Science Foundation has been sensitive to these appropriate desires of scholars; in modesty, we can say that the Foundation has strengthened our universities without encroaching on their prerogatives or impairing their self-determined policies.

We have been aided by scientists from the faculties of many universities in thus protecting the freedom of all universities against the dominating influence of needed money. All requests for financial assistance, all applications for fellowships are judged by committees of scientists who are versed in relevant fields of science. Such committees may sometimes be too conservative, unimaginative, or influenced by personal prejudices; generally, however, they represent the best judgments available among scientists who are selflessly devoted to the furtherance of sci-

ence and their universities. Beyond the judgments of these committees, the final responsibility rests with the National Science Board. We are now formulating plans for diffusing our responsibility more widely and vesting it in part in the universities in which research is done.

We recognize a primary responsibility to the universities which are among the most vital and enduring institutions of our nation and of all the civilized world.

DETLEV W. BRONK,
Chairman, National Science Board.