

by James B. Conant in *Shaping Educational Policy*, the compact will strive for better cooperation between the educational community on one hand and governors and state legislatures on the other. It will also provide a clearinghouse for educational data, develop proposals for adequate financing of education and make recommendations to federal agencies; but it will have no authority to make policy.

A steering committee that met in New York in December adopted a six-month budget of \$147 000 and started to search for a \$40 000-a-year executive director. Although the compact was adopted by educational and political

leaders from every state, and most states have already extended their unofficial approval, it will not become effective until at least ten states ratify it. The Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Danforth Foundation of St. Louis are supporting the compact until state contributions are available.

Despite widespread criticism of the states for abdicating their educational responsibilities, many educators and public officials fear collaboration between politicians and the schools. Elvis Stahr, president of Indiana University, believes that the compact's constitution might not withstand political influence. He said at the December meet-

ing that he did not think governors and legislators should formulate education policy. Criticism from another quarter has come from the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges, which questioned the need for the compact and stated that it would not adequately represent higher education. Nevertheless, the compact's modest beginnings are not expected to threaten any organization, and if it can contribute in any way toward greater state involvement in higher education and development of nationwide standards of graduate degrees, it will have more than justified its existence.

J. Herbert Hollomon discusses federal support of science

Few men in government are more persistent than J. Herbert Hollomon in urging that science serve the basic needs of the society that supports it. Appointed assistant secretary of commerce for science and technology by President Kennedy in 1962, Hollomon has consistently endeavored to use the resources of government to advance American technology. The recently enacted State Technical Services Act, which Hollomon conceived and supported through the Congress, will enable thousands of small businesses and industrial plants across the country to keep abreast of technological innovations.

But basic science at this time, and physics in particular, can scarcely afford to have federal support diverted to technology. We interviewed Hollomon and asked him if he thought it would be necessary to shift emphasis away from basic science and toward the application of technology to national problems, such as transportation and air pollution.

We have basic science bias

"I think it is extremely important to continue our support of basic physics, chemistry and, particularly, biophysics and biochemistry," Hollomon replied. "But I also believe we are biased toward thinking that science related to, say, the stimulation of transportation systems, is somehow not good science. Now, in a sense this kind

of science is not as fundamental as nuclear physics, but it is nevertheless first-rate science.

"Basic is basic to the beholder, and applied is applied. For instance, we support some work in the National Bureau of Standards in plasma physics. This work is basic research. The reason we support it, however, is because we believe that plasma physics will contribute in some direct or indirect way to the measurement capability of the country. Now, does this make it basic or applied? The answer depends on who looks at it. I think it's much more important to look at research in terms of either the institution that does it or the institution that supports it, and not in terms of how basic it is. I really don't know what 'basic research' means, and I don't think anybody else knows. I can define it any way I want, and I can give you all sorts of figures on research activity that will be affected by slight changes in the definition of 'basic research'.

"Some intellectual activity that is important to understand the world in which we live is not concerned with nuclear physics or solid-state physics. It is concerned with other important problems, and it needs to grow at a more substantial rate that it has grown in the past. Now, since our R and D budget will continue to grow, I think the real question is what the rate of growth will be—not whether any part of the budget will be cut back."



HOLLOMON

Do you think we have an effective decision-making process for the allocation of federal funds?

"To answer the question of effectiveness we have to answer another question—does the process operate? It *does* operate, but I feel there is something lacking in our system. As long as we have a rapid, indefinite rate of growth, no one really worries about allocation very much because the pie is growing—and as the pie grows, pieces of the pie grow along with it.

"The problem of allocation comes, however, when there are more things to do, or more interests, or more ideas or significant fields to work in than we can afford. I think that time is coming. Our system of allocation operates very well for the established fields, the fields for which there are scientific leaders. But it seems to me that mainly because of the project-grant system and