

"One of the baffling problems of contemporary democracy is the difficulty of seeing through the maze of government to find who is responsible. With constitutional autonomy the will of the people acting through the legislature and the governor would set the goals and see if the goals have been reached; the governing board would be responsible for overseeing the state colleges in the public interest. The problem that now exists is that officials for a variety of state agencies can make decisions affecting the day-to-day operations of the institutions. Therefore, responsibility is determined by a number of officials who are also responsible for a variety of programs other than governing state colleges. We feel that the Board of Trustees and the five institutions for which they are responsible suffer from this situation which makes it very difficult for them to carry out their mandate.

II. CONSTITUTIONAL AUTONOMY AND EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT

"Our second contention is that providing constitutional autonomy for the state colleges would lead to more effective and efficient management of this highly important public responsibility.

"The state colleges in the next years will complete their transformation from status as single-purpose teacher-training institutions to a major segment of a broadly expanded state system of higher education. When these institutions were a small division of the State Department of Education, they needed much help in planning even routine operations. The five colleges individually and collectively were not equipped to make the kinds of decisions alone that could be made by a large institution

with the staff to plan and coordinate its own affairs.

"In 1962 the Curlett Commission recommended that the state colleges be placed under their own governing board which 'should be charged with the single task of governing these institutions.'² The Commission also recommended that governing boards be granted independence and autonomy. On this matter the report stated that the Commission 'regards the right of any board of trustees to govern the internal affairs of an academic institution under its jurisdiction as essential both to the freedom and the efficiency of higher education. For it is through freedom that higher education attains its highest level of performance in the tasks of conserving, disseminating and advancing knowledge.'³

"Thus the basic recommendation in favor of autonomy is not new. Justification for it may be found in earlier studies such as the two reports by The Committee on Government and Higher Education, *The Efficiency of Freedom* and *The Campus and the State*. Both make the point that efficiency and freedom for higher education are interdependent and that to withhold the power to govern themselves from the institutions and their governing boards is a handicap not only from the point of view of higher education but for efficient government as well.

"On the extremely important practical application of the role of the Executive in allocating the state's

² COMMISSION FOR THE EXPANSION OF PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION IN MARYLAND, PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION IN MARYLAND, 1961-1975, at 45 (June 1962).

³ *Ibid.*