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COMMUNITY SERVICE: FACT OR FICTION
1.The University and its Faculty
2. The Corporation and Corporate Executives

By

John S. Hoyt, Jr.

Department of Agricultural Economics

University of Minnesota
Institute of Agriculture
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

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NOTE: This Staff Paper contains copies of two related papers given at different locations the week of November 4, 1970. They have been reproduced together as an economy measure in printing.

* Professor and Program Leader for Special Project Development and Coordination, Agricultural Extension Service and Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, University of Minnesota.

(Staff papers are published without formal review within the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics.)

"From the College Point of View What are the Needs, Tradeoffs and Payoffs of Participation in Community Research and Service?"

Comments
by
John S. Hoyt, Jr.*

at the

Conference for Presidents and Deans

on

Creating a Campus Milieu for
Community Research and Service

St. John's University

Collegeville, Minnesota

November 4, 1970

*Professor, Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics and Program Leader, Special Project Development and Coordination, Agricultural Extension Service, University of Minnesota

Your moderator, Dr. Henry, in a note to the panel members commented that "Perhaps Dr. Hoyt's observations will be somewhat different, coming from an institution that has stressed "service" to its clientele and is much larger than others in the state."

Perhaps so, but in words far better than I can fashion, President Malcolm Moos, speaking at the Communiversity Conference, stated the needs, the tradeoffs, and the payoffs of participation in community research and service.

Let me quote directly from his comments:

1. "Our great universities must undergo major adjustments requiring them to work from problems rather than disciplines, which universities have heretofore been reluctant to do. Here we must shake some people loose from sheltered environments and get them into the scrap."
2. "If we are to move ahead in mastering the difficulties that are smothering society, the focus must be on problems, not subject matter--on solving problems, not the accretion of knowledge."
3. "In my judgment, it means that we have come to a juncture where the professional responsibility of a scholar to his discipline is matched by his professional responsibility to the community."
4. "In short, what we require, and urgently so, are activist academics who will start sometimes with only the vaguest concept of the problem but who will be constantly alert to the cross-overs and intersections and ever able to turn into them quickly and easily."
5. "I believe that the professional responsibility of scholars to their disciplines is matched by their responsibility to their community and, unless such commitment develops--and rigorously so--urban blight will bury us all."

6. "The University must go to the community instead of insisting that the community come to it."
7. "The university must enter into the process of directed change."
8. But of this there can be no doubt: If the University enters the area vigorously, it can over a longer period of time fashion directed change of urban structures to the great benefit of society."

I suspect I could end my remarks at this point on the premise that I have answered the question that has been posed and, coincidentally, have earned some "Brownie Points" with University Central Administration. In a sense, I've satisfied your "needs" by "trading-off" Dr. Moos' impressive analysis--and the "pay-off" for this community service is a modest honorarium for my saying what you want to hear.

But I am reminded of a quotation which I heard about a year ago and which I cannot forget. It goes like this: "In Biblical days it was considered a miracle if an ass were to speak. Today, it is considered a miracle when one keeps his mouth shut."

So, at the risk of censure from my peers and/or my superiors, I feel that I owe you--and myself--some further, candid, comments. They represent my observations from the position from which I view the Goliath of the University--and Higher Education in Minnesota in general--and the David of Community Research and Service. A David which hasn't yet found--at least in my view--his sling, let alone a suitable stone.

Item--President Moo's statement was actually made three years ago last month. With the possible exception of a few programs which have been funded largely from outside sources, I have seen but little evidence that Central Administration in the last three years has been either willing or able to put its money and its faculty resources where its mouth is.

Item--The responsibility of the faculty--as an entity--encompasses resident instruction, research, and continuing education. Very few individual faculty members accept all three responsibilities. Professional rewards and recognition are almost wholly focussed on the first two--resident instruction and research--and the faculty member who happens to be engaged in only the third is regarded by his peers as a "second class citizen"--and all too frequently is rewarded as such.

Item--Academic departments discriminate against faculty engaged in community service programs. Why shouldn't <u>every</u> assistant, associate, or full professor have a <u>right</u>--despite the fact that his job is continuing education--to a faculty appointment in a department in which he holds a degree discipline? Or, alternatively, why should a faculty member who holds an appointment in an academic department be put in a position which forces him to relinquish that appointment in order to progress professionally in a Continuing Education component of the University?

Item--Applied research--that is research which has both a time deadline <u>and</u> a public policy alternative choice purpose--still runs dead last in terms of the interests of most faculty members. Basic research--the study and explanation of behavior in the physical or social sciences--is still the "in thing" in academic departments. Why? I suspect because the rewards for graduate degree theses and professional journal publication--both monetary and psychic rewards--still are the accepted measure of university status.

Item--Universities confer honors such as "Regents' Professor" for excellence in performance as a faculty member. Virtually without exception these honors are for excellence in resident instruction or basic research or (occasionally) for prior performance in public agency service. Simultaneously they confer distinguished service awards on alumni who have demonstrated excellence in performance--and in most cases the performance is in the area of community service.

There are other items that could be cited but my time allocation won't allow for that now.

In summary, I am endorsing wholly President Moos' evaluation of needs for community service and research and in fact, his estimate of the payoff in terms of societal gain. But--and from where I sit it is a large but--a restructuring of the value system of the internal trade off costs and benefits is sorely needed if higher education is to really meet its full responsibilities to the community which it purports to serve.

The Corporation and the Executive

John S. Hoyt, Jr.

Colonial Church of Edina

6 November 1970

The Corporation and the Executive

6 November 1970

On Wednesday morning of this week I had the opportunity to speak to a conference of Minnesota College Presidents and Deans about higher education's responsibility to the community. In very summary form I based my comments on two premises:

1. On a statement by University President Malcolm Moos made three years ago. He said, "I believe that the professional responsibility of scholars to their disciplines is matched by their responsibility to their community and, unless such commitment develops--and rigorously so--urban blight will bury us all."

2. On my personal observation that, 3 years and a month later, I have seen no real evidence that either University administration or the community of University scholars had yet developed that commitment. That, in short, they had not "put their money and their efforts where their mouth is."

Community responsibility is not the exclusive province of the scholar however. The corporation and the corporate executive must share the responsibility and I submit that they have individually and collectively failed as dismally as the universities and the scholars.

I want to spend a few minutes attempting to discuss some philosophical rationale which may explain the failure rather than dwell on documenting the fact of failure. Before I do I suspect I owe you some explanation of why, as a professor, I claim some right to speak about the corporation or the corporate executive.

Over the past 30 years I have worked for:

1. A public utility;
2. Private corporations;
3. A federal agency;
4. A not-for-profit corporation;
5. A state agency (as a consultant);
6. Local government (as an elected and appointed official), and
7. The military (in both a commissioned and non-commissioned status).

If you like what you hear that list is called "broad experience"; if you don't, it's called "job-hopping."

So much for attempting to justify my right to an opinion--and to imposing it on you. Why have the corporation--and the corporate executive--failed in their responsibility to the community?

My basic reference--or my "text" is H. A. Overstreet's, "The Mature Mind" written in 1949. I commend it to you highly as a thought provoking treatise on how to grow up.

Let me suggest--based on Overstreet's work--that Adam Smith, in the latter part of the eighteenth century, took command--with his economic philosophy--of the minds and institutions of men.

1. "With or without him, a new way of economic life would have come; for powerful forces of science and technology had made a crumbling feudalism impotent either to control or to release the energies of men. What Adam Smith did was to give these forces direction by providing them with a philosophy and a principle of action: that of economic self interest."

   "To Adam Smith himself this principle was not one of economic anarchy. For him "enlightened self-interest" was synonymous with a responsible concern for the common good. But it was the peculiar fatality of his viewpoint--and even of his phrasing--that it lent itself to misunderstanding and misapplication by immature minds. Whatever he may have intended, his philosophy became, in large measure, a rationalization by which men of driving energy and limited social understanding justified their concentrated pursuit of wealth and their reduction of their fellow men to the status of competitors, workers, and consumers."

2. "The concept of "economic man" not only pitted one individual against another, each absorbed in his own self-interest, but fostered yet another type of human fragmentation: it set one phase of man's nature against other phases. Economic advantage became something that could be pursued by means not subject to supervision by religion or ethics. Thus the life of the individual was divided into compartments, with such soundproof walls between them that a person in his role as "religious man," "civic man," or "domestic man" could not even hear what he said in his role as "economic man." Not only were men divided against themselves, but man was divided against himself."

3. "History sometimes does odd things with the works of men. Adam Smith, writing late in the eighteenth century, aimed to release human energies from arbitrary bonds; but the cumulative nineteenth-century effect of his work was to leave man trapped within a self-interest so narrowly defined that it had no use for many of his creative, rational, and empathic powers.

4. "It is a long psychological road from the "management of a household," or even the "wealth of nations," to "money-making." Yet this is the long road that our civilization has traveled--and in the process of traveling it, men have, in large measure, developed a different character structure. They have learned to attach importance to different phases of their own nature; to laud as commendable different habits and attitudes; to strive for approval and prestige by different means; to seem themselves as differently related to other members of the human group; to have different ambitions, different fears, and a different

"conception of success and failure. They have become, in brief, not members of a household so much as members of a "business civilization"--a money-making civilization."

5. "The making of money, in short, has meant the making of an unprecedented material "prosperity"--for that portion of the planet where the money has been made. It has meant the building of a civilization better equipped with more tools for doing more things rapidly and accurately than any civilization that ever existed before. "Money-making," in a material sense, has unquestionably produced not only many goods, but also much good. When we turn to its psychological influence, however, we are forced to ask whether what it has produced is good enough--or is logically on the way to becoming good enough."

6. "Industrialization has made alike for the unifying of all mankind in bonds of mutual relatedness--so that it has bred the concept of "one world"--and for the dividing of mankind into nations, classes, and "advanced" and "backward" peoples: these latter fit objects for imperialistic exploitation. Also, because it has largely taken from the ordinary person his pre-industrial sense of belonging to his society--of being securely and significantly part of it--our economic system has gradually driven that ordinary person to seek membership in some exclusive-interest group that is set over against other groups. He joins a trade association, or a manufacturers' association, or a union, or a group dedicated to the perpetuation of racial superiority; and in each instance, he gains a sense of belonging by making it less likely than before that his generous imagination will extend to include those human beings that are outside the select group."

7. "Whenever our economic order is challenged, its supporters point with pride to the fact, already noted, that it has raised the material standard of living in those countries where it has been the dominant order. The constant reiteration of this fact would seem to imply that, under industrial capitalism, the raising of the human standard of living has been chief among the "pursuits of men"--that this has been the main focus of their attention and energy; that this has determined their definitions of success and failure. If such were the case, capitalism could clearly show itself to be a force for man's psychological maturing: it would constantly invite him to take on creative responsibility, to employ his imagination to understand the needs of other people, to see the human being as whole and as member of a whole humanity. The plain fact, however, is otherwise: the raising of the standard of living has been, not a chief pursuit, but a by-product; the chief pursuit has been money-making. Where a conflict has arisen between money-making and raising the standard of living, it has been the former that has taken precedence."

8. "Another fact, also, about our strange economy is that it has never been interested in the whole human being, but only in those aspects of his nature from which some monetary profit could be derived. An individual might be important to the system as a worker--a person who could be hired to make certain motions of his hands that would contribute to the production of salable goods. He might be important as a consumer--a person who could be persuaded to turn over his money in exchange for goods. He might be important as an investor--a person with surplus money that could be "hired" to work for a corporation. He might be important as an inventor of new things to be sold. He might be important as the possessor of such psychological know-how as could be relied upon to turn hesitant consumers into eager ones. He might be important as a possessor of prides, ambitions, and affections to the extent that these could be converted into a program of spending. He might be important as a possessor of a "distinguished name" if this name could be hired as advertising copy. But man as man has held slight interest for our economy."

9. "Because ours is a "business civilization," moreover, various institutions that are presumably non-economic in their aims have been relegated to positions of such dependence upon the economic order that they, too, learn to rationalize, compromise, and practice a multitude of small dishonesties. This is true of religious institutions--many of which have learned so adroitly to pretend that you can serve God and Mammon that they now believe it themselves. It is true, also, of educational institutions--many of which have learned only too well and too painfully that the mental activities of their students must be confined to "safe" areas."

   "Where mental dishonesty is made to seem like common sense, or like a fine patriotism, the full maturing of men and women is not likely to be the rule."

10. "Few, today, would argue that our economic system gives most people a fine sense of confidence--in themselves and in the dependability of the culture. Yet everywhere men, women, and children are afraid. Tests, for example, relative to the fears of children in the ten-year-old group show that a dominant fear is that of the father's losing his job. This means that we are distorting our children with a fear that is laid upon them at a time of life when they are helpless to do anything about it. Not only the children of men, but the men themselves, are everywhere afraid of losing their jobs--or of not getting an advance--or of being laid on the shelf in middle life. They and their wives are afraid of not making a good impression, of not being liked by the right people, of not being invited to the right places."

    "Ours has become a fear-economy--and to that extent, it is an economy inimical to the full maturing of the human individual."

What Overstreet has said, as I understand it, is that we have falsely equated the "common good" of the economic man with the Christian ethic of the "Golden Rule." I probably have no more "guts" than the rest of you to change overnight--but I do have a question; where and how do we go from here?