

REMARKS: PANEL OF CHANCELLORS

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I was pleased to see "alliances" chosen as the focus of this year's conference. I truly believe that the defining characteristic of the next decade will be "partnerships" and the need to collaborate across disciplinary, institutional, state and national boundaries to contend with complex challenges and maximize our opportunities. I am personally, and the University of Missouri is institutionally, committed to building cross-university alliances.

I also much appreciate the wit and good humor we bring to our exchange of ideas at this conference. I appreciate the comments so many of you have made. As a concluding speaker, let me take a minute to respond to a few questions and issues, and then I'll mention collaborative initiatives I value at the University of Missouri (MU).

I agree that information technology will continue to foster competition and we will have to work harder to hold market share in providing educational programs. At this point, there are a few of our faculty colleagues who share this concern, but, at least at MU, it is my impression that most do not.

I am troubled by our discussion of measurements. Sometimes we only measure because we can measure. At the national level, I am concerned by the current dialogue within the American Association of Universities (AAU) about membership rules. I am concerned that the AAU is too tradition-bound and inward-looking as it considers this important issue. If the group were to re-examine its purposes, this might lead to different conclusions about the size of the organization and the types of criteria that should be applied for membership. Clearly, I see the need for a larger organization.

Related to Luis Proenza's talk, I agree that we are in a period of change and there are areas in which change is very rapid. There will be both risks and opportunities. Regardless of what we do or don't do, there will be internal change. What is the best way? We should approach it calmly and with reason. If we react with strong resistance to what is coming externally, it will become negative in impact.

In regard to administrative hierarchy, I believe we must make it less rigid. The old style is to live within "silos" so that communication goes up and down. Some administrators now take a more permissive view and recognize that effective teamwork requires us to break down the silos or communicate

across the silos. This is terribly important. If we cannot get beyond the old style of communication, partnerships are impossible.

In regard to teaching and learning, the MU faculty have worked hard the past 10-15 years to improve the quality of the learning experience for undergraduates. The faculty at MU have revamped the general education curriculum and have created living/learning environments, and we've put significant resources into both efforts. In regard to teaching assistants, we recognize their necessity and value within institutions of the type that we represent, but it is very important that we deal well with the issues of proper support, proper training, and proper screening. Also, at MU, we are trying hard to build a bridge between our research and undergraduate education missions. We are doing so by involving more and more of our undergraduates in our research programs and this makes unique use of the type of institution that we are. Of course, improvement of the undergraduate learning environment has brought additional pressure on individual faculty members to work harder and do more. Finding the proper balance is a constant tension, and it must involve the reward system. While some faculty would rightly complain that we have not gone far enough, it is clear to me that today we do reward a quality job at the undergraduate level much better than was the case in 1982.

I liked Marc Johnson's comments about "centers." One important point I would like to make is that partnerships begin at home. An important focus at the University of Missouri over the past 15 years has been to encourage and reward interdisciplinary research activity on the campus. This has been particularly important for our faculty in the colleges of agriculture, food and natural resources, medicine, veterinary medicine, arts and sciences, human environmental sciences, and engineering. Through mission enhancement we continue to strengthen linkages and build new ones. Two of our earliest ventures were the Food for the 21st Century and the Molecular Biology programs. Both were started in the 1980's with state support and both have subsequently attracted very able new faculty and significant federal and other outside support. Based on the foundation provided by these two programs, it was an easy step to expand the focus to the life sciences and the development of interrelated research programs devoted to a safer, more abundant food supply, improved health care, and cleaner air and water. As we have become increasingly aware of the complexity and interrelated nature of all organisms, the critical need for an integrated approach to life sciences research has become clear.

We believe the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center will become a world class contributor to the field of plant science. This is a joint venture of plant scientists in the Midwest, involving MU, Washington University, the Missouri Botanical Garden, and the Monsanto Company. We have since been joined by the University of Illinois and Purdue. I would welcome participation

by Kansas State, Nebraska and the University of Kansas. We want the number of participants to grow so that it is truly a Midwestern operation. This unusual partnership combines public universities, a private university, a non-profit corporation and a for-profit corporation. It has been a very interesting new model to launch and manage. I think it's important that I explain Monsanto's role. The corporation is represented on the Center's board of directors, but is insulated from influencing its research program. We have a large board of directors and Monsanto has only one seat on a governing body of 14. Monsanto provided land and funding, but our plan is to develop some endowment through fund-raising and to fund most research through competitive research grants. We break ground next week on a facility that will require about 45 million of the almost 200 million now in place.

The incredible variety of research alliances at MU is worth noting—and celebrating. One of the most successful in my experience is FAPRI, the Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute affiliated with MU and Iowa State University. In studies ranging from the farm to the international marketplace, FAPRI uses comprehensive data and computer modeling systems to analyze the complex economic interrelationships of the food and agriculture industry and prepared baseline projections each year for the U.S. agricultural sector and international commodity markets. Another success story is RUPRI, the Rural Policy Research Institute. RUPRI brings together MU, Nebraska, Iowa State, and the University of Ulster, along with numerous other collaborating organizations and 80 universities in 40 states. A major RUPRI focus is multi-university, interdisciplinary teams working with legislative and administrative decision makers in two areas: (1) the rural impacts of Medicare reform and the Balanced Budget Act; and (2) welfare reform and workforce policy.

There are many other examples at MU (as would be the case for the other institutions represented here), and I will not go further in providing descriptions. I will simply close where I started—with a strong emphasis on the importance of alliances and partnerships coupled with the observation that, indeed, they are more difficult to organize and manage, yet they are the key to achieving much more than would be possible in isolation. Collaboration also requires very tightly focused goals and targeted energy—both to provide the infrastructure within a given institution and in regard to the institutions which these partnerships successfully create.