

higher education more willing and more able to enrol needy students. Combined with the fact that students from low income families will be eligible for the BOG grants, the effect of the bill, if it is fully funded, should be to increase the accessibility of higher education to financially handicapped students.

In detail, the institutional support grants contained in the conference report will be parcelled out according to a complicated formula. Forty-five per cent of the funds allotted for support grants will be given on the basis of the number of students who receive the new Basic Educational Opportunity Grants, another 45 per cent of the money will be shared out according to the total amount of money received by students at each institution from the old educational opportunity grants, work study and National Defense Educational Assistance loans, and the final 10 per cent will be distributed on the basis of \$200 for every postgraduate student at each institution.

Part of the opposition to the measure is based on the fact that it might work against students from middle-income families, but another criticism that has been voiced is that what is needed at present is immediate and uncomplicated federal relief from financial ills.

Many college presidents have argued, in their letters to Mrs Green and in other public statements, that the conference report should be turned down by Congress, that another bill simply continuing federal funding in 1973 at the same level as in 1972 should be rushed through, and that the provisions of the Higher Education Bill should be thought out more thoroughly and incorporated into another bill which would be introduced later. Opponents of the conference committee's institutional aid formula also point out that since the amount of money is contingent on other provisions in the bill, unless all the bill's proposals are fully funded—which is unlikely—the total amount of money available for the desperately needed institutional grants will be reduced.

Although the institutional aid provisions of the bill go to the heart of the federal government's relationships with the higher education community, it is the antibusing provisions that have stirred up the most public dissent, and which placed the whole bill in jeopardy. Antibusing amendments clearly have no place in a measure dealing with higher education, but the bill was used as a convenient vehicle for opponents of busing to force through Congress as quickly as possible a measure that would put a halt to court-ordered desegregation.

Leader of the move to tack the antibusing amendments on to the House

bill was Mr John Ashbrook, the arch-conservative from Ohio who has been running against President Nixon for the Republican presidential nomination because he believes many of Nixon's policies are too liberal. Ashbrook and several antibusing supporters tacked an amendment on to the higher education bill when it was first passed by the House of Representatives. The amendment would have prevented federal courts from ordering schools to be desegregated by busing students from one district to another.

The chief problem for the higher education provisions of the bill was that busing has emerged as one of the most highly charged issues in this election year. There is reported to be a strong public sentiment against using forced busing of children to achieve racial balance in the public schools. George Wallace rode the issue with much success throughout his election campaigning, and President Nixon preserved his electoral base by sending to Congress a bill which would have placed a moratorium on all court ordered busing.

The bill that emerged from the conference committee was less stringent than the hard-line measure passed by

the House of Representatives, although it went further than the amendment tacked on by the Senate. Essentially, it provides that when a federal court orders busing to achieve racial balance, the local groups need not comply until their appeals have been exhausted. The existing law, based on a 1969 decision of the Supreme Court, is that busing should begin immediately it is ordered by a federal court. In the event, the House of Representatives passed the bill by a vote of 218 to 180.

What will the White House do with the bill? It seems likely that the measure will be signed by President Nixon without too much delay, because although its busing provisions do not go as far as he originally wanted, effectively the measure gives him the moratorium he requested.

The higher education community is therefore likely to get the financial shot in the arm that it has been seeking for a long time. Unfortunately, however, because of the delay caused in part by the antibusing fight, and in part by the differences in philosophy over institutional support, the money will arrive in the universities too late to affect planning for next year.

## GRADUATE STUDENTS

### Enrolment Sags

by our Washington Correspondent

THE shrinking job market, cutbacks in enrolment by private universities and the scarcity of funds for student support caused graduate enrolment in science departments to decline by 5 per cent between 1970 and 1971. This finding, the fruit of a survey of nearly 3,000 science departments conducted by the National Science Foundation, is further evidence of the downward trend noted in 1970, when graduate enrolment declined by about 2 per cent, and the reduction is heaviest among part-time students.

Particularly affected are the top twenty institutions—those that receive the most money for research and development from the federal government and which were awarded the greatest number of NSF fellowships.

Graduate enrolment in these institutions declined by 8 per cent between 1970 and 1971. And it seems that private universities have been forced to cut back their graduate intake rather more drastically than have the public universities—the respective declines are 6 per cent and 1 per cent.

One reason for the decline that is evident from the NSF survey is simply a lack of support for graduate students. The number of students supported by fellowships and traineeships in 1971 dropped by 10 per cent compared with the previous year, and while the federal government supported some 37 per cent of all graduate students in 1969, it supported only 32 per cent in 1971. Moreover, the full impact of recent reductions in federal traineeships—particularly those administered by the NSF itself and by the National Institutes of Health—will not be felt until this year.

Other findings from the survey include:

**Table 1** Per Cent Change in Graduate Enrolment in Doctorate Departments, by area of Science and Enrolment Status, 1969-71 \*

Area of science	Total		Full time		Part time	
	1969-70	1970-71	1969-70	1970-71	1969-70	1970-71
Total	-0.7	-2.9	†	-1.5	-3.1	-7.9
Engineering	-1.7	-5.7	2.6	-2.0	-8.0	-11.8
Physical sciences	-3.5	-5.6	-3.4	-4.3	-4.1	-14.7
Mathematical sciences	0.3	-5.8	1.3	-4.3	-3.2	-10.9
Life sciences	1.2	-1.1	0.4	0.1	8.1	-10.0
Psychology	1.5	4.2	1.2	4.8	3.8	-0.2
Social sciences	0.5	0.4	-0.6	-0.9	4.0	4.5

\* Data are based on 2,579 doctorate departments reporting in autumn 1969, 1970, and 1971.

† Less than 0.05% change.