

He Must Be Fiscal Expert, Visionary, Lobbyist

Chancellor—Jack of Education Trades

**WANTED:** Well-educated, personable man for a tough job. Duties include those of educator, administrator, fiscal expert, visionary, salesman, and lobbyist. Must also have ability to settle arguments tactfully.



Kerr Hunter Packer Byrne

The Oregon State Board of Higher Education won't run help-wanted ads in its search for a new chancellor, but if it did, the ad would have to read something like the above.

The job of chancellor of the State System requires many men in one, for it's many jobs in one. Charles D. Byrne, state chancellor for five years and secretary of the board for almost 20 years previously, described the duties thusly:

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

"First of all, he's the chief executive officer of the State Board of Higher Education and as such is the responsible head of all the institutions of higher education in the state (two universities, four colleges, medical and dental schools, a technical institute, and a general extension division.)

"He's responsible for the entire gamut of higher education—curricula comes through him to the board; development of physical plants comes through him to the board; finance comes through him to the board, and personnel comes through him to the board.

"These are the big areas. These things originate with the faculty and the presidents of each school, come up through him, and he makes the final recommendation to the board. He can turn down, modify or recommend an institution's requests."

**AN EVEN TOUGHER JOB**

Once all this is done, an even tougher job faces the chancellor, a job involving the qualities of salesman and lobbyist. Another former chancellor, Frederick Hunter, described that portion:

"He has to bring the whole thing together in a single plan to present to the legislature. It's the chancellor's business to formally inform the legislature and the governor of the needs of education."

Once informed of the needs it's up to the legislature to provide the money to make the system work. Steering the system's program through the legislature unscathed is something like trying to put a man on the moon—nobody's been able to do it yet.

**President Re-elected**

Ezra Raymond has been re-elected president of the Eugene chapter of the Oregon School Employees Assn. Other officers are Mel McDerman, secretary, and Earl Strand, records secretary.

The office of chancellor, in fact the entire State System of Higher Education was conceived in strife that raged through the legislature in the 1920s. In those days individual institutions went to the legislature for their operating budget each biennium with an "every school for itself" attitude. Then, as now, the principal institutions were the University of Oregon and Oregon State.

"If one school started a campaign for a new building, the other did everything it could to defeat it," Hunter recalled.

**TO KEEP THE PEACE**

Finally in an attempt to end the academic bloodletting, the legislature created the state system with a policy-making board to keep the peace and run the system.

There were four chancellors before Richards moved up to the office in 1955 from vice chancellor. The first was William Jasper Kerr. Kerr had been president of Oregon State.

Hunter said he believed Kerr never had a chance to get started because of the cries of favoritism that arose from his having been associated with Oregon State.

Hunter, who still lives in Eugene, took over the top post in 1935, and served for the longest period of time—until 1946. Hunter took two steps that he believes went a long way toward improving conditions:

"We were continually assessing problems that affected all the institutions—particularly curricula—by joint committees." The warring officials of Oregon and Oregon State thus found themselves sitting down together to try to work out common problems.

**HUNTER'S SECOND STEP**

Hunter's second step—"Informing the citizenry of the needs of higher education as a unit, instead of presenting the needs of separate institutions. . . This was a continuing presentation. I traveled 25,000 miles a year to allay the distrust that had arisen concerning higher education."

Paul C. Packer succeeded Hunter in 1946 and served until 1950, when he resigned. The state board in its search for a successor turned to Byrne, who had served as board secretary since

the founding of the system 20 years before. Three years later Richards was brought in as vice chancellor and in 1955 Byrne resigned.

Byrne, who also still lives in Eugene, said he believes there has been a definite change in the duties of the chancellor over the 30-year history of the office.

**LACKED AUTHORITY**

"I would say that originally the board and the system did not give the presidents the authority and the autonomy that they later acquired. I felt that the institution executives should have some authority and be the leader of the campus."

But this authority was gradually granted and the freeing of the chancellor from administrative details shifted the accent of his office to overall planning, coordination, and development of higher education in the state, Byrne said.

It is with this latter function in mind that the state board will begin its search for a new chancellor, Board President Henry Cabell told the Register-Guard.

"I feel very strongly about this. We must have a man who is a qualified educator. . . We have to rely on him as an expert in making educational policy decisions, so we want a man whose judgment we can trust."

**RESIGNATION DISCUSSED**

Cabell said he believed the board would also be looking for a tactful administrator, capable of making fair and firm decisions when conflicts arise between institutions—as they still do.

The board informally discussed Richards' resignation and the task of picking a successor at its meeting in Corvallis Saturday. "I would assume that we'll use the same procedure as we've done in the past—it's very much similar to picking a president for one of the institutions," Cabell said.

"We'll begin to look around for people who would be qualified, get as many names as we can, get information on them, compare notes, and get the best man we can," Cabell said.

Richards offered an opinion on the biggest job facing his successor:

"It's the importance of providing to institutions the resources they need to become outstanding. The future chancellor's principal job will be to find resources, and not only from state tax funds."

"This whole area of negotiation with the federal government to bring to Oregon the necessary federal activities (in the academic field) is important."

"I predict that the amount we're presently receiving from the federal government can be raised so that in a short time, one out of every three dollars we have will be in federal funds."

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