

Statement
of
Fred R. Sheheen, Chairman
South Carolina Commission on Higher Education
April 7, 1983

In reviewing events which have transpired since our last meeting, it would be proper for us to consider our positions as appointed public officials for South Carolina.

If your experience has paralleled my own, you have been contacted in person, by phone and by letter by many concerned citizens about the issues which are about to come before us. I have, incidentally, forwarded to each of you copies of letters of all shades of opinion on these issues which have been sent to me personally.

I suggest today that while we may have been discomfited occasionally over the sometimes urgent activity which has intruded into our daily routines, we must recall that we are making important public policy decisions which affect all South Carolinians.

It is neither our province nor our privilege to make these decisions isolated from the currents of public opinion. And that is what you have been hearing during these past weeks.

Opinion has come from interested parties, of course.

Opinion has come from affected institutions, of course.

And opinion has come from plain, ordinary people who are concerned about efficient, economical and available health care for themselves and their families.

It has come from all sides, representing all views. Surely, I have heard from someone on every side of every issue that will come forth here today.

But we should properly accept and digest these opinions, applying the facts at our disposal and our best intellectual efforts in arriving at conclusions today.

The purpose of my remarks is to say that I hope you will accept these intrusions of opinion into your life over the past month as appropriate expressions from your constituents, the people of South Carolina.

It is the way of our system that elected and appointed public officials should be accessible and open, and I hope we all accept our public service roles fully comfortable with that proposition.