

CHAPTER I

A NEW BEGINNING

In the history of American higher education, the decade of the Sixties is already established as a period of radical changes in which colleges and universities, especially in the public sector, grew to unprecedented size and stature and then fell from a pinnacle of public favor and support. The factors responsible for the meteoric rise of higher education are easily discovered. A demographic explosion, economic expansion, the post-Sputnik scientific and technological revolution, and rising social expectations combined to place demands upon colleges and universities which forced their expansion to unthought of limits. By whatever yardstick applied, higher education by the late Sixties had become big business and a determining social and political force in American life. But the late Sixties also marked the beginning of higher education's loss of the public's good will and preferential treatment. The rising political activity within the academic community, the anti-Vietnam war demonstrations and violence of students, and the apparent institutional indifference to public criticism and insistence on accountability—whether singly or in combination—brought higher education into the glaring light of public scrutiny. Confronted by aroused taxpayers, alumni, legislatures, and governing boards in the early Seventies, it nearly seemed that public colleges and universities would not survive their successes of the previous decade.

Illinois State University's period of growth and development began in the late Fifties. Whatever the angle of vision or the standard of measurement, the changes were so rapid and dramatic as to render the institution nearly unrecognizable to its friends and alumni. From a small, somnolent teacher education school, which carefully monitored the manners and morals of the

students and faculty and was still referred to as the “normal school” by townspeople, Illinois State University became within fifteen years a large multipurpose institution whose high-rise buildings dominated the skyline.

At first the pace of growth and expansion was slow and controlled, dictated by institutional choice and limited facilities. Although the university’s new president in 1956, Robert G. Bone, found much that needed doing, one of the most important tasks was to plan for the surge of students expected in the early Sixties when the postwar baby boom would come of college age. In the spring of 1958, a university planning committee, supported by a faculty referendum, recommended a doubling of enrollment by 1967, from 3,100 to 6,200, and laid out a pattern of land acquisition and building construction required to accommodate the additional students. For the time it was an ambitious if not an astounding blueprint for future growth. Eleven new building projects and five additions to existing structures were proposed, a physical expansion that would create an extensive West Campus in an area where the community was accustomed to seeing the University Farm and a number of old barracks used as temporary student housing.

But matters quickly got out of hand, as perhaps experienced by colleges and universities everywhere. Instead of a measured growth to reach its goal of 6,300 students in ten years, the University reached that level in five years (by 1963) and then doubled again by 1968. The reasons for the University’s extraordinary growth from 3,200 students in 1958 to 13,000 in 1968 are not hard to find. As economic prosperity, rising personal incomes, and changing social values combined with a population explosion in the late Fifties to make a college education both desirable and attainable, the proportion of Illinois’ high school graduates entering college increased at an unanticipated rate. Moreover, under pressure from parents, public school administrators, and business and industry, the State was confronted with the necessity to expand public higher education facilities either by greater enrollments at established schools or by creating new institutions. The latter was the slower and far more costlier solution, while enrollment expansion was the quickest, cheapest method to meet public demand and thus initially determined public policy for higher education in the State. The result was

that the University grew larger than planned whether it was desirable or not.

Limitations of physical space rather than the preference of the administration and faculty became the controlling factor over the University's rate of growth. First it was the shortage of student housing, then classroom facilities, but always the shortage of land and money which confronted President Bone, chairman of the Committee for Campus Planning, and the University's governing board as they wrestled with the problem of providing space for more students each year. Whatever the problem in any year, construction planning, budget preparations, and measuring the impact of expansion on the community became more complex, time consuming, and critical for both the administration and faculty committees. Piece by piece, residential and business properties on three sides of the main campus were taken up. It was a slow and costly but unavoidable process and, ironically, temporarily added to the student housing shortage as many of the older houses purchased and demolished by the University had provided student rooms. Farm land long used by the University's Department of Agriculture was also committed to create a new campus to the west of Main Street, a state highway and the community's major north-south thoroughfare. By such means, fifteen new buildings and ten additions to older structures were completed between 1957 and 1968, at a construction cost of over \$60 million. Classroom space tripled and Milner Library doubled its capacity, while a fieldhouse-stadium complex and a laboratory school for secondary education were completed on the west campus. Construction of residence halls was the most spectacular, increasing the number of dorm beds sixfold. In order to maximize land use, high-rise structures were favored over the more traditional dormitory architecture of two or three stories. From the modest nine floors of Hamilton-Whitten, opened in 1960, the ultimate and final residence hall, occupied in 1968, came in the 28 floor Watterson Towers, the tallest building between Chicago and St. Louis. Among the consequences to the community of the University's expansion, the skyline of Bloomington-Normal was radically altered.

More profound were the changes in the faculty and administration of the University in the decade of the late Fifties and early Sixties. From a total of 286 serving 3,200 students in 1957,

the faculty nearly tripled in the next decade. Throughout that period, President Bone obtained from the University's governing board various improvements in faculty conditions, partly because they were long overdue and partly out of necessity as the academic departments sought new people in a highly competitive teachers' market. Salaries at all levels were doubled, class loads were reduced from an average of seventeen hours to twelve hours per week, research opportunities were expanded, and other fringe benefits were improved. With larger numbers of both students and faculty and the concomitant complexities of campus life, the University's administrative structure required reorganization to maintain an efficient and tolerable operation. Even before the period of growth began, President Bone, upon assuming his position in 1956, recognized the necessity to decentralize the management of the University's operations by ending the practice by which earlier presidents involved themselves in all aspects of running the school, including membership on all University committees. As an important step in that direction, the position of vice president was revived in 1959 after nearly a half century of disuse. Arthur H. Larsen, who had served as acting president in 1954-56, was appointed to take charge of the University's academic affairs, assisted by Francis Belshe as Dean of Undergraduate Instruction, and C.W. Sorenson as Dean of the newly established Graduate School. By 1963, with an enrollment of 6,600 and over 900 faculty and staff, further changes became imperative. On the advice of a special consultant, the University was divided into four major areas: Academic, Administrative, Student Affairs, and Special Services, with Eric Johnson joining Dean Larsen as a vice president of administrative affairs. Student Affairs, traditionally divided between a Dean of Women and a Dean of Men, particularly needed revision because of the changing life-style of the young and the new high-rise residence halls. It now came under a single Director and Dean of Students, Richard Hulet, whose staff of assistants advised and coordinated the many nonacademic interests and activities of student life. Finally, Harold Gibson took on the thankless job of Special Services that consisted of those operations which did not fit into the other major areas. While other administration shifts would be required in the future, the new alignments of 1963 enabled President Bone to more fully realize his goal of decentralized and responsive University management.

President Bone also recognized the need to involve the faculty in the deliberations on institutional policy, thereby drawing upon faculty expertise and uplifting faculty morale. A University Council, comprised of fifteen elected faculty, the president, and three other administrators, had been established in 1951 but had exerted only a limited influence on campus affairs. The Council sprang to life under President Bone and became the major policy-recommending group on campus, interpreting the views and interests of the faculty and staff. There was little about the University to escape the attention and free-wheeling discussions of the Council, whose decisions President Bone carefully refrained from unduly influencing by always voting last. For most faculty, however, involvement came through a revitalized and overhauled University committee system which funneled recommendations and reports on all major issues and problems through the administration to the Council. There never was any question that the final campus approval and recommendations to the governing board was President Bone's responsibility; but, in contrast to the earlier years when all decisions were made in the president's office, the emerging system of shared governance raised faculty morale, maintained communications with newer faculty, and held the campus together in the crisis years ahead. It was one of the most important results of that decade of growth and development.

As the University grew larger, it nonetheless remained a single-purpose institution, committed to preparing teachers for elementary and secondary education. As a consequence, it was, by the 1960s, one of the few schools of its kind in the nation. While the University's function was held constant in that decade of rapid expansion, much was undertaken to improve the quality of the academic programs. The general education requirements were upgraded and strengthened in 1957; now all graduates regardless of teaching field would leave the University with a strong foundation in the arts and sciences. A selective admissions policy using high school rank and ACT scores was introduced in 1958 which over time improved the quality of the student body and dramatically lowered the student attrition rate. The Elementary Education program, one of the University's largest components, was reorganized through the efforts of Dr. Helen Nance, head of the division. The first doctoral programs, in

Art Education, Educational Administration, and Biological Sciences, were introduced in 1963 and strengthened the University's program of graduate studies. Also in 1963, a University Honors program and Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees were offered for the first time (only Bachelor of Science in Education degrees had been offered previously). With more undergraduate majors, graduate students, and faculty, departments broadened established programs by adding new courses to the catalog, thus promoting sub-fields within most disciplines. Considering the range of academic improvements, the University Curriculum Committee became one of the hardest working committees on campus.

No less dramatic and vital were the changes in student life. While the general pattern of values and life styles of recent college youth has become one of the most studied aspects of higher education, each institution has had a unique experience drawn from its own peculiar circumstances. For Illinois State University, the changes which took place in student life amounted to nothing less than a revolution in campus life. At the heart of the changes was *in loco parentis*, that system of rules and regulations governing student behavior outside the classroom in which the University became the authority figure in place of parents. On top of the traditional guidelines governing dormitory hours, cheating, gambling, and so forth, the University over time had imposed the additional standards of "personal behavior expected of members of the teaching profession." Among other things, according to the catalogs of the time, "the use of intoxicating liquor on or off campus" was specified as a violation of professional behavior, a rule which was, from all accounts, zealously enforced by the Deans of Men and Women, even among World War II veterans. Smoking on campus, for faculty as well as students, was also frowned upon. Young people unsympathetic or unwilling to comply were told not to seek admission to the University; student violators were expelled.

The passage of time gradually brought about a substantive change in the old standards. New faculty and administrators, no less than young people raised in a more permissive society, found the restrictions archaic. The general ban on alcohol was dropped from the University catalog in 1958 along with the vague statement on professional standards. Drinking and gambling in the

dormitories were still prohibited, women's hours continued, and dormitory visits by the opposite sex were not allowed, but rather than the old moralism of *in loco parentis*, a code of student life released in 1967 after several years of study emphasized the maturity and responsibility of students as young adults who no longer needed the long tether of parental control.

Students themselves came to life in the late Fifties and became more involved each year in University affairs. Encouraged by President Bone, Dean Hulet, and faculty advisors, student body presidents and members of the Student Senate concerned themselves with the consequences of expansion; students were also included on University committees which related to their interests. In 1960, campus leaders actively campaigned for the passage of statewide bond referendum needed to finance University building projects. In 1959 and again in 1962-63, students participated in campus deliberations on the issue of retention or deletion of "Normal" in the University's official name. And as a portent of things to come, when the University basketball team was included in the NCAA national tournament in early 1967, 1,560 students marched through town to the president's house demanding in a rather rough manner that classes be dismissed for several days to allow them to attend the games in Evansville, Indiana. Compared to the Free Speech Movement on the Berkeley campus of the University of California and developments elsewhere, student activities at Illinois State were, for the moment, responsible and free of extremism. But the changes which began in the late Fifties amounted to nothing less than a revolution in campus life at Illinois State, a transformation which gathered momentum each passing year and whose effects have not yet run out.

The late Fifties and early Sixties were years of significant growth and development for the University, and perhaps as in any institutional setting, changes which are inevitable and unavoidable tended to produce momentum for still other institutional adjustments not originally contemplated nor intended. Such was the case involving two interrelated questions: whether the word "Normal" should be part of the University's name and whether the University's resources should be confined to the single function of teacher education. As long as the University remained small and stable, these questions were hardly con-

sidered; the University was a teachers college with a proud “normal school” heritage. But the sudden influx of large numbers of new people—administrators, faculty, staff, and students—untempered in the school’s traditions and whose attention was focused on the future rather than the past, forced the issues out into the open.

The name-change question was first openly discussed in an AAUP meeting in 1959 and immediately aroused deep emotions and divisions among faculty, students, alumni, and townspeople. Defenders of the status quo argued that the real issue was the school’s single purpose which “Normal” symbolized, while those favoring a change insisted on the purity of their motives and their desire to free the University of an undeserved handicap. As expected, alumni expressed a sentimental attachment to the past, and some townspeople argued, mistakenly, that as the University had taken its name from the town of Normal, there should be no name change. A slender faculty majority favored a change, while President Bone remained officially neutral to avoid an administration-faculty split, though privately he supported dropping “Normal” from the University’s title. The Teachers College Board, however, was unwilling to take action without evidence of greater support and there the matter rested until the fall of 1961 when AAUP and the Student Senate began campaigning for “ISU in 62.” New additions to the faculty, the active student leadership of Charles Dunn, senior from Bloomington, and James Koch, sophomore from Morton, and a vigorous campaign managed by Warren Harden and Stanley Rives made the result certain this time; deletion of “Normal” was favored by a large campus majority. Although the Teachers College Board again refused to touch the issue, a number of local businessmen and area representatives in the state legislature supported the required legislation in the Illinois General Assembly. The statutory changes were passed without difficulty and on January 1, 1964, the institution became Illinois State University.

Opponents of the name change were right in one sense. It was a step in the direction of broadening the University’s purpose beyond teacher education. A poll conducted by the University Council in the spring of 1963 to determine what the faculty believed were the University’s most pressing problems revealed that the school’s failure to have nonteaching programs was the

foremost faculty concern. With "Normal" gone, most faculty and students saw no reason to continue the single purpose of the school. The realization of that goal, however, was not alone the consequence of faculty and student advocacy; it was also the result of the circumstances of growth. The University was fast becoming one of the nation's largest schools committed exclusively to the preparation of teachers. It was that fact of growth, predicted to continue well into the future, more than anything else which prompted questions to be raised about the validity of the University's single purpose by people outside the institution. Members of the Board of Higher Education, visitation committees of the General Assembly, the University's own Advisory Committee of community people, and even the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education—all doubted that the University should continue to offer only teacher education programs. As the May, 1964, report of a North Central Association visitation committee stated, "In the midst of rapid growth in enrollment, faculties, and personnel, the institution seems to be at the point where two major decisions must be made: (1) will the single purpose of training teachers be maintained, or will it become a multipurpose institution; and (2) can the University continue to operate with maximum efficiency with departments and divisions, or would some other administrative structure better serve the needs of an expanded academic program." A *Pantagraph* editorial of the time put the matter in sharper focus: "It is easier to justify the tremendous investment at Illinois State University if it offers top quality general education without stinting on teacher training for those desiring it." Becoming multipurpose was a change whose time had arrived: the University's singleness of purpose was now a liability to itself and the public, and the only questions remaining were how and when the change would be made.

Developments went smoothly during the 1964-65 school year. At the University Council's request, President Bone appointed a special faculty-administration committee, chaired by Francis Belshe, to recommend ways to broaden the University's academic programs. The first steps in the transformation proved rather simple. Because the existing general education requirement and department majors were so strong, nonteaching bachelor degrees in the traditional disciplines could be granted

immediately by eliminating the education component required for state certification. The development of new major fields and interdisciplinary programs required more time and would await the future. Belshé's committee also recommended that the University be reorganized administratively with a collegial structure. The report was accepted by the University Council which set about the difficult political task of arranging departments into manageable colleges, a process not completed until the following year. Meanwhile, President Bone informed the Teachers College Board of the University's wish to grant liberal arts degrees, which was approved on April 12, 1965, with little fuss. The Board of Higher Education, the final authority in such matters, consented on October 5, 1965, with even less discussion. The time for change of purpose had indeed come. With the fall term of 1966, Illinois State became one of that new breed in higher education, "an emerging public university."

When the preliminary work of reorganization had been completed in the spring of 1966, President Bone announced his intention of retiring at the end of the next school year. His original goal in 1956 had been to serve only ten years, and his time was now up. He would stay on the additional year, he said, to complete the work on the next biennial budget and help break in a new Dean of the Faculty, Richard R. Bond, and a set of college deans. But then he was done. President Bone's decision was startling news, for he was popular with everyone on campus, knowing most faculty by first name (he was Bob Bone to them), and giving student concerns the attention they deserved. The specific goals he had set for himself in meeting the challenges of the Fifties had been largely achieved: the University, stronger as well as larger, in which academic freedom flourished for faculty and students alike, had emerged out of its past.