P.S. to the NEWS
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BUSINESS GIFTS TO COLLEGES

"Don't bite the hand that feeds you" is an old aphorism that most people abide by except colleges and universities. I've been waiting for years for some courageous soul to object to the way universities not only bite, but chew up the businessmen who feed them generous contributions. Finally, it happened.

Mr. David Packard, chairman of the Hewlett-Packard Company and one of the business geniuses of our time, was invited to address a prestigious fund-raising group called the Committee for Corporate Support of American Universities. There at the University Club in New York City, in the august presence of the country's educational elite, including the presidents of Harvard, MIT, Cornell, Pennsylvania, Chicago, and Stanford, Mr. Packard gave it to them straight.

He said that a survey shows that 90 percent of university students believe -- as they have been taught -- that "American corporations are evil and deserve to be brought under government control." Pointing out that business recruiters and ROTC units have been rudely kicked off many college campuses, he said that control of the universities has shifted from the trustees to the faculty, and too often "decisions are determined by a mili-

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tant minority of the faculty." He said that university trustees could no longer be counted on to spend the money in ways which the corporation could defend to its stockholders.

Mr. Packard's stunning conclusion was that corporations should no longer make unrestricted gifts to private education, but contribute only for specified purposes.

His speech was an embarrassing disappointment to the university administrators who had assembled for what they elegantly called "the symbiosis between the private corporation and the private university."

Maybe one reason why universities are so antagonistic to business is that college professors are a privileged class immune from the discipline of the free market and from the cardinal rule of business that "the customer is always right." Their income and their job security do not depend on the quality of what they produce. Even private universities receive a large share of their income from the Government and from foundations rather than from their customers, who are the students and their parents. Professors have job tenure and cannot be fired whether they please their customers or not.

It is no wonder that corporate philanthrophy to higher education has declined in recent years. It is a hopeful sign that American businessmen such as David Packard are providing the leadership to call a halt to the teaching of untruths about the American free enterprise system.

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