

EDUCATION

Fast Climb at Foothill

Instead of groping for answers, the job applicant was hitting his startled interviewers with prickly questions: "What will you do if I double the library budget? What if I make academic standards so high that many members of your community cannot attend this college? What if I tell you that there will be absolutely no proselytizing of athletes?" Assured complete freedom, hard-driving Calvin C. Flint, 56, four years ago accepted the presidency of California's

money comes from its prosperous "college district," a 105-square-mile area that includes Palo Alto and is currently assessed at \$512 million. The voters launched Foothill (in the foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains) with a \$10.4 million bond issue, and now support it from property taxes to the tune of some \$2,000,000 a year. Less than 25% of its budget comes from the state as against 40%-60% for grade and high schools.

The Foothill campus is a 122-acre complex of 36 buildings, with lavish language labs, a big outdoor swimming pool, a

as thoroughgoing courses in American history and "language arts." Also required at Foothill: composition, speech, biological or physical science, math, fine arts, social science, literature or philosophy—leading toward a two-year Associate in Arts degree, or, in certain specialties, a Certificate of Proficiency. President Flint insists that "adult education," or random course-taking, is strictly for high schools.

Flint's high standards (plus Bay Area living) are fast attracting a first-rate faculty: 22% of Foothill's 92 teachers have doctorates. To get even better teachers, Flint typically spent last month scouring the East, a new departure for California junior-college presidents. One recent morning his desk was festooned with 75 unsolicited applications. To fill 42 new teaching jobs next fall, Flint can now choose from 6,000 applicants, 10% of them with Ph.D.s.

Open House Campus. Foothill's 5,000 students are the steady, average-smart children of managers and skilled workers in the area's space-age industries, from Ampex to Lockheed. One of Flint's tributes to them is complete freedom for the student newspaper and student government; the college boasts political groups of all shades except Communist, and apathy is unknown to them. Last week the conservatives got the John Birch Society's Robert Welch to speak on campus; the equally militant Young Democrats imported a hotly anti-Birch speaker on the same day. Foothill's administration was delighted at this initiative. "We're developing maturity here," says Dean of Instruction H. H. Semans, "not a 13th- and 14th-grade school."

A real community college, Foothill opens its doors to every local group, from Boy Scouts to dental assistants. A lively citizens committee helps Foothill import diverse outside speakers, from Ogden Nash to Norman Thomas. The San Francisco Symphony gives frequent concerts. Foothill's zeal, in fact, is prodding other California junior colleges to imitation. Several have doubled their book-buying budgets, for example, and others are raising academic standards to Foothill level. "Some junior college has to be the prototype of what a junior college can do," says pleased President Flint. "Why not Foothill?"

The Ghost at the Graduation

At each of about 1,000 U.S. high school graduations this year, it is quite likely that an earnest salutation will implore his classmates to learn "intellectual honesty," defined as "the degree to which we say what we think." At the same time, about an equal number of valedictorians will praise "romance" because "it stiffens the muscles, adds endurance, freshens the eyes and tinges life with a bright hue of great expectation." In a vast chorus of identical phraseology, class presidents will cite Columbus and Alexander Graham Bell to evoke the "thrilling experience in our lives when we find that we can make practical use of facts which we have discovered." And a thousand school principals



FOOTHILL COLLEGE CAMPUS

Higher education on a school-district base.



FLINT

paper-stage Foothill College in Los Altos, 35 miles south of San Francisco. Starting from scratch, Flint has already made Foothill a mountaintop among U.S. junior colleges—the fastest-growing segment of U.S. higher education.

Two-year public "community" colleges are billed as the solution to two national problems: the shortage of skilled technicians and the enrollment bulge at four-year colleges. This is no easy task. Most community colleges must admit any high-school graduate, provide technical training for "terminal" students and still keep their academic standards high enough for transfer students to step easily into the junior year at regular colleges.

\$5,000 Cheaper. Despite this conflicting role, the nation's 678 junior colleges are booming: last fall they enrolled 25% of all U.S. college freshmen, and may enroll half of them by 1970. California leads the U.S. with 69 (eventually to be 100) such colleges, almost all of them controlled locally on a school-district base, like grade and high schools. They can chop the eventual cost of a B.A. by some \$5,000 because tuition is free and the students live at home. Foothill's

1,000-seat auditorium and parking space for 3,000 cars. Designed by Architects Ernest J. Kump and Master & Hurd, the redwood-and-concrete campus is so stunning that it took the first and only prize awarded this year by the American Institute of Architects.

Unlike other junior colleges, Foothill starts students on probation if their high-school average is C or less, and its dropout rate is a hardhearted 40%. On the academic side, Foothill matches the curriculum at four-year colleges; the main difference is more guidance and smaller classes. Foothill's teaching loads are kept deliberately low, for example, so that teachers can spend more time advising students or poring over their required weekly compositions. As one apparent consequence of such attention, Foothill's transfer students generally get better grades at four-year colleges than those who started out there.

6,000 Job Hunters. For terminal students, Foothill offers everything from data processing to X-ray technician's training. But even these students must tackle liberal arts courses that go far beyond minimum state requirements, such