



The Chronicle Review

From the issue dated July 25, 2003

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CHRONICLE IN PRINT:

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Governors Who Act in the Public Interest

To the Editor:

The piece by Neal C. Johnson and Charles S. Clark, of the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, is dripping with mandarin contempt for the democratic process ("[Take the Gamesmanship Out of Appointments to Public Colleges' Governing Boards,](#)" The Review, June 6). It begins by belittling elected officials ("a newly minted governor who has run for office as an agent of change -- and don't they all?") and concludes that higher education should be left in the hands of "seasoned" trustees -- i.e., those who brought you the status quo.

In fact, the governors cited in the piece as meddlesome change agents -- Jim Doyle of Wisconsin, John Engler of Michigan, Bill Richardson of New Mexico, Mitt Romney of Massachusetts -- were addressing a democratic mandate to deliver more-effective state services, including higher education. If change cannot be the outcome of an election, then what is the point of holding elections?

The American Council of Trustees and Alumni believes that it is the obligation of governors to appoint trustees who will represent the public interest, not just advocate for their institutions. This is a trend not to be denounced, but to be honored.

Jerry L. Martin
Chairman
American Council of Trustees and Alumni
Washington

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