

The Beare Eleven

Eleven propositions about
an education organisation

THE BEARE ELEVEN

**Eleven propositions about an education
organisation which are the bases for
its organisational style**

**by
Hedley Beare,
Chief Education Officer,
Australian Capital Territory Schools Authority**

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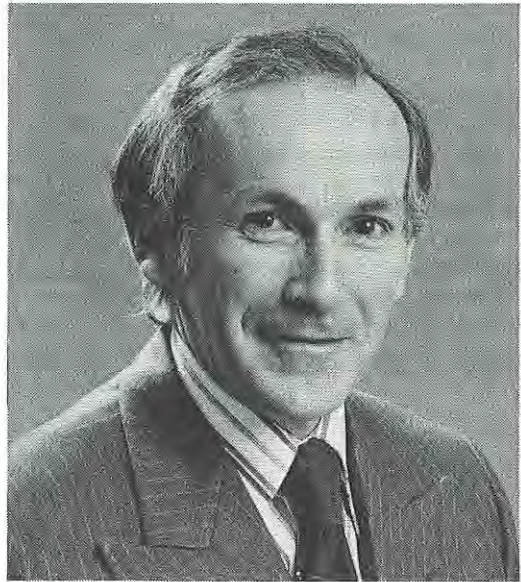
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PREFACE

This booklet is the outcome of a paper I delivered to members of the office of the Australian Capital Territory Schools Authority at a conference held in Bowral during February 1977.

The A.C.T. school system became an independent system under Commonwealth aegis on the first of January 1977 when the ACT Schools Authority Ordinance came into effect. The system had operated as an Interim Authority since October 1973; during the period 1974-76, therefore, we have built up the system's modus operandi, its infrastructure, and the patterns of interaction needed to ensure that it could function effectively as a dynamic and forward-looking school system. From the beginning of its existence, the ACT school system has put emphasis on involvement — especially of teachers, parents and students — in its decision-making processes. It has also firmly committed itself to distributed decision-making by setting up governing bodies for each of the schools in the A.C.T. It has tried to devolve to the schools all the decision-making which can reasonably be located at the school base. The school board has parents, teachers, the Principal, the system, and in secondary school the students all represented on it. The system itself is run by a fifteen member council ("The Schools Authority") which consists of people drawn from a wide cross-section of the Canberra community, including teachers, parents and citizens, the public service, employers and employees, and academics. The Authority, to assist in clarifying its policies, has a set of standing committees with the same range of membership.

The model is so new and different in the Australian context that the first years of the Interim Authority have been fairly traumatic for all involved. When in the passage of the Ordinance the Authority acquired its legal basis, there were many of us associated with the system who were sadder and wiser than we were when we first set out three years earlier full of the euphoria and almost religious zeal derived from the belief that we were a new chosen race marching to inherit our own educational Promised Land. Part of that sadness stemmed from our awareness that it is not so easy for people to break out of their own boxes; sometimes, no matter how hard we try, we end up looking the



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same. The resistance to the new modes and the dysfunctions in the new system are often the results of what we discover within ourselves. As Cassius pointed out: "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, But in ourselves, that we are underlings".

In short, the structures will be about as good as the people who try to work them. And the effectiveness of the system, no matter how good it looks on paper, is largely the outcrop of the attitudes of the people involved with it. I am convinced that any structure can be made to work if only the operators have the will and the drive to make it work. What seems more important to me, therefore, is that the people in the organisation share common goals, espouse the same fierce determination to make the organisation achieve, and that they adopt a similar mode or style of operation which is in harmony with the goals the organisation has set for itself.

It was this kind of consideration which prompted the Bowral conference. For the first time in its history — indeed, for the first time since Canberra had schools (which means that it was the first time in more than sixty years!) — all the persons occupying key roles in the Head Office of the school system went away together into residence, with the express purpose of clarifying our working relationships, and of making explicit our organisational goals. The

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conference therefore involved educators and public servants, teachers and finance officers, field teams and office teams, branch heads and section heads, all in a common search for a unifying purpose. In retrospect, it was a landmark conference, for it not only confirmed a Head Office structure, but also defined an administrative style.

The text of this booklet is built on one of the three keynote addresses to that conference. It made explicit the matters which many of us had been taking for granted, but which others

were finding puzzling and aberrant. It is a kind of Credo about the administration of an education system. And it evoked the comment that it should be made available to other members involved with the ACT school system. We now know that it is of interest to an even wider audience. And so we have moved to have the Credo published. Even if it does not produce concurrence, at least it will open for wider debate what should be the organisational style of an office – whatever its internal structure – which purports to deliver an educational service.

INTRODUCTION: SOME PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

This booklet tries to define some of the bases of an organisational style which is suited to the administration of a school system working at this point in the twentieth century. It therefore combines theoretical and practical insights which I have gleaned over a considerable number of years in administration.

It seems to me that the educational administrator must meld whatever organisational structure he uses to administer a school service with more abstract considerations such as those outlined below before he can be sure that he has developed a fully functioning organisation and one that is compatible with the major thrusts in education at present.

I could claim to have been an organisational change-agent since about 1954, from the days I first took up teaching in high schools in South Australia.

I pioneered the role of Education Officer in the South Australian Education Department. I was, in fact, the first incumbent for such a position and therefore had to create the role model. I was one of the early designers responsible for developing and expanding that State's inservice education program for teachers. I participated in the expansion and designing of the teacher education provisions to the point where Teachers Colleges which we administered became autonomous Colleges of Advanced Education with diploma-granting status. Much of the planning for that outcome fell to my unit.

I was one of the first Regional Directors in South Australia and therefore played a formative part in the decentralisation movement in Australian education. And over the past six years, I have been in the pilot's seat when the two newest school systems in Australia have tried to get off the ground. So I have been an educational developer all my professional life.

In consequence, there has been a long gestation period for the notions I deal with in this monograph, and the act of reconciling, simplifying and systematizing the notions has produced considerable personal turmoil for me.

From this turmoil I have derived eleven propositions about an education organisation, and I put them forward as a kind of manifesto; that is, I see value in making them manifest or ex-

plicit. Perhaps one of my most cogent reasons for this view is my awareness that not many education systems embody these principles, and not every administrator would be happy to

THE TROUBLE WITH
EDUCATION TODAY IS
THAT THE FUTURE ISN'T
WHAT IT USED TO BE.

live by the manifesto. I think it was Mark Twain who said, "I like a fellow to come out and say what he really thinks, providing I agree with him". In this context I know that not every reader will agree with me and to a degree, then, the eleven propositions are sure to be provocative — as a total package, if not singly.

Let me sound a warning, however, at the outset. Do we really want to change? We need to look beyond our conscious level and see whether we have built deeply into us certain resistances to change. Centuries ago Machiavelli wrote:

"Men like to change their masters hoping to improve their lot. This makes them take arms against their rulers only to be disillusioned."

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sioned when they later see by experience that they have worsened their state".⁽¹⁾

Machiavelli also makes the comment:

"There is nothing more difficult to plan, more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to manage than the creation of a new system, for the initiator has the enmity of all who would profit by the preservation of the old institutions, and merely lukewarm defenders in those who would gain by the new modes".⁽²⁾

And over of a quarter of a century ago, Eric Hoffer wrote:

"When our mode of life is so precarious as to make it patent that we cannot control the circumstances of our existence we tend to stick to the proven and the familiar. We counteract a deep feeling of insecurity by making our existence a fixed routine."⁽³⁾

The tendency to resist change is almost inherent in us.

We need to be aware that we have that tendency in us, and when we are confronted with

something that rearranges our landscape or alters our familiar life-space, let us be conscious that we will have to cope with certain irritations and rebellions in ourselves. It is easy to pay lip service to change, but if we are involved daily with a major change, we will constantly catch ourselves out. For we will find ourselves reacting as though the past existed still, and the responses in the new context may be bewildering, unanticipated and even frustrating. We need to make sure that we confront those resistances for they stem from insecurities and uncertainties deep within us.

An education service based upon the propositions that follow will be different from what we know, and at least initially may cause considerable irritation to those who are administering it. For new skills of management will have to be learnt by its operators; and tolerant responses will have to be expected from its customers. Without either, the new format is in danger of being still-born.

Here, then, is the Beare Eleven.

Proposition Number One

THE ORGANISATION MUST BE CONCERNED ABOUT PEOPLE

Much has been written about "humane organisations". When you think about the organisations which you have had to deal with (rather than the ones you have actually worked in) you will realise that it is very easy for a person on the inside of an organisation to throw the organisation at you, to put you in a weak bartering position, to make you feel powerless, to make you feel bewildered about the organisation by explaining (even helpfully) the red tape involved, and so on. Sometimes the insider is unconscious of the impact the organisation has on the outsider.

The effect can be counteracted if the people within the organisation – the insiders – make it a deliberate policy to be concerned about people, individual people. In the case of an organisation associated with education, it is even more important that this be the conscious and overt policy because we are in the people-development industry; it is paramount that we should underline our over-riding concern for people.

Firstly, this people-concern should be evident to the people we work with. The office ought to be a kind, open, pleasant place to live in. If I can use the expression, it should be obvious that we love people and that we like their company. In an education system, that includes the people in schools because they are an integral part of our total organisation. Teachers are friends, and schools are our friends. Most of all, it should be abundantly evident that we love kids.

Secondly, a humane organisation shows concern for the people it deals with who are **outside** the organisation. An organisation charged with dispensing a service to the public must be seen to be doing just that. The impression that so many public bureaucracies give is that they are blocking the realisation of the wishes of the persons they should be serving. The person, the customer, who is not able to understand the internal organisational machinery often feels that the organisation and the people in it are not interested in him or in his problems.



In 1969, White wrote of a model which he called "the dialectical organisation, an alternative to bureaucracy".⁽⁴⁾ His prototype was an actual welfare organisation dealing with poor people in one of the deprived suburbs of a large American city. The designers of the prototype realised that no one would be able to solve the residents' problems – not even the residents themselves – unless the people inside the organisation took their part.

They realised, in fact, that the typical bureaucracy, by its very structure, tended to prevent this from happening.

- Because a bureaucracy has a pyramidal structure, the client – the customer – slots into the organisation generally at one of the lower levels and therefore automatically inherits a subordinate place in the organisation.
- Because the bureaucracy acts by means of a division of duties, it or its officers cannot relate to the client as a whole person; it relates to his classification, to a part of his problem, but no one part of it can deal with the client as a whole person.

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- Because the bureaucracy works on rule and precedent, the novel or the individualistic in the client (don't we as educators thrive on "individual differences"?) is over-ridden by rule and status quo, by "policy decisions".
- The bureaucracy's internal working codes reward cold and tidy efficiency rather than warm involvement with the client which can be time-consuming, inefficient, and wasteful of scarce resources.

The "dialectical organisation" therefore adopted what White calls a "service orientation" which manifested itself in the following working code:

1. *Service is not at a distance — it means personal involvement with people.*
2. *No person or problem is beyond our concern or attention. In fact, we are obligated to seek out the 'outcasts'.*
3. *... We can never really give up on a person.*
4. *Our own interests or personal feelings are not of any importance as we serve. We may not personally like the person.*
5. *We must individually assume that we are responsible... and thus try our best to make a difference.*⁽⁵⁾

The organisational structure that emerged had many similarities to the free-form, matrix organisation described later in this monograph.

It is sufficient at this point merely to note the organisation's "people-orientation".

From among many comments that I could make, let me choose two. Firstly, I think it desirable for the people in an educational organisation to identify themselves with particular schools, or school boards and teachers, not only to ensure that the destructive "we/they" mentality is not allowed to grow, but also to test whether the kind of service needed is being delivered. Secondly, other things being equal, a letter from a person ought to be answered before a letter from an organisation. Individuals should get a quick response; a large organisation can tolerate a delayed response since inside that other organisation, one can assume a similar kind of organisational digestion will go on when our reply is received.

In summary, then, the education organisation must be concerned about people and in large measure that orientation will manifest itself in the attitudes of the people in the organisation. The people-concern is not achieved merely by changing the organisational structure (although that helps) but by changing the attitudes of the people in it.

The poet Robert Herrick wrote:

*"Examples lead us, and we likely see:
Such as the prince is, will his people be."*

Good attitudes are changed by living alongside those who practise what they preach. "People-concern" is everybody's business in the education organisation.

Proposition Number Two

THE ORGANISATION MUST BE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT AT ONE AND THE SAME TIME

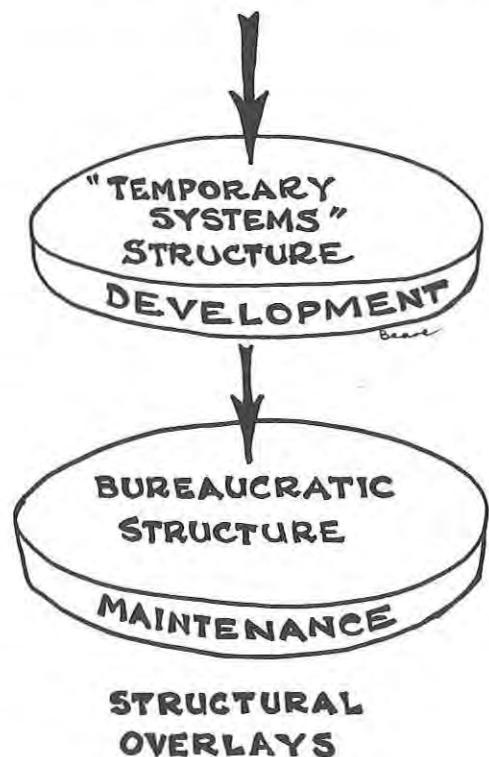
Now what do I mean by that? "Efficient" simply means that the job is done with economy of resources. "Effective" means that we have accomplished what we set out to achieve. Thus it is possible for an organisation to be effective and yet not efficient, and it is also possible for an organisation to be efficient and yet not effective. An organisation needs to be both, at one and the same time.

In order to be either, the organisation must have routines, particularly to achieve efficiency. The people inside the organisation must know how it runs, how to get things done, and how to get them done quickly. Routinization should therefore ensure that there is a vehicle for quick action, and an assurance that there will be a quick meshing of the parts in the organisation. It is wrong to equate routinization with red tape; imputations about red tape in an organisation derive from a misuse rather than proper use of the routines. Routines need to be understood by everyone so that there are accepted and acceptable means of efficiently getting results.

"Effectiveness" implies that we are trying to achieve an end result. For that reason one should not misunderstand the purpose in "routinization". Routines are provided simply to speed up the action. If they don't, why put them there? Routines tend to ensure that the diffuse and jumbled signals which the organisation picks up from its environment are systematized, codified and parcelled so that some action can be taken on them, and a desired outcome achieved. In consequence, there is a constant danger that the routines could damage the effectiveness of the organisation, especially one dispensing an education service. For every organisational action should be examined to ensure that the best possible educational outcome stems from organisational endeavours. The problem is that education is often untidy; the tender growing edge of young children is a fragile plant, to be handled sensitively. Teachers

have been accused of imposing strict discipline, rules, school principles, and so on, and of bruising creativity and sensitivity in the young. The educational administrator also has to be constantly vigilant lest he too damage the very thing he and his organisation exist to sponsor — that delicate growing flower called education, or a child's learning. How do you ensure that in an organisation that is required at the same time to deliver its goods efficiently as well as effectively?

Bureaucratic structures are good for maintaining an operation, for routine functions, for repetitive functions, for functions within stated policy; bureaucratic structures are very effective because they work by rules, by regulations, by precedent, by accurate information flow, by suitable checks and balances. But if the administrator wants to sponsor change and inno-



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vation, problem solving and idea generation, then he needs another kind of organisational structure, which below I have called "organismic". It seems to me a necessity in modern organisations that we put these two structures into operation concurrently. One deals with maintenance and routine operations, the other handles developmental and creative activities. There needs to be, as it were, a structural overlay to handle the creative. The matrix organisation comes to grips with that problem. It simply implies two structures working concurrently in an organisation. It suggests that everybody in the organisation has certain operational functions which it is his responsibility to carry out. For example, there must be a group who are attending to financial matters day by day; there will be another group servicing curriculum needs; another group may have responsibility over staffing, and so on. But developmental (as opposed to managerial) tasks usually require a multi-disciplinary approach or a galaxy of separate insights to be fed into the process. Thus developmental activities usually call for task forces, working parties, in other words, for creative and multidisciplinary teams. In order to create such a team the organisation may have to put together people drawn from across the operational areas. I will give three examples. Say we are dealing with a matter over the creation and building of a new school. It is quite likely that someone dealing with finance, someone expert in buildings design, and someone expert in curriculum will need

to come together to prepare collectively the brief on what is needed for that new school. Or to give another example, if the organisation is developing new policy over school-based funding, it is quite likely that it will need the insights of the people in the finance and supply area, in the staffing area, and in the staff training area. One may need others, but certainly people with those kinds of insights will be among them. To develop new policy over the community use of schools, someone from the finance area will have a contribution to make as will someone from the buildings area, someone from the legislation area, someone from the staff development area, and there could be others. Now the matrix organisation assumes that even while the person in the buildings area is handling day-to-day matters on buildings and which have come up in a routine way, he may also be involved at the same time in an interdisciplinary task force, looking at new creative developments, and carrying through particular projects. He could, for example, be serving on project teams 1 and 3 as shown in the chart. In a sense, he has three bosses, and he will have to learn how to live with that kind of arrangement, if we are to make sure that the organisation is something more than merely a bureaucracy. That is what the matrix organisation implies. In our organisation a person should be involved in operational activities for his section and developmental activities for the whole organisation at one and the same time.

		DEVELOPMENT "TASK FORCES"		
		Project I	Project II	Project III
OPERATIONS	FINANCE	X		X
	SUPPLY		X	
	BUILDINGS	X		X
	CURRICULUM	X		
	STAFFING		X	
	LEGISLATION			X
	STAFF DEVELOPMENT		X	X
		New Schools	School-based funding	Community Use of Schools
THE MATRIX ORGANISATION				

Proposition Number Three

THE ORGANISATION MUST HAVE A LOW BUREAUCRATIC PROFILE

It seems to me not possible to have an organisation that is either non-bureaucratic or anti-bureaucratic if it has routine operations to perform. But we can minimize the ill-effects of bureaucracy. Since the characteristics of bureaucracy have been well-documented, the technical aspects of the term should now be clearly understood.

- Firstly, a bureaucratic organisation is one man writ large. Since the single craftsman now no longer can accomplish the total operation, we divide it up into its component parts and we assign people to specialise in delivering each of the component parts. Collectively, then, the total task is done. So **division of labour** is the first characteristic of bureaucracy.
- Secondly, in order to make the operation interlock, it progressively focusses into one person. So bureaucracy has a set of pyramids creating a hierarchy of authority, the person at the head of each pyramid being the person who takes the final decision in his divisional area. So **hierarchy of authority** is a characteristic of bureaucracy.
- Thirdly, one's organisational status is derived from the position one occupies in the pyramid. The familiar aspects of the public service are apparent here. A person who is a Class 11 has greater status than a person who is a Class 8. And it is assumed that the person at Class 11 level can make some decisions that the person at Class 8 level cannot. **Ascribed status**, therefore, means that you derive your status by reason of the position you occupy in the hierarchical pyramid.
- Fourthly, one's value to the organisation depends upon how well one can fulfil the specialist requirements of that position. Because division of labour is practised and each position has certain prescribed tasks to perform, one's success in the organisation depends upon the technical skill one acquires in performing one's small part of the total task. **Technical competence** therefore is a characteristic of bureaucracy.
- Fifthly, because there must be general understanding throughout the organisation about what one can do and what one can't do in order for the total task to be performed satisfactorily, the organisation must work by its own set of laws. Any operator has to be confident that every other person understands the same rules of operation so that their work can be in harmony. **Rules and regulations** therefore tend to be an outcrop of bureaucracy.
- And lastly, bureaucracy is **impersonal**; that simply means that the organisation shows fear or favour to none. The son of the Prime Minister and the son of the garbage collector will both receive the same quality of treatment from the organisation. It will not bend through personal influence.

One of the problems we confront with bureaucracy is that it has become such an effective and useful method of organising over the last seven or eight decades that people tend to think it is the **only** way one can organise large-scale groups, organisations or institutions. So when an administrator is faced with the responsibility of organising and coordinating the work of a large number of people there is a tendency in him to reaffirm bureaucratic characteristics. Indeed the theoretical literature argues that the people organisations called schools are among the most highly bureaucratised institutions that man has invented. You have only to compare its familiar ways of operating with the six characteristics of bureaucracy to understand what I am talking about. Let us take the high school as an example. It will divide itself into faculties, or into departments, and there will be a subject master or senior teacher in charge of each. It will practise division of labour and hierarchy of authority. The 'principal' of course, sits on top of the pyramid. In such a setting, the operators become very conscious of status; so within the teaching service the thrust for promotion and upward mobility are always strong. In the matter of technical competence, we find some teachers who teach

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maths, while someone else teaches French. They are not interchangeable skills, and there is no generalist craftsman who can perform the whole teaching program alone. Rules and regulations are endemic to the life of schools; in order to keep the students in control, they invent a host of control devices. And lastly, the emphasis upon factors like standards, marks, gradings and a certificate suggest that people have to be put into slots impersonally, without looking at individual personality. Schools therefore tend to be highly bureaucratised.

The educational administrator therefore has a constant problem. For schools and schoolmen behave bureaucratically almost by second nature, and yet they criticise others for behaving bureaucratically. One can be blamed for being bureaucratic and blamed for not being bureaucratic at one and the same time. In consequence, the educational administrator needs to be on his guard and be able to detect bureaucratic behaviour at a thousand paces!

There are some obvious give-aways.

- If you find people asking, "What is the policy, or our policy, on such and such?" they are really expecting rules and regulations to exist by which to moderate behaviour. The people who keep asking for regulations, for administrative handbooks,

for "rulings" are tending to fall into the bureaucratic mould.

- If the organisation produces duty statements for each position, it is trying to define the technical competence required for the position. It expects the incumbent to be tightly boxed in his job.
- When people talk about "promotion", of course, they are falling into the bureaucratic trap of assuming that status in or worth to the organisation depends on how high you can climb up the pyramid. By way of contrast, can a self-employed medical G.P. or a man running his own small business think about "promotion" in that kind of sense?
- The 'public service passive' will be used; to say 'it has been decided that...' hides the identity of the person or persons who make the decision.

The educational administrator needs therefore to be vigilant about bureaucratic tendencies — his own and those of his colleagues. That the tendencies often work to confine rather than expand a child's consciousness has been all too clearly documented, especially by those calling for "humanistic education". The following description by Myers, for example, could apply to schools in Australia as well as to those in the U.S.A., about which he writes:

BUREAUCRACY AND SCHOOLS	
	Faculties; Departments
DIVISION OF LABOUR	Pre-school/Junior Primary/ Primary/Jun Secondary/Secondary . . .
HIERARCHY OF AUTHORITY	Principal/Assistant Principal/ Senior Teacher/Assistant . . .
ASCRIBED STATUS	Promotion . . .
TECHNICAL COMPETENCE	Subject Specialists . . .
RULES AND REGULATIONS	School Rules Regulations Handbooks . . .
IMPERSONALITY	Standards Marks/Gradings/Results . . .

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"Schools have many of the characteristics of what sociologists term 'a keeper culture', that is, a closed culture that allows its inhabitants limited independence of thought and action Many schools will not permit children who arrive early in the morning to enter the school. When they are permitted to enter, they are expected to go directly to their assigned rooms, often to wait outside the classroom until the teacher arrives. The child cannot leave the classroom without the permission of his teacher, who writes an official timed pass. Even armed with this the child is not free to walk the corridors without being stopped by what are euphemistically termed hostesses or guides (we might say here senior teachers), actually, part of the palace guard. At the end of the day, many schools require all children to leave by a specified time, often 15 to 30 minutes after the close of school."⁽⁶⁾

Control and regulation of people, keeping actions within bounds, supervision by superiors on the basis that people cannot be trusted are manifestations of wrongly applied bureaucracy. How does one counter these tendencies?

It is impossible to be exhaustive, but there follow some of my suggestions on how to adopt a low bureaucratic profile.

- We should ask for just enough regulations to get by, and not one more.
- Policies, and policy rulings, should be few and general. The more particular they become, the less flexibility they allow to the creative operator.
- The fewer promotional rungs there are, the more one delimits the rat-race for promotion. One's enjoyment of one's work then depends upon variety, challenge, interchange rather than the success of scrabbling up the promotional tree.
- We should look for opportunities to allow officers to practise job enlargement. We should encourage them to work beyond their duty statements, to participate in planning teams and task forces. In short, we should not allow people to be confined to boxes.
- We need to develop an organisational struc-

ture in which people accept responsibility and are willing to act in that way.

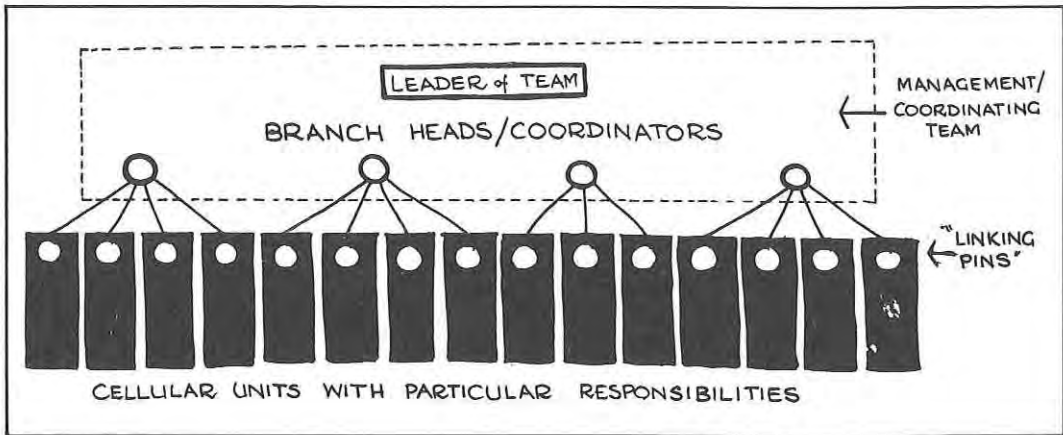
It was largely for this reason that we have recently adopted a cellular arrangement to replace the pyramidal arrangement derived from the bureaucratic model. You see, if you use the bureaucratic structure, an officer can always ask somebody else to take the responsibility for an action. He can become a non-thinking, organisational cog.

In conclusion, I believe we should accept the fact that any manmade artifact, any organisation, will be imperfect. It can be improved upon, and therefore every administrator should regard himself as a component-part remodeller. We ought all to work for refinement of the organisation, constantly replacing procedures

I'VE HAD A DREADFUL DAY.
THE CHAP I USUALLY PASS
THE BUCK TO WAS AT
HOME SICK.



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with better ones. And to that extent we become problem-solving people; we identify problems in order to solve them. "Don't find

fault", the saying goes, "find a remedy; anybody can complain". That is the stance for an organisation taking a low bureaucratic profile.

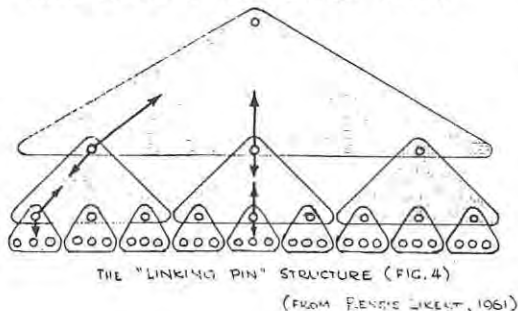
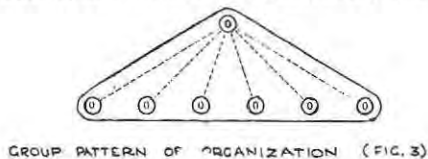
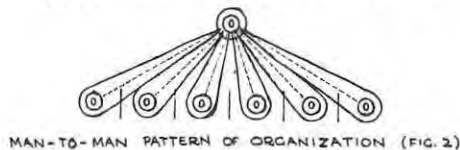
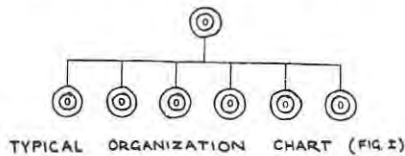
Proposition Number Four

THE ORGANISATION SHOULD BE ORGANISMIC AND IN DYNAMIC FLUX

No. I did not say orgasmic or orgiastic; they really would be organisations worth working in! "Organismic" means that it works like an organism; it is alive, and growing. It has dynamic movement in it; there is a certain degree of excitement within it; it is an organisation pulsing with life. It encourages interaction between its own members and also with its public; it therefore sponsors participation.

Now let me tell you why I have listed this as one of our propositions. When someone draws up an organisation chart, it usually embodies the typical hierarchical pyramid with interlocking triangles of power, and with each office holder placed inside a little box on the chart. The assumption in such a chart is that each person has a defined task, he has an area over which he exercises territorial possession, he

handles the work well within that domain, without external interference, he feeds his recommendations up the pyramid when he wants a decision and it is made by someone else sitting in a little box at the top of the chart. Most organisations may look like that on paper, but they never really function that way. Rensis Likert in 1961 demonstrated that there are working variations to this pattern.⁽⁷⁾ Most people interact in some way with their superior, talking things through before they actually put pen on paper. In short, a man-to-man pattern of organisation is generally practised. There is also a tendency for a group pattern of interaction to emerge; before the head of a unit gets a submission on paper, inter-action and discussion occur within the unit to firm up a line of action. Then Likert makes a very significant jump by demonstrating how the interlocking pyramids in the bureaucratic structure really work. The person named as the unit's leader Likert calls the "linking pin". After all the interaction has taken place in any one of the units, there needs to be one person who can formalise the action, who has assigned authority to legitimise a decision and to ensure that it locks into the system's total operation in a formal sense. The organismic structure works on interaction, interplay, informal communication, and so on.

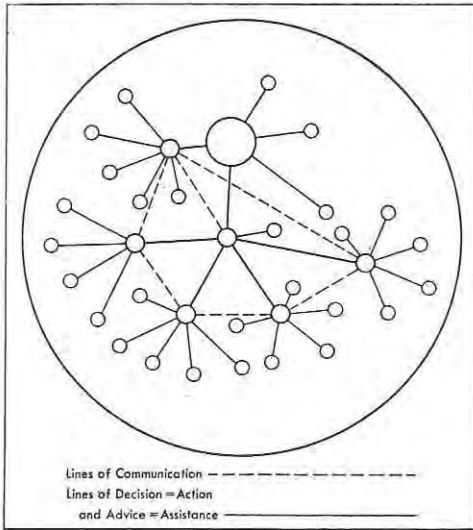


One of the biggest problems in that arrangement, however, is shown in the following chart.⁽⁸⁾ It shows the organismic pyramidal model for the organisation's structure, including the free flow interaction at any one of the levels, and with decisions feeding up in the formal sense from the "linking pin" to the person who has the formal power to put his name to the decision. The great problem in that model is the communication between the levels, or between the units.

The key decision makers acquire a filtered view of reality by getting to know only what other people feed up to him. How does one solve that problem?

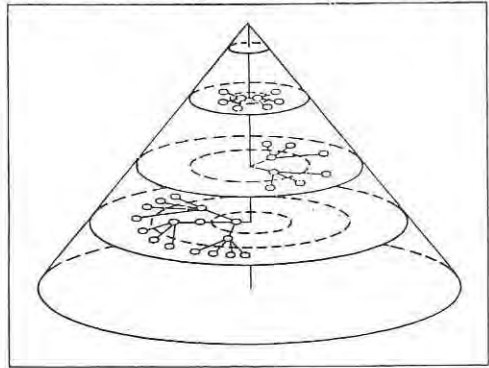
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Organismic Model of Organisation Structure

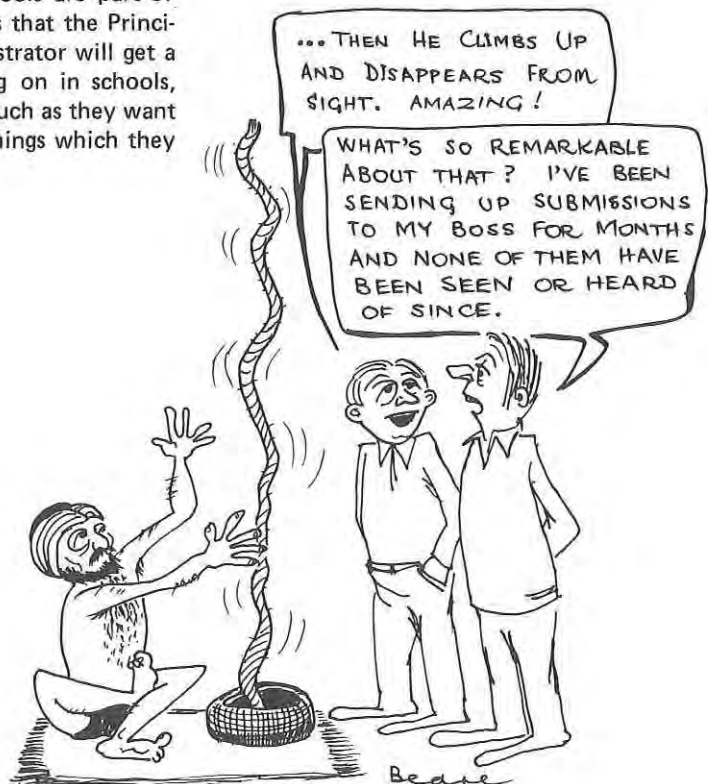


If the people in the organisation try to make it organismic and to keep it in dynamic flux, there ought to be enough informal interchange for all to be aware of what is going on. The educational administrator has the particular problem about keeping in touch with what is going on in schools. Since schools are part of the organisation, the danger is that the Principal or the head office administrator will get a filtered view of what is going on in schools, for people tend to tell us as much as they want us to know; they may hide things which they

Organismic Pyramidal Model of Organisation Structure



do not want others to know, or they may simply not pass on information which is useful for someone else or which could solve a problem or light a fire somewhere else in the system. I believe therefore that most dynamic systems require someone, or a group of people, to roam the gaps in the organisation, to act as stimulators, sponsors of interaction, sharers and carriers of ideas and information, in short to be facilitators and catalysts.



Proposition Number Five

AN EDUCATION ORGANISATION MUST ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION

And it needs to be genuine participation, not merely, tokenism. There are several reasons. Reinhold Niebuhr wrote, "Democracy is a method of finding proximate solutions to unsolvable problems".⁽⁹⁾ A pluralistic organisation or even a pluralistic society must have some way in which to arrive at consensus decisions, for even a good decision which is unacceptable is simply not operable. Unless there is compliance on the part of the people affected, the decision cannot be put into effect. Again, Niebuhr argued, "The political process requires the widest possible distribution of power for the sake of justice".⁽¹⁰⁾ Some people are sure to be unjustly treated if there is a concentration of power at one centre; and education is concerned about people.

Yet there are even more compelling reasons why an educational organisation has to be participative. Firstly, if the people involved in implementing the decision have also been involved in arriving at the decision then there is a greater chance of successful implementation. And education is a labour intensive industry and involves many people besides teachers, educators, and learners. Secondly, there are some ideas which we will not have access to unless we include some people. Teachers must be included because, if we are dispensing a professional service, teachers are the ones who can advise how the decisions will affect their students. Thirdly, it has been well documented that every child has a parent standing in the background as a powerful educative influence. In fact, some studies would suggest the parent impact on a student's achievement is more powerful than that of the schools. So if we are going to ensure adequate learning in schools, parents must be regarded as partners in the process. But it is not only parents who influence the education of the young, for the community's impact is also profound. Let me cite one example. I would lose almost nothing if I offered to pay out one dollar for any night when on Australian television there is no one shot or killed or mur-

dered. I would probably not pay out a single dollar inside a month! Repeatedly, night after night, in homes throughout the nation we are in so many words told, "Human life is cheap; people are dispensable; it doesn't matter if you kill them off". Whatever else the school does, it has to confront that kind of value formation going on in the community through another educative medium. Therefore, the community must be brought alongside if we are to make any progress in public education.

But this leads me to a point needing clarification. There is a great deal of difference between having people involved and having them as participants. Involvement simply means that they are co-opted because it is convenient to do so. The word means to "roll in with". "Participation" on the other hand means that



**VOLVO MEANS
TO ROLL !**

one is part of the action, one is a member of the cast. If you are not there, we can't put the play on at all. Thus the education organisation is participative because teachers, parents and the community are part of the educational action and if they are not included then education itself will dysfunction.

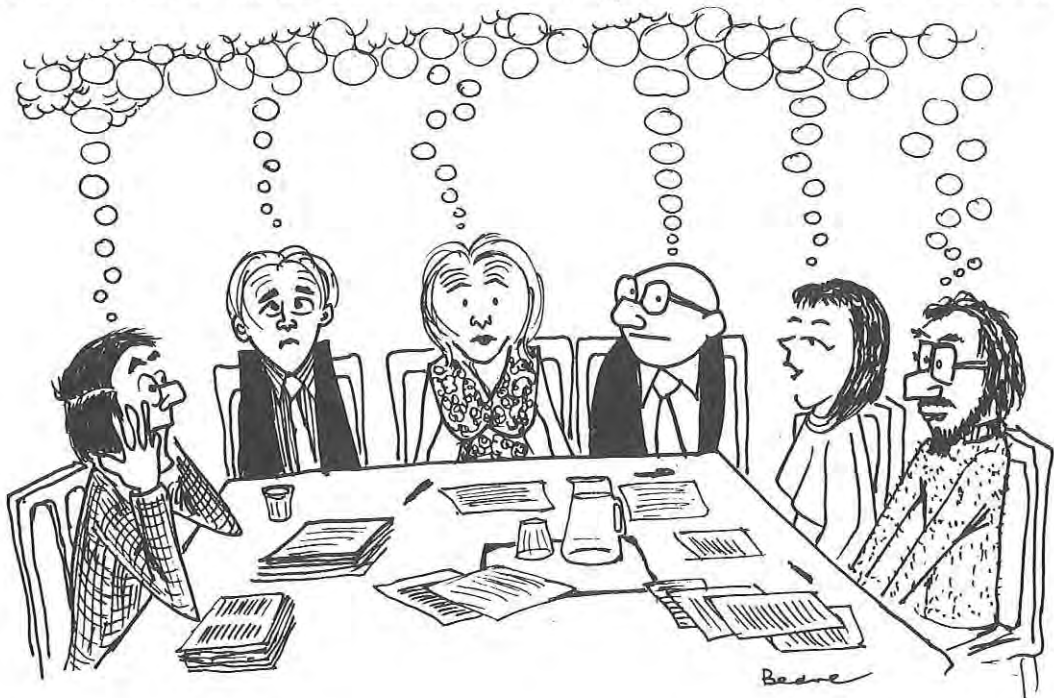


EXCUSE ME, BUT COULD I GET INVOLVED?

It must also be stated in this context that the all-too-familiar "adversary model" is lethal to an organisation which is trying to be participative. The persons who practise the confron-

tation model divide "workers" from "management", employers from employees, public from professionals, even schools from community. Dichotomies are created in order to foster division, antagonisms, schisms and disharmonies. The confrontation model goes directly counter to the participative model. The one divides while the other tries to unite. Unfortunately also, the adversary model is often fostered by industrial unions so that they can use it for their own ends, while the participative model fosters professional responsibility because it puts the professional in close touch with his client.

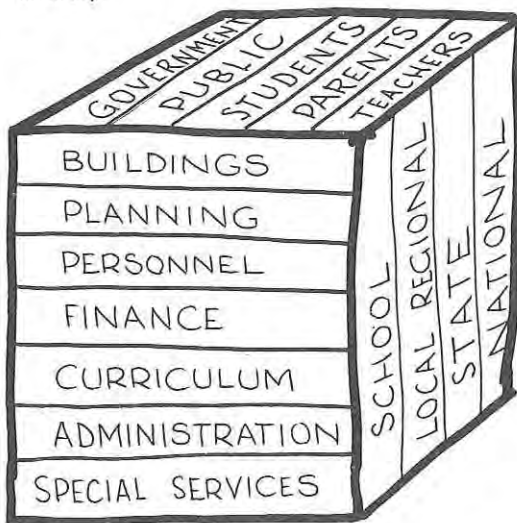
The most common manifestation of participation in an organisation is the production of committees! And if laymen, the clients, and the public are to be made members of those committees, one of the common qualities they will all bring to the committee's deliberations is technical and organisational ignorance! In particular they simply cannot be expected to understand the professional niceties of the education process. It seems to me, therefore, that a participative structure carries with it the necessity to inform the people whom we are trying to involve as partners in the exercise. Servicing, putting to them recommendations in focus, giving accurate background information become part and parcel of the participative process. In effect, one must educate the



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people while one asks them to make decisions. Committees will function well only if they are spoon-fed.

The professional educator, especially the educational administrator, has an especially difficult role as a participant. He has certain educational outcomes which he wants to achieve yet he is in a situation where he is at the mercy of lay people who do not necessarily understand all the implications in the professional matters under discussion. In a sense he has to steer the committee, ensuring that it does not hit the wayside posts and fences or veer off the road entirely.



THE TAYLOR BOX

Professor Taylor's "Taylor Box", remodelled by author. From the paper by Professor William Taylor, "Participation; Constancies and Change in Educational Administration". A.C.E.A. Bulletin No.6, October 1976 pp.11-26

Furthermore, it is a mistake to assume that everyone wants to participate; and even more of a mistake is to assume that everyone wants to participate in all respects and at every level of decision-making. When one gets beyond simplistic notions about "involvement" and "participation", one must grapple with a host of second order questions. One must ask who (or what groups) ought to be involved in what areas of decision-making and at what levels. In a recent paper, Professor W. Taylor suggests that some parents won't be very interested in dealing with anything beyond a school level. They simply would not be interested in dealing with national issues in education. There will be some people, for example, who do not feel competent to assist in the governmental domain in curriculum. They might be interested in discussing curriculum at school level, but are not very interested or confident about generating policy in curriculum matters at state or territorial level. In short, from the "Taylor Box" one can take a slice, cut in any of three planes, and be confronted with the need for a different participative design, different representational patterns, different modes of reaching consensus decisions. Do not assume, then, that there is only one model for participation.

Yet in the final analysis, no educational organisation is viable for long without participation. That participation causes frustration, consumes time and energy, is messy and untidy and even unwieldy constitutes no excuse for doing without it. For education assumes participation and without it the education enterprise ceases to be!

Proposition Number Six

THE ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND ITS MODE OF OPERATING SHOULD DELIMIT HIERARCHY AND EMPHASISE COLLEGIALLY

This is possibly the most important proposition of the whole eleven. Put simply, it means that we should behave towards each other like colleagues, like professional equals, and we should not set great store on the fact that some of us might be labelled bosses or leaders.

The proposition strikes at the very heart of bureaucracy and it assumes in its operators a clear sense of professionalism. Space does not allow me here to go into the conflicts between bureaucracy and professionalism, now a discrete subsection in the literature on organisations and administrative science. Suffice it to say that there are some profound consequences and radical differences which will emerge in an organisation that seriously delimits hierarchy and practises collegiality. It will become professional in the best sense of the word.

A professional rises or falls on his own competence, on his ability to deliver the service he is trained to give. "Status" (in the organisational sense) means little to him; competence means all. Thus if professional skill is to be emphasised at the expense of ascribed status (a characteristic of bureaucracy, you will remember), then the organisational structure will be a "flat" pyramid, with very few promotional rungs in it. Only in this way can we stress equality, interdependent skills, teamwork – in short, collegiality.

One of the problems in the older school systems was that the person who became an administrator or an inspector of schools sometimes knew less about the work going on in schools and less about new developments in educational theory than the bright young person who may be still a classroom teacher, who could have been better and more recently educated, and who had acquired more recent insights into the education process; so the older person's status was threatened. It would be better for an educational organisation if the two could relate as colleagues

and if the artificial factors of hierarchy or status did not exist to cause static and interference.

In any case, these days, high level management simply does not have all the data or all the insights necessary to make adequate decisions and management is forced to rely upon other people for advice. In fact, Kosmetsky and Ruefli predict that because of the information explosion and the development of information technologies

"higher level managers will give up some of their power, thereby flattening the pyramidal organisation, and diffusing participation in major decisions throughout lower levels".⁽¹¹⁾

A new style of organisation is therefore emerging. Indeed, Michael of the University of Michigan describes the "new manager" in the following way:⁽¹²⁾

- He is future-oriented
- He is relatively young
- He lives in an organisational setting emphasising
 - personal openness
 - non-hierarchical grouping



*"JUST A MOMENT, JACKSON.
I'D LIKE YOU TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE FOLLOWING DECISIONS."*

©PUNCH



"DAMMIT ALL! THEY'VE BUILT IT UPSIDE DOWN!"

— interpersonal tasks and problem-solving skills

- He is motivated by an ideology, (which defines his long-range goals and allows him to work compatibly with colleagues who share the same vision).

As the cartoon suggests, then, does it really matter if the building is constructed upside down? It still looks and functions the same! In an organisation which is non-hierarchical does it matter who is at the top? He is simply the "linking pin", the person who can take formal action to ensure that things are done. But it is collegiality, not hierarchy, which produces the action and the dynamism.

In a now-famous article entitled significantly "Beyond Bureaucracy", Warren Bennis argues for an organisational form which, he says, will gradually replace bureaucracy as we have come to know it. The organisation of the future, he declares, will look like this:

"The social structure of organisations of the future will have some unique characteristics. The key word will be 'temporary'; there will be adaptive, rapidly changing temporary systems. There will be problem-oriented 'task forces' composed of groups of relative strangers who represent a diverse set of professional skills. The groups will be arranged on an organic rather than a mechanical model; they will evolve in response to a problem rather than to programmed role expectations. The 'executive' thus will be-

come a coordinator or "linking pin" between various task forces. He must be a man who can speak the diverse languages of research, with skills to relay information and to mediate between groups. People will be differentiated not vertically according to rank and status but flexibly and functionally according to skill and professional training.

Adaptive, problem-solving, temporary systems of diverse specialists, linked together by coordinating and task evaluating specialists in an organic flux — this is the organisational form that will gradually replace bureaucracy as we know it. As no catchy phrase comes to mind, I call this an organic-adaptive structure." (13)

That description is so important that I must make a textual commentary upon it.

- Note that he is talking about "organisations of the future".
- "The keyword will be temporary". So the organisation chart, the organisation as a set piece, will be a thing of the past.
- "There will be adaptive, rapidly changing temporary systems". Organisation men will have to learn how to swap places and take on different roles.
- "There will be problem oriented task forces composed of groups of relative strangers who represent a diverse set of professional skills." The matrix organisation is suggested here and the organismic model which I spoke of earlier.
- "The groups will be arranged on an organic rather than a mechanical model". That is, the organisation will respond to the need to solve problems, and will reform its structures as the problem demands it. The solid bureaucratic structure of the organisation will be superseded.
- "They (i.e., the groups) will evolve in response to a problem rather than to programmed role expectations". What happens to "duty statements" in this kind of context?
- "The executive will thus become a coordinator or linking pin." Bennis uses Likert's word.
- He then describes the executive. He is "a man who can speak the diverse language of research", i.e. he will be literate in the areas with which he is dealing. He will have "skills

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to relay information" — he is a communicator. He will be able to "mediate between groups"; he is a co-ordinator of teams.

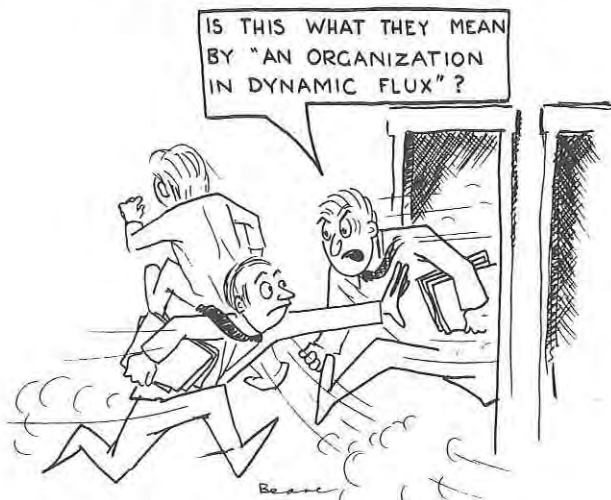
- "People will be differentiated not vertically according to rank and status, but flexibly and functionally according to skill and professional training." Bennis here emphasises the non-hierarchical approach; one that values skill, not status. Then Bennis summarises the new form of organisation.
- Firstly, it is "adaptive". People ought not to be worried about being pulled off one job and put on another.
- Secondly, it is "problem solving"; it focuses not on carrying out tasks, but on identifying problems and getting them solved.
- It consists of "temporary systems of diverse specialists"; to solve some problems, the organisation will need to select people from here and there so that collectively they have among them the range of skills needed to solve the problem.
- Those temporary systems will be linked together by a roughly drawn structure.
- If the executive is to be a task evaluation specialist, one of his jobs will be to size up the problem, say what he needs to solve it, assign the people he needs to solve it, and when they come up with a solution he must be able to evaluate whether the suggested solution is satisfactory.
- Even the coordinators are in "organic flux."

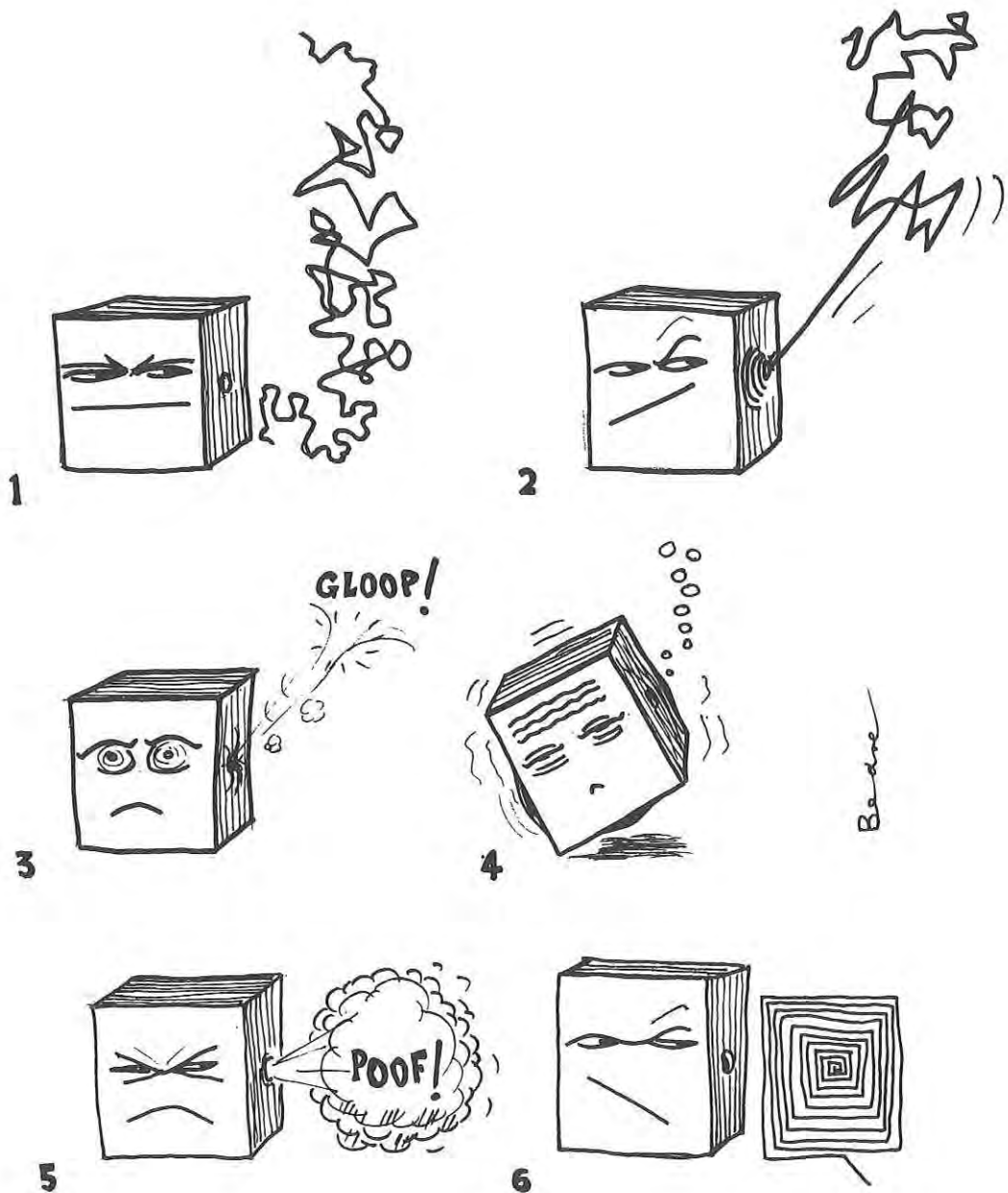
This is the organisational form which will gradually replace bureaucracy as we know it,

WELL, I KNOW THE ORGANIZATION HAD A "TEMPORARY SYSTEMS" STRUCTURE. BUT NOW IT'S JUST DISAPPEARED ENTIRELY!



says Bennis. Such a structure puts heavy demands on its operators. Furthermore, even though it develops professionalism, it will cause problems in a teaching service where the sense of hierarchy and bureaucracy is so strong. But it should be now clear that collegiality and hierarchy are unhappy partners, and one must choose the former if one is serious about professionalism





Proposition Number Seven

THE EDUCATION ORGANISATION SHOULD BE AN OPEN ORGANISATION

If the organisation is open it means that it has nothing to hide, it is amenable to outside influences and it is willing to interact with other people.

The word "open" is used in a biological sense. The organism feeds on its environment, is willing to take in nourishment from outside, and is willing to give information to other people. An open organisation tells people what is in the pipeline. Thus its public and its members have to learn to live with uncertainty. There are some occasions when the honest response will be, "I don't know" or "That decision hasn't been made yet" or "What is your opinion so that we can use it to help us to reach a decision?" The open organisation tells about things that haven't been decided as well as about the things that have been.

There are awesome dangers about being an open organisation. There is the confidentiality problem. There is the fact that you get too many fingers in the pie. There is the fact that the organisation can become victim to sectional interests and the obsessive view that those sectional interests have about their own little domains. Nevertheless, we must learn to live with these dangers if we want to be open. Openness gives the organisation a public acceptability that a closed organisation does not get. Yet it entails a great amount of time in oiling the wheels, in telling people things, in supplying information, in consultation.

One of the reasons for our setting up field teams in the ACT was to make sure that we had a group of people who could devote their time to making the system open, to letting people know, to interacting with all the people in the organisation. Those field teams must fail unless everybody in the organisation and particularly those in Head Office are willing to stand behind the teams, particularly in helping solve problems they identify. The field teams are free agents to wander where they will in the organisation. Indeed their mere existence should speak of openness.



Proposition Number Eight

THE EDUCATION ORGANISATION SHOULD ENCOURAGE SCHOOL-BASED ACTION AND INITIATIVE

Frankly, I have some reservations about a school-based approach. Why? My reason is that I think the school as we know it is about to undergo a massive remodelling throughout the world. I am not confident that the conventional school can survive into the 21st century. Some of the developmental work going on in South-East Asia concerning non-formal education should make us pause. For poorer nations have decided that the traditional school is wastefully expensive and that it is possible to design a non-formal education (NFE) program that leads a student from grade 1 through to adult education without his ever having to go inside a school. The NFE approach is one of the most promising developments in education, yet it is the newer (and poorer) nations who have discovered this new form, and are showing that they can make it work. I am therefore worried lest the school-based approach simply reaffirms a model which is about to be reformed, if for no other reason than that of finance!

On the positive side, the school-based approach simply implies that we put heavy emphasis on the local school operation. The system exists to help schools, to diminish central action and to protect schools in their endeavours. It seems to me that the schools which are most in danger, and therefore most in need of protection, are those which are doing new or unusual things. Yet it is those very schools who are hurt by routinisation, because central organisation can in fact work against initiative by making all schools conform.

The system therefore needs to make a clean definition between local actions (which it is in the power of the school to take), and global action (which the system's coordinating organisation, the Schools Office, must take). System-wide action usually falls under one of four headings.

- Some actions are coordinating, that is, they are beyond the capabilities of any one school to take.

- Some are distributive. That is, the head office must take the total resources of the system and distribute them amongst the schools in as equitable a way as it can.
- Some are planning actions.
- And some are facilitating and servicing actions.

Beyond these, we should devolve to the schools as much as is possible. Central administration should get rid of every responsibility which schools can shoulder. Mr J.S. Walker, a former Director-General of Education in South Australia, made a statement about school-based decisions which was widely quoted:

"We are going to give schools responsibility until it hurts." True. Responsibility hurts. But real school-based decision-making implies both hurt and health, taking hard decisions and living with the consequences. The school-based approach, then, is a kind of crystallisation process, whereby the head office gets rid of the decision-making which is the rightful domain of the schools in order to concentrate on and decant out of solution those jobs which only the Schools Office can perform.



**PARTNERSHIP OF
PROFESSIONAL
AND PUBLIC**

Proposition Number Nine

THE EDUCATIONAL MISSION OVERRIDES EVERY OTHER CONSIDERATION

The students' needs are paramount. Over almost everything we do, we must ask ourselves, "How will this affect kids?" The schools system should be one dedicated to the love of children.

In some respects, we are in danger of developing in Australia school systems that are teacher oriented rather than student oriented. And that is to our shame for students are the focus. Nothing in the schools' organisational world is more important than students. That is the reason why a school system can practise management by objectives. You agree with that, the schools agree with that, mums and dads agree with it, the community agrees with it, every parliamentarian agrees with it. We are on about kids. If you do anything that impairs the learning capacity of kids, you will invoke criticism and rightly so.

The educator, and especially the educational administrator, must keep in mind all the time the consideration, "What will be the educational outcomes of our action?"

There can, of course, be some rather odd outcomes if one loses sight of the educational mission. Did you hear of the systems analyst who was asked to review the efficiency of a symphony orchestra. "For a considerable period", he said, "the four oboe players have nothing to do. I recommend their numbers be reduced and the work be spread more evenly over the whole of the concert, thus eliminating peaks of activity. I also noted that all the violins were playing identical roles. This seems unnecessary duplication. The staff of this section should be drastically cut. If a large volume of sound is required it could be obtained by means of electronic amplification. I also observe that there seems to be too much

repetition of some musical passages. Scores should be drastically pruned. No useful purpose is served by the horns playing a passage that has already been played by the strings. It is estimated that if all redundant passages were eliminated, the whole concert of two hours could be reduced to twenty minutes and there would be no need for an intermission." (14)

Such silly outcomes can only result when the operator — albeit intelligent and skilled — loses sight of the reason for the organisation's existence.



Proposition Number Ten

THE EDUCATION ORGANISATION SHOULD ENCOURAGE INNOVATION

To paraphrase Robert Townsend, if we are not here to change the traditional modes of operating schools, what the hell are we here for? If it was not necessary to improve education practices, why set up the ACT Schools Authority, the newest school system in Australia? Once a school network has set up its life support systems, where does it go from there? I believe the ACT school system could be one of the most visible and creative school systems in the world. If we could document some of the developments going on in ACT schools, I believe the community would be astonished. We simply have not communicated the message. The ACT school system has become Australia's first local education authority. But so what? Have we anything to show for our newness and creativity!



What school systems around the world have achieved visibility? What systems in the USA have you heard about, and why did you hear

about them? New York, and Chicago are known because they are big. Palo Alto is known for its work in computer based instruction and self-paced learning. You might have heard about the team teaching project at Lexington and the Winnetka Scheme. What ones have you heard about in the United Kingdom? The Inner London Education Authority is justifiably well known, as is Michael Harrison's Sheffield school systems. They are adventurous systems. The Abraham Moss Centre and Eric Midwinter's work in education priority areas have probably drawn attention to Manchester. Henry Morris and his village colleges drew attention to Cambridge. Sir Alec Clegg's work brought the West Riding in Yorkshire to prominence. If you asked a Canadian "What school systems have you heard about in Australia?" I wonder what his answer would be, and why he would make his choice that way?

And there are so many things in education which are needing change. Secondary education, non-formal education, education beyond school, getting the school and the community together, the teacher role, better staff usage, the teacher becoming catalyst rather than instructor, teacher attitudes focussing on professionalism, the school year, the use of the school plant, the holistic curriculum, parent and home co-opted into the education process new instructional programmes as the result of technology, education networks, education for world citizenship — the list goes on.

Where is a system that will pioneer new territory in education? At a time when schools are under violent attack around the globe, the world looks for a visionary system that will fulfil rather than frustrate our hopes for our children. Is ours that system? Shouldn't it be?

Proposition Number Eleven,
which completes the Beare Eleven

THE EDUCATION ORGANISATION SHOULD BE AN OPTIMISTIC ORGANISATION

The following incident comes from a book by John Powell.

We're with you! We're proud of you! Good luck, brother!" (15)

"Some time ago a friend told me of an occasion when vacationing in the Bahamas he saw a large and restless crowd gathered on a pier. Upon investigation he discovered that the object of all the attention was a young man making the last-minute preparations for a solo journey around the world in a home-made boat. Without exception, everyone on the pier was vocally pessimistic. All were actively volunteering to tell the ambitious sailor all the things that could possibly go wrong. 'The sun will broil you! . . . You won't have enough food . . . That boat of yours won't withstand the waves in a storm! . . . You will never make it'.

When my friend heard all these discouraging warnings to the adventurous young man, he felt an irresistible desire to offer some optimism and encouragement. As the little craft began drifting away from the pier towards the horizon, my friend went to the end of the pier waving both arms wildly like semaphore spelling confidence. He kept shouting 'Bon Voyage! You're really something!

What education needs, I think, are eschatological educators, educators who know the future they want to bring in and who are determined that they are going to get there. We want (to use another term) proliptical operators the ones who are ready to slide the future into the present and act as though that future is here and now.

Education has more than its share of prophets of doom. It is high time that educators began affirming collectively that we are doing places, we are optimistic about the future. Bon Voyage! To that extent the education organisation should be fun to be associated with because of the optimism in it. There is enjoyment in being in an organisation that feels it is going places. There is an exhilaration in overcoming difficulties and sharing the spoils of battle. The members of an education organisation ought to be saying repeatedly, "We are optimistic about education. We know where we are going, and we are confident we will get there. Bon Voyage!"



FOOTNOTES

- (1) Niccola Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Thomas G. Bergin (New York: Appleton-Century Crofts, 1947), p.2
- (2) *Ibid*, p.15
- (3) Eric Hoffer, *The True Believer* (New York: Harper Row, 1951), p.17. I am indebted to the following in which the three quotations in this section were used: Samuel A. Moore II, "Organisational Inertia and Resistance to Change", *Educational Forum*, Nov. 1976, pp.33-36
- (4) Orion F. White, "The Dialectical Organisation: an Alternative to Bureaucracy", *Public Administration Review*, Jan/Feb 1969, pp.32-42
- (5) *Ibid*, pp.36-37
- (6) Donald A. Myers, "The Humanistic School, a Critical Analysis", *Educational Forum*, Vol. xxxvi, No. 1, Nov. 1972, p.56
- (7) Rensis Likert, *New Patterns of Management* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961)
- (8) R. Oliver Gibson and H.C. Hunt, *The School Personnel Administrator*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1965), pp.150-2.
- (9) Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1944), p.118
- (10) *Loc. Cit.*
- (11) *The Futurist*, Dec.1972, p.245
- (12) Don Michael, "The New Manager", *The Futurist*, Dec. 1972
- (13) Bennis W.G., K.D. Benne and R. Chin, *The Planning of Change* (Holt, Rinehard & Winston, 1961), p.578
The same view, indeed almost the same wording, occurs in: John M. Thomas and Bennis W.G. (eds), *Management of Change and Conflict* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1972), pp.224-225 which quotes Bennis' essay of 1966.
Warren G. Bennis, "Changing Organisations", *Journal of Applied Behavioural Science*, Vol. 2, No. 3, 1966.
Warren G. Bennis, "Beyond Bureaucracy", *Trans-Action*, Vol. 2, No. 5, July-Aug 1965, pp.31-35 (The same wording shown in the text above appears on p.35).
- (14) Gerald J. Pine, "Teacher Accountability: Myths and Realities", *The Educational Forum*, Nov. 1976, p.51
- (15) John Powell, *Fully Human, Fully Alive* (Niles, Illinois: Argus Communications, 1976), pp17-8