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ABSTRACT

Colleges should be administered by educators. An academic administrator insensitive to educational purpose and process is destined for failure. Failure is also the probable destiny for the academic administrator whose performance is not anchored in the concept sense of administration. The mastery and artistic application of major administrative concepts enable us to avoid managerial mechanics and administrative clucking, to establish an administrative competence that both facilitates and inspires the work of collegues. These are major obligations of administration. The times incline us toward pessimism and negativism. But this is precisely when we need the unique act of administrative leadership. (Author/KE)

THE BEST AND MOST PHILOSOPHICAL INVENTION OF THE HUMAN MIND

--ITS ADMINISTRATIVE USE--

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THE BEST AND MOST PHILOSOPHICAL INVENTION OF THE HUMAN MIND

--ITS ADMINISTRATIVE USE--

> Life has not taught me to expect nothing, but she has taught me not to expect success to be the inevitable result of my endeavors. . . .Life has taught me that active loving saves me from a morbid preoccupation with the shortcomings of society and the waywardness of men.
>
> Alan Paton, What I Have Learned

For this occasion, I had originally planned reflections entitled "The Concept Sense of Academic Administration." The title derives from my conviction that "common sense" does not always provide an adequate guide for explanation or action. This is true in both the physical and social sciences, and I believe it to be true in administration.

I agree with John Silber that colleges should be administered by educators and that an academic administrator insensitive to educational purpose and process is destined for failure.[1] But I take the matter a step further. Failure is also the probable destiny for the academic administrator whose performance is not anchored in the "concept sense" of administration. The mastery and artistic application of major administrative concepts enable us to avoid managerial mechanics and administrative clucking, to establish an administrative competence that both facilitates and inspires the work of colleagues, which in my mind are major obligations of administration, in the academy and out.

But I have decided that this is a conviction that can be rested within these opening remarks. Moreover, I have been provoked into another theme, one that I believe may be more important at this juncture in higher education

history and in our potential to affect its course. Let me introduce that theme by looking back for a moment to a series of events during the internship year.

Living in Nashville this year has provided several opportunities to discover the basis of its claim as "Music City." Among these opportunities have been an elegant evening at the Nutcracker Ballet, pleasant moments with the easy sounds of the George Shearing quintet, and a footstomping frolic at the Grand Ole Opry. It is from the latter, of course, that Nashville gets most of its reputation. One evening I heard a country music version of Alexander Pope's beatitude "Blessed is he who expects nothing, for he shall never be disappointed." In the closing lines of a country hit entitled "Crude Oil Blues"--popular during the gasoline crisis--is the less sophisticated but clear translation hanging on a closed gasoline pump and reading "He who expects little ain't ganna be disappointed."

This bit of second-hand country philosophy connected with events in my professional life in a timely way. I attended this spring a "Seminar on Statewide Planning in Higher Education," one of a series conducted as part of the Inservice Education Program under the auspices of the Education Commission of the States and State Higher Education Executive Officers. Here were gathered coordinating and governing agency personnel from over the country.

The seminar setting established by director Lyman Glenny and others was certainly not one of buoyant optimism. There was clear indication of the need to dig in for hard times, to consider carefully the current environment in planning activities--the potential for stabilized and declining enrollments in coming years, for an uncertain economy, and for a "low priority" attitude among legislators and state officials. The mood was one of caution and concern.

Certainly some of these attitudes are easy to find in Tennessee, where we have had a rather grim financial year, and both executive and legislative

offices have been particularly aggressive in examining higher education budget requests. Economic conditions and competing priorities for public services have left higher education with a smaller portion of the fiscal pie. The increase in dollars to be appropriated this year will be about 2 percent--at a time when inflation is eating away at a rate of 14 to 16 percent and energy costs are driving campus utility bills up by a factor of two and three.

Meanwhile, back at the campus level, administrative colleagues at both Memphis State and other colleges are not only trying to deal with the impact of this fiscal crunch, they are also spending increasing amounts of time fussing with tenure tangles, promotion puzzles, and the rumors and realities of collective negotiation. So that life does not get too routine, diversions are provided by visitors from EEOC who drop in to match salaries and experience of selected female faculty with male counterparts and advise how much back salary the institution owes. The discomfort of sitting on this academic picket fence is made complete by assorted lawsuits from faculty and students, and resolutions from the legislature directing studies of faculty workload and law school admissions policies. This is a time when it is certainly easier to expect the worse and thus avoid disappointment.

The times incline us toward pessimism and negativism. But this is precisely when we need the unique act of administrative leadership. That act is to provide a touch of unwarranted optimism--to hold before our faculties some vision of the purpose of our endeavor, to search for productive and creative channels of activity when conventional ones close or congest, and to invest in the resiliency of the human spirit by expecting the best effort from ourselves and those who work with us. The matter is more simply put. We're more likely to get the best if we expect the best.

Administrative colleagues occasionally accuse me of being naive. They suggest that I should entitle my remarks "How to be a Successful Polyanna

in a Cruel World." Or they suggest that I am like the Czech optimist who knows that things are much worse this year than they were the last, but knows that they are much better than they will be next year. The labels and the associated philosophical set I reject, and here's why.

I've always been intrigued by the power latent in the expectations we hold for others. In early 1943 Harry Hopkins, President Roosevelt's closest confidant was helping the president prepare his state of the union message. Targets for war production were to be part of the speech, and Hopkins cited a report from a panel of experts saying that the United States' economy, by straining every fiber, could produce 24,000 planes the next year. Roosevelt told Hopkins to double that number and add 10,000. The aircraft industry did not quite meet the Roosevelt expectation of 60,000 but did produce 49,000 planes, almost double what the experts predicted.

Most of us can personalize this same finding. We have had the experience of belonging to some organized group--athletic team, musical group, drama cast--whose coherence and energy were tapped by challenge that held high expectation of performance. And each of us could turn the same principle inward, remembering in our lives some teacher, some friend or colleague, who expected the best we could give. A passage from one of my favorite pens is appropriate here. From Emerson's "The American Scholar":

> . . . The private life of one man shall be a more illustrious monarchy, more formidable to its enemy, more sweet and serene in its influence to its friend, than any kingdom in history.[2]

Before the care of a professor at Memphis State University, I thought a doctoral degree was something you needed to practice medicine. Having my educ ional aspiration elevated, I persisted because I saw in the lives of a few good men and women, some of whom have been through this ACE internship program, high models of professional performance and personal integrity.

And in those models was the expectation of higher performance for all whose lives they touched.

The other side of the stylistic coin is highly visible as well, the sad spectre of an academic administrator whose entire style is empty of any inspirational quality, whose complete attention is commanded by dollars, digits, and documents.

A friend of mine tells me of an academic vice president who has a distorted sense of what the phrase "strong administration" means. This VP has the reputation for being able to make those tough decisions, who, in a "shoot-from-the-hip" style, mows down those screwy ideas from deans and directors and moves on to the next challenge. But his style is not balanced. He can be tough; but he doesn't know how to lead. He lacks that inspirational quality that calls out the best in deans and his chairmen. The pervasiveness of his negative style dampens the spirit and enthusiasm of an entire faculty.

A quick caveat. I do not argue against the need for administrative courage to properly resist sloppy thinking, unbridled ambition, or impractical schemes. But I do say that we need balanced styles. To the 1974 ACE meeting in San Diego, Richard Lyman suggested in his keynote address that "we do not have to be demoralized just because somebody tells us we are."[3] A good way to avoid a crisis of imagination and courage in higher education today is to remember our leadership obligation to expect the best effort from ourselves and others.

The German philosopher Goethe said that "If we take people as they are, we make them worse. If we treat them as if they were what they ought to be, we help them become what they are capable of becoming." I believe there's practical validity in this philosophy. The basis of my belief is akin to that of the Tennessee mountaineer who was once asked by a friend whether he

believed in baptism. "Darn tootin' I do. I seen it done!" Is there other evidence, philosophical or empirical, to commend this point of view, something more substantive and public than just my testimony and commitment? There is; and it is to this evidence that I now briefly turn.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL CONNECTION--ASSUMPTION AND ACTION

Before touching the research foundations of the relationship between expectation and performance, I want to engage in a bit of philosophical reflection on the same question.

In our attitudes and in the quality of our expectations, we can enshrine mediocrity or promote excellence, tie down every Gulliver or free human potential. What differences in the behavior of our students would you predict if we expect success rather than failure? What differences in performance of faculty do we elicit if we expect responsibility rather than lethargy? And what differences in the record of administrative colleagues do we establish if we expect trust rather than treachery? We can have the dubious pleasure of always being surprised if we consistently underestimate the potential of those with whom we work--but we can never know what the far limit of that potential might have been.

We need no flurry of footnotes to convince us that the administrative style of a president or dean can invade an entire institution, can mobilize the imagination and energy of a staff or smother every creative and dissonant impulse that arises. This is an observation so obvious that we tend to overlook it when we occupy leadership roles. We need look no further than the president and chief administrative officers of our own institutions to see that the style of the administrator is a crucial factor in shaping the quality of a work environment.

But if we will feel comfortable with an "authority", then the matter is nicely placed by Roger Heyns when he asked the 1972-73 class of ACE interns to consider the Watergate affair and

> . . . contemplate the pervasiveness of leadership. Every bit as important as pronouncements made, orders given, or policies stated are the leader's values, attitudes, and style.[4]

If a college president takes no vacation, then it is more difficult for those who work with him to do so. If a dean is an academic Simon Legree, then it is easier for chairmen to get ulcers. And if a chairman is insecure, then there will be less risk taking on the part of his faculty.

I know a medium-size university where the president's administrative style is built on mistrust and less-than-modest assumptions about the decision ability of his faculty. To be fair, the maturity and readiness of institutional faculties to participate in governance matters is indeed a variable matter. And it is frustrating to watch endless committee meetings, some characterized by Stephen Bailey as sessions "at which trivia are fondled and important issues nibbled to death by anxiety-ridden colleagues."[5] But frequently, faculties have no chance to mature because no one expects them to.

This is a perfect example of a common administrative fallacy which I call contrived learning. Contrived learning occurs when we make assumptions about a situation (Dean X needs to be fired, Program Y needs to be dropped, or Action Z will solve this problem), we make a decision based on those assumptions, and then we adjust the environment to produce the predicted consequences (I told you so).

At this institution, the faculty may not mature in their involvement simply because the president does not expect them to and therefore will not provide an opportunity. In this case, however, an aggressive faculty have found another outlet. It's called a union.

Fortunately, there are examples on the positive side as well. A large state university president made a regular practice of complimenting his staff in public addresses and remarks. If you were one of those who had done your work well, you could take pleasure in this mode of reinforcement. If you

were one of those who had not, and you listened carefully, you could quickly discover what it was the president wished you to be doing better. This public expression of confidence and more subtle expression of expectation generally was a more artistic approach to motivation than a private chewing.

Now some of you will say that my colleagues were right. This is indeed polyanna foolishness. There are some folk who are simply lazy and untrustworthy. And there are some others who are just downright mean. For them, it does less good to expect the best than to get their attention by a good administrative temper fit, or as collegiate godfather make them some other offer they can't refuse.

You may be thinking that, if you follow this philosophical set, it leads to such interesting possibilities as expecting Adolf Hitler to show up for services at the local synagogue. Others will observe that this all sounds very much like Douglas McGregor's Theory Y management style, when we all know that even McGregor had trouble being a college president on this theory. But these are points with which I would agree. The trouble with the use of Theory Y, as with any theory, is recognizing the limitations of its applicability and therefore its effectiveness. Physical scientists are not necessarily upset because they have two or three theories to explain and predict the propogation of light, and they do not abuse the wave theory because it does not explain, at least at present, the photoelectric effect.

In 1969 I published a paper entitled "The Context of Organizational Behavior."[1] In that paper I suggested that:

> The essential theme of scholars in administration is that relationships encouraging dependence, submissiveness, conformity, and imposed evaluation must give way to relationships which hold promise for development of trust, for independence of action, for risk taking, for self-evaluation. . . .

> Yet the literature is equally clear on another point. It is that rigid and stereotyped notions of management styles belong, to borrow a phrase from Galbraith, in the museum of irrelevant ideas. There is no personality syndrome characteristic of all effective leaders nor a management style appropriate for all organizational situations. Flexibility is the key word. There is a time for independence and a time for control, a time for participation and a time for authority.[6]

I have had six years to test what I wrote and believed in 1969. And I have found no experience that causes me to abandon what I said then. Incidentally, this same theme continues to appear in the management literature. For example, in a 1970 book by William Reddin entitled Managerial Effectiveness[7] and in a 1973 Harvard Business Review article entitled "How to Choose a Leadership Style,"[8] the basic proposition is the same. The effective administrator is neither tough nor permissive but one who can match style with situation.

A postscript to this discussion. We can find support for either position we want to take on the power of optimistic expectations, from the optimism of Goethe to the pessimism of Pope.

For example, in my reading during the past few months was the disquieting little book The Human Prospect by Robert Heilbroner. He exposes some uncomfortable human inclinations:

> The explosion of violence in street crime, race riots, bombings, bizzare airplane hijackings, shocking assassinations has made a mockery of the television image of middle class gentility and brought home with terrible impact the recognition of a barbarism hidden behind the superficial amenities of life.[9]

Heilbroner goes on to point out that the material achievements of our technology have failed to satisfy the basic longings of the human spirit:

> . . . the values of an industrial civilization, which has for two centuries given us not only material advances but also a sense of elan and purpose, now seem to be losing their self-evident justification.[10]

Is there a parallel in higher education? Have the halcyon days of the '60's led us to associate quantitative activity--growth in faculty, facilities, and finance--with academic progress and quality? Are the administrative skills of the '60's those we will need for the years we now face?

It is easy to find in the chronicle of the past sufficient reason for pessimism. But there is a persuasive counter-position. I find it forcefully expressed in remarks by Dr. Rene Dubos, writing in the 1973-74 winter issue of The American Scholar. He testifies as follows:

> . . . I believe that optimism is essential for action and constitutes the only attitude compatible with sanity. As the French historian Elie Halvey wrote to one of his friends in 1895, "Pessimism is nothing but a state of mind, whereas optimism is a system, the best and the most philosophical invention of the human mind." Optimism is a creative philosophical attitude, because it encourages taking advantage of personal and social crises for the development of novel and more sensible ways of life.[11]

Here, I think, is the key passage. To argue that the quality of our first expectations is a major determinant of the kinds of behavior we will elicit is not to take an ostrich-like view that we have no crisis and no distorted human personality. It does suggest that constructive and creative response to challenge is not likely to emerge from defeatism and pessimism.

The record of higher education is not a museum filled with fossils of years gone by and finished works hanging on the walls. We are not through. It is a progress that requires us to address continuing challenge. In his work The Ascent of Man the late Jacob Bronowski reminds us that:

> . . . man is the only one who is not locked into his environment. His imagination, his reason, his emotional subtlety and toughness make it possible for him not to accept the environment, but to change it.[12]

My position is that we cannot place these human qualities in the service of higher education, unless we first have the commitment to do so. And the kind of optimism I have in mind is neither patient nor passive. On the contrary, it is aggressive in looking for every possibility of constructive action within the realm of practical possibility. Perhaps this is enough philosophical wandering. What can we find in the empirical world to sustain our confidence in the proposition? Let us turn our attention there for a moment.

THE RESEARCH CONNECTION--EXPECTATION AND PERFORMANCE

What I have shared thus far is personal experience buttressed by selected philosophical support. I place high value on learning from experience. In fact, experience is probably the most frequent mode of learning for administrators. Since good habits are formed by practice, the way to become a good administrator is to administer. But since bad habits are also learned through action, it turns out that bad administration is also learned through experience.

Fortunately, we do not always have to place our hand on the hot stove of experience to learn that we can get burned. As professionals, we should attend to conceptual and objective data as well, to place ideas in the service of improved performance. I want now to cite two or three examples that offer some research support for my theme.

The first of these illustrations reveals how expectations can condition our approach to scholarship and theory building. I find it amusing but also disturbing. In his text on Principles of Behavior Modification, psychologist Albert Bandura reports a case in which behaviorists induced a bizzare broom-carrying behavior in an adult schizophrenic by periodic positive reinforcement.[13] They then delivered the patient to a psychotherapist who was unaware of previous reinforcement conditions.

In the case report, the psychotherapist wrote the following analysis: "Her constant and compulsive pacing, holding a broom in the manner she does, could be seen as a ritualistic procedure; a magical action. Her broom could then be: a child that gives her love and she gives in turn her devotion, a phallic symbol; the scepter of an omnipotent queen."

Now the analysis of this patient's behavior proceeds from a theory base with a clear set of expectations, which are revealed in the case report. The analysis of the behavior is perhaps less troublesome than the therapy

which might be prescribed. As a postscript, the broom-carrying behavior was easily extinguished by removal of the reinforcement and required no interpretative probing of the patient's sexual conflicts or repressed past. Those of you in the social behavioral sciences can recall other examples in which the expectations of researchers have biased research findings. What is the lesson here for administration? It is that our assumptions and associated philosophical set condition our perception of events around us. To be consistent, this holds no less true for optimism and high expectations than it does for the pessimist. The test is which posture yields the most effective results in terms of goals sought and cost--human and fiscal.

The second example I take from a recent and well-known study that dealt with the influence of our expectations. It was first reported in the book Pygmalion in the Classroom by Robert Rosenthal and more recently summarized in the September 1973 issue of Psychology Today. Stay with me for a brief report of what Rosenthal found:

> . . . Fode and I told a class of 12 students that one could produce a strain of intelligent rats by inbreeding them to increase their ability to run mazes quickly. To demonstrate, we gave each student five rats which had to learn to run to the darker of two arms of a T-maze. We told half of our student experimenters that they had the "maze bright," intelligent rats; we told the rest that they had the stupid rats. Naturally, there was no real difference among any of the animals.
>
> But they certainly differed in their performance. The rats believed to be bright improved daily in running the maze--they ran faster and more accurately--while the supposedly dull animals did poorly. The "dumb" rats refused to budge from the starting point 29 percent of the time, while the "smart" rats were recalcitrant only 11 percent of the time.
>
> Then we asked our students to rate the rats and to describe their own attitudes toward them. Those who believed they were working with intelligent animals liked them better and found them more pleasant. Such students said they felt more relaxed with the animals; they treated them more gently and were more enthusiastic about the experiment than students who thought they had dull rats to work with. Curiously, the students with "bright" rats said that they handled them more but talked to them less. One wonders what students with "dull" rats were saying to those poor creatures.[14]

I interrupt Rosenthal's narrative here to plead that you not dismiss the results thus far simply because we are dealing with rats. And I also caution against any transference of the animal label to colleagues of any variety. Let us hear what Rosenthal next did:

> If rats act smarter because their experimenters think they are smarter, we reasoned, perhaps the same phenomenon was at work in the classroom. So in the mid 1960's Lenore Jacobson and I launched what was to become a most controversial study: Intellectual Bloomers. We selected an elementary school in a lower-class neighborhood and gave all the children a nonverbal IQ test at the beginning of the school year. We disguised the test as one that would predict "intellectual blooming." There were 18 classrooms in the school, three at each of the six grade levels. The three rooms for each grade consisted of children with above average ability, average ability, and below average ability.
>
> After the test, we randomly chose 20% of the children in each room and labeled them "intellectual bloomers." We then gave each teacher the names of these children, who, we explained, could be expected to show remarkable gains during the coming year on the basis of their test scores. In fact, the differences between these experimental children and the control group was solely in the teacher's mind.
>
> Our IQ measure required no speaking, reading, or writing. One part of it, a picture vocabulary, did require a greater comprehension of English, so we call it the verbal subtest. The second part required less ability to understand language but more ability to reason abstractly, so we call it the reasoning subtest.
>
> We retested all the children eight months later. For the school as a whole, we found that the experimental children, those whose teacher had been led to expect "blooming," showed an excess in overall IQ gain of four points over the IQ gain of the control children. Their excess in gain was smaller in verbal ability, two points only, but substantially greater in reasoning, where they gained seven points more than the controls. Moreover, it made no difference whether the child was in a high ability or low ability classroom. The teachers' expectations benefited children at all levels.[15]

The final example I take from a paper appearing in the November 1970 issue of Educational Leadership, a paper by Arthur Combs entitled "The Human Aspect of Administration."[16] The basic question explored by Combs and his associates in their research work was this: "How can you tell the

difference between good practitioners and poor ones in the helping professions: social work, teaching, psychiatry, clinical psychology, administration, counseling, nursing." Here is what they found.

Not in the amount and kind of knowledge practitioners possessed was the difference found but in their behavior patterns, especially in the quality and character of first or instantaneous reactions. In Combs' words:

> . . . We think that, in a human being, what makes the difference is the belief system the person holds. Especially this has to do with what you believe is important.[17]

Other important discriminating factors were these:

> Good helpers are concerned with people and poor helpers with things.
>
> Good helpers believe that people are able instead of unable, dependable rather than undependable, worthy rather than unworthy.
>
> Good helpers have positive self-concepts, whereas poor helpers see themselves as unwanted, unable, undignified, unacceptable.
>
> Good helpers are likely to have purposes which are altruistic rather than narcisstic.
>
> Good helpers are not concerned with what methods are used but do methods fit. They are neither directive nor non-directive, hard or easy, authoritarian or participative.

And here I will take an interpretative liberty with Combs' conclusions to suggest that good helpers are professional artists who place ideas and technique in action with a sensitivity to person and place. I draw your attention to the second finding mentioned--the one about the assumptions good helpers make of others. But I want to observe as well that there is a rich mine of concepts in the other findings. In particular, the one about the self-concept of good helpers is worth noting. If you will permit a short diversion, I recall forceful support from Abraham Zaleznik's book The Human Dilemmas of Leadership:

> The exercise of leadership requires a strong sense of identity--knowing who one is and who one is not. The myth of the value of being an "all-around guy" is damaging to the striving of an individual to locate himself from within and then to place himself

> in relation to others. This active location and placement of oneself prevents the individual from being defined by others in uncongenial terms. It prevents him also from being buffeted around the sea of opinion he must live within. A sense of autonomy, separateness, or identity permits a freedom of action and thinking necessary for leadership.[18]

The implication here is that the administrator who has the healthiest sense of personal identity, who knows both strengths and limitations, will be the one from whom you can expect the most effective leadership. Test that idea in your own experience.

It seems to me that we do have some evidence from the empirical and research world to support our proposition that positive expectations, a touch of unwarranted optimism, does tend to elicit higher levels of performance. I repeat for emphasis: this does not mean that the academic administrator is always a nice guy, that he never gets mad, never raises his voice. But it does mean that, if he hopes to call out the best in his associates, the probability is higher if he begins by expecting the best.

Before I close this discussion of the research support, there is a related thought that I would like to entertain. I hesitate because of a penchant for order and relevance. But since my friends tell me that these are euphemisms I use to camouflage my rigidity, I will inject at this point a one-point sermonette.

A related and powerful tool available to the academic administrator, or to any administrator for that matter, is that of reinforcing colleagues for work well done. The reinforcement of desired behavior has a research basis, if a philosophically controversial one, in the work of psychologist B. F. Skinner and others of the behavioral bent. We know from an array of research that proper reinforcement of behavior is an effective method of promoting the recurrence of that behavior.

We spend a lot of time these days in our councils and cabinets talking about incentive systems, exploring the influence of salary and sabbaticals. Not to depreciate the importance of money and leave as reward instruments, it is surprising how much good effort we can elicit by the simple expedient of telling a colleague that he or she did a good job. It is equally surprising, sadly so, how often this simple tool is ignored.

I recently talked with a young research associate in an institutional research activity, apparently a highly capable young professional. She indicated that in two years of work in that office, she had never received any feedback, of any significance, on the quality of work she was doing, or even on what she was doing. Here is a case where an academic administrator has missed a good chance not only to get best performance but to develop a promising talent.

On the other hand, I know an academic vice president who, with staff support, pays careful attention to the achievements of university faculty. By a personal note, a phone call, or conversational comment, he expresses his pleasure in their achievement and accomplishment.

I know that some academic administrators and faculty object to the use of reinforcement on philosophical grounds. They are unhappy with the implications of Skinner's Walden II and see the approach as demeaning to human personality. Recently, I attended a conference to explore the application of Personalized Systems of Instruction, or PSI as it is known. One of the major principles of PSI, as I understand it, is the use of immediate feedback to the student. This is a reinforcement concept and, of course, has its theoretical mooring in behaviorism.

Before they had completely understood the other principles of PSI, the educational goals and content conditions under which it might be most effective, and the interaction of the method with instructor style, some

faculty members attending the conference branded the method as facist, authoritarian, and more appropriate to Russia than the U. S. One indicated that he smelled a "rat in the woodpile" and the rat was B. F. Skinner. As I listened to those attacks, I wondered to myself how many of these same faculty members provided positive reinforcement to students and colleagues who held points of view similar to theirs--a curious inconsistency.

Enough of this diverson. A word of "well done" carefully and sincerely applied can do much to sustain that good performance we may elicit by holding high expectations.

INTIMIDATION VERSUS INSPIRATION: AN ARTISTIC SOLUTION

Let me begin closure with one or two final illustrations. On page 5 of the February 11, 1975, Wall Street Journal is a full-page advertisement for a new book in business management. The book is entitled Winning through Intimidation! What the book offers is described as follows:

> It explains--in terms candid enough to make you wince at times--what intimidation is, why you become intimidated, and how you can avoid the mental lapses that occasionally cause even the most successful people to inadvertantly, and unknowingly, become intimidated. And in doing so, it kicks the props out from under phony altruism and goody-two shoeism once and for all.[19]

The book thus offers counsel on the use of intimidation as an effective management tool and also guidelines on how not to be intimidated. There is no clue as to the possible outcome if two administrators have both read the same book. Perhaps there will be a sequel publication on What To Do If You Have Just Been Intimidated.

Maybe there are times when intimidation is the order of the day, but all that I have shared with you thus far clearly indicates that I believe we're going to need leadership not with intimidation but with inspiration. Is that part of the "phony altruism" referred to in the ad? I think not. Crises call for leadership and also make us more ready to respond to leadership--and that, by the way, is a matter also well established in the research literature.[20] And so the crises facing higher education today make the field ripe for leadership. We anticipate possible careers in academic administration at a fortunate time.

Someone has observed that "under carefully controlled conditions, organisms will behave as they damn well please." I guess I feel that the situation is a little more predictable than this maxim suggests. I have taken the position that our effectiveness will be enhanced, and our students and faculties the beneficiary, if we hold high expectations for both our

performance and theirs, if we can find the strength to remain optimistic in the face of what appear to be overwhelming problems.

But maintaining such attitudes will not be easy, for there are many who will object to our holding more noble assumptions about students and colleagues. For example, some will say that holding high expectations opens you to hurt and disappointment. But surely this is not a sufficient reason for professionals to expect less than the best.

Others will say, as I have previously indicated, that holding high expectations is a foolish position considering what we know about human behavior. In the June 3, 1972, issue of Saturday Review, the prominent sociologist Amitai Etzioni wrote that:

> What is becoming increasingly apparent is that to solve social problems by changing people is more expensive and usually less productive than approaches that accept people as they are and seek to mend not them but the circumstances about them.[21]

He goes on to cite an impressive array of failures in which we have attempted to educate people into behavior changes. Such attempts include campaigns related to driver safety, smoking, drug abuse, and criminal behavior.

Etzioni suggests that our conventional approach to change is to change attitudes in hopes that behavior will follow. His message is that there are times when change may be effected more readily by changing the behavior and letting attitudes follow. There are sufficient examples in public policy for us to pay attention to this counsel.

Indeed, this article troubled me no little bit when I first began to reflect on what appeared to be accurate reflections of human inclinations. And at first glance, this position would seem hostile to the idea of expecting high performance from those with whom we work. But there is another way of looking at the matter. Whether it is a rationalization you may judge. But it occurred to me that, by holding high expectations for performance, we

may be doing exactly what Etzioni suggested--helping to change the performance environment.

In illustration, this final reminisence. Last year I had breakfast in the home of a former doctoral student, a man who now holds a responsible administrative position in higher education. I can remember first interviewing him for an assistantship. He was a student whose high school teachers took bets on whether he would finish high school. His academic record at the undergraduate level could not be labeled as a very spectacular one, and his master's work was one we would characterize as mostly B's and a few A's.

He had been teaching physics in one of the local high schools before thinking about doctoral work, and I had word that he was a really fine teacher. I decided to take a risk, gave him one or two projects to tuck under his arm, a desk to work at, a little encouragement, and some breathing room. The results were phenomenal. I quickly learned that the only problem with his academic record was that no one had really ever expected him to do much; he had never "turned on," so to speak.

I am not asking you to generalize from this sample of one, nor uncritical acceptance of anything that I have said. But I am asking that you review your own experience, which includes a look at the leadership styles about you each day, that you also see what research evidence you can find and make up your own mind how you want to approach the leadership responsibilities that may be yours.

Retrenchment, caution, disenchantment are words that some are using to describe the mood of higher education today. Planners warn us against enrollment declines portended by birth rate statistics. Economists forecast a gloomy fiscal picture. Legislators talk about the need for more work

out of faculty. Systems experts tell us how we can save money through cost analysis and management information systems. And government officials tell us how we have failed to accommodate minorities. Perhaps such counsel is necessary. But in identifying our failures we do not have to obscure important achievements.

I remember reading in Viktor Frankl's The Doctor and the Soul a few years ago that physicians had found a relationship between attitudinal states and the presence of chemicals in the blood that fight off infection. Apparently low amounts of the chemical were found to exist in the blood of patients suffering from depression. As I remember, what was not known was which came first, the depression or chemical state.

Physiologists will sprout gray hairs from my crude analogy. But I am suggesting that the current professional depression found in higher education does not associate well with the levels of vision and daring needed to carry higher education forward. These remarks are certainly a poor substitute for a direct injection of optimism and high expectations. But perhaps in them you will discover an important key to our leadership potential. I ask only for you to remember that. . .

> Expecting others to do their best is not the same as insuring success; it will increase the probability.
>
> Expecting others to give their best should not be used to make others the prisoners of our expectations but to free their potential.
>
> Expecting others to explore the far limits of their potential is not the same as making achievement sound easy. There must be real challenge to human effort and ingenuity associated with that expectation.

The unique act of leadership is to apply that touch of unwarranted optimism, to hold high expectations of performance. Such an act will indeed open us to hurt, to disappointment, to failure. But it also opens us to the

possibility of magnificant human achievement, to the satisfaction that comes in helping human potential unfold, and to the pleasure that comes when we call into action the noblest part of the human spirit.

I began this paper with Alan Paton's testimony to the power of "active loving." I close on the same theme. Erich Fromm ends his book The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness with this passage:

> The situation of mankind today is too serious to permit us to listen to the demagogues--least of all demagogues who are attracted to destruction--or even leaders who use only their brains and whose hearts have hardened. Critical and radical thought will only bear fruit when it is blended with the most precious quality man is endowed with--the love of life.[22]

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[2]Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The American Scholar" in Lectures, (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company), p. 103.

[3]Richard W. Lyman, "The Search for Alternatives," The Educational Record, Fall 1974, p. 22.

[4]Roger W. Heyns, "Leadership Lessons from Watergate," The Educational Record, Summer 1973, p. 173.

[5]Stephen K. Bailey, "People Planning in Postsecondary Education: Human Resource Development in a World of Decremental Budgets in More for Less: Academic Planning with Faculty without Dollars, papers presented at a conference sponsored by the Society for College and University Planning (SCUP) with the cooperation of Academic Development and Planning in Transition (ADAPT), Nordic Hills, Itasca, Illinois, April 17-19, 1974, p. 5.

[6]E. G. Bogue, "The Context of Organizational Behavior: A Conceptual Systhesis for the Educational Administrator," Educational Administration Quarterly, April 1969, pp. 62-63.

[7]William J. Reddin, Managerial Effectiveness (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1970).

[8]Robert Tannenbaum and Warren H. Schmidt, "How to Choose a Leadership Pattern," Harvard Business Review, May-June 1973, pp. 162-172.

[9]Robert L. Heilbroner, An Inquiry into the Human Prospect, (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1974), p. 15.

[10]Ibid., p. 21.

[11]Rene Dubos, "The Despairing Optimist," The American Scholar, Winter 1973-74, p. 16.

[12]J. Bronowski, The Ascent of Man (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1973), p. 19.

[13]Albert Bandura, Principles of Behavior Modification, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969).

[14]Robert Rosenthal, "The Pygmalion Effect Lives, " Psychology Today, September 1973, p. 58.

[15]Ibid., p. 58.

[16]Arthur W. Combs, "The Human Aspect of Administration," Educational Leadership, November 1970.

[17]Ibid., p. 198.

[18]Abraham Zaleznik, Human Dilemmas of Leadership, (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), pp. 41-42.

[19]Wall Street Journal, February 11, 1975, p. 5.

[20]Robert L. Hambin, "Leadership and Crises, Sociometry, 1958, pp. 322-335.

[21]Amitai Etzioni, "Human Beings Are Not Very Easy to Change After All," Saturday Review, June 3, 1973, pp. 45-46.

[22]Erich Fromm, The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness, (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1973), p. 438.