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ABSTRACT

This book provides an account of the major administrative restructuring and organization that has occurred in Australian public school systems over the past decade. Section 1 provides a discussion of the Australian restructuring efforts in an international context. Chapters in this section include the following: (1) "The Restructuring of Schools and School Systems: A Comparative Perspective" (Hedley Beare); and (2) "Policy Origins and Policy Games: Site-Based Management in the United States and the United Kingdom" (Frederick M. Wirt). Section 2 focuses on the Australian context of restructuring and contains the following: (3) "Re-structuring in Australia: A Personal View" (Phillip Hughes); and (4) "Restructuring Education in Australia" (George F. Berkeley). The third section provides eight case studies that detail the restructuring efforts of the last decade. Chapters include: (5) "Educational Restructuring in the ACT Government School System" (Geoffrey Burkhardt and Milton March); (6) "Walking on Water: Restructuring Queensland's Education System" (Ian Matheson); (7) "Restructuring in New South Wales" (D. A. Swan and R. B. Winder); (8) "Ideals to Action: Corporate Management within the Northern Territory Education Department" (Kerry Moir); (9) "Changes in Public Administration of Education: South Australia" (Bryce Saint); (10) "Restructuring Education in Tasmania: A Turbulent End to a Decade of Tranquility" (Brian J. Caldwell); (11) "Betwixt and Between Change: A Victorian Game" (Phillip Creed); and (12) "Reversing the Policy Process in WA: From Top Down to Bottom Up" (Peter Wilson and Don Smart). The final section draws implications and conclusions in the following chapters: (13) "Restructuring, Corporatism and Competition: Implications for Graduate Programs for Administrators" (A. Ross Thomas); and (14) "Conclusions: Where Restructuring Has Taken Us, and Where It Is Leading" (Grant Harman, Hedley Beare, and George F. Berkeley). References accompany each chapter. (LMI)

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RESTRUCTURING SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

Administrative Reorganisation of Public School Governance in Australia

Edited by Grant Harman, Hedley Beare, George F. Berkeley

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RESTRUCTURING SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

Recent Administrative Reorganisation of Public School Governance in Australia

Edited by

Grant Harman
Hedley Beare
George F. Berkeley

Australian College of Education
Canberra, 1991

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Preface

This book is the final outcome of a team research project, sponsored by the Research and Projects Committee of the Australian College of Education. The project commenced in early 1990, with the development of a detailed research strategy and methodology, and of documentation to guide members of the research team. In May 1991, draft papers and preliminary findings were presented at a colloquium held in Armidale on the topic of 'Corporatism and Public Schools'. This was organised jointly by the Research and Projects Committee of the College and the Department of Administrative, Higher and Adult Education Studies at the University of New England. Participants at this colloquium provided important input to the research process, contributing both helpful criticism and suggestions. The colloquium was fortunate to have as a plenary speaker and contributor Professor Frederick M. Wirt (University of Illinois), a distinguished political scientist with a special interest in public school governance and the politics of education. Since the colloquium contributors have considered the suggestions and have revised their papers for this publication.

As co-ordinators we wish to acknowledge the tremendous help we have received from many people and organisations. In particular, we wish to thank all members of the project team for their valuable contributions and co-operation; we count it a privilege to have worked with such colleagues, who know so much about the events of restructuring and reorganisation over the past decade in their particular political units. We wish to express our sincere thanks to the Australian College of Education and, especially, to members of both the Research and Projects Committee and the Publications Committee. We also wish to express our thanks to all those who helped in organising the colloquium in Armidale and in preparing copy for printing, especially Cindy Porter of the University of New England.

Grant Harman
Hedley Beare
George F. Berkeley

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Abbreviations

ACT	Australian Capital Territory
CMG	Corporate Management Group
CTS	Commonwealth Teaching Service
EPAC	Economic Planning Advisory Council
ERU	Education Review Unit
FRC	Functional Review Committee
ILEA	Inner London Education Authority
LEA	Local education authority
NIC	Newly industrialised country
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory
SBM	Site based management
SCC	State Co-ordination Council
SCINOS	Standing Committee for the Implementation of New Organisational Structures
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
WA	Western Australia

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Introduction

THE RESTRUCTURING OF AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

Grant Harman

This book provides an account of the major administrative restructuring and organisation that has taken place in Australian public school systems over the past decade or so. It attempts, in some considerable detail, to document the various major organisational changes that have occurred, and to set these in a broader context, identifying both the particular local actors who initiated and implemented the changes, and the broader political and management trends of which they were, or are, part. It also attempts to set the recent 'reform' experience of public school governance in Australia in a broader international context, both with regard to public sector management restructuring, and to the decided move within education systems to school-site based management, especially in America and the United Kingdom. In addition, the book attempts some assessment of the effects and the consequences of these various changes, especially for the school systems involved and the quality of education provided to students. Such assessment is important since, in the final analysis, government agencies providing community services must be evaluated in terms of quality and appropriateness of the service they provide to clients, and the costs involved. Finally, the book makes some suggestions about possible future directions of public school governance in Australia.

The Problem and Our Focus

Our starting point is that the decade of the 1980s produced a most important and largely unexpected phenomenon in Australian education. This phenomenon was the major and often simultaneous restructuring of the various government education departments and agencies responsible for the administration of public schools. Such a large upheaval and reorganisation had been unknown previously in the various Australian states and territories. From the time that the various public education

systems had been created late last century, education departments evolved gradually, expanding their range of functions, changing their names from departments of public instruction to departments of education, in many cases in recent years providing for a limited measure of community and parent input into school governance, and generally moving from administrative structures at their centre based on levels and types of education (*i.e.* primary schools, secondary schools, teacher education, technical education) to ones based on major administrative functions. In a few cases, there had been points of significant, major administrative changes, such as when technical education in New South Wales, and later South Australia, was moved to form separate, new departments. But, to a large extent, the development of education departments for almost a century had been gradual, evolutionary and incremental. By the late 1970s, most of these departments were organised in a similar fashion, with large central offices housing various administrative divisions and numerous service units, concentrating on areas such as administration, finance, curriculum, student assessment, special education, in-service education and building construction and maintenance. Admittedly, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory were a little different, but in these two cases changes in government administration from federal to territorial responsibility provided the opportunity and the impetus for administrative innovation. But, with these exceptions, conformity to a similar organisational pattern was the norm, and education departments had been conditioned to a large measure of stability and continuity. Directors-General like Sir Harold Wyndham in New South Wales and Dr L.W. Shears in Victoria served for long periods and in many cases the education portfolio also had been held by the same Minister for extended periods.

The 1980s, however, brought a new and often uncomfortable experience for these education departments which had enjoyed almost a century of stability. Why this administrative restructuring occurred so suddenly and unexpectedly after such a long period of comparative stability raises a most important question of vital interest to both educators and students of public administration.

But, perhaps more important, all these changes have had a great deal of publicity and have had a major effect on the organisations concerned. Many departments have been restructured quite radically, with new organisational designs, with outside consultants being asked to provide advice or supervise overall implementation, with senior officers having to compete (sometimes in open international competition) for their old or redefined jobs, with central offices being reduced drastically in size, and with ministers claiming that all the changes have been designed to improve the quality and efficiency of public schooling. Many educators, as well as informed members of the public, have been asking such questions as:

- Have all these changes been necessary?
- What has been really wrong with the way our public schools have been administered?
- Have the various changes produced significant savings in administrative and other costs?
- What have been the effects on teachers and what goes on in classrooms?
- What effects have the changes had on the public perception of our public schools?

One most interesting aspect of this restructuring movement in the various Australian states and territories is that in terms of agenda and rhetoric it corresponds closely to major restructuring movements that have taken place over the past decade in many education systems in OECD countries (Caldwell 1989; Macpherson 1989). In fact, across OECD countries the restructuring movement has tended to be moving in the same broad directions. Generally the restructuring efforts appear to be part of an attempt to make the management of education more efficient, more accountable, and more responsive to government policies, to introduce corporate management approaches from the business sector, to devolve more responsibility to regions and schools, and to place much greater emphasis on educational outputs. There is increased use of the market metaphor, and a tendency to see education as a service to be delivered or as a commodity, rather than to view education in the more traditional ways it has been thought of in the past. Symbolising these changes is the way that titles of key administrative posts have changed; for example, 'Director-General of Education' to 'Chief Executive' or 'Chief General Manager, Schools Division'. In many cases very senior officers, including permanent heads, have been pushed aside in order to make way for new appointees.

To date these very important developments have not been studied in any great depth, nor are there readily available detailed accounts of the changes that have taken place in each of the individual Australian states and territories. Further, very little attempt has been made to try to understand the political and social dynamics at work and to assess what effects the various changes are having on the morale and work of teachers, on what is going on in classrooms, and on public perceptions of education and educators. True, there have been a number of useful conference papers (eg. Beare 1983; Beare 1985; Beare 1989; Caldwell 1989) and a few chapters in books. There is also the important study on the first phase of major organisational change in the Victorian school

system initiated by Mr Alan Hunt as Minister (Frazer, Dunstan and Creed 1985),and a useful report published in 1984 by Dr Laurie Shears, then Co-ordinator General of Education in Victoria. But many of these works do not deal with these developments up to the current time, there are no recent detailed, comparative studies of the developments in the various governmental jurisdictions, and assessment of the effects of the changes has been limited.

With this background in mind, we designed a team research study which aimed to

(a) document, with some degree of detail, what major changes have taken place in organisational arrangements for public education in each Australian state and territory, over the past decade or so;

(b) attempt to set each of the particular sets of changes in a broader context of changes in public sector management practices, government politics and political values within the particular political entity; and

(c) provide some assessment of the costs and the effects of these changes, both short-term and long-term, on teachers, the education system, financial commitments, and public perceptions about education and educators.

Approach

At an early stage, the co-ordinators decided that, given the limited financial resources available for the project, the most suitable approach to use would be a co-operative team one, drawing on recognised expertise in each Australian state and territory. We also were conscious of the need to tap local expertise and detailed knowledge. Thus, we decided to develop a framework for analysis of the changes which have taken place in each government unit, and then to recruit a team member (or members) to write the case-study about each political unit following clear specifications. According to our plan, team members would provide draft papers by a specified date, and these would be discussed at a seminar or mini-conference. Other experienced educators and analysts would be invited to participate in such a meeting, in order to make presentations on the broader context, to reflect on their own experience with restructuring, and to comment on broad trends documented in the various papers. Constructive comments also would be provided to authors of the case-studies. From this we would move to production of the final report.

Essentially we have followed this strategy. We were most fortunate to be able to recruit a research team of experienced and

distinguished educators and analysts. To a large extent, the strength of this volume is directly attributable to the quality of our team. The team has included three former Directors-General of Education, other former senior education administrators, a current senior official, and highly experienced researchers and academics. On the other hand, it should be noted that because of direct involvement in particular restructuring, some team members write from the perspective of participants and not outside observers.

Particular care was taken in the development of the briefing paper for team members writing the case studies. We explained in our briefing paper that the main aim of each case-study was to document the key changes that had taken place in terms of organisational redirection for public school governance over the past decade or so, and to provide some assessment of the costs and consequences. We asked that studies concentrate on central system-wide arrangements, but where appropriate reference could be made to changes in arrangements for governance at both regional and local levels (*eg.* regional boards, school boards or school councils). Since we sought to recruit team members with substantial knowledge about the changes they would describe, we saw little need to provide for extensive, detailed, original research. Instead, we asked team members to write on the basis of readily available studies and documentary material, and official published documents, supplemented by their own knowledge and experience and, where appropriate, by interviews with key participants.

Our briefing paper explained that no particular format was required for the case-studies, but that each study should include the following:

(a) **Introduction** This should provide an indication to the reader of how the paper is structured and of any central argument or arguments.

(b) **Context** This should not be too detailed, but it would be helpful to know about key characteristics of the particular jurisdiction, the size of educational enterprise (*eg.* number of schools, teachers and enrolments), and major trends over the period in terms of politics (*eg.* changes in government. changes in Minister) and changes in public sector management. Brief comments about non-government schools would be appropriate.

(c) **Documentation of major changes** Here it would be helpful to have in some detail an account of what major changes in organisational arrangements have taken place over the past ten years

or so. What were the structures like a decade or so ago, or immediately before the major change or changes? What changes have been made and did these result from changes in legislation or major reports? What was the rationale given for the changes? What are the current organisational and structural arrangements?

(d) **Key Actors** Describe who the key actors were in the changes, and what roles they played. The following questions could be addressed:

- What role was played by the Minister, other politicians, and political parties?
- What role was played by senior departmental officers?
- Did university or college academics play a major part and, if so, how did they contribute?
- Were research studies commissioned?
- Were there committees of inquiry, or working parties?

(e) **The Source of the Changes and the Change Process** What explanations can be offered about the causes of the changes, or what factors operated to ensure success? Were the changes:

- the result of frustration with the existing machinery;
- based on the declared policy of the government;
- based on the personal views of the Minister;
- the result of pressure from interest groups;
- part of a major public-service restructuring; or
- or some combination of factors?

If possible, try to document what explanations key actors gave for what was happening. What role did research and careful analysis of data play? What weight was given to educational factors?

(f) **Assessment** What have been the costs (financial and in human terms) and the benefits? What effects have there been on teacher and administrator morale, efficiency in administration, community input into policy determination, teaching and learning in

classrooms, and public perceptions about schooling and educators? To what extent has the non-government sector been affected? How do key interest groups and individuals view the changes?

(g) **The Future** It will be important to have some comments on possible future directions. Are the current structures likely to be stable and enduring? What effect will factors such as award restructuring have?

Organisation of the book

The book is organised as follows. Section I provides a discussion of the Australian restructuring efforts in an international context. Hedley Beare looks at developments in six OECD countries (the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and Japan) and points to common themes, including a common vocabulary, a universal trend towards school-based management, clashes of values between political forces, and reconstruction driven by political rather than educational considerations, with a major concern about economic factors. Frederick M. Wirt then reviews in more detail site-based management reforms for school governance in the United States and the United Kingdom. He turns to both economic theories and political theories to help us develop an understanding of this phenomenon.

Section II focuses on the Australian context of restructuring with chapters by two Australian educators with extensive senior administrative experience and also experience with system-wide administrative reorganisation. In the first, Phillip Hughes provides a personal retrospective review of the past two decades of restructuring and calls for educators to develop more understandings of the change processes, rather than being passive victims of change. In the second, George Berkeley sets the scene of what has happened in the last two decades in terms of the environment in which education departments operate, and responsibilities of our public school systems and the pressures on them.

Section III provides eight case-studies – one for each Australian state, one for each of the two Australian territories. Together they document in considerable detail the restructuring efforts of the past decade, and their implementation.

Section IV attempts to draw out implications and conclusions. Ross Thomas looks at implications for university graduate programs in educational administration. He presents data from a study of principals who took office first in 1989, and points particularly to the implications of an increased emphasis on competition.

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As editors, we then attempt to draw out some conclusions. We identify some common themes, and point to some of the similarities and differences among the case-study accounts in terms of restructuring experience. We draw attention to what appears to be the likely emerging model of the future – public school systems with far less bureaucratic structure between the schools and the chief executive and with the main emphasis being on schools which largely will be self managed. In this arrangement, the pyramidal organisation is replaced by a network organisation, the centre of which simply co-ordinates and resources schools, which in turn have greatly increased managerial and financial responsibility.

What appears currently to be driving Australian education systems in this direction is a mixture of frustration with restructuring attempts to date, and new financial pressures. As the new financial pressures bite, in a number of cases governments are deciding to cut administrators rather than teachers, and to reduce services provided to schools rather than school budgets.

Significantly, current overseas trends are moving too in these same broad directions. In Britain, for example, national legislation is dramatically reordering the locus of school decisionmaking, with dissolution of the Inner London Education Authority into 13 borough LEAs and the possibility of local schools 'opting out' of their LEA and being directly funded by Whitehall. In the United States, there is the current wholesale dismantling and reconstructing of the huge Chicago public school system, and the recent second wave of school reform centreing on parent choice by using market mechanisms or by decentralising decisions to the local school site. This choice movement has had the support of various writings, but particularly the major study of Chubb and Moe, entitled *Politics, Markets and American Schools* (1990). Chubb and Moe demonstrate through large-scale data analysis that schools with tight and local control achieved better student achievement records. They conclude that problems of academic performance levels in schools will not be solved by any of the changes brought on by the school reform movement, but that the problems are a direct and inevitable result of the structure of American public schools, specifically their control through democratic processes. Their solution is greater autonomy – local school autonomy of principals and teachers, freed from what they see as the dead hand of bureaucratic regulation from government and large school systems.

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I Restructuring: The International Context

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Chapter 1

THE RESTRUCTURING OF SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL SYSTEMS: A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Hedley Beare

Introduction

The 1980s produced a rush of simultaneous, educational reconstruction in many countries around the world, and the fact that it was an *international* trend should excite our curiosity. Why has there been such a consistent concern across the globe to improve schooling outcomes and school performance, what is driving this movement and who typically are the prime policy actors? Tha[illegible]e reforms of the 1980s and those proposed for the 1990s are every[illegible] being called 'restructuring' is interesting also, even though that word carries different meanings in different countries.

These reforms do not seem to *begin* as curricular changes, as was the case, for example, in the United States after Sputnik in 1957, nor do they originate with teachers and educators. At least initially, they appear to have been imposed from outside and they seem to hone in very quickly on the control and governance of both schools and school systems, at who makes the decisions, especially those decisions relating to what is taught in schools. In short, the reforms are overtly political, and they tend to target the *management* of education. Why?

If the movement is at base political, then we must concentrate on a set of subsidiary concerns like the following:

- how schools and school systems are being reorganised,
- how their resources are allocated or deployed,
- how the functions are parcelled out and what kinds of people are assigned those functions,
- who holds the purse strings,
- where the power points are,
- who controls and governs these institutions,

> who are pushing for the reforms and why they are doing so now.

If the same symptoms are surfacing simultaneously across the world, why is it that so many people in so many countries have woken up this morning with the same stomach pains? Is there a common epidemic abroad? What are the educational (or political) physicians prescribing as antidotes to heal the pains? And do the medicines contain similar chemicals?

National Case Studies

To provide us with the tangible evidence with which to make comparisons, I here use the cases of the six countries (the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and Japan) which are the focus of an international investigation, the results of which have been edited by Professor W.L. Boyd (Pennsylvania State University) and me. We could of course have chosen other countries; the reconstruction currently occurring in Sweden, for example, is so dramatic that the developments there are sure to be internationally significant. Even so, economic and political interactions abound among the six countries we chose, and all of them have experienced the infatuation with educational reform throughout the 1980s.

In the **United States of America,** the watershed year appears to have been 1980, the year Ronald Reagan first succeeded to the White House. Two sets of forces appeared to be operating on schools in the United States at the time. Firstly, the Coleman Report in 1966 and the Jencks study in 1972, both dealing with equality of educational opportunity, produced a strong body of opinion that a child's progress at school depended overwhelmingly on the child's home background and that it was affected only marginally by what the school itself did. So the 1970s saw the generation of programs aimed at social justice, at minorities, at disadvantaged children and the schools they attended, at innovation in both the curriculum and the way it was taught, at alternative modes of delivery, and at teacher preparation for these tasks. These programs appeared in other countries too, not only in the USA, based upon the same research findings and policy imperatives.

Secondly, and almost as a counter-revolution to the anti-school radicalism of the 1970s, the effective schools movement emerged strongly in the 1980s, with a panoply of measures to sponsor excellence, to assess outcomes, to build 'school impovement plans', to make 'efficiency' and 'effectiveness' popular, and to emphasise that the *instructional* program of the school is its highest priority. The effective schools movement re-asserted the primacy of schools, the validity of the traditional forms of

schooling, and the centrality of a common curriculum including literacy and numeracy.

United States researchers into school effectiveness tended to use as their performance indicators the standardised test scores gathered by national testing of competencies in mathematics and verbal ability (that is, reading). By the early 1980s, many people outside of education had become aware that those test score averages had been declining consistently, year by year, for about two decades (see, for example, Hanushek, 1986). Yet this was the same period when new funding had been injected into schools, when teacher qualifications had risen and class sizes had fallen, when the preservice programs for teachers had lengthened, when school buildings and equipment had made quantum leaps in quality and sophistication. What had gone wrong, then? Had the money been wisely spent? There followed a period of major public reports on education arguing that education was now in crisis. The 'bible of the reform movement', the result of a task force set up by the President, appeared in 1983 titled *A Nation at Risk*.

Paradoxically, the 1980s saw the President following a consistent policy of pulling back from federally funding those areas in which the states had the prime legislative authority. So welfare programs were cut, and among them education. There was a deliberately fostered slippage of power and responsibility from the national to the State authorities. The Governors and the Senior State School Officers became very active in setting educational priorities; the Education Commission of the States became a powerful arena for generating ideas about the nature of the reforms which should be visited upon education. It was clear, too, that new economic rivalries were emerging among the several States and that the existence of a well educated workforce was a strong determinant of whether international and national business houses would locate part of their operation in a particular city or State. And all the while, the federal authorities, and the Presidents themselves (first Reagan and then Bush) were high on rhetoric about education but mean with money, a situation which Michael Kirst has called 'the bully pulpit' in education.

By the 1990s, then, several recurrent themes were evident. The large education bureaucracies were considered too ineffective and too unwieldy to meet the challenges of the 1990s. Federal authority (by presidential and fiscal choice) and local authority (by a citizens' tax revolt) diminished and the power of the states increased. Schools were being freed from many of the centrally imposed regulations which constricted their ability to provide the kind of educational service which their client populations were demanding. School-based management was in favour. The governance patterns for schools were being altered to allow for a school-site council of parents, teachers, and students. The management, organisation, structures and the managerial personnel were targets for upgrading and development. Perhaps the most visible icon of the reform

movement was the reconstruction of the Chicago School System, one of the largest systems in the world, let alone in the states.

In the **United Kingdom,** a parallel development had been taking place. Following the publication in 1977 of the Taylor Committee's national inquiry into the way elementary and secondary schools were governed, action was taken to revise the membership, functions, and legal authorities of the Boards of Governors and the Boards of Managers which had supervised schools in Britain for decades. The United Kingdom had had school-site councils for many years, but the Education Act of 1980 revised their powers and responsibilities.

The Conservative government of Margaret Thatcher dominated the educational policy arena for the decade of the 1980s. Bringing a strong rightwing, freemarket and economically driven ideology to the Education portfolio, Secretary of State for Education Sir Keith Joseph and then Kenneth Baker proceeded to redraw the map of British education, with interventionist policies from the centre. For example, the Manpower Services Commission (subsequently re-named) was given money to sponsor initiatives in Technical and Vocational Education in local authorities and schools. New certification processes were introduced. The examining authorities were persuaded to experiment with new assessment formats. A series of youth policies was aimed at making available to every school leaver who did not proceed to higher education a place in a training program. Employment - or, more accurately, youth unemployment - was a pervasive motivator for many of the reforms.

The Thatcher government also moved to break up a number of the power blocs which appeared to be dominant in education. The Schools Council, on which the national teacher unions were heavily represented, was abolished and replaced with two, lean bodies, one to run the national examination system, the other to advise on a national curriculum. The move symbolised a more general shift towards conservatism in education. The centrality of traditional subjects was confirmed. The importance of science and mathematics was underlined. And the return to a regime of hard-nosed scholarship in basic disciplines was signalled in the favour shown to private and elite or selective schools.

The school systems in large metropolitan areas, particularly in the former smoke-stack cities in the industrial north, had been an annoyance to the Thatcher government because they were controlled by unions and they solidly supported Labour. Indeed Labour Party members were in the voting majority on their councils (and education authorities), and they challenged many of the Conservative initiatives. There was, for example, a celebrated clash between the Liverpool Council and the national government in 1985, in which the city threatened to spend its way into bankruptcy in defiance of the rate-capping imposed by Westminster. So the national government moved to disband the recalcitrant metropolitan boroughs. Thatcher's most spectacular act in this respect was to do away

with the Greater London Council, and then to wipe out probably the most conspicuous school system in Great Britain, the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA), which for decades had been a Labour stronghold.

In an attempt to empower local schools and at the same time defuse the power of local education authorities which had not taken willingly to the Thatcher reforms, the government enacted provisions to allow local schools to opt out of their local authorities and to operate as free-standing entities within a national framework. The government had also sponsored and funded schemes to train Heads of Schools in effective management techniques. The reforms culminated in the Education Reform Act of 1988, a Bill whose consequences could be as far-reaching as those which flowed from the 1944 Education Act. The Conservative government also contemplated the possibilty of doing away with local education authorities *per se*.

The changes in Great Britain and the United States have been the unofficial guidebooks for the reforms in other places. At the least, the writings and policy initiatives in those countries have been well perused and drawn on by educators, by policy analysts and policy makers, and especially by politicians, around the world.

Canada has always been acutely conscious of its powerful neighbour to the south, but the exploding economic marketplace in Asia and particularly the North Pacific during the 1980s also had a profound impact on the country, in somewhat the same ways as it has had on Australia and New Zealand. Two of the common impacts should be noted. Firstly, Asia and the North Pacific contain the economic miracles, the spectacularly successful newly industralised countries (NICs and somewhat of a misnomer now) like South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore; and then more lately the 'small tigers' like Thailand and Malaysia; as well as the giant economies of Japan, China and India. Frankly, middle-range economies with European patterns of life (Australia, New Zealand, and Canada in particular) are enormously threatened by the 'Pacific Era', and not least in terms of economic survival. The most powerful impact has been by means of Asian investment capital. Secondly, each country has experienced a wave of immigration from the Asian sector, an infusion of people with lifestyles and backgrounds so significantly different from the culture derived from Europe that they have upset many of the conventions once taken for granted in the receiving country.

The educational reforms in Canada are in a way deceptive, for they appear to have placed heavy emphasis on the multicultural nature of the country and in particular on the effort to make Canada a bilingual (French- and English-speaking) country, an overt attempt to make the nation economically and socially cohesive in a hard-nosed, economic world. It is as though the unfinished business from the past needs to be completed before the country has the strength to cope with the immediate

future; after all, it is in French-speaking Quebec and the eastern provinces where the nation's economic strength is located. A similar kind of dynamic operates in New Zealand with its Maori population, and also in Australia where recent immigration has transformed its demographic make-up. While these obsessions with ethnic minorities may appear inward-looking, they in fact reflect a growing uneasiness about the world community and the need to make new accommodations with it. The proximity of Canada to Asia has had a telling impact, producing a new kind of political, social and racial melting-pot. So the economic pressure because of its closeness to the United States, the political and economic developments in Asia and the Pacific, and the racial mix within the Canadian population seem to have produced the politicised context in which school reform thrives.

The reconstruction of the **New Zealand** national school system has been spectacular, not least in the way it has led to an astonishing degree of decentralisation and in its focus upon a management and control of schools which are intensely localized. The Taskforce to Review Education Administration (known as the Picot Committee, the name derived from its Chairperson Brian Picot) spoke of 'excessive ministerial involvement', 'sectoral fragmentation', and a 'lack of priorities at the centre'. It therefore proposed turning the system on its head. Whereas schools had discretion over a mere 1.9 per cent of the Education vote, the Picot recommendation was that 94.5 per cent of the money should now be placed directly in the hands of schools. To push through the reforms, the government brought in on short-term contract Dr Russ Ballard, a forester, to head the Education Department. Recent writings by Macpherson consider the reasons why political intervention in the management of schools in New Zealand occurred as dramatically as it did in 1988. It must also be noted that the consequential changes to the local and national management of schools have not been smooth.

So it is chastening to consider the attempted educational reforms in **Japan** since 1984. It is a country whose schools, in spite of the provisions within and by prefectures and metropolitan governments, have operated with a degree of central consistency and control which seems inconsistent with the trend elsewhere. Japan has such a buoyant economy that it might seem to be a country to be copied rather than to be changed. Indeed there seems to have been apprehension in the USA, Canada, New Zealand and Australia that the Japanese (among others) were outstripping them in terms of education as well as economically. Indeed, some Australian businessmen have suggested in recent years that the Confucian economies, with their emphasis on such virtues as hard work, loyalty, and courage, might now provide a better model to copy than the Protestant work ethic does. One could have been forgiven for concluding that Japan was one country which had got things right.

Yet at the very time other countries were undertaking educational reform, the Japanese too were attempting to change their schools. In 1984 Prime Minister Nakasone set up a National Commission to reform Japanese education, and made it of such high priority that the action was taken at prime ministerial level and not even by the national Ministry for Education. Four major reports were produced by the Commission between 1984 and 1987. So why did the reform movement come from the national government level and not from the prefectures? National competitiveness, apparently! Because the Commission used so little expert input from educators, the reforms not surprisingly appear to have had little impact on the way individual schools operate.

Of course, the Recruit scandal intervened to cause the resignation of Nakasone and Takeshita after him, but the rumour of their return revived the speculation about whether the educational reforms will be resurrected too. Certainly, there is obvious apprehension in Japan about the regimentation and lack of creativity in primary and secondary schooling, about a curriculum which relies too heavily on rote learning, about the lack of attention to individual differences, and the poor provisions for adult and continuing education. If Japan effectively reformed these things, perhaps we should speculate where that would leave the rest of us.

And it is surely significant that educators repeatedly and in several countries have been left out of the policy process which is the antecedent of the reforms. When they *have* been included, those with right-wing, conservative, and business-compatible orientations have been chosen, almost regardless of which political party is in power.

The Case of Australia

So the Australian reforms which went on unabated for the whole of the 1980s must be seen in their international context; there is even a sense of *deja vu* about them. We can note the collective impact of the spate of 'better schools' reports in the Australian States in the 1980s; the growth of the non-government sector (especially the Catholic schools sector) and the rhetoric about choice; the restructuring and downsizing of the state departments of education; the widespread amalgamation of schools as the result of both declining enrolments and higher retention rates; the need to provide a wider range of options at senior secondary levels, and especially the reconstruction of the Year 12 certification procedures; the strongly interventionist activities of the federal government (especially since Dawkins became national Minister in 1987), the creation of a federal 'mega-Ministry of Education' (the national Department for Employment, Education and Training); the abolition of free-standing statutory authorities like the celebrated Australian Schools

Commission and Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission and their metamorphosis into a National Board for Employment, Education and Training directly answerable to the national Minister; the development of a 'unified national system' in higher education, and possibly in primary and secondary education too; and the growing power and influence of the national council of Ministers of Education (the Australian Education Council) to fill the vacuum left by the Schools Commission. During the decade, every state and territory school system underwent some kind of substantial restructuring, including from 1989 the huge New South Wales system which exceeds in size the largest system in the USA, the New York system.

We could take several perspectives on the Australian reforms, but it is really only in the last two years of the decade that the most powerful underlying factor came to the surface. In the late 1980s, and particularly when faced with corporate collapses, a worsening balance of payments problem, and an economic recession, system after system moved to trim the bureaucracy, to distribute consultants and experts back to schools and regions, to renege on some working conditions (like enforcing larger class sizes), and to find ways to improve teacher salaries only selectively through such devices as award restructuring. In short, there is not enough money to finance the education efforts.

Common Themes

When all these countries are viewed synoptically, it becomes apparent that there are several common themes and trends inviting investigation. Several emerged from our multi-nation study. It is useful, then, to list some of them here, speculatively, in an attempt to explain what the reform agenda is about.

First, *a common vocabulary has now emerged*, including ubiquitous terms like excellence, quality, school effectiveness, equity, efficiency, and accountability. The words reveal a consistent mind-set about schooling.

Second, *there is an almost universal trend towards school-based management*. To understand the education reform manoeuvres in any country, therefore, one is forced to confront the concepts of centralisation and decentralisation, which seem to underlie so much of the discussion and writings about restructuring of schools. The words themselves present us with difficulties for they have their own paradigm implicit in the imagery which gave them their derivation. 'Decentralisation' (meaning 'down from the centre') implies that the centre has the power in the first place, but paternalistically agrees to share it with others of lower status. 'Devolution' involves the same metaphor. If the terms are not offensive, then they ought to be, for they imply a view about education and its

management which needs to be challenged. Indeed, the problems about accountability cannot be dealt with unless the definitions of these terms are clear.

Third, *restructuring usually means devising a new administrative format to govern the way state and federal departments and school systems are configured*, the way their functions are distributed, and how their resources are managed. One of the abiding problems is that schools and school systems are being remodelled according to a managerial pattern found in *business* firms operating in the *private* sector of the economy, and with an orientation to the conditions of the post-industrial economy. Thus much of the education reform, especially that which is taking place in Great Britain, Australia and Europe, and to a lesser degree in the United States, is driven by the politics of privatisation, and it has thrown into sharp confrontation the differences between private (or independent) schools and public schools. It is a matter with far-reaching consequences when government itself helps to finance those private schools from the public purse, yet both the major political parties in Australia are committed to state aid for private schools. Furthermore, there is a fairly bland assumption that, if schools are to be remodelled, then the *public* schools ought to made to look like the *private* schools.

The privatisation syndrome has other effects too. Education has become part of the movement to sell off government assets, to force public institutions to operate in a kind of free market, to force on to public institutions the patterns favored by the private sector of business, and to advocate excellence at the expense of equity. There are some devastating consequences, especially in sociological terms and particularly to public schools, when a sharp dichotomy between public and private, between government and non-government schooling, is allowed to develop.

Fourth, *the reconstructions have uncovered the dilemmas arising from the setting up of school-site councils*, usually to govern or manage the local school. It is not always clear why these councils are being created, who wants them, and what political purpose, either overt or covert, they are to fulfil. Who should sit on those councils? What is the justification for the pattern of membership and the balance of voting powers? Why have teacher unions tried to ensure a voting majority for teachers? Should the principal be a full voting member, an adviser to the council, or its executive officer without a seat on the council? Does it matter if the principal is also the council's chair? And what functions ought the council be allowed to discharge? It is obvious that how one answers these questions depends upon how one conceives of the council in the first place, and these underlying assumptions need to be brought out into the open.

Fifth, *the reconstructions highlight clashing values in the political forces*. Swanson suggests that for two centuries democracies have tried to

maintain a balance among the three respective goods of liberty, equality and fraternity. The terms have of course been given new names now; thus we speak of parental choice and the deregulation of schools (freedom), equity (instead of equality), and the development of community, enculturation, socialisation and shared social values (instead of fraternity). But experience over several decades seems to suggest that political parties tend to favour one of these values above the other two in the policies they enunciate for education, and, as Guthrie and Koppich pointed out, they produce the periods of 'value disequilibrium' which lead to reforms. Thus, at any one time, it is possible to predict the trend in educational reforms by asking whether freedom and choice (liberty), or equity and social justice (equality), or community and national priorities (fraternity) are being given priority.

Sixth, *the reconstruction is driven by political rather than educational considerations.* The reforms do not originate with educators or with the schools or with the systems to which those schools are attached; they are mandated from outside by political actors. In a sense, educators have lost control of the agenda. Further, the signals are clear that educators are not trusted. In his book entitled *When the Luck Runs Out* (1985 : 22-23), Hilmer comments that a company adopts the policy to promote from within when it wants to demonstrate that it trusts its employees and considers them important. 'Conversely', he says,' regularly bringing in outsiders...indicates that the organization does not trust the abilities of its own people.' Of the ten departments of education in Australia and New Zealand, in 1991 only *one* is headed by an educator who has come up through the system in the conventional way!

Seventh, *economic factors pattern the nature of the restructuring.* In a post-industrial economy, the workforce is employed predominantly in the services sector; indeed, it has been estimated that about four jobs in every five will soon be found in services or information industries. It is these sectors where both the established and the emerging professions are found; and to hold employment in them, in fact to gain a licence to practise, it is necessary to hold a formal qualification gained through post-school study. A post-industrial economy can be sustained only by education.

Eighth, and largely because of that previous factor, *national governments are now powerful actors in education* even though in the federal systems like those found in the United States, Canada, and Australia the national government has no constitutional authority to intervene in education. In Great Britain, which for so long has had a 'national system locally administered', the pattern of national intervention is also changing. National governments are becoming involved because the health of national economies depends on how well educated the workforce is.

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Ninth, *restructuring appears to be aimed at the way schools and school systems are run.* There is a consistent thread in the reforms to remove the policy making about education from the grip of educators, largely because other actors want to use education for instrumental purposes. Economic gain is about productivity, about how public and private enterprises are run. So business is tending to impose upon education the kinds of structures which allow firms in the private sector of the economy to be resilient and to survive in post-industrial conditions.

Tenth, *it is obvious that countries are learning from each other,* adopting ideas and models from elsewhere with a speed which has never been seen before. Telecommunications, international travel, the interlocking international economy, and the fact that a large number of workers in influential positions now behave like citizens of the world rather than members of a particular country ensure that ideas travel quickly. In many respects, education itself is an international industry now, and educators - whether in classrooms, administration, or in field positions - have to be international in their credentialling, in their modes of operation, in their curriculum programming, and in the acceptability of the services they give. Education too now operates in an internationally competitive setting.

Eleventh, *the economic imperative is also providing a new rationale for education and, more narrowly, for schooling.* Economics is redefining education. Schools are expected to compete for customers. They are being asked to manage their resources as though they are private firms. They are being required to give an account of themselves in a sophisticated way, by means of formal reporting of outcomes. They are being asked to show their managerial maturity by demonstrating their productivity through negotiated performance measures. The free market analogy is being used to explain how schools should operate.

Twelfth, *there is a surprising lack of fundamental curriculum reform* in the restructuring movement. This is not to say that there has been no reform of the curriculum, but, if anything, it has signalled a return to what is perceived as an essential core. The restructuring movement, in other words, has embodied a conservative view about what schools should teach. I find this disappointing as well as surprising; for the new *international* context must surely soon produce a need for all curricula to reflect the awarenesses which a citizen of the world must have.

And finally, *the restructuring is not over yet,* and does not look as though it will be for the duration of the 1990s, simply because the forces which produced the current spate - economic competitiveness, the recession, the interdependent international economy, the re-aligning of political forces, the emergence of new national alliances, and widespread

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values disequilibrium - will produce policy turbulence for some time to come. Only the resilient, adaptable, quick and creative will thrive.

Conclusions

It is perhaps provocative to suggest these as 'conclusions'. Those involved in the educational restructuring movement or those affected by it need to develop synoptic vision of this kind, however. If educators are to influence the flow of events or to survive the flood, then they must be able to read the trends, to intervene at the critical times, and to ensure that good *educational* outcomes do in fact emerge from the spate of reforms.

And that is the chastening point on which to end. For after at least a decade of intensive restructuring, after considerable pain to schools, students, parents and teachers, after the wasteful demise of some of this country's most valued educators, and after we have seen many schools and tertiary institutions with enviable reputations amalgamated or destroyed, are we any better off than we were in 1980? Has there been an obvious qualitative improvement in the performance levels of students at all levels, in the way schools function, in the way teachers are trained, in the quality of the teaching service, in the way schools and school systems are managed, in the well-being of the community, and in the confidence with which the graduates from Australian schools face the world? At the end of the decade, I am sad to say, it is quite possible to mount a feasible case which argues that education is now worse off than when the decade started.

End note: This chapter is based upon the introductory chapter in H. Beare and W.L. Boyd (in press) *Restructuring Schools: An International Perspective on the Movement to Transform the Control and Performance of Schools*, London, Falmer Press.

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Chapter 2

POLICY ORIGINS AND POLICY GAMES: SITE-BASED MANAGEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AND THE UNITED KINGDOM

Frederick M. Wirt

Introduction

This paper approaches site-based management (SBM) reforms from a political perspective on education and with a focus on these reforms in the United States and the United Kingdom. The purpose is to help illuminate common qualities that may be evidenced in the Australian cases reported in this book, as well as to explain why they occurred. This political science approach focuses on how public policy of any kind springs from the interaction of political power and national values as these are mediated by structures of policy making and by the role of public opinion.

In this perspective, educational administration is viewed as a manifestation of this political process, despite the apolitical focus on that it has often taken (Wirt and Kirst, 1989). Judith Chapman's recent report (1991) expresses this perspective best:

> ...there is no science of educational administration, divorced from policy evaluation; all there is in our talk on these matters is a complex 'web of belief,' shot through differentially with descriptive and evaluative elements, according to the contexts and purposes in which our theories of administration are brought to bear and applied in our world (p. 2).

How administrators are caught up in the swirl of power and values can be seen in the clash over quality versus choice in the American states after 1985 (Boyd and Kerchner, 1988) It was a clash that left professionals struggling with often contradictory and highly debated mandates (see the debates in Clune and Witte, 1990). In Australia as this volume testifies, a similar debate ensued over questions of quality and accountability, political and professional decision making, and its

implications for roles of school participants (fully reviewed in Chapman,1990). SBM has brought such challenges to the profession because this reform seeks to empower non-professionals (parents) and to devolve decision-making to the lowest unit of schooling. Nor is this reform restricted to a few places, as Hedley Beare's chapter in this book notes, and as other volumes attest (Caldwell and Spinks 1988; Beare and Boyd, forthcoming)

As Beare covers details of these SBM reforms, my focus is rather upon the common and uncommon elements of the politics of these reforms in the US and UK. It relies on two recent insightful comparisons from James Guthrie and Lawrence Pierce (1990) and Bruce Cooper (1990). With the reforms laid out, the analysis moves to explaining their origins.

Essentials of SBM Reforms

United Kingdom

National legislation in 1986 and 1988 (the Education Reform Act) dramatically reordered the locus of school decision making in the UK (fully reviewed in Maclure, 1988). A 'top-down' reform of this kind befits the constitutional basis of this unitary nation, but the reform was also driven ideologically by a set of integrated ideas. Thus, markets--not government-- should be given the priority in society's efforts to achieve the value of school quality. Moreover, the market mechanism should be focused upon local units of school governance, empowering them in ways that would create choices for parents who want the most effective education for their children. These arrangements, when in place, would also strengthen the economy.

To implement these values, six major structural changes were adopted:

1. A national curriculum in core subjects was imposed from Whitehall.
2. National testing was imposed for students at ages 7, 11, 14, and 16.
3. 'Grant-maintained schools' were created that could opt out from their local education authorities (LEA) in order to receive full financial support directly from Whitehall.
4. Creation of city technical colleges (like the American vocational education high schools).
5. Dissolution of the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) into 13 borough LEAs.
6. A 'local school management' scheme that involves :

- open enrolment in every school within the LEA;
- formula-driven resource allocations to each school;
- setting priorities at each school site for spending its allocation;--empowering a board of governors at each school to hire and fire staff and teachers;
- provision of information to parents on the school's performance.

By mid-1991, these legislative goals had been realized to differing degrees. All six have been instituted; the ILEA is gone, and numerous technical colleges have appeared. National curricula and testing are now either in place or being arranged or expanded, and locally managed schools are pervasive. The linkage between school and LEA has drawn closer. But where local options do exist to manipulate national requirements, there has been limited acceptance of national preferences.

Thus, few schools have 'opted out' (McLeod, 1989) despite recently increased inducements. Fifty school sites did so in the first 16 months, six more in April 1991, and thirty-seven sets of parents will vote on it in 1991 (*Times Education Supplement*, Oct. 12, 1990; January 18, 1991; March 1, 1991; March 15, 1991). Further, in 90 of the 103 LEAs of England and Wales, the variation found by one analyst in the use of national funding formulas is striking. 'To those who believed that education reform would force a uniformity upon authorities, this research suggests that there may still be considerable scope for individuality, initiative, and imagination' (Thomas, 1990, 25).

Nevertheless, the main elements of the school system of the UK have been dramatically rearranged by these reforms. But whether the ideological goals that drove it will be realized--that is, student achievement improvements through choice and then increased economic productivity--is a matter on which no evidence now exists.

United States

In the essential fragmentation of a system of federalism, no centre can directly reform institutions that are rooted constitutionally in the periphery units. In the United States, with school authority vested in the state level, the historical result has been a fragmentation in school policy and results, and so the account of school reform is more lengthy. But a rough uniformity has shaped this jumble due to the historical influence of professionalism (Cremin, 1961; Tyack and Hansot,1982). That force could sweep state legislatures to create laws that supported those earlier reforms. So, when SBM reform came to this nation, it did so through legislatures, but in the form of contradictory waves among the fifty states.

These reforms arose first from a growing dissatisfaction with school productivity. That discontent was crystallized in a series of mid-1980s national reports (Wimpelberg and Ginsberg, 1989). While their impact on LEAs and schools was small, they sensitized state legislatures to dissatisfaction. Especially important was the highly publicized and federally-sponsored *Nation at Risk* that spread a sense of national malaise to even more citizens and kicked off an enormous state response. Another stimulus was the growing concern of business and industrial leaders about the declining quality of American workers in an increasingly competitive world market. A further stimulus was the budget shortfall of many states as the economy moved into a recession in 1990; legislators and governors wanted new ways of schooling that were cost-effective, a less risky and costly strategy than increasing taxes.

The first policy response to this dissatisfaction--termed 'the first wave'--came in a set of of reforms in almost all states in the mid-1980s. These focused on the value of 'quality.' Over forty states increased their graduation requirements, revised student testing, provided academic enrichment programs, raised teacher certification/preparation standards, and built development programs for teachers and administrators; twenty to thirty states adopted more particular reforms (Doyle and Hartle, 1985). Note that these were low risk, they always used the instrument of state legislation, and everywhere they sought to raise standards of performance by adding to existing requirements. Typically, these were designed to produce: a longer school day and year, more demanding textbooks, more home work, fewer course electives, more courses for graduation, more student testing, and more requirements to become or remain a teacher or administrator.

This top-down reform was hardly assimilated in local systems when a 'second wave' of reform occurred after 1989--indeed, it is still underway and so has not run its full course. The thrust of this second wave was to realize the value of 'choice' by using market mechanisms or by decentralizing decisions to the local school site. Note that these were much harder tasks, which may account for their slower rate of adoption than was the case with the first wave.

Echoing the British, choice proponents in the US urged the market as the means to improve educational productivity and to satisfy parents' dissatisfactions with schooling. Chubb and Moe's (1990) large-scale data analysis, showing that schools with more tight and local control had better achievement records, received wide publicity among choice proponents. The choice proposals take several forms (reviewed in Witte, 1990; critically evaluated in Clune and Witte, 1990):

1. A 'voucher' system by which students are given funds to attend a school of the parents' choice.

2. 'Magnet' schools that focus on a particular subject (e.g., science), and in which qualified students within a city can can enrol (Blank, 1990).
3. Freedom to select other schools within the LEA than just the closest one.
4. Freedom even to select a school outside the LEA.

In these first few years, only the magnet schools have been widely attempted. Even with option 3 and 4 that emerged in the most active state--Minnesota--very few parents had opted to move away from the neighbourhood school. It may be that the costs of daily transporting one's child outweighs the purported advantage of a better school. On the other hand, the magnet schools have been around for several decades (in New York City they are even older for the performing arts); in the big cities with large minority populations they have been earlier suggested as an alternative to desegregation. But the start-up costs, and the need for a large concentration of students, make this reform not likely to be widely adopted outside big cities.

By 1990, another policy effort to provide choice, namely, local empowerment, had been authorized by fourteen states, but within these not all LEAs or school sites must adopt it. This reform is of two kinds (Wohlstetter and McCurdy, 1991; see for fuller analysis, Malen, Ogawa, and Kranz, 1990):

1. 'Administrative decentralization,' in which the central office of a LEA designates certain tasks meeting its interests that are carried out by school-site teachers and principals. Here, the central office delegates authority downward on a limited basis but the local schools are still accountable upward.
2. 'Site-based management,' a structure that empowers parents, teachers, and principals in each school building to set their own priorities, to allocate their budget accordingly, to shape their curriculum, and to hire and fire personnel. Here, decision-making authority is local while responsibility is directed not upwards but out to the community the school serves.

These reforms have taken on the generic--and multi-meaning--label of 'restructuring.' It is important to note that such restructuring has been an ongoing part of Americans' changing notions of how to define and control education, what David Tyack (1990) has termed 'tinkering toward Utopia.'

So it was that during 1990-1991, educational circles--professionals, laity, and politicians alike--were intently discussing this option. There were important differences in how structure and authority were provided. That is seen in questions over who gets power (e.g.,

parents are excluded from SBM in Miami and Los Angeles but not in Chicago) and over what the SBM's authority can cover (e.g., principals can be hired and fired in Chicago but not elsewhere). (For an excellent comparative analysis of these cities, see Wohlstetter and McCurdy, 1991; for a progress report on the longer experience in Miami, see Rungeling and Glover, 1991).

It should be obvious that the role of the federal government has been minimal in these two waves of reform. President Ronald Reagan used his office as a 'bully pulpit' to call for state and local efforts to improve education . But as it developed, it was action in scores of state legislatures that decided the matter, and it will be the actions in thousands of LEAs and more thousands of schools that will determine the success of SBM.

However, there are also quite recent national efforts underway to reform schooling toward quality goals. The Congressionally-authorized National Assessment of Educational Progress in mid-1991 provided first-time ever comparisons of the achievement outcomes on selected subjects in all but thirteen states that opted out. A National Education Goals Panel is developing a new national assessment system. Another organization seeks the national certification of teachers. National leadership is also involved. President George Bush continues use of the bully pulpit by defining himself as the 'education president.' His leadership seems restricted to encouraging state-local systems to reform but without federal help. He has urged national standards in academic achievement (an unthinkable idea even five years earlier), and in a major address in 1991 he recommended adoption of choice arrangements, including vouchers--but still without additional federal funds.

Patterns of Similarities and Differences

Parallelism in American and British reforms has been hinted at, but it will illuminate the transnational nature of educational reform if we examine directly both like and unlike elements of these reforms before explaining them.

Similarities: Riding the Transnational Wave

Similarities exist in both the *explanations* for, and the *practices* of, these countries' SBM reforms. That point has been strongly emphasized in recent analyses of these changes (Guthrie and Pierce, 1991; Cooper, 1991).

The similar explanations of the reforms' origins rest in a common ideology of justification and in a common dissatisfaction with educational results. In both nations there is a clear ideological assertion of the direct

linkage between the state of the economy and the school's role. The asserted linkage is that more educated workers will increase economic productivity, and so the role of government should be to improve the quality of schools as a part of its larger policy of national economic development. Such thinking has been evident long before these reforms were urged. Businessmen in both nations have long been concerned with an educated workforce; for example, they were a major stimulus to American vocational education programs from early in this century.

The reasons for this business concern are evident in both nations. In the UK after World War II there had been wide acceptance of the necessity both a) to expand educational opportunities to as many students, and to as far as possible, for reasons of social justice, and b) to create more job opportunities. That acceptance broke down after 1980 when the Thatcher Government crystallized a general dissatisfaction with schooling by asserting that schools were not fitting students to existing job markets and so they were not making the workforce sufficiently competitive in world markets. The explicit ideology of this government centres the pivotal role of choice in the marketplace.

Americans heard similar and mounting criticism of their schools. It arose first at the individual level during the 1960s in concerns over *Why Johnny can't read* that ballooned in the 1980s to a widespread dissatisfaction over the poor showing of their students compared with others on standard tests. That malaise joined a growing concern in the 1980s over economic competition with Japan in which Americans saw themselves as 'falling behind' in selected industries. All these dissatisfactions were reflected in annual polls that national reports subsequently used, as noted, to stimulate across the states those first-wave reforms designed to improve quality by raising standards.

Not only the origins but the practices of these reforms also showed similarities in the UK and US, for example, assessing student performance with standardized tests. But the chief similarity in practice has been the empowering of local policy actors. That reform sought to shift power for school decision-making from higher to lower authorities in curriculum, personnel, and budget.

In both nations there was the explicit assumption that SBM would restructure the school learning environment in a way that would fit the distinctive needs of each local school and therefore would improve student learning. However, there still remained some responsibility over local decisions that was vested in a higher authority--the central office or state government in the US and the national government in the UK. Governments may restrict themselves merely to setting broad goals and to monitoring their implementation locally--as in the state-local system of the US--or they may require specific standards of curriculum and testing--as in the UK. It is important to re-emphasize that all reforms,

whether top-down or bottom-up, thought increased school productivity would improve economic productivity.

Differences: Filtering the Transnational Wave

The major differences in these two nations' reforms arose from the basic differences found in a unitary compared to a federal government. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher could impose system-wide national curricula and testing programs--or could abolish the ILEA. She also could impose on this changes an ideological tone and then link both to popular dissatisfaction with education. Yet neither Presidents Reagan nor Bush could impose anything like these under the American Constitution. They could stimulate a popular discussion about remedies for the problems of schooling, and that discussion could lead to adoption of similar, multiple reforms by the states, first centralized and then decentralized. While presidents can try to set the policy agenda by their criticisms and suggestions for reforms, that strategy does not work well unless there is a widely perceived and latent dissatisfaction. And that was to be exactly the the case with education. Consequently, the American account of SBM lies in the events on the periphery, for the states have been where the action was.

In short, in both nations the differences in constitutional arrangements were overcome by popular waves of dissatisfaction. In both, the national leaders' programmatic responses were surprisingly similar in broad outline, but in each, the methods of program adoption were different--again, for constitutional reasons. Thus do differing political institutions in democratic societies respond to similar waves of policy dissatisfaction but also permit a differentiated filtering of those waves.

Explaining Reform Currents

It is striking that all analyses point to a common explanation--the economic--of how these reforms came into being. After reviewing this explanation more fully than to this point, I will suggest an alternative basic explanation that is political.

Economic Theories of School Reform

Economic explanations of reform reflect a simple model of institutional interactions. Thus, new workforce needs in the economy were going unmet by the educational system, so that political masters, as part of economic development, stepped in to alter schooling structures. Guthrie and Pierce (1990) see this as a major factor in an emerging global

economy, a condition which could explain such changes in other nations as well.

However, Douglas Mitchell (1991) has an even broader economic theory about what happened that justifies elaboration. He starts recalling the accepted view of fifty years ago in both nations that national governments should stimulate the economy through educational development--which both nations then did. However, that acceptance had unravelled by the 1970s due to inequalities in service provision and to lowering student achievement, and consequently political leaders stepped in again to change school programs and organizations.

These nations currently have focused on at least fifteen common school issues; these included raising standards, providing choice, containing school costs, and decentralizing decision making and administration. These issues did not just migrate from nation to nation but arose independently in each nation. Indeed, they borrowed surprisingly little from one another's experiences. Those were: the decade of experience in parental choice, in Scotland, Alberta, Canada, and Victoria, Australia; the British use of tests to control access to higher education; and the Americans' vast experience with minority schooling and independent LEAs.

What underlay this common reform agenda, Mitchell suggests, was a basic shift in the 'economic sub-structure' that is now shaking all public services--not simply schooling. That phenomenon questions the old consensus on how to provide these services. Indeed, this economic shift may be as fundamental as that in the first Industrial Revolution of the 18th and 19th centuries. It is not simply the familiar shift to service industries but a shift to an economy based on a 'cybernetic control of a broad array of tasks previously thought to be the domain of skilled and semi-skilled work.'

The first revolution had required schools to provide students with three qualities in order to fit them into the emerging political order. These were 'literacy and numeracy,' ' work and social discipline, ' and the 'substituting of organizational for individual identity. ' Everywhere, education set these three qualities as the criteria for success in schooling, but they also were thought to bring success in the workplace

The school thus become another assembly line with its emphasis on order (e.g., sorting and grading), sequence (e.g., in curriculum), division of tasks (e.g., teaching vs. administration), payoffs for success (e.g., the distribution of grades), and the socialization of students to accept 'discipline, control, and identity transference.' In time, school prowess became more significant than that in the workplace. The end result was a new institution in society, encompassing and socializing children in order to supplement other institutions--economy, family, government.

However, the emerging second revolution that Mitchell discerns challenges these three requirements of schooling. Greater literacy or numeracy is not needed in the type of economy. Rather the need is for higher-order thinking skills, such as 'problem solving and social networking' that would require schools to change in a fundamental way. However, most jobs in industry and business today are still based on the old work role, so that schools do not prepare students well for higher-order thinking skills.

That contradiction has serious consequences. It leads to the alienation of youth from the job market and their sense that schools are irrelevant to that market. The old values of discipline, involving superiors responsible for coordinating and integrating workers' efforts, are now yielding to workers' responsibility for those tasks, as seen currently in the Japanese and other high productivity corporations. That is, what were once tasks of managers are now those of workers whose tasks are no longer segmented. These changes in the work-school nexus means that one can no longer believe that to get a good job one gets a good education, although that was the reality in the earlier economy. So when economic problems arose, criticism was directed against schools, not industry. The ostensibly well-prepared students now find a marketplace whose opportunities are ill-fitted to their training. It was against all this mismatching of instruction and job needs that current reforms were directed in both nations.

This extended analysis demonstrates the broad and sophisticated reach of economic theory to explain school reforms. Basically, this theory sees national institutions like education as being moved by alterations in the economic sub-structure.

Political Explanations of School Reform

But what is missing in all this is a *political* explanation of the origins of these reforms. As these are early days for the few who are trying to understand the international dimensions of such reforms, a political explanation can be only tentative at this stage.

(a) *Theory Specification*

Note, first, that these education reforms are reported only in democratic nations. Hans Weiler recently (1990) reported on decentralization of power reforms among a set of these outside the English-speaking world. Note, second, the special structural features of democracies that relate to a political explanation of SBM reforms. Their central feature is that major policy currents arise from dissatisfaction by citizens with, among other things, their public services.

'Dissatisfaction theory' has been used to explain changes in local school systems in the US (Iannacconne and Lutz, 1978). It is expanded here for application to the transnational waves of school reform pursuing greater quality or choice. As developed here, the theory requires that, to be effective, citizen dissatisfaction must meet certain specifications. It must be:

1. *existent* widely among citizens in a democracy, not just a few;
2. *perceived* widely as actually existing; and
3. *crystallized* by some 'triggering event' (Cobb and Elder, 1983), a natural disaster or a sudden and massive breakdown in the performance of a social system.

Further, the policy necessary to meet such dissatisfaction will be facilitated by certain structural features in a political system, those that:

1. provide channels for its expression;
2. have elected to office those persons who fear for their political survival; and
3. operate with a media of communication that can circulate bad news about public services at a high volume and velocity.

(b) *Political Origins of US-UK School Reform*

Given these theoretical specifications, how well do they fit the education reforms in the US and UK? First, there was a common triggering event, namely, the growing reports of lowered student achievement in both nations that were perceived as disasters. That event was independent of any economic explanation of subsequent reform. When parents complain increasingly to school authorities that Johnny can't read, that fact is not economic.

Such dissatisfaction stimulated complaints that at first were individual. As noted earlier (Wirt, 1981) in the cycle of policy change in democracies, at its earliest stage individually expressed dissatisfaction produces little response. But when mutual awareness of dissatisfaction arises and when it is made visible (via national commissions' reports, opinion polls, media exploitation of any disaster), then political channels become sensitive to group action and policy makers are more open to streams of group demands (Kingdon,1984).

Note the relevance to school reforms. Politicoes in both nations were suddenly faced with a massively dissatisfied 'public opinion,' which political scientist V.O.Key once defined as that opinion to which politicians find it prudent to pay attention. Faced by such dissatisfaction, for politicoes to defend the current school system was not a good strategy for survival; on the other hand, 'credit-claiming' for instituting reforms

certainly was. They may have used the idea of better schools for a better economy either as rhetoric or as passionate ideological belief. This was an ideology that was compatible with the renewed political strength of business interests in both nations in the 1980s. But note that such ideas were not what first fastened their attention on school problems--it was public discontent.

The Thatcher Government followed this strategic response with an impressive emphasis on a focused ideology and an even more impressive pursuit of the reforms in Parliament against considerable opposition, even from within the party (Maclure, 1988, chap. 10). President Reagan adopted a roughly similar strategy under the constitutional limitations noted earlier. But his strategy also fitted better his central policy focus on reducing Washington's programs (devolution to the states), oversight of business (deregulation), and expenditures (cut program funding). This strategy affected education in a massive way that turned school program emphasis from the value of equity to quality and choice (Clark and Astuto, 1988).

Even in the fragmented centralization of the balkanized American states, governors could do the same by suggesting the problem's source, offering reforms, and linking these to a belief it would lead to greater economic productivity. That is exactly what happened quite successfully to a generation of young governors during the 1980s; among eighteen major issues, education dominated all others in their major addresses (Beyle, 1990, p. 231). This was especially the case in the Southern states with the nation's poorest schooling. One indicator of the success of this survival strategy is that one Southern governor, Lamar Alexander, became the American Secretary of Education in 1991.

In short, popular dissatisfaction, programatically and ideologically, stimulated politicoes in both nations to articulate that discontent and urge school reforms. Clearly then, this political strategy has high survival value when citizens become dissatisfied in democratic nations.

School Reform: Adult Games and Children Games

In the open, sensitive channels of democracies that can link popular dissatisfactions to politicians' survival, the latter will fasten on useful, politically salient, cause-and-effect explanations. But these explanations may not be related to improving education results, as critics have noted and have charged in the first wave of American reforms (Boyd, 1987; Fuhrman and Elmore, 1990). Similarly, the SBM reform of the second wave was designed to implement the choice value, but it creates problems in realizing other values, like quality and equity (see authors in Chapman, 1990). Indeed, it is arguable that these values are inherently

contradictory (Marshall, Mitchell, and Wirt, 1989, chaps. 4,6) and that the arguments supporting it are contradictory (Weiler, 1990).

American education history reveals that it was against just such a decentralized system of schooling (reflecting choices to fit their diverse communities) that reforms a century ago imposed instead a centralized system (Tyack, 1990). It was designed to foster the values of quality, efficiency, and equity. In short, particular values need particular organizations to be realized (Wirt, 1991). The SBM reform is only another skirmish in this historical conflict in basic values in public policy that is also manifest in the British experience.

Another and more serious problem exists with SBM reforms in the two nations. A striking omission from studies of these reforms is evidence that it affected school productivity by increasing student achievement. In the LEAs with the longest experience with SBM, while it changed processes and structures, there was little change in academic achievement in New York City (Rogers and Chung, 1983; Gittell, et al., 1972) or Salt Lake City (and Ogawa, 1988). Recent research surveys of that American experience are similarly negative in reporting improvements (Malen, Ogawa, and Kranz, 1990; Bryk, Lee, and Smith, 1990, pp. 152-54).

Those findings support the thesis that much of this reform turbulence seems like an 'adult game' that appear regularly in democratic policy conflict. Such games are a struggle over power to decide :

1. what symbols will dominate among policy-making actors, often a form of 'symbolic politics' (Edelman, 1967); thus, reforms will increase educational and economic 'productivity';
2. how public resources will be allocated among these actors, both vertically (the British locally-managed school formulas or the American states' revenue-supplementing) as well as horizontally (allocation of funds within an American SBM school or British LMS);
3. what structure for decision making will control both the symbol and resource sides of the policy struggle; thus, both decentralized as well as centralized reforms in the two nations are about desirable decisional systems; and
4. which historical forces will influence these policy games, (detailed in the state and territory chapters of this book); thus historical is but another form of adult influence created by preceding generations that shapes the adult game of today.

Fundamentally then, this set of interactions is basically political because it is a struggle for power to decide dominant symbols, to secure resources, to employ facilitative structures, and to express historical influences. If politics is, in Harold Lasswell's classic formulation, 'the

study of who gets what, when, and how,' then these reforms clearly share those political qualities.

However, these interactions should be distinguished from 'children games,' namely those that focus upon what happens to students in the learning environment. The essence of this game is not overtly centered on power, hence it is not overtly political, but rather focuses on leading children to learn; hence it is primarily educational. This kind of game:

1. centers on the curriculum and instructional aspects of the educational profession; and
2. commences, operates, and concludes with an evaluation mode to determine whether these efforts actually do increase learning.

I suggest that the evaluation component of the children game is central to how it is played, thereby distinguishing it from the adult game of policy making. It is evaluation that historically built a complex testing and measurement concern into an established field of pedagogy. It has also recently and widely demonstrated the inability of schools in the two nations to increase achievement. But evaluation is a sword that cuts two ways. *Any reform arising out of the adult game must also be judged for how the learning environment is altered and how that produces, in turn, improved achievement.*

The cold truth is that there is no convincing evidence that these UK and US reforms have played the children game successfully. Reports provided to date of achievement improvements, reduced drop-outs, or teacher and parent happiness in SBM systems are not convincing (e.g., Glickman, 1990). The ghost of *post hoc ergo propter hoc* haunts such reports. Indeed, the fullest review of the literature of SBM effects (Malen, Ogawa, and Kranz, 1990) is highly critical that any effects are attributable to this structural change. I urge that too little attention is paid to such findings and to the need for evaluation. For evidence of reform effects to be convincing, the evaluation mode should be featured prominently in the design, initiation, organization, and implementation of reforms like SBM. Knowing at the earliest stage that the children game is being played on this kind of field will, like Samuel Johnson's aphorism on hanging, wonderfully focus the attention of the players in the adult game. Furthermore, such evaluation must incorporate quasi-experimental and contextual designs so that we can be sure than other causes are not confounding the alleged reform effects. These designs involve:

1. pre- and post-tests of the same student cohort;
2. comparison with other cohorts not undergoing the reform;
3. longitudinal studies; and

4. contextual analysis of the potential effects of other factors than just the reform.

Given the political passion for SBM in the two nations, it is unlikely that politicoes will want to undertake such evaluation of their handiwork. Nor are the dissatisfied citizens likely to understand the matter, preferring rather to think that 'something is now being done.' But businessmen should have a concern for evaluation of these reforms because they believe they will benefit from them. There is no reason why scholars and educational practitioners should not adopt this evaluative mode of analysis when they confront the school reforms--and do so from the beginning.

Clearly then, the adult game of SBM dominates in the UK and US. But it is not too late to think about evaluation that sets in from the first design of SBM reforms, pursues comparative and contextual analysis through time, and concludes with the basic research and policy question of any public service--So what?

The Australian Case

Several considerations arise in reviewing the studies of SBM in the Australian states and territories reported in this volume. They could be elaborated in detail but instead are simply sketched as convenient guides for the reader moving through them.

First, there is everywhere surprising evidence in Australia of the political dissatisfaction theory set out above. Everywhere, complaints swelled about school productivity, and everywhere politicoes responded with reform ideas about 'flat structures,' SBM, or whatever program was modish. Everywhere, they had to contend with other actors to define the symbols in the desired program, to allocate the resources, and to restructure the decision-making process. And everywhere the values of choice contended with those of equity, efficiency, and quality, while contenders sought organizations that would realize their value preferences (Wirt, 1991).

Second, their reports raise questions about forces influencing policy behaviour that can be explored in subsequent analysis. Did public opinion polls show over time explicit evidence of popular dissatisfaction? Was the distinctive political culture of each state or territory influential in shaping its policy results? Similarly, what historical influences dominated this policy, influences that are rooted in conflicts over basic values? (Brian Caldwell on Tasmania and Kerry Moir on the Northern Territory are especially vivid on this factor). What was the role of the Commonwealth government in this reform movement? (Was this Sherlock Holmes' dog that did not bark in the night?)

Third, there is as yet no indication of the children game, but rather one finds the domination of the adult game in the current popular passion for SBM. This may not be fair, though, because it is early days among all states but Victoria. Yet it is unclear that a designed evaluation of the reform exists in any state at present. If so, Australians cannot even begin to answer the question--So what?

It is important to keep in mind that each case study does throw light on the larger question of educational effectiveness, which are also matters of interest in the US and UK as well. As a foreign scholar reviewing these multiple responses in Australia and observing their commonalities with reforms elsewhere, I am increasingly convinced that John Donne had it right, 'No man is an island...' These studies provide an archipelago, if not 'the mainland,' for understanding educational restructuring and, ultimately, its effects on children. Yet everywhere it is still an adult game, in which its players are asking: 'It was good for me--was it good for you?' But at some point some one must begin to ask: 'Was it good for the children?'

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II Restructuring: The Australian Context

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Chapter 3

RE-STRUCTURING IN AUSTRALIA: A PERSONAL VIEW

Phillip Hughes

A Personal View

Since being given this task, I have re-written and re-organised (re-structured, perhaps) this paper a number of times. This is only partly because it is a difficult subject and much more because it is difficult to be dispassionate about something which has been part of my life for 40 years. It is difficult to be academic in one's treatment of an issue of such personal significance and I decided therefore to make a luxury out of this necessity and comment from a personal point of view. Of course, I can do so with an easy mind. Since I retire in September 1991 I have no concerns about the 1992 budget, or my chances for promotion, and I will be beyond re-structuring.

Once I had made that decision, I found it quite fascinating to look at the current position in terms of my experience. In Tasmania, where I returned as a teacher in 1954, I became Deputy Director-General in 1965 and in 1968 went to my first meeting of Directors-General as Acting Director-General. The others present included Harold Wyndham, Fred Brooks, Colonel Mander-Jones, major figures whose experience went back for another 30 years, so my links with experience extend well over 50 years. After leaving Tasmania in 1969, I returned in the 1980s to be given the task of reviewing the administration of the Department of Education. Similarly in Canberra where I went in 1970, I was asked to chair the panel to recommend the form of the new education authority, the first since Federation and later became foundation Chairman of the newly formed ACT Schools Authority. Now, in 1991 I have been asked back to the ACT as deputy chair of the Task Force on Re-Structuring ACT Schools. These chances to re-visit one's past are rare and they provide illuminating views of one's earlier thinking. Over this same period, I have been involved in reviews in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia so that the topic of this paper is a part of a long and deeply-felt experience.

It is sobering to look at that experience, and my current interpretations of it, in the light of what I have written at various stages for occasions such as this colloquium, and the ensuing publication. It is of interest to see the ways in which the emphases have changed, and my interpretations have changed.

1973: The development of a new education authority after a public inquiry in the Australian Capital Territory (Hughes, 1973).

1977: A New Zealand colloquium on the topic, Policies for Participation, with my emphasis on devolution of responsibility from the centre (Hughes, 1977).

1978: ACER Review. Evaluation of an education authority - the beginning of a phase of critical review (Hughes and Mulford 1978).

1981: A British colloquium and publication on The Politics of School Government, with my emphasis turning to an evaluation of the rise and fall of parent participation in schools (Baron, 1981).

1982: One of the early reviews of an education department in Australia, with the emphasis firmly on efficiency and effectiveness (Hughes, 1982).

1985: National High School Principals' Association Annual Conference. The theme was Devolution and Accountability : An Evaluation and the emphasis was one of realisation of the implications for accountability which followed on devolution. My key-note paper on Politics in Education addressed the change in role for the Director-General, as ministers and premiers took a stronger role in education, balancing the move to devolution (NHSPA, 1985).

1987: Publication of the AERA 1986 Symposium on Educational Policy in Australia and America. My summarising paper in this climate of general re-structuring was Reorganisation in Education in a Climate of Changing Social Expectations. Organisational change had become endemic and now needed to be seen as part of a wider social movement.

1990: USA (Australian Education Policy Project). This symposium at Wollongong had re-structuring as its central emphasis, but significantly, the title of the publication brought out a different

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aspect, the Professionalism of Teaching in the Next Decade (Ashenden, 1991).

This reflection on experience and on thoughts seen as relevant at a particular time has led me to some sobering conclusions:

- sobering, because that reflection reminds me that the way I interpret that past now is very different from the way I saw it as a participant at the time;

- sobering, because that reflection shows that we tend to see current events as the culmination of historical/social change rather than in our reflective view as merely a point in that process - not the final crisis nor the culminating success - but both less final and more revealing than perceived at that moment.

Those reflections move me away from either an apocalyptic vision of total collapse or an identification of exhilarating hopes for the future. The actual processes of change are more complex and less clear in direction than our analyses often admit. We need to appraise them more clearly if we are to affect them, rather than to be passive victims of change.

Re-Structuring - A Confused Concept

The term re-structuring is a comparatively recent usage, but tends to be confusing since it is used in so many different ways. In the *USA - Australian Education Policy Project*, the discussions stressed the differing ways the idea has been developed in USA and Australia. The definition used was 'a comprehensive, strategic re-working of schools and schooling, making a more purpose-built education system.'

The reality of current experiences has been less clear, less rational. In the United States although official groups such as the Education Commission for the states have taken part, a major role has been played by individuals and the emphasis has been on re-structuring schools,
e.g. John Goodlad - the IDEA Project.
Ted Sizer - the Coalition of Essential Schools.
Mortimer Adler, the Paideia Project.

In Australia, the emphasis has been on the re-structuring of systems. Every state has felt the surgeon's knife; some would say the butcher's cleaver. The major purpose of these changes did not relate to schools, but to the locus of control of systems. Some of the features of

this change in power, are detailed in the 1985 National High School Principals' Association Conference paper. That analysis was from a survey of the views of past Directors-General, as to their assessments of changes.

By 1985 these factors had already made an impact.

1. The reduced acceptance of 'expert authority' in general, whether the expert is a Director-General or the principal of a school.
2. The increased influence of pressure groups in our society.
3. The great visibility of educational activities and decisions with particular emphasis on the role of television. The Minister for Education can and does make decisions on the spot in television interviews rather than wait to seek further advice. There is an understandable reluctance to seem indecisive or in need of expert opinion.
4. The realization by individuals and groups that for difficult decisions in education the Director-General can only say no. Only the Minister can say yes. This is because the decisions which reach the Director-General are only those which cannot be approved within existing policy. If they can be approved it will have already been done. The Director-General, however, cannot of himself change existing policy but must refer to the Minister. Most people perceiving the effect of this chain will shortcut this procedure and go direct to the Minister.
5. A further major cause is the broader social role accepted quite universally for education. Education has convinced its audience that it is linked with 'life chances'. Such a valuable commodity is likely to continue to receive enhanced attention and greater political input.
6. In an effort to meet the complexities of the current situation governments in Australia have restructured their own functions and operations and have asked for, and implemented, restructuring of departments of education. This restructuring has normally increased the power of the political arm in contrast to the public service arm of government. Premiers' departments now play a more active controlling role rather than public service boards. Premiers and ministers appoint their own advisers from political

> ranks in order to implement their own agenda, thus further distancing the Director-General from the area of decisions. In all this, of course, we are coming closer to the US situation where the senior advisers for politicians go in with the one election and out with another. The role of continuing public servants in such a situation is much more exclusively an instrumental one. (Hughes, 1987)

These points relate particularly to administrative structure, and particularly to the persons who make the policy decisions.

A second emphasis must include a consideration of changes in participation, particularly the participation of parents. The words of Commissioner Bigge in his 1820 report on education still have some resonance for us.

> It will therefore become an object of importance so to extend the system of education [in] NSW, that as little control as possible shall be left to the parents over the time, the habits, or the disposition of their children.' ...
>
> It will be seen that the feelings expressed by Commissioner Bigge in 1820, [as quoted above] still rouse some agreement in Australia. After making significant headway in the late 1960s and early 1970s the participation of parents in significant decisions at the school level has slowed significantly. Perhaps not coincidentally, so has the public support for education which was the basis of the major developments and expenditures of the 70s. These were based on strong support by both parents and teachers for clearly expressed goals. With the separation between these two groups, teachers find themselves lacking a community-wide political base. Teachers, in an effort to make school-based decision-making mean teacher-based decision-making, may end up with a hollow victory. The only decisions to be devolved to the school level in such a situation are likely to be trivial ones. It is clear from a number of operating examples that schools can work effectively, through real participation of parents, teachers and students. The exclusion of any one of these groups from the process is likely to leave the process as an empty form. (Hughes, 1981)

More recently still, the emphasis has moved yet again, from the questions of power and of participation, to one of reduction in expenditure.

This emphasis has brought about a reduction in administrative numbers, with a flatter structure and deep cuts in curriculum, media and specialist services. The accompanying emphasis, devolution of responsibility to schools, is argued in terms of better administration, putting authority where decisions are made. However, it bears a strong relationship to reduction of expenditure through cutting services.

In both the USA and Australia, attention is now beginning to focus on the teacher and on teaching.

> **In USA** - the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards has been established with substantial funds to implement a major research project on teaching and to develop procedures for teacher appraisal and the establishment of a register of teachers.
>
> **In Australia** - the emphasis on teaching has come in various ways. One is through the industrial arena and 'award re-structuring'. Dean Ashenden describes the key idea 'educational work in schools should be undertaken in new and different ways so as to greatly increase the productivity of learning ... ' (Ashenden, 1991)

This concept is aimed to lead to a different career structure for teachers. The industrial bargaining has so far failed to make much advance although the concept of 'advanced skills teacher' or AST has been introduced. It has led to a high degree of specification of working conditions in the attempt to reach union - employer agreements but not so far to any significant change in career structure. If the decisions on the positions of AST2 and AST3 are as lacking in consistency as those for AST1, a major hope will be lost for an improvement in the career prospects of able teachers who wish to stay in the classroom.

Ken McKinnon, in a comment on the situation, with particular reference to the idea of devolution of responsibility to schools, stated as follows:

> they have failed to hand over control of the things which really matter - the time and effort of people (Ashenden, 1991).

A further development is the Schools Council's Project on Teacher Quality which again places teaching at the centre of the emphasis for improved educational performance, with its publication, *Australia's Teachers*, centred around a Teachers Charter. This charter with its brief but significant comments on ethical aspects, on teacher expectations, on the importance of content as well as process, and on the role of 'explicit

teaching' offers very worthwhile prospects for action (Schools Council, 1990).

Thus, restructuring can mean:

- the reorganisation of education systems so that there is greater political control;
- the development of a flatter and much smaller administrative and services structure with a managerial emphasis for senior administrators;
- the administrative and political processes by which schools can be closed, with minimum public fuss;
- the devolution of responsibility to schools for their own management, usually with a requirement to involve parents in policy development and decisions;
- an emphasis on the operation of schools - 'effective schools', 'excellent schools' making use of research linking school characteristics with educational achievement;
- an emphasis on teachers and teaching - perhaps through the industrial arena and career structures - perhaps through the Schools Council's preferred route of teacher development.

Which are the elements which offer prospects for improvement?

Prospects for Improvement

Much of the present confusion has arisen from the stress of meeting educational challenges of unprecedented size, arising from social change. Compulsory schooling, the concept that a total age-group should be required to take part in education is a comparatively recent invention, being introduced in various steps in the last half of the nineteenth century. It was a deliberate response to the demands of the industrial revolution which required large numbers of people with sufficient literacy to follow simple instructions and learn simple skills. In spite of the legal requirement, it took until the beginning of this century to establish habits of regular primary attendance and to introduce a limited offering of secondary education for the comparatively few who required higher levels of preparation. Education had become a significant part of government budgets for the first time, with 5 percent of the total population being enrolled in schools and one person in every 800 (1 : 800) being employed in teaching.

The change from this situation was gradual, involving firstly the further development of the various sectors of education, primary, secondary, technical and higher education. The changes in employment demands from the 1950s, requiring a much larger group with mid-level

technical and clinical skills, brought the increase in secondary participation, particularly up to Year 10. This period saw a doubling of the proportion in education, to 10 per cent of the total population. This change, together with a gradual reduction in class-sizes, saw the teacher proportion of the total population increase to 1 : 300. The increase in recruitment implied by this change was made possible together with increases in standards of entry by the large numbers of women who entered the teaching profession.

We are currently in the midst of a third and still more difficult phase of change. The structure of employment is in the process of a major change. In 1966, approximately 60 per cent of the 15 - 19 year age-group were in full-time employment, thus leaving 40 per cent of the age-group involved in some form of education or training, or unemployed. The current figures for full-time employment for the age-group is 15 per cent, leaving 85 per cent for some combination of education and training, or unemployment. The change is substantial in size and has a major significance for the nature of education. The rapidity of the change in retention is clear from the figures: in 1983, 36 per cent of the age-group continued to the end of Year 12; by 1990 that figure was 62 per cent. This represents a change in participation as well as retention. The major purpose of Year 11/12 education had been preparation for further education, with the majority continuing on. By 1990, this situation has altered as the majority of Year 11/12 now seek a preparation with a more vocational emphasis. We are seeing, too, a further significant change in total educational participation, with strong implications for finance. In the current situation, 20 per cent of the total population is involved in full-time education, and ratio of teachers in that population is now 1 : 70. These figures make an interesting comparison with those for general practitioners. The 1986 Population and Housing Census of the Australian Bureau of Census and Statistics shows that the ratio of GP's in the general population is 1 : 994.

These figures have major implications for the financing of education and also for the recruitment, status and salaries of teachers, since such a high proportion of the population in education, implies a heavy financial commitment. In this situation where education is unavoidably a major concern of government we must expect that there will be sustained and critical attention paid to the processes, not only in terms of cost but in terms of purposes, processes and achievements. Unfortunately, in the current situation educational administrators have come to be seen as part of the problem rather than as part of the solution. Writers such as Macpherson speak of 'provider capture' as the process whereby those who provide the service effectively capture the terms and emphases of its delivery (Macpherson, 1989).

Whether we look at Australia, New Zealand, USA or UK we can find evidence of this feeling of profound mistrust felt by politicians for

administrators. This is partly why the response of left-wing and of right-wing governments to the challenges of education take on a similar form:

- a reduction of the extent and an increase in the effectiveness of central control of education;

- an increase of responsibility to the school level, based on the increased participation of parents as well as teachers in policy decisions.

So far, educators have failed significantly to live up to the challenges posed by this process.

What George Baron wrote in 1981 now has an even stronger ring of truth:

> The designing of soundly-based institutions of democratic government based on universal suffrage, the recruitment of impartial, reliable and qualified public servants, the professionalisation of major occupations and the provision of even minimal social services are still very live issues in Third World countries. In the industrialised nations they are no longer sufficient in themselves to assure stable and well-adjusted societies. Factors which contribute to the challenge to them are:
>
> > *The final breakdown in the last two decades in the respect hitherto accorded in most countries to the church, the law, the 'propertied classes', the employer, the family and the school;*
> >
> > *The related independence and security of the individual based in many countries on protection of employment, on comprehensive social services and on human rights legislation.*
> >
> > *The increased visibility of government and of the consequences of governmental action, due to the coverage of local, national and international events now provided by the press, radio and television;*
> >
> > *The disintegration of accepted patterns of social and political behaviour, due to the interpenetration of national and racial cultures through population movements and through facilities for rapid long-distance travel;*

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> *The diffusion of political power, resulting from new techniques of group action, ranging from quickly mounted campaigns against unpopular government proposals to strikes and demonstrations and, in the most extreme cases, to urban terrorism.*

All of these factors have particular relevance for the schools and their government. 'Respect' is replaced by demands for accountability; teachers, parents and pupils seek greater access to information and less confidentiality; what is taught and how it is taught are matters for public debate and scrutiny; and the school now exists in a climate of great sensitivity as regards practices that might be held to be discriminatory in respect of sex, race, religion or social class (Baron, 1981).

Fred Wirt wrote also of the part education has played in creating the conditions for the critical atmosphere in which it lives.

> This transnational event [the increasing education of the West] has created a generation better educated than their parents, and more inclined to do what champions of education always said it would do. They widen their perspectives on the possible, and they challenge what has been in order to fulfill their manifest capacities. As one political result, they question traditional values in every institution, evaluate the very utility of institutions themselves, staff the agencies of governance at all levels, and, in short, seek new policy directions.
>
> As a result of this difference in generations, there is now a new world outlook in Western nations (Inglehart, 1977), a 'silent revolution' that has transformed basic perceptions of what is possible in social life; note that this change took place after the burgeoning schooling of post-war generations (Wirt, 1987).

We have yet, as educators, to adopt roles which reflect the reality of the social and political context. Re-structuring, in whatever form, is largely an attempt by governments to obtain a better hold on a very complex and very expensive system. The fact that they have chosen inappropriate and inefficient mechanisms for that process does not deny the validity of their need to be able to define directions and limits. As educators, it is up to us to find better ways of helping that process. In this, there is a dual task, neither part being easy. The first part is to

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recognise more specifically the political role of education, as a major function of government, requiring a legitimate involvement. The second is to recognise the public and community aspects of education, calling for more open and more effective communication about the purposes and the achievements of education, as part of the establishment of a continuing dialogue.

In the first task an important issue to address is the mistrust of educators as administrators, implicit rather than explicit, but powerful in its effects. It has had a powerful impact on the role of the senior officials in state systems. On the one hand they are depicted as managers, with the neutral role of implementing the political agenda. Yet, conversely, they are frequently treated as partisan and subject to change as governments change. The concept of an educational leader in the mold of a Wyndham or Frank Tate or Peter Board is now missing within state systems. In such a situation, the professional bodies in education and the university departments of education have an important role to play. We should not, however, accept as permanent the assumption implicit in this situation.

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Chapter 4

RESTRUCTURING EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA

George F. Berkeley

Introduction

If Rip van Winkle had been an Australian educational administrator operating in the 1950s and had awoken from his sleep in the 1990s, he would probably have had great difficulty in recognizing whatever State Education Department he had worked in. He would not have experienced any real problems had he awoken in the seventies but throughout the eighties what some would call the 'virus restructurus' had certainly struck in a number of places. Nor does one attack render the recipient immune from further bouts as the attached chronology shows.

The picture is one of frequent and ongoing change. Even prior to 1979 there had been quite significant changes in the organization of State Departments. A major change in a number of States had been the shift from Divisional (primary, secondary, special) directorates to functional divisions (personnel, research, curriculum, planning, finance, etc). In a number of States, there had also been reductions in the overall responsibilities of the Permanent Heads such as the removal of technical and further education to either another Minister, a Commission or to the same Minister but in another Department. Shears (1984) documented a series of changes in the responsibilities of the Victorian Director-General from 1965 through to 1982 some of which have their parallels in other administrations.

In an article in the Melbourne *Age* on change in Victoria (1/9/90), Geoff Maslen stated that Cardinal Newman once observed that to live is to change and to be perfect is to have changed often. On that basis, he concluded, Victoria's 2200 schools and their teachers must be perfect as they seem to have been forever immersed in a sea of change. Given the continual organizational change still occurring across the country our systems must now be qualified, to borrow a grammatical term, for the *pluperfect* state.

What are the reasons for all this change? Is it just a search for some elusive 'holy grail' of administration? Is it an expression of the whims or personal ambitions for a place in posterity of politicians or senior administrators? Have systems been in danger of breakdown? More importantly, for our study, are there, across the systems, factors which have made some change both urgent and necessary? I believe it is a combination of all of these and that there are a number of factors which can be isolated and whose occurrence made change in organizational structures either desirable or perceived to be desirable. What are the factors that are driving these changes?

These factors pragmatically arrived at from the experience and perceptions of the writer include:

- the increased size of State Departments;
- the increased complexity and cost of education, and the press for accountability;
- the impact of recession;
- reform in the public sector;
- public and professional criticism of education;
- the changing nature of schooling;
- the increasing professionalism of teachers;
- politicization of education;
- the press for democratic management;
- corporate management, including devolution.

Before considering these factors one needs to keep in mind the essential characteristics of Australian education systems which they possessed from their origins in the 1970s or thereabouts until the post-World War II period. To generalize, they were large, highly centralized, heirarchical, bureaucratically administered, and largely policy led by a career teacher who had graduated to become a Director-General, and pursuing a fairly conservative and straight-forward view of schooling.

Against this background it is pertinent to examine briefly each of the factors seen as contributing to this climate for change.

Growth in Size of State Departments

The number of children for which State Departments have had to provide education has increased very significantly in the post World War II years both from demographic and educational causes. Natural births,

migration and the retention factor have combined to raise State school enrolments in Australia to 2,193,347 in 1990. Population increases and population shifts have made necessary extensions to many existing schools and the construction of new ones at a rate undreampt of in the pre-war depression wars. The planning of new buildings, the maintenance of existing buildings and the provision of services and stock across the extended areas of the States have imposed severe administrative strains on the existing organizations.

Increases in pupil numbers mean increases in the number of teachers and these numbers have been further increased by the continuing (at least till the mid-eighties) reduction in class sizes and the provision of specialist and advisory and support teachers. The number of teachers in State schools was 146,477 in 1990. These additional teachers have to be recruited, appointed, inducted, transferred, paid, superannuated, appraised, given sick leave, promoted, trained, disciplined and retired. All of these activities require an increasingly complex infrastructure not easily imposed on a relatively simple central office organization largely designed in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

Rises in the Complexity and the Cost of Education

Increases in the size of the school population and of the teaching service result in direct and indirect increases in the cost of education. At the same time the range of pupils in the schools, both in terms of ability and of scholastic needs, has been considerably extended and has added to the costs. Curricula to meet this extended range and the needs of an increasingly complex and technological society require better and more expensive equipment. As a result the real per capita cost of providing education has increased significantly in recent years at the same time as the funds available to governments, or which they are willing to expend on social services, are both subject to more competition and are harder to come by. As a consequence there is a call for those departments using the major proportions of public funds to be more accountable concerning the use of these funds. Such accountability requires administrative arrangements more complex than an old fashioned paymaster and an Accounts Branch.

An added parameter in education from the early seventies was the involvement of the Commonwealth Government. The preparation of submissions to the Schools Commission and the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission (for those Departments administering

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TAFE), negotiations with these bodies, administration of, and accountability for, the resulting programs required a considerable and different kind of workforce within Departments. Most Departments formed special units to deal with Commonwealth-related matters, including Grants Commission submissions, and these units did not always sit easily with the existing organization.

Inevitably as bureauctatic organizations became larger and more complex there was an inevitable build-up of personnel sometimes caused by what has been termed 'nest feathering' by senior bureaucrats. There is a constant need to examine structures to reduce overlap or staff provided for functions no longer relevant.

The Impact of the Recession

The two factors outlined above contributed to the rising costs of education just at the time that funds available to governments were becoming less. At the same time there were pressures on governments to spend funds on areas other than education. The cults of effectiveness and efficiency, accountability and, in more recent years, of productivity have, in the view of some (Bates, 1991) led to the demand that Education Departments maintain, and even expand their operations while operating with less resources. These pressures on the way reduced funds are expended has led to emphasis on outputs as well as inputs, to more programmed budgetting and to the development of indicators of performance as a means of demonstrating accountability.

Reform in the Public Sector

Those intimately involved in education sometimes neglect to place educational restructuring in the wider context of attempts to reform the public sector. In a number of States (Victoria, South Australia, Queensland and Western Australia) there have been programs or reports aimed at overall reform of the public service. Education, as generally the largest State Department and user of funds, has been chosen as an initial target for such reform. As Berkeley (1990) says

> ...reforms to the management of public sector education did not occur in isolation. They are part of a movement for reform in the whole of the public sector. Indeed in some

> States moves towards review and reform of Education Department administration were a direct result of overall reviews of management of the public sector.

A particular direction of most public sector reforms has been the move towards corporate managerialism and strategic planning. This brings in the concept of managers rather than professional leaders and the strategem of the senior executive service--that elite group of managers who allegedly can, and often do, move across a wide range of areas--be it transport, health, forestry or education. As the Queensland Green Paper (Public Sector Management Commission, 1990) states

> A mobile SES is premised on the view that the mobility of people brings with it the introduction of new and different ideas, talents, skills and experience. This concept ... provides the human resource flexibility necessary for the government to allocate key senior managers to achieve the best possible outcomes in terms of service delivery and policy implementation.

Criticism of Education

Any subscriber to a press clipping service knows that criticism of schools and education departments are frequent, often trenchant and sometimes unfounded. Many critics, both public and professional, claim that there is, or has been, a crisis of confidence in the State schooling system. Political leaders who have attacked the government's conduct of education when in opposition may, on gaining power feel a necessity to reform. In New South Wales, Premier Greiner stated as follows:

> What is clearly overriding the public perception of the State school system here and elsewhere in Australia is that the system is not producing the results for the community.

According to Peter Kell (1991), Greiner attributed the poor performance of public schools to the management structure of the NSW Department of Education; he labelled the Department a monolith and, as a consequence, set up the Scott management review.

Within the profession and among educational administrators themselves there has been a constant questioning of procedures and

processes and consideration of the need for change. In particular the need for increased professional involvement at all levels of decision-making has been recognized and has found expression in a number of the structural changes initiated.

The Changing Nature of Schooling

State Departments in Australia through much of their first century of existence were essentially concerned with administering schools providing for the compulsory years of education, primary schools and secondary schools, with the latter providing for less secondary pupils than their private school counterparts. Most of the State students generally stayed on only until Year 10 or lower. The curriculum of these schools was reasonably stable and both the context and the physical space in which schooling was provided changed little for much of this time.

In recent decades both the scope and presentation of schooling has changed. The value of education in the early years has been increasingly recognized to the extent where pre-schooling has become an integral part of most State systems. The provision of education for a wide range of handicapped pupils led to the creation of special schools and support services to ordinary schools when these pupils are mainstreamed. Increased retention beyond Year 10 has inexorably changed the nature of the upper secondary school both in terms of its inmates and its curriculum. At the same time as these changes have been occurring significant changes have occurred in both learning and teaching at all levels, in teacher-pupil relationships and in school-community and teacher-parent interactions.

The primary/secondary divisional structure of most departments proved inadequate to cope with the administration of these enlarged and altered systems and most, even before the restructuring of the eighties, had moved to a functional organization of their divisions and branches. Much of the later restructuring was concerned with establishing a system which in the view (or hope) of change agents could most effectively deliver services to schools to enable them to function.

The Increasing Professionalism of Teachers

The recent Australian College of Education study (Logan et al, 1990) showed that since 1963 the proportion of teachers with graduate

status has increased significantly. This is but one indicator of the fact that today's teachers, because of their better initial and further qualifications, are more likely to be less compliant to the demands of a bureaucracy and more active in seeking a say in the conduct of the enterprize in which they work. As a result State systems have had to give much more attention to work in the personnel and industrial areas. This, and the more recent attention to equity and gender related areas, and to award restructuring, have necessitated organizational changes in central and regional administrations.

Politicization of Education

The declining power of Directors-General has been well documented by a number of writers including Shears, (1985), Beare, (1989), Berkeley, (1990) and Harman, (1987). This declining power has been matched by more direct involvement of Ministers coming into the ministry with either a personal reform agenda or a party reform agenda. The high profile of education, and its importance in the budget area and in Australia's reconstruction, have ensured that policies for the provision of educational services are high on the political agenda. One outcome of this has been the formation, and/or the extension of Ministries of Education as distinct from Departments. These Ministries, for the most part, are staffed by the Minister's chosen political and educational advisers, his minders as James Walter describes them, and are assuming more and more of a policy role while reducing the Department's involvement in policy formulation and advice and having them concentrate their endeavours on matters administrative.

A further factor which has contributed to the press for restructuring, particularly on the administrative organization, has been the tendency, or perhaps now the rule, to replace all or most senior officers following a change of government. This has been complemented by the creation in most public services of a senior executive service, which as argued before constitutes a so-called elite band of senior officers chosen on the basis of superior managerial ability which, it is claimed, may be transported across Departments regardless of the professional and disciplinary bases on which they operate. For senior officers, and not merely the so called Permanent Head, the permanency of a career in the public services is today very much open to question.

The Press for Democratic Management

Common to the rhetoric expressed in many of the restructuring proposals is the need to decentralize and devolve operational decision-making. This is generally argued on the basis that the effectiveness of decisions is enhanced when they are made as close as possible to the areas and people who will be most affected by these decisions. The general picture painted of the educational bureaucracies before reform is that they were remote, inflexible and irresponsive. Rightly or wrongly they have been pictured as being governed by rules rather than reason or common sense and as treating all schools, no matter what their location or the particular problems they face, as if they were the same.

To change this approach, and to enable schools and communities best to meet their needs, the call over the last decade or so has been firstly for decentralization of decision-making and secondly, for devolution to the local school or group of schools and their communities. A key premise as expressed by Scott (1990) is that the school, not the system, is the key organizational element providing teaching and learning and that the best judge of the particular needs of a school will be that school's teachers, its parents, and its community. In such a devolved operation the role of the system is one of provision of support to the self-managed schools and their leaders.

Corporate Managerialism

At the same time as there has been the press for devolving power and decision-making to the local level the concept of Education Departments as corporations with corporate goals and strategic plans designed to improve effectiveness and productivity has been seen as a desirable outcome of reform and restructure. Much has been said in other places (e.g. Bates and Yeatman) concerning views on corporate managerialism and its impact on education and the other social service aspects of governments. Harrold (1989) defines corporate managerialism as:

> the process of dissolving the multitude of rules and routine processes of heirarchical departmental organizations, and allowing more organizational discretion and initiative to managers who are actually responsible for service delivery,

> in the belief that public service efficiency, flexibility and responsiveness would thereby be enhanced.

In such a view the various activities of a department are seen as programs which can be run by managers selected for their managerial skills and who should be left generally free of the encumbrances of the bureaucracy so that they might indeed manage the programs.

A problem faced by structural reformers is how to individualise decision-making while, at the same time, having all the constituent parts of the system pursue the agreed upon corporate goals. Beare (1988 p 251) noted the tendency of systems adopting a corporate model to keep control of the essential and strategic areas while allowing entrepreneurial freedom to the operating units.

Overview of Factors

These then are some of the factors that have operated in varying combinations in the different States and Territories to create a climate for changing organizational arrangements operating within those systems--in a word for restructuring. As Table 1 shows a number of systems have faced more than one restructure over the past decade. Whether the reason for further restructuring has been the perceived failure of the first attempt, a change of the ruling political party or some realignment of the factors discussed above is an interesting topic for further deliberations.

Some light on this may arise from an examination of the processes used for implementing structures and of the impact these processes and the resultant restructures may have had on the systems.

The Processes of Restructuring

In examining the various restructures that have taken place in this country over the last decade one can extract certain similarities from the processes used. In general they have been top down in design, that is someone or some group of persons have been responsible for looking at the existing organizational structures and recommending different structures which, in their opinion, will better meet the perceived or stated purposes of the organization.

In some instances the initial propositions have been put forward as proposals for public discussion as in the Victorian Green Paper of 1979

and the Education 2000 document in Queensland in 1985. Following the publication of the initial proposals, responses or submissions have been sought from interested parties and a subsequent further paper (White) issued as in Victoria or a summary of submissions as in Queensland (Bassett, 1986). In others such as the Scott Review in New South Wales and the PA Review in Victoria the Review Team has determined its preferred form of restructuring following a selective round of consultations. In others, for example in the most recent review in Queensland, there has been a stated intention prior to the restructure to have all interested parties contribute to the discussion by open meetings and by submission and response. However there have been considerable doubts expressed as to whether the end conclusions and recommendations arose out of the consultations or had generally been predetermined politically and by the members of the review team and were merely whitewashed by the appearance of a consultative process.

This is, of course, often one of the consequences of a restructure, namely suspicion of the motives by those likely to be affected and rapid development of rumours and talks of conspiracies, ulterior motives and the like aided, and abetted by stakeholders with positions to defend. The result is frequently lowered morale and a reduction of commitment in the organization while the process is in train, particularly when there is a lack of clarity in the stated intentions of the reformers.

The Impact of Restructuring

If we refer back to Table 1 to examine the extent of organizational changes and the repeated attempts at restructures, for example in Victoria, one can understand the cynic that likens the exercises to those of rearranging the chairs on the deck of the Titanic. An analogy that springs to mind on observing new political or administrative masters deciding on yet another restructure is that of successive chairs of green committees of golf clubs, each of whom seeks to rearrange the work of his predecessor to leave his particular version of what constitutes the best course there for all posterity to admire--until the next Chair comes along. Unfortunately, instituting the changes is often the easier task--getting it right is somewhat more difficult.

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Going Corporate

'Education is big business' was a phrase often used by administrators in describing the range and scope of the operations of Education Departments and of their expenditure. True, but perhaps this comparison and the moves towards operating Education Departments along similar lines to big business corporations have led to some reduced emphasis on the real role of such Departments--the support of schools in the business of teaching and learning and of contributing to the social development of young human beings. Schools and education are about children, not units of stock. In the long run, after all the rhetoric that accompanies restructuring, the question must be asked--What real changes have occurred in the classrooms as a result of the reorganization and have they been beneficial to the children in those classrooms?

The Impact on Staff

One of the principles espoused by Peter Wilenski (1986) for administrative reform, if change is to occur, is the necessity of recruiting new people into existing institutions. He claims they bring with them a commitment to change and a freshness and enthusiasm while being unencumbered either with debts to people already in the organization or with attachments to existing processes and programs. This has certainly been taken up by recent restructuring.

One cannot really argue with this as a principle, but it would seem to me, particularly as education is meant to belong to the caring professions, that, in a number, if not in most Australian restructures, there has been little regard, if not a callous disregard, for people caught up in changes. There would almost seem to be a belief that for the exercise to succeed, the sacrifice of professional lives of public servants many of whom have served well and long across the vast and unpopular areas of their State must be made. The consequences of such sacrifices for the morale of the administrative staff of departments are well known and predictable.

The further consequences of the spilling of positions across an organization, the subsequent advertising, head hunting, interviewing, appointments and relocations and redundancies, in terms of human resource waste and cost are well known but generally not researched or documented. In Queensland at the moment, for example, more than 150 senior positions have been thrown open, all with new and high-sounding

names and complex lists of key selection criteria, for the applicants to grapple with. One cannot but wonder what productive work is occurring in that Department at this time.

Costs of Restructuring

Again this is an area on which little hard data appears to be available. Costs are however likely to be substantial particularly when there is a use of outside consultants and the taking of senior administrators off line. Once the recommendations are being put into effect the costs of staff changes and the office relocations and rearrangements will generally be significant not to mention the loss of productivity during the settling down period.

Devolution and Decentralization

Among the stated aims of a number of restructures has been that of reducing the central bureaucracy and moving many of its functions and its personnel either to regions or to districts or clusters of schools while, at the same time, devolving considerable powers to the schools and their communities. In cost benefit terms this relocation may seem to effect a desirable change without additional cost. Time alone will tell whether or not, in due course, these clusters become functioning bureaucracies in their own right and build up infrastructures that require more and more staff. Another issue is that of whether there is enough expertise available to operate effectively in dispersed locations but that in itself is a major debate.

In conclusion then it is maintained that there are a number of factors, common across this country, which have contributed to the rash of reorganizations we have witnessed. Although different strategies for restructuring have been used there are also many common elements. An analysis of these strategies and their consequences may help to increase our understanding of the process of changing large organizations. Even better such a study, including following through the implications of reorganizations, might even help us avoid some of the mistakes of earlier reformers.

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TABLE 1: A CHRONOLOGY OF RESTRUCTURING OF AUSTRALIAN STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS

	STATE OR TERRITORY							
YEAR	N.S.W.	VICTORIA	QUEENSLAND	STH AUST.	W. AUST.	TASMANIA	ACT	N.T.
1979	Public Service Act 1979 DGE responsible to Minister	Hunt Lacy Review	Report of Parliamentary Select Committee on Education (Ahern)		Departmental Reorganisation			N.T. Leg. Assembly assumes responsibility for education
1980	Education Commission Act, 1980	White Paper on Strategic & Structure for Education in Victorian Gov. Schools						
1981		PA Report - Rationale & Definition of Proposed Organization structure Education (Amendment) Act, 1981		Into the 80s - Our Schools & their Purposes		White Paper on Schools & Colleges		P.A. Review Commissioner for teaching appointed
1982				Education and Change in Sth Australia (Keeves Report)		Review of Efficiency & Effectiveness of Education Dept. (Hughes)		
1983		Decision Making in Victorian Education - devolution principles					Challenge of Change - Review of High Schools (Steele)	Directions for the Eighties
1984		Establishment of State Board of Education	EDUCATION 2000 Review Commenced	Administrative Reorganization (area offices) (1983-86) Public Service Review	Report of the Committee of Enquiry into Education in WA (Beazley)			Commissioner for teaching position abolished
1985		Creation of Ministry of Education & Position of Chief Executive Officer	EDUCATION 2000 Report					Review and Reorganization of Education Dept.
1986		Ministry Structures Project Team Report Taking Schools into the 90s	Report of Committee of Review Education 2000 Submissions		Managing Change in the Public Sector			
1987	Education and Public Instruction Act, 1987	The structure and Organization of the Schools Division	Public Sector Review Meeting the Challenge	Review of Personnel Policies & Practices (Yerbury)	Better Schools Report		Management Review of ACT Schools Authority (Berkeley/ Kenway)	Towards the 90s Excellence, Accountability & devolution
1988	Education Commission terminated. Management Review (Scott Curriculum Review (Carrick)		Separation of Tafe from Education Department				Chief Executive Officer vested with functions of council	Towards the 90s Vol.2
1989	Schools Renewal Department of School Education			Education Review Unit established			Self government in ACT Ministry for Health, Education & Arts	Teaching in Tomorrows Territory
1990	School Control Education Education Reform Act	Abolition of Regional Boards/ Staffing Reductions	Focus on Schools Report			Review of Dept. of Education and the Arts (CRESAP)		
1991	Further Restructuring of Department	Dept of Education Changes to Office of Schools Administration	Reorganization of Departmental Structures			Draft Policy on School Self Management	Education Plan for ACT, 1991-1993	Public Sector Review of Expenditure

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Chapter 5

EDUCATIONAL RESTRUCTURING IN THE ACT GOVERNMENT SCHOOL SYSTEM

Geoffrey Burkhardt and Milton March

Introduction

The major changes that have occurred in the organization, management and structure of public schools in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) over the last 10 years have focussed on the reversion from governance by a representative ACT Schools Council (a statutory authority) with a Chief Education Officer as its main managerial executive, to a more bureaucratically and traditionally structured ministerial department of education. Policy responsibility was recentralised at the ministerial/political level with the managerial responsibilities vested in the Education Secretary as departmental head.

The motivation for these changes was generated largely by the introduction of local government for the ACT, the establishment of State like ministries for the management of the public services including education, and the increased politicization of education that came with the beginning of local party political representative government structure following local self government in the ACT. The return to a conventional ministerial structure in 1989 following passage through the Federal Parliament of self government for the ACT legislation marked the end of one of the most innovative and inspirational chapters in the history of public school system management in Australia this century.

In 1974, in response to popular local demand and overwhelming public support, the ACT school system was separated from the administration and control of the NSW Department of Education. The ACT Schools Authority, as the first new system of education to be established in the Commonwealth of Australia since Federation, developed a highly participative management style.

The structure which emerged after 1974 generated a series of changes in the educational climate of the ACT which greatly increased

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teacher professionalism, teacher satisfaction and community participation. Some of these changes included:

(a) The formal involvement of representatives of the teachers' union, parent groups, community groups and students at the policy making level as members of the Council of the ACT Schools Authority;
(b) The establishment of elected school boards for all schools;
(c) The establishment of secondary (senior) colleges for years 11 and 12;
(d) The establishment of school based curriculum development which replaced the centralized syllabus committees of the NSW Department of Education with variety, choice and experimentation in curriculum design;
(e) The replacement of the NSW externally examined Higher School Certificate with a school based moderated progressive assessment system for year 12 students in ACT government schools and some non-government schools.

All of these changes were achieved in the short period of six years under the leadership of the policy making Council of the ACT Schools Authority which was chaired by a part time chairperson and managed by a Chief Education Officer in conjunction with a dedicated team of school principals.

The impact of these changes upon teachers, pupils and citizens in Canberra was immediate, professionally uplifting and highly stimulating. Teacher morale was seen to have greatly improved, parent and community participation was raised,though not entirely uncontroversial in its manifestations through school boards and local pressure groups.

A number of factors additional to ACT self government helped bring this brilliant but brief chapter in ACT educational management to a close, and usher in a retreat to the ministerial bureaucracy system. They included the gradually increasing constraint upon public (Federal) funds available for education in the ACT, as it became apparent that expenditure per pupil place in the ACT was considerably above the average of other state departments of education. The contraction in enrolments in some age cohorts in the late 1970s and early 1980s put pressures upon ACT education policy makers in respect of the management of contraction. Another variable was the difficulty the Council of the ACT School Authority experienced in its school closure programs in the wake of demographic changes in the ACT.

At the core of the changes that took place in the establishment of the ACT Schools Authority was a basic shift in the philosophy of education following the release of the Hughes Report (1973). Parent and community participation and choice were to become cornerstones of the

system. Professional autonomy of teachers was given great emphasis, with the introduction of school based curriculum development. Diversity among schools was enshrined as a virtue of the school system, while individualism and the needs of the student became great considerations in the aims of the newly established school philosophies under the guidance of their recently elected school boards. There was evidence of lateral thinking as a motivating force in the development of distinctive, but separate, school cultures, tailored for the specific needs and interests of each local suburban community. This newly found loosely coupled school system gave impetus to the development of the concept of the school principal as the instructional leader in each local community.

By 1991, following the legislative changes which led to local government, blinkered by the pursuit of the economic paradigm as the dominant managerial philosophy, the ACT ended up with a school structure and management approach which resembled, in many ways, those in most Australian State governments in the 1960s and 1970s. It is evidenced in the attempts to re-introduce a number of management practices popular in the first half of this century. These include efforts to introduce a more co-ordinated curriculum (through the development of curriculum guidelines); the grouping of schools into regions, and the establishment of regional directorships; the creation of a hierarchical management bureaucracy at Head Office; and the imposition, from the top, of system aims and objectives and discussion of the possible introduction of standardised testing as a means to ensure that schools and teachers follow curriculum guidelines. Also, the Schools Accrediting Agency has been replaced by a Board of Senior School Studies.

Context and Character of Education in the ACT

In the ACT in 1990, there were 133 schools comprising 97 (73 per cent) government schools and 36 (27 per cent) non-government schools. The total students enrolled was 60,895 of which 40,408 or 66 per cent was enrolled in government schools and 20,487 or 34 per cent was enrolled in non-government schools *(A Data File on ACT School System 1990)*. The apparent retention rate for 7-12 years was 102 per cent for government schools. Pupil teacher ratios for the government sector were 18.7 primary and 12.1 secondary, and for the non-government sector 22.6 primary and 13.9 secondary. Average class sizes for government schools in 1990 were 28 for primary schools and 23 for secondary schools. Approximately 63 per cent of year 12 leavers from government schools and 72 per cent of year 12 leavers from non-government schools in 1988 proceeded to further (higher) education. 13 per cent of students in the government sector were overseas born.

A most notable feature of trends in student enrolments in ACT government schools over the period 1965-1991 was is the rapid increase in school populations from a total of approximately 15,000 in 1965 to almost 40,000 in 1978. In a period of rapid expansion of Canberra under Federal government capital investment programs, enrolments more than doubled in this 13 year period, which encompassed the foundation period of the ACT Schools Authority. The decades of the 1960s and 1970s saw the removal of the headquarters of many Federal government departments from Sydney and Melbourne to Canberra; the building of many of the national buildings including the National Library, High Court, National Gallery etc. The impact of Federal Government upon local ACT population growth, through the activities of the National Capital Development Commission, was sustained and occurred at a time when the Australian state education departments were feeling the pressures of teacher shortage and a suburban building boom in new schools and amenities, at least until the mid 1970s.

From 1978 onwards, the trend in enrolments levelled off, with small declines in total enrolments in primary and secondary schools during the early 1980s. Herein lies one of the major sources of administrative and structural problems which beset the fledgling ACT Schools Authority management during that period. The incentive for school closures and mergers following the identification of the stability of school enrolment trends, occurring during the decade of 1980s, one of increasing financial constraint, posed for the Council of the ACT Schools Authority a shift in management orientation from one of optimism and rapid expansion to one of the management of contraction. This readjustment of organisational perspectives and expectations, so soon after the realignment of local education philosophy from one of top down bureaucratic centralism to one of community participation, professional autonomy and client choice, was difficult to accomplish without generating friction with teachers unions, local communities and parents' organisations. From an organisational climate of expansion, financial adequacy, and abundance of promotions opportunities in an expanding system, teachers and principals were required to adjust rapidly to an environment of stability, contraction of promotions positions and enrolment rationalisation policies. The hollow core and expanding rim model of enrolment trends in the city of Canberra forced consideration of school closures and mergers in the older inner suburban areas. It was during the decade of the 1980s that the carefully designed and implemented community schools approach to school building and suburban planning first came under serious questioning. The concept, cherished by the NCDC planners and local educational administrators of the 1960s and 1970s, where each small suburb of 4000 people had its own primary school (enrolment average of approximately 400-500) and local high school of approximately 600-800, (where every child was in easy walking

distance of her/his local school, through a system of road underpasses and bicycle paths), was capital intensive and was seen to carry a higher cost per student place than more cost-effective school planning.

For these reasons, the change from rapid expansion to stability and constraint was perhaps much more pronounced in Canberra than in Australian state government departments of education. Because of the company town nature of the national capital and its extreme sensitivity to changes in Federal Government economic and demographic policies, the go-stop experience helped cripple the full development of education philosophy in the ACT which had its birth in the Currie Report (1967) and Hughes Report (1973).

The secondary college sector (years 11 and 12) of ACT schools proved to be an exception to the trends described above. The secondary colleges, commencing in 1976, experienced a gradual increase in enrolments to 1991.

During the decade of the 1980s, teacher stock remained relatively constant in government schools. In 1982, there were 2629 government school teachers in the ACT (FTE) which increased to only 2849 by 1990.

Along with all other Australian State education departments, the period of reduced teacher recruitment and oversupply of the 1980s resulted in a significant shift in the age profile for teachers, which showed an average age for male teachers of 41 years 8 months and for females 42 years 0 months, in 1990.

The relative differences between the staffing and resourcing of ACT government schools and government schools in other Australian States which existed in the 1970s have been eliminated to a great extent. By 1986, the ACT student teacher ratio for government primary schools had reduced to 18.2, which was the Australian average in that year, but the ratio was still a little better at 11.4 for secondary schools than the national average of 12.3. By July 1990 average number of students per teacher in primary schools in ACT had risen to 18.7 compared with the national average of 18.2 and for secondary schools 12.1 in ACT compared with 12.2 nationally.

Where the ACT differed considerably from some other state systems was in the percentage of total enrolments that attended non-government schools and also in terms of retention rates for years 7-12 where the ACT recorded a retention rate of 96.9 per cent for government schools compared with an Australian average of 54.3 per cent in 1989. Average expenditure per student was another domain where the ACT system differed considerably, spending $3,300 and $5,110 per primary and secondary student respectively compared with an Australian average of $2,830 and $4,320 respectively for primary and secondary students. This difference in expenditure averages could be accounted for largely in terms of economies of scale, as the ACT only has approximately one twelfth of the number of students and staff compared with the largest state systems.

Also, the retention rates in senior secondary years being dramatically higher than in other states adds greatly to the average costs of secondary education.

In terms of policies which affected teacher morale in the ACT, the local government has, over the last years, reversed two innovative policies developed successfully in the formative years of the new ACT Schools Authority. In the 1970s the new authority created a grade of master teacher at subject master level, which provided, to a limited extent, a career path, other than through administration, for high quality classroom performance. The creation of new master teachers had largely ceased a few years ago in the ACT, just about the time when other state departments of education were thinking about instituting a grade of advanced skills teachers as a means of promoting school improvement. However, most recently the ACT is now following the national trend of introducing Advanced Skills Teachers.

A second significant policy reversal perpetrated by the new bureaucracy recently was the abolition of the grade/role of assistant principal in primary and secondary schools. Done with the happy compliance of the Teachers' Federation under the excuse of flattening the pyramid, this policy shift reduced from 4 to 3 the promotional levels in the teaching service. It destroyed the well developed school administrative structure of 3 assistant principal positions in high schools, each with a separate specialised role of curriculum, administration and student affairs. Despite the lip service given to the flattening of the structure as the motivation for this policy, the bureaucracy then created the position of regional director, at the level of one above principal. The impact of these changes to career structure in schools was felt keenly by senior teachers who had already been experiencing a severe curtailment of their promotional prospects following the changed demographic conditions in the ACT. Each regional office now appears to be creating its own regional bureaucratic domain.

History and Background to Recent Developments in Education in the ACT

Following the proclamation of the seat of government act in 1913, responsibility for government education in ACT remained with the State of New South Wales until the establishment of the ACT Schools Authority in 1974. The new Authority emerged in response to community pressure expressed in the form of reports and submissions such as that from the Currie Committee (1967) which called for a system of schools that exercised a large degree of control over their choice of staff and curricula.

The new Authority was unique in Australia in that it was representative in nature being composed initially of nominees of teachers, parents and the community with a small number of ministerial appointees. It elected its own Chair and selected the Chief Education Officer who was appointed on a term contract and became a member of the Authority itself. The Authority reported through its Chair to the Federal Minister of Education and the Chief Education Officer (a statutory appointee of the Commonwealth Government) who also had lines of communication to the Minister.

Four separate levels of schooling were established: Pre-school, Primary School for years K to 6, High School for years 7 to 10 and Secondary College for years 11 and 12. With a very small number of exceptions, separate institutions continue to operate at all these levels.

A very flat hierarchy operated within the administrative office established by the Chief Education Officer and its main role was envisaged as servicing the schools and advising the Authority. Principals reported directly to the Chief Education Officer. Teaching staff, including Principals, were members of the Commonwealth Teaching Service, initially the responsibility of a separate teaching service commissioner but later falling under the control of the Chief Education Officer when the position of Commissioner was abolished.

The unit of policy making at the individual school level was a school board, again representative in nature, consisting of teachers elected by the staff, elected parents, elected students, the Principal and a single nominee of the Authority. The Principal participated in the selection of all staff and the board was responsible for a large part of the recurrent expenditure other than capital outlays and salaries. One of the early decisions made by the Interim Authority in May 1974 was that each 'school should be responsible for its own curriculum within broad guidelines developed by the Authority'. These guidelines were very broad, indeed, and a very diverse set of curriculum materials and practices emerged.

The year 1974 was a period of experimentation in education and the new Authority set out to be different from the system that had preceded it. It decided to rely on internal school assessment of student progress rather than external examinations at all levels, including the final stage at the end of senior secondary years. Here it labelled its terminal qualification a Year 12 Certificate rather than a Higher School Certificate to emphasise its different nature from that deriving from other government systems. The co-ordinating body for the issue of the Certificate was called a Schools Accrediting Agency to indicate its role of authenticating the courses of study developed within a single school or a co-operating group of schools, rather than being a statutory board prescribing courses of study for the schools.

Greater freedom was available to teachers at other levels of schooling with primary schools being required only to justify their curriculum to the school board and high schools to register their educational programs with the Authority. At the central office level, curriculum consultants were appointed to advise schools and to assist with the development of curriculum.

The feeling within the schools was one of relative autonomy with institutions accepting responsibility for, and a sense of ownership of, the educational activities and services they provided. At the system level, a spirit of joint or collective responsibility developed in the early days.

The Context of Change

Thomas Dye (1978) has maintained that the changes of public policy take place in response to variations in the balance of forces emanating from three main sources of influence; established government institutions, active pressure groups and significant individuals. Major innovative change appears to occur during periods of political instability when the latter two sources can overcome the centralising tendencies of the institutional forces.

Certainly the ACT Schools Authority emerged at a time favourable to experimentation and innovation. This was in the middle of the Whitlam years when many experiments in collaborative decision making such as the Schools Commission were launched. People still believed in the role of education as a great social leveller and in the rights of the community to participate in the decisions that affected them. The Interim Authority held its first meeting in October 1973 and the early days have been described by Berkeley and Kenway (1987, p.4) as a period of '...frenetic energy, high enthusiasm, expectation and optimism...'

None of the statutory educational bodies established at that time survive today. They were all firstly fettered by the Liberal Government that followed Whitlam and subsequently axed by Hawke Labor government which became totally disenchanted with their apparent autonomy. Perhaps the concept of funding decision making bodies that are independent from government is a luxury that can only survive during a period of plenty and one that will always be discarded when times are tight and resources short, but the disappearance of those bodies is mourned by many as marking the end of an era of participation.

The circumstances surrounding the demise of the ACT Schools Authority are indicative of the dilemmas which occur when the lines of authority and accountability become separated. The Authority was a statutory body operating under an ordinance of the Federal Government which gave it wide discretionary powers even though constraining it to take directions from the Minister. The Chief Education Officer was a

member of the Authority and charged to implement its decisions but was also an officer of the Commonwealth with responsibilities to the Minister. The officers working under the Chief Education Officer were either members of the Commonwealth Public Service or the Commonwealth Teaching Service. Many of the members of the Council of the Authority were members nominated by the groups they represented and had obligations to those groups.

Inevitably, from time to time, the Authority made decisions that were at odds with the thrust of general government policy and minor clashes occurred. When the ACT education system was a minor part of the responsibility a large federal department with a comfortable budget these difficulties were easily handled but two major shifts took place. One was that competition for funds became more intense with a shrinking economy and the other, perhaps linked with the first, was that the Labor Government decided to off load the Australian Capital Territory and to establish a system of self government which would have responsibility for managing its own finances.

Over time the government moved to increase the number of ministerial nominees on the council of the Authority and, during Mr Wal Fife's period as Federal Minister for Education, changed the basis for selection of the Chief Education Officer. Originally this position had been filled on recommendation from the Council but was changed to become a ministerial appointment after advice from the Council and other sources.

During the interim arrangements before self government became a reality, the responsibility for administering education in the Territory shifted from the Federal Department of Education to that of ACT and Territories Department under firstly Mr Gordon Scholes and then Mr John Brown.

Later, when the Council sought to redistribute resources between the sectors of education the teachers' union resisted and threatened industrial action. Not long after this, the Council was disbanded. The abolition of the ACT Schools Authority was not done in isolation. A number of other statutory authorities were also abolished at the same time as part of the general return to ministerial department style of government. The political situation had changed dramatically with the election of an ACT Parliament with responsibility for local functions and services in the Territory. Education became the responsibility of firstly a department of Education and then a division of a larger Ministry for Health, Education and the Arts.

The role of the unions is significant in the changes that took place. Initially the Teachers' Federation was highly supportive of the participative style of governance that emerged in the early days of the Schools Authority, although the other public service unions preferred more centralised avenues of negotiation. The teachers increasingly moved

towards a more centralist approach which relied on lobbying ministers, threatening industrial action and issuing directives to members when they failed to win the arguments at a community consultative level. The Federation also had difficulty accepting the legitimacy of school boards. Given the oligarchic structures favoured by unions to ensure solidarity and discipline, this reversion is not surprising even though it may be disappointing to those favouring collaborative decision making structures. It certainly helped to destroy the base of the ACT Schools Authority where decisions were made within a Council of representatives of many interests. The Federation seems more at home with a centralised departmental structure which enables dealing and bargaining with a restricted number of powerful decision makers to gain uniform conditions and practices, rather than being exposed to the open checks and balances that obtain in a participative system of governance.

Major Structural Changes in Public Education in the ACT

The report, *A Management Review of the ACT Schools Authority*, 1987 (Berkeley Report) commissioned by the Federal Minister for Territories provides details of the administrative history of public school management in the ACT 1974-1986. From Chapter 2 of this report, which links proposals outlined in the Hughes Report, *A Design for the Governance and Organisation of Education in the Australian Capital Territory* 1973,with subsequent developments, the evolution of structural changes are summarised in a general statement:

> In line with the Hughes Report, the initial organisation of the Office of the Interim Authority was fairly flat, as distinct from the pyramidical structure more likely to be found in a state education department at that time. The office was organised into four branches, namely Curriculum Development and special projects; schools and general policy; management services and special education, guidance and counselling (Berkeley Report 1987).

In 1974 this above structure differed considerably from state departments of education which then functioned with separate primary, secondary and technical education branches. By 1987, the ACT Schools Authority had begun to develop a hierarchy of bureaucratic nature. It is emphasised, however, that where it differed most from state education departments was in the structure and operation of its governing body, the Council of the ACT Schools Authority, chaired by part-time chairperson. At different times during its existence, the Council was responsible to the

Commonwealth Ministers for Territories and the Minister for Education. Originally the Commonwealth Teaching Service Commission was responsible for the supply of teachers to the ACT Schools Authority. However, with the abolition of the office of the CTS the Schools Authority assumed the responsibility for staffing its system. The terms and conditions of service lay, initially, with the Commonwealth Public Service Board. Even then the Berkeley Report (1987) notes that this structure by 1986 was seen as being 'too bureaucratic'.

The uniqueness of the ACT public schools system from 1974 to 1986 was rooted in its founding philosophy which emphasised community participation and the decentralisation of authority where each school determines its own educational philosophy, emphasis and program, based on the needs of its students and its community. This important point of community participation is reflected in the following statements from foundational sources:

> The Government System of education, then, is visualised as one of high quality, based on free schools which are largely independent and responsible; one which offers freedom of choice to parents and in which their participation is a vital element ... (Currie, 1967: 11).

> The school system would have three major elements. The first is the Education Authority which would be the policy making agency for the system. Second are the schools themselves which, within guidelines laid down by the Authority, would have considerable independence to develop their own educational programs and approaches to administration. The community and the teaching profession would participate actively in educational policy making in individual schools and the Authority ... (Department of Education, 1973).

> Matters of education policy, research, planning, finance, buildings, works, staffing and other services to be in the hands of a representative council (Hughes, 1973).

The Interim Authority introduced school based curriculum development, elected school boards for each school and freedom of choice of school for parents in the ACT. Diversity was applauded as a refreshing strength of the new system. Unfortunately, this philosophy carried with it the seeds of later conflict and tensions between the educational professionals and the bureaucratic components of public service structures and procedures when cost consciousness dominated educational policy making from the mid-1980s.

Two vital and distinguishing characteristics of a new different school system culture quickly emerged after 1974:

1. The principle of parent choice of schools reflecting the emphasis upon the community's role in educational management.

2. The principle of teacher professionalism which was strongly encouraged and fostered through the perception of increased professional autonomy that teachers and school principals developed in the domains of curriculum, student assessment and intra-school staff responsibilities.

It is argued in this paper that the restructuring that took place with the establishment of a Department of Education following self-government in 1989 weakened the culture and philosophy of the ACT Schools Authority, doing great damage to the public stature of teachers and principals in the government schools and creating an environment for declining teacher morale. While these legislative changes associated with ACT self-government were not the only cause of the deterioration of community faith in and support for the public system, they are argued to be the significant variables in most cases.

In 1985 the government made a decision to reduce the size of the Council of the ACT Schools Authority from 15 members to 9 members. At that stage the Council represented the interest groups of the ACT Teachers Federation, the ACT Council of Parents and Citizens, the ACT Pre-School Society, students and invited members. School boards (except small schools) comprised the Principal, an Authority nominee, two teachers, three parents, and two students (in high schools and colleges).

In 1987 the Berkeley Report made major recommendations for the restructuring of ACT government school management. Many of these recommended changes were implemented, although the structure now existing does differ from the initial Berkeley recommendations in two important ways:

1. It has in its structure a Ministry for Education, rather than a Council of the ACT School Authority, as the policy making authority;

2. It now has three operational divisions, rather than the four, originally recommended by Berkeley.

The ACT was divided into four geographical regions, or clusters of schools, each under the management of a Regional Director.

The chronology of changes in ACT government school system is summarised in the following schedule:

1967 ***Report on an Independent Education Authority for the ACT*** (G. Currie, Chairman). This report is regarded at the formal commencement of the initiative to create a separate education system in the ACT, then currently part of NSW Government Department of Education system.

1972 ***Teachers for Commonwealth Schools*** (W.D. Neal, W.C. Radford). A Report to the Commonwealth Department of Education and Science on aspects of the organisation, careers, and salaries in schools to be staffed by the Commonwealth Teaching Service. This report led to the establishment of the Commonwealth Teaching Service into which ACT government school teachers transferred from the NSW Department of Education following the establishment of the Interim ACT Schools Authority in 1973.

1973 ***An Education Authority for the ACT*** - A Departmental Paper - Commonwealth Department of Education.

1973 ***A Design for the Governance and Organisation of Education in the ACT*** (P.W. Hughes, Chairman). This report framed the organisational structure and philosophy for the ACT Schools Authority.

1973 First Council of the Interim ACT Schools Authority established in October.

1973 ***Secondary Education for Canberra.*** *Report of the Working Committee on college proposals for the ACT.* (R. Campbell, Chairman). This report laid the framework for the secondary colleges (years 11-12).

1974 Formal commencement of the ACT Schools Authority under the new Interim Schools Authority.

1975 The ACT Schools Accrediting Agency established by the Interim Schools Authority to conduct accreditation and registration of courses for both government and non-government schools.

1976 ***ACT Schools Authority Ordinance*** constituted a 15 person governing body for the Authority.

1983 ***The Challenge of Change.*** *A Review of High Schools in ACT* (J. Steinle, Chairman). Emphasised the system needs of high schools and the more effective control of high schools.

1985 The governing body of the Council of the Authority reduced to 9 members.

1987 ***A Management Review of the ACT Schools Authority*** (G. Berkeley, Chairman). Recommended major restructuring of management into divisions governing functional groups and the geographical regionalisation of schools under local directorships.

1987 Removal of responsibility of education in ACT from the Federal Department of Education to the Federal Minister for Territories.

1987 (September) In the context of the Federal Budget of 1987, the Council of the Authority was abolished.

1987 (December) The government amended the ACT Schools Authority Ordinance and vested all its functions and powers in the Chief Education Officer.

1989 (May) The new ACT local government came into existence under legislation for self government in the ACT. It established a Ministry for Industry, Employment and Education. The old ACT Education Authority became the ACT Ministry for Health, Education and the Arts, under the control of a Secretary and two Deputy Secretaries.

1991 Schools Accrediting Agency placed under an independent chair and renamed The Board of Senior School Studies.

1991 ***Education Plan for ACT Public Schools 1991-1993*** - ACT Ministry for Health, Education and the Arts. In the Deputy Secretary's preface to this document, the changes projected were justified in the statement, 'The climate in which our original education philosophy was established has changed dramatically over the last two decades'.

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Key Actors and Factors in Restructuring

One of the characteristics of education in the ACT has been the constant perceived need to call upon outside experts to validate developments in the Territory. In consequence, innumerable reviews have taken place over the years, the most recent by Berkeley and Kenway in 1987. Most of these reports have strongly supported the basic structure and philosophy of the system. Nevertheless, major changes have occurred, some, seemingly, in direct contrast to the recommendations of the reports that preceded them.

Another characteristic has been the tendency to parachute into the system appointees to senior administrative posts, rather than to rely on the expertise of the officers within the system who were largely responsible for its innovative design, structure and philosophy. The overall effect has been to transform the system till little trace remains of some of its original ideals.

Although the major factors influencing the structural changes in ACT public education during the last decade had their source in ACT legislation for self government, there were other important contributors and facilitators. In common with many major educational changes in Australia, the ACT is no exemption to the tendency for change to be initiated by recommendations of reports and enquiries. Most of the turning points in its short administrative evolution during the last two decades have followed from reports and reviews, commencing with the Currie Committee Report in 1967. The most important report during the last ten years to influence the ACT education structure was the Berkeley report, *A Management Review of the ACT Schools Authority*, the recommendations of which have been discussed above. It is important to note that political events overtook this report, which was originally written substantially in the context of the expected continuation of the Council of the ACT Schools Authority as the decision-making power for the government school system. The Berkeley Report was tended to the Chair of the Schools Authority on 27 June 1987, but shortly following this the Minister for Territories announced the abolition of the Council, and the transfer of its powers to the Chief Education Officer. This prompted, on 15 October 1987, Mr Berkeley to respond to an invitation to offer further advice on the recommendations of his report following the abolition of the Council.

Other reports which made a contribution to the climate for change in the ACT government school system during the 1980s included *The Challenge to Change - a Review of High Schools in the ACT*, 1983 (J. Steinle Chairman), and *Primary Children in the ACT - Report of the Committee to Review Primary Education in ACT Government Schools*, 1981. Most recently, in 1990, the ACT Government published a plan

which delineated a proposal for the closing and rationalisation of up to 25 ACT government schools.

Members of the public and community organisations were encouraged to comment on the proposals contained in this plan and, after some public debate, and an extension of time for the submission of comments, the Department of Education began to introduce the rationalisation of schools from the beginning of 1991. This closure and mergers proposal, the last in a series of proposals leading to school closures since the beginning of self government in the ACT, was argued on the basis of costs and expenditures in a constrained local government financial climate. Since 1989 first the ACT Labor Ministry and then the Alliance Ministry (Liberals and minor parties) have pursued school closure plans in what have been largely cost cutting exercises pursued to political advantage. Both major political parties have appeared to favour the re-organisation of education management in the ACT, as an alternative to the preservation of the neighbourhood school approach of the 1970s. Diversity among schools within the context of their respective suburban locations has been rejected by ACT educational planners. During both the Labor and Alliance Ministries, each respective Minister for Health, Education and the Arts has adopted a much more interventionist role, than in the years before local self government. The role of the Chairperson of the Council of the ACT Schools Authority as the systems spokesperson and official interface between government and the community has been replaced by the Minister directly, rather than his chief executive, the Departmental Head, or Secretary, whose functions as spokesperson for the system appear to have been usurped by the Minister.

One of the problems associated with the present ministerial structure is that Education is only one of three public service functions within the Minister's responsibility and the Health (including hospitals) component of his current portfolio has preoccupied so much of his time. In the current economic and political climate of the ACT, we would argue that some of the very senior educational administrators do not appear to share the vision and the educational philosophies upon which the ACT school system was established in 1974. Yet there is ample evidence to suggest that ACT teachers and parents still do understand and support the basic values and ideas which underpinned the initial ACT Schools Authority. This interest and community support has been reflected in the spirited and often bitter public defence of the neighbourhood schools concept and the high degree of acceptance and support for school based curriculum development and progressive assessment of students. What the local community appears to have regretted most about the structural changes in ACT education is the contracting opportunities for community participation and consultation in its management. Richard Campbell (1989) is unequivocal in respect of the issue of participation in ACT

education in respect of the events which led up to the abolition of the Council of the Authority:

> For anyone who believes in the principles of participation originally espoused by the Currie Committee, developed by the Hughes Panel, and embodied in the Schools Authority from 1973 to 1985, this state of affairs is most unsatisfactory. Equally unsatisfactory is the way that three fundamental changes have been made with no serious attempt at public consultation. Given the long history of public debate, campaigning and serious reflection, this contempt of public opinion is nothing short of disgraceful,

In reviewing the effectiveness of the management structure prior to the changes of 1989, Campbell again is explicit. In the context of an address (The Currie Lecture, ACT Institute of Educational Administration, 1989), Campbell states from his stance as a former Chairman of the Council of the Schools Authority:

> My considered opinion is that this participative form of decision making proved effective, both as providing an open forum in which the full range of opinions could be voiced and heard and as a body able to tackle hard decisions.

He goes on to comment:

> In the context of the 1987 budget, the Council of the Authority was dismissed overnight, ostensibly as a cost saving measure. That excuse was manifestly absurd ... but those who secretly put the government up to this action got away with it.

Campbell claims that the Council of the Authority, set up as a broadly representative body, had been 'progressively whittled away to the point where it was totally captured by its own bureaucracy'.

Interpreting Campbell's comments and reviewing the events of the period 1987-89 one can conclude that the major changes had their roots in politics, local and federal. It is argued in this paper that the rationale for restructuring and in subsequent events up to 1991, derived not so much from educational reasons, nor as a consequence of administrative dysfunction in the school system, but from the resolution of party political pressures in the ACT and federal domain.

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Chapter 6

WALKING ON WATER: RESTRUCTURING QUEENSLAND'S EDUCATION SYSTEM

Ian Matheson

> When I disclose what I have seen, my results invite other researchers to look where I did and see what I saw. My ideas are candidates for others to entertain, not necessarily as truth, let alone Truth, but as positions about the nature and meaning of a phenomenon that may fit their sensibility and shape their thinking about their own inquiries.
>
> (Peshkin 1985, p.280)

Introduction

In the face of increasing school enrolments, higher retention rates in Years 11 and 12 classes, demands for greater community involvement in educational decision-making and reducing per capita funding in real terms, what is the most efficient way of educating young Australians and meeting society's expectations for them? What, also, is the most appropriate administrative structure for a system committed to providing quality teaching and learning ?

A search for the answer formed the basis for the restructuring of the Queensland Department of Education during the eighties. The evolutionary process was halted when a new State Government was elected in December 1989. A judgement that the processes in place were not proving efficacious was made on the basis of a short review, described by some as a 'single-frame snapshot', taken on behalf of the incoming Minister for Education, Paul Braddy, in February 1990. Braddy appeared to act on perceptions gained from various pressure groups within the broad education community, and from some people within the service of the Department itself who were dissatisfied with the rate of change or the form of the change itself. The final point of the conclusion to *Focus on Schools* states 'The State Government will benefit through clear channels through which priorities will be communicated to schools' (p. 138). Thus it would appear that Braddy was motivated also by a need to impose

a particular set of political premises. A more dramatic, even revolutionary, approach to change has become characteristic.

In reviewing any organisational change it is impossible to divorce the course of events from the politics and the personalities involved. This is true of changes affecting any organisation from a family unit to a massive structure such a state department of education. An education system that managed change without the counterproductive intrusion of these two factors would indeed be unique.

> It must be considered that there is nothing more difficult to carry out, nor more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to handle, than to initiate a new order of things. For the reformer has enemies in all those who profit by the old order, and only lukewarm defenders in all those who would profit by the new order, this lukewarmness arising partly from fear of their adversaries, who have the law in their favour; and partly from the incredulity of mankind, who do not truly believe in anything new until they have had actual experience of it. Thus it arises that on every opportunity for attacking the reformer, his opponents do so with the zeal of partisans, the others only defend him half-heartedly, so that between them he runs great danger.
>
> (Machiavelli 1940 ed., pp 21-22)

Kings, presidents and prime ministers have learned this. Education ministers and their chief executives should not expect to discover otherwise.

Machiavelli's third point, an important one, is that in order to succeed, change needs to have time on its side so that the new structures may be experienced. The restructuring of the Queensland Department of Education has proceeded at uneven paces during the decade and has experienced uneven levels of success because political events have frequently overtaken the various iterations necessary for successful implementation of changes.

This paper explores the route taken by the Department and its Ministers to respond to emerging needs in education. In doing so comments will be made on the places of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Education in Queensland, the Review of the Organisation and Management of Educational Services undertaken by a task group during 1984-85, the EDUCATION 2000 exercise of 1986, the Standing Committee for the Implementation of New Organisational Structures (SCINOS) and two agents external to the Department, viz the Public Sector Review Committee chaired by Sir Ernest Savage, and the Expenditure Review Committee which assumed the remnants of the

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Public Service Board's role, along with other responsibilities, when the Board became defunct in 1987.

While the paper places some emphasis on the labours of these committees and groups, readers should note that these labours were based on submissions from a wide range of groups representative of most community sectors. Those task groups which did not seek community opinion directly had full access to the information and advice gathered by others.

Reference will also be made to the present Government's efforts to restructure the Department of Education, as part of the State Public Service, on the bases of what the Government refers to as 'the principles of increased efficiency, effectiveness, impartiality and accountability' (Davies, 1990).

Background to the 1980s

Until the end of the 1970s, the Queensland Department of Education was the product of unplanned growth. As new demands were made of departmental services, new sections were added. In the absence of clearly defined strategies for change interfaces occurred. These were counter-productive to organisational effectiveness and impeded the efficient operation of the state system. This was recognised both within and without the Department itself.

The Queensland state Government took the initiative on 4 April 1978 when it resolved to appoint a Select Committee 'to inquire into, report upon and make recommendations in relation to the system of education in Queensland and the extent to which it meets the expectations of students, parents and the community' with particular reference to the following matters :

(a) the efficiency and adequacy of the present system of secondary education;
(b) appropriate emphasis in primary education between basic education and other activities;
(c) adequate technical and further education to meet today's industry needs;
(d) a review of the decision-making process in education and the role of the community in this area;
(e) adequacy of social education courses for primary and secondary students;
(f) the need for new courses, the ability of the education system to provide them and the administrative machinery for implementing them;

(g) the introduction of an independent authority to investigate complaints by parents or community organisations concerning any aspect of education; and
(h) any other matter pertaining to the matters for inquiry, report and recommendation as aforesaid (Ahern 1979).

The Select Committee consisted of Messrs M. J. Ahern (Chairman), W. D. Hewitt, L. W. Powell, C. J. Miller and E. F. Shaw, all members of the Legislative Assembly and representative of the three political parties. The Committee was supported by an Advisory Panel consisting of representatives of the higher education sector, state and independent schools and parents.

Six Interim Reports were presented, each containing a body of recommendations. These were presented in summary form in Section 8 of the Final Report. The Final Report (pp.23-26) contained 91 recommendations and made clear the perceived need for :

- school-to-work transition issues to be given a priority;
- continuing review of Year 7 to Year 8 transition;
- the question of separate directorates to be kept under review;
- devolution of responsibility to regions to be an on-going process aimed eventually at giving schools themselves significant autonomy;
- procedures to involve parents in decision-making;
- the issues of school size and class size to be addressed;
- the enhancement of school -TAFE co-operation;
- the role of the school principal to be strengthened;
- gifted and talented students to be identified and catered for;
- achievement-based assessment issues to be addressed; and
- encouragement of community use of school resources.

It is interesting to note the continuing importance of these recommendations to the later imposition of political decisions upon the Department and to internal departmental decisions related to successive stages of restructuring. It is equally interesting to note that the Select Committee's recommendations, supported by recommendations of later advisory committees, differ very little from the education policies of the present Government as echoed in *Focus on Schools*. This paper later refers to Task Group recommendations, the 1987 goal statement and the Department's 1990 focus. Comparison is invited.

In the early eighties, the Director-General of Education, Clyde Gilmour, initiated some internal reviews of the Department. These were inevitably coloured by the recommendations of the Ahern Select Committee. They were fired also by his own perceptions of the Department's operations and the need to re-orient the Department to meet

emerging educational, social and economic trends. Perhaps the most significant result was the May 1980 Report of the Work Group on Departmental Organization. This served to confirm what many critics were saying : the Department was seen to be unresponsive to emerging needs in schools because policy was poorly defined, co-ordination of action was hampered by rigid administrative structures, and information dissemination was poor.

This departmental profile was drawn at a time when the schools divisions took the first moves toward a 'seamless' P-10 curriculum. A P-10 Mathematics Syllabus Committee chaired by Ron Hickling, then Regional Inspector (Primary), Brisbane North Region, began a review of mathematics aimed at eliminating transition problems in this subject experienced by students moving from primary to secondary school. The Hickling Committee was answerable to the Directors of Secondary and of Primary Education. The two directors were seen as the initiators. At this stage, the move towards P-10 curriculum development in a broader context had the support of the Director-General, but was not seen as a departmental imperative.

The emergence of this departmental profile almost coincided with the first clear indications that the 1980s would bring higher retention rates in Year 11. In 1981 the growth in Year 11 enrolments was small but significant. By 1982 the trend was clear and the reasons also were obvious. Diminishing employment prospects for 15-year-old school leavers were forcing some students to remain at school. However, the need to provide a new range of learning opportunities for these students also became obvious. These young Australians were seeking enhanced pre-employment skills in hospitality, light engine maintenance, word-processing, tiling and glazing and the like, not places in the higher education institutions.

This departmental view of the Department's operations emerged, also, at a time when funding for school systems, in real terms, was being reduced, and when systems were being urged to improve their cost efficiency. Governments, federal and state, were looking to schools to help solve the nation's long-term economic problems and yet carry out the tasks with reduced funding.

Teacher appointed as Minister for Education

Lin Powell was appointed Minister for Education in the latter part of 1982. He brought to his new position experience as a teacher within the state system, a background of membership of the Parliamentary Select Committee of Enquiry into Education and a missionary zeal to reform what he perceived as inappropriate aspects of the Queensland system. Lin Powell was clearly in sympathy with many of the criticisms levelled at

his Department. He embarked upon a public awareness campaign, as he later explained:

> I wanted to make people think education. I wanted to stop the only reason parents went near their children's schools was for fund-raising. I wanted education to be child-centred and not bureaucracy-centred.
>
> History will comment on the success of those policies. I am happy that I made people think. I am unhappy that everything I did was politicised (Powell, 1990).

In July 1983 the Minister wrote to the Chairman of the Public Service Board, Dr Colin Brennan, expressing the belief that changes to the structure of the Department could improve its efficacy and, in the longer term, be more cost efficient to the Government. The priority implicit in this request is interesting because it indicates a 'benefit-cost' approach to departmental activity rather than a 'cost-benefit' approach. Powell demonstrated that he was prepared to make decisions about educational needs first and then battle with his Cabinet colleagues for funding on the basis of the benefits that would accrue. His successful policies in relation to distance education and the quality of schooling in Torres Strait are just two examples.The assistance of the Public Service Board was sought in examining the structures of the Department and making recommendations for change.

Two officers of the Board's Consultancy Services Division were assigned to the task later in 1983. They interviewed a number of people within the Department to obtain their views on major concerns and on trends thought likely to affect the future operations and services of the Department. The issues discussed in those interviews included:

(a) the appropriateness of the Department's organisational structure and management policies and practices;
(b) the effectiveness of the delivery of educational programs and services at both the central and regional levels;
(c) the effective utilisation of resources (manpower and financial) available to the Department; and
(d) the suitability of career paths within the Department (Task Group Report, 1985).

The Board officers provided a confidential report to the Minister in October 1983 recommending that a Task Group be established to investigate comprehensively the issues identified in the preliminary review, and that the Task Group be directly responsible to a Steering

Committee comprising the Minister, the Chairman of the Public Service Board and the Director-General of Education.

The recommendations were accepted and the Task Group commenced work early in 1984. By this time Clyde Gilmour had retired from the position of Director-General of Education and had been succeeded by George Berkeley.

The Hinchy Task Group

The Task Group was chaired by Alan Hinchy, Assistant Director-General of Education (Finance and Administration) and comprised the Directors of Planning and Special Programs, Preschool Education, Curriculum Services and Organizational Services, the Manager of the Department's Operational Audit Unit and the Principal Consultant, Division of Consultancy Services of the Public Service Board. Alan Hinchy recently had served as a fulltime member of a group that had reviewed the Department of Health and brought appropriate skills to the chair.

The inaugural meeting of the Task Group was held on 9 January 1984 and its final report was presented in February 1985. During the twelve months of its existence, the Task Group provided the Steering Committee with seven interim reports and was instrumental in having a Working Party established to examine the implications for schooling of any proposed changes to the Department's organisational structures. At the same time the Task Group recommended that public discussion be generated and suggested the distribution of a document which would both inform the public about the directions of the thinking of the Task Group and of the Working Party and generate public debate across the state. The emerging document became known as *Education 2000*. The Task Force was economical in its effort:

> At the outset, the Task Group recognised that the review to be undertaken was not unique in either Queensland or Australian contexts. In Queensland, the reports of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Education were available , together with the *Report of the Work Group on Departmental Organization* (May 1980) ... Elsewhere in Australia, a variety of reports on the reviews and reorganizations of the Education Departments in Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania (all undertaken in the last five years) were available. The Task Group resolved that, wherever applicable and appropriate, the findings and recommendations of those reports should be taken into account in the current review, together with the

> subsequent experiences of the particular Education Departments which had sought to introduce new patterns of organisation and management as a result of the review process (*Review of the Organisation and Management of Educational Services*, 1985, p.3).

Given that the Select Committee had canvassed Queensland opinion thoroughly and that extensive information and opinion was available on an Australia-wide basis, the Task Group had access to a range of views elicited from Queensland community sources, schools, school authorities and other systems.

At an early stage in its deliberations, the Task Group reached the conclusion that, regardless of the nature of the organisational structures ultimately adopted by the Department, the need to co-ordinate all components of the system would be of paramount importance. The Task Group recommended that corporate management techniques be utilised to ensure that the diverse sections of the Department became mutually supportive and that the Department itself underwent a unifying change.

The Task Group took pains to point out that the identified fragmentation of the Department could be overcome only if the separate responsibilities and functions were exercised in response to corporate, rather than individual, perspectives. It saw the need for corporate management emphasising:

> (a) the need for continuous review of the effectiveness of an organisation's functions and activities, in terms of support for the organisation's goals and objectives;
> (b) the importance of the total organisational environment; and
> (c) the maintenance of dynamic mechanisms through which competing needs and wants within the organisation can be analysed and reconciled (*Review of the Organisation and Management of Educational Services*, 1985, p.41).

If the 'snapshot' taken in February 1990 at the present Minister's behest gave a true picture of the results of the restructuring of the 1980s, and not just a glimpse of the state of evolution at that time, it may have been revealing the failure of some key players to understand 'corporate management' in the terms described by the Hinchy Task Group.

The Task Group recommended a structure whereby the head office would take responsibility for general policy formulation, overall departmental planning affecting the system as a whole and negotiations with Treasury for resources. At the same time it was recommended that regional offices should be mainly concerned with service delivery, supervision, implementation of policy and tactical planning. Schools,

colleges and units were to concentrate on the successful implementation of educational programs.

While these recommendations may seem to propose a fairly rigid line of responsibility, the Task Group realised that, in reality, policy decisions would result from wide contributions. It reported as follows:

> Both policy and planning are strongly linked to the overall co-ordination of the various organisational units of the Department. Moreover, many of these units, whether at head, regional office, or institutional level, will contribute directly or indirectly to policy and planning (*Review of the Organisation and Management of Educational Services*, 1985, p.25).

Dr Robert Kidston, Visiting Fellow, Centre for Australian Public Sector Management, Griffith University, who spent considerable time in 1989 examining how the Queensland Department of Education implemented corporate management, made this succinct summary of the Task Group's recommendations concerning management structures:

> Head Office responsibilities were to be grouped into four functional areas to cover:
>
> - the development and integration of education programs to guide schools and colleges;
> - the monitoring of operations at regional and institutional levels;
> - the management of finances and the acquisition and allocation of resources; and
> - the provision of services required to support the Department as a whole including such matters as strategic planning and policy analysis.

A senior corporate management group comprising the Director-General and four Assistant Directors-General was to exercise collective responsibility across those areas of responsibility.

> Regional office responsibilities on the other hand were to be grouped into three functional areas:
>
> - the direction, supervision and management of programs in educational institutions;
> - the evaluation of programs and operations at institutional level; and

- the provision of professional, technical and administrative services to support the regional office as a whole and to support head office groups where appropriate (Kidston 1989, pp 6-7).

The Task Group, during the course of its deliberations, had promoted the formation of a Working Party to examine implications of proposed rearrangements in schooling, an indication that system administration should be linked to curriculum delivery.

The work of the Task Group revealed a general support among directors, both head office and regional, for curriculum continuity during the compulsory years of schooling and for the provision of a wider range of options for students in Years 11 and 12. Task Group discussions showed that this general support was influenced by a number of factors :

- the P-10 curriculum thinking of the late 1970s and early 1980s;
- the efforts by some teachers of upper primary classes and Year 8 groups to erode the Year7-Year 8 interface;
- the gradual adoption in some schools of a philosophy of early childhood education (as opposed to preschool and junior primary);
- the success of the numerous school-based optional subjects being offered by some secondary schools across the state; and
- the imaginative ways some principals of secondary schools and TAFE colleges were co-operating to provide forms of pre-vocational programs for those students not oriented towards higher education.

As a result, the Task Group recommended the establishment of a working party to advise the Minister, the Director-General and the Task Group on curriculum issues. The then Director-General of Education, George Berkeley, established the 'Working Party to Examine Implications of Proposed Re-arrangements in Schooling' in 1984 and requested early recommendations. The Working Party was chaired by the Assistant Director-General (Schools), Ian Matheson, and consisted of the head office schools directors, three regional directors, and the directors of TAFE and Curriculum Services.

When the Task Group linked the Working Party's recommendations with its own, the Task Group proposed that the discussion paper, *Education 2000: Issues and Options for the Future of Education in Queensland*, be prepared for release to the public for comment and reaction.

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Working Party to examine implications of the proposed re-arrangements in schooling

The Working Party based its discussions on the belief that

> the quality of education ... depends upon the interaction of a complexity of factors. These factors include a curriculum relevant to the needs of learners and the needs of a changing society, effective instruction, well-prepared teachers and administrators, adequate resources and facilities, and effective monitoring procedures (Working Party to Examine Implications of the Proposed Re-arrangements in Schooling, 1984, p. vi).

While this is all self-evident it serves to underscore the fact that the Working Party believed a clearly defined curriculum field was necessary, even critical, if the state's schools and colleges were to succeed.

It is not surprising that the Working Party's recommendations covered:

- Curriculum development that promoted both continuity during the compulsory years, and imaginative programs to meet emerging and varying needs during the post-compulsory years.
- Possible changes to institutional arrangements in a few cases that could be used in pilot studies aimed at eroding curriculum interfaces.
- Changing roles of inspectors of schools.
- Review of existing teaching awards to facilitate any possible changes in curriculum structure.
- A review of head office and regional office relationships and responsibilities in the light of curriculum changes with more responsibility moving to the region.
- The need for realistic budget allocations to meet the demand for inservice education programs.
- The need to review credentialling procedures in Queensland with the possibility of the Board of Secondary School Studies being responsible for year 12 certificates only.

Education 2000

In the foreword to *Education 2000*, the Minister for Education stated as follows:

> This discussion paper is the culmination of events I set in motion in July 1983. My decision to conduct a review into the organizational effectiveness and operational efficiency of the Department of Education arose out of my belief that our schools and our colleges must be responsive to the changing world in which they exist. It is only by this means that our students will continue to attain the highest standards of achievement ... I intend to consult widely with all interested individuals and groups concerning the issues raised in this paper, prior to any firm decisions being made by the Government. I therefore invite all those interested in the future directions of Queensland education to participate in the public discussion and to forward their written comments to me so that they may be considered in the context of the Government's planning (*Education 2000 : A Discussion Paper* 1985, p. iii).

These comments emphasised Powell's view that *Education 2000* :

- was a discussion document;
- invited public debate;
- encouraged all interested people within Queensland society to participate;
- sought written submissions;
- reserved the right of a government to make final decisions, but undertook to consider public opinion in making those decisions; and
- tied proposed changes back to schooling and curriculum issues.

Queenslanders of 1985 had little experience with 'green papers' with the result that many critics of the *Education 2000* exercise had difficulty accepting that the document was a discussion document. Comments at public meetings held throughout the State revealed that people ranging from a CAE registrar to parents believed that *Education 2000* was a blueprint for future departmental direction.

The Queensland Teachers Union and the Queensland Council of Parents and Citizens' Associations expressed concern that they had not been party to the internal reviews and discussions that led to the public involvement. With the benefit of hindsight, their complaint seems reasonable. At the time, however, it was believed that these two organizations would contribute strongly to public debate and also would have a part in reviewing written submissions and drawing recommendations from them.

Some sections of the community, even some members of the education community, could not distinguish between curriculum

directions and actual buildings. There was a belief that a P-10 curriculum meant P-10 schools. The fact that some trials of new institutions were occurring at the same time seemed to confirm their beliefs. For example:

- two senior colleges to cater for years 11 and 12 and TAFE students were constructed at Hervey Bay and in the Redlands District;
- an arrangement to provide a P-3 school, a 4-10 school and a senior college in Roma was negotiated with the local community;
- two new primary schools were constructed with the pre-school facilities incorporated in the main building complexes; and
- two new centres of distance education were being built at Longreach and Charters Towers to cater for the distance education needs of children from pre-school to year 10.

While these institutions enabled the Department to test some of the recommendations of the Working Party, great pains were taken to reassure the community that

- they were trial institutions only and would be fully assessed before any decisions were taken to replicate them;
- the Roma institutions were meeting needs peculiar to Roma and were most unlikely to be repeated;
- the distance education centres were designed round the emerging findings of a Ministerial Advisory Committee on Distance Education and were peripheral to the *Education 2000* issues;
- even if the Department and the Government wished to embark on a full- scale campaign to re-organise schools structurally, funds to carry out such a massive program simply did not exist; and
- P-10 should be interpreted as both process and content, a framework providing approaches that can guide practitioners in curriculum development as well as being the products of centrally-located curriculum-development groups.

The best efforts of the Minister and senior officers failed and many subsequent written submissions criticised proposals concerning curriculum continuity and post- compulsory offerings on the basis of bricks-and-mortar reasoning.

Education 2000 and the public forums generated 987 submissions. The bulk (about 65 percent) of these came from school communities, non-government schools, postsecondary institutions, community workshops and meetings and various diverse groups across the state. This indicates that many more than 987 individuals contributed to the thinkings that underpinned the submissions. There was no controlled format, so all submissions contained unfiltered thinking not generally possible through structured surveys.

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Committee of Review: Education 2000 Submissions

In August 1985, Powell appointed a Committee of Review, chaired by Emeritus Professor G.W. Bassett, to study the written submissions objectively and make appropriate recommendations. The Committee was broadly representative of state, Catholic and independent systems/schools, TAFE, the Queensland Teachers Union, the Queensland State Council of Parent and Citizens' Associations, business and the community.

The Committee delivered its Report in June 1986. The Report organised its recommendations to cover issues related to:

- Curriculum
- Teacher preparation and development
- Staffing
- Communication and decision-making
- Structures
- Students with special needs
- Isolated students
- *Education 2000* and non-government schools
- Implementation of *Education 2000* proposals

The findings of the Committee of Review supported proposals for curriculum continuity and enriched opportunities for students in their post-compulsory years. However, caution was recommended in establishing what the Committee referred to as 'the functional grouping by curriculum' (*Report of the Committee of Review : Education 2000 Submissions* 1986, p. 81).

The Committee signalled potential difficulties with any proposal to alter curriculum management and accreditation procedures. Opposition to changes proposed by the Working Party and raised for consideration in *Education 2000* came from the primary education professional community, independent schools and the Board of Secondary School Studies.

Subsequent events proved the Committee's fears well-founded. Viewed now from a distance of some years, the stands taken by the protagonists seemed to have been based on tradition rather than on the need to explore new approaches to curriculum development and accreditation in the light of changing social and economic circumstances.

Another ever-present factor was that, although Powell himself appeared to be committed to change for altruistic reasons, because he was the Minister and because he held some strong personal views on a range of social issues, his motives were interpreted by some as political and self-seeking.

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In many respects the personalities of some of the people involved made consensus on issues relating to students in schools difficult to achieve. Agreement in some areas was achieved only after the composition of brokers was changed by circumstances (*e.g.* retirements and annual elections of associations' office bearers).

The Committee of Review drew attention to the fact that the Queensland Department of Education had never developed a mission statement. It recommended that in view of the queries raised in many of the submissions as to the rationale for the proposals made in *Education 2000*, the Minister for Education should consider publishing a statement of the educational aims and general philosophy underlying the Queensland education system (*Report of the Committee of Review : Education 2000 Submissions* 1986, p. 80).

At the same time that the Committee of Review was preparing its report on *Education 2000* submissions, a state government committee, chaired by Sir Ernest Savage, was carrying out a Review of Queensland Business Regulations. The Savage Report was released in December 1985 and was, in part, critical of government departments in general for failing to define their corporate objectives. The Education Department found itself under pressure to develop a statement of objectives from two quarters : the general community (through the Committee of Review) and the state government (which adopted the recommendations of the Savage Report).

Ministerial Advisory Committee on Distance Education

Concurrent with the operation of the Hinchy Task Group and the Matheson Working Party, a review of distance education provisions was being conducted. A Ministerial Advisory Committee on Distance Education was established in November 1983 under the chairmanship of Bill Hamilton, Deputy Director-General of Education. The chair passed to Ian Matheson in early 1984 following Bill Hamilton's appointment to the position of Chairman, Board of Advanced Education.

The Advisory Committee was representative of home tutors, the Isolated Children's Parents' Association, higher education, the Queensland Teachers' Union and the Department of Education. Members convened meetings with parents, home tutors, teachers and interested community members at 36 venues across the state from the most remote centres and homesteads to Brisbane. Two officers of the Alaskan State Education System, world authorities on distance education provisions, were employed as consultants.

Written submissions were sought and 64 were received from a wide range of organisations and individuals. The Advisory Committee closely

monitored the design of the two trial distance education centres at Longreach and Charters Towers, and, through the Committee's encouragement, gained for the communities of the two proposed centres the right to help select the principal and deputy principal for each. This constituted a major break with established protocol and heralded a new era in parent involvement. The *Report, Ministerial Advisory Committee on Distance Education* was presented to the Minister in December 1985.

Reports of 1985-1986

The year 1985 was a watershed year for the Queensland Department of Education. Available in that year or in the first part of 1986 were the following reports:

- *Implications of the Proposed Re-arrangements in Schooling*, the Report of the Matheson Working Party, November 1984.
- *Review of the Organisation and Management of Educational Services*, the Report of the Hinchy Task Group, February 1985.
- *Education 2000 : Issues and Options for the Future of Education in Queensland : a Discussion Paper*, March 1985.
- *Review of Queensland Business Regulations, First Report* (the Savage Report), December 1985.
- *Report, Ministerial Advisory Committee on Distance Education*, December 1985
- *Report of the Committee of Review : Education 2000 Submissions*, June 1986

These reports, in a general sense, stressed the need to shift to a corporate-style management to ensure that the management structures and style would lead to increasing levels of de-centralisation, to retain a level of Brisbane office responsibility in keeping with accepted notions of accountability, to fit curriculum offerings to the needs of students and to employ new technologies wherever they would enhance quality of learning programs and ease of overall administration.

In 1986, the Government commenced planning for the major changes to the Education Act. The proposed changes would have affected most aspects of the Department's operation and, because parts of the proposed legislation would have altered post-compulsory course accreditation procedures, also impacted upon the non-state sector. The proposed changes were also significant for the Board of Secondary School Studies.

Coming as they did on the heels of the *Education 2000* project, these proposed changes were subjected to spirited and, frequently, emotional debate in the education community. The fact that the

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proposals would have led to improved formal consultation with non-state schools and with commerce and industry was lost in the heat of struggle for control of curriculum development. Lost, also, was the vision of something more appropriate for students of the late 1980s than just what was available during the 1970s.

Controversy surrounding the legislation continued into 1988. This inevitably absorbed much of the time and energies of the Minister and senior officers of the Department with the result that progress in establishing corporate management structures was slower in 1986 than either the Minister or the Director-General wished. The year 1986 brought the retirement of George Berkeley as Director-General of Education in November and the appointment of Ian Matheson to the position.

Review of Queensland Business Regulations

In implementing the Savage Committee's recommendations, the state government required each department to develop a 'strategic plan' which would state its objectives, its priority programs and its performance evaluation procedures. The government also expected each department to develop an appropriate corporate management style and clear administrative systems.

The Public Service Board assumed responsibility for managing the implementation of the Savage Report recommendations and provided departments with guidelines for implementing the proposed strategic plans. These guidelines were clearly readily applicable to the Department of Education and were adopted for implementation. The requirement that a strategic plan be developed fitted comfortably with the Education Department's orderly adoption of corporate management principles. The time frames set by the government appeared tight for a large 'people' department to manage with ease.

Steering Committee for the Implementation of New Organisational Structures (SCINOS)

In response to government and public pressure, the Policy Committee of the Department in November 1986 took charge of strategic planning. The Director-General and four Assistant Directors-General, who comprised the Policy Committee, set 1 December 1986 as the date for an initial goal statement. At the same time, the Policy Committee established a timetable for the preparation of a strategic plan by November 1988. Program and project proposals were to be introduced to Policy Committee by the appropriate Assistant Director-General, and the

overall co-ordination of the project resided with the Director of Organisational Services.

The goal statement was prepared by an internal committee which consulted with senior officers at head office and regional office level. This action enabled the short time line established by Policy Committee to be met. It also attracted criticism that the views of the full range of interested parties had not been canvassed. While this criticism was valid, it must also be remembered that in the few years prior to December 1986 there had been opportunity to establish community views on the rôle of the Department through the process of the Select Committee and Education 2000. The goal statement was succinct:

> *Statement of Purposes of the Queensland Department of Education*
>
> Subject to the relevant legislation and other expressions of government policy:
>
> - to promote and support the pursuit of learning in the State of Queensland.
> - to advise the Honourable the Minister for Education on issues relating to the education system in Queensland
> - in respect of preschool, primary, secondary, special and technical and further education, to provide general, specialised and vocational education through State education programs in State preschools, schools and colleges.
>
> *Organisational Rôle Statement*
>
> *Rôle 1:* to respond to, co-operate with and inform the Queensland community concerning existing and emerging needs in education.
>
> *Rôle 2:* to provide effective and efficient State education programs.
>
> *Rôle 3:* to provide quality human and physical resources required to operate State education programs.
>
> *Rôle 4:* to provide quality support services necessary to operate State education programs.
>
> *Rôle 5:* to promote consultation and co-operation with other systems and authorities in the provision of educational services (*Meeting the Challenge* 1987, p. 7).

The action of the Policy Committee and the preparation of the goal statement provided the first indicator that corporate management had been accepted by the Department and that the Department intended being responsive to the pressures from the government, from the community and from within the Department itself.

The government maintained pressure on its departments through the establishment in December 1986 of the Public Sector Review Committee chaired by Sir Ernest Savage. This Committee was charged with examining ways of improving the efficiency and productivity of the Queensland Government. The PSRC adopted ideas of program management sponsored by the Public Service Board. Program management led directly to program budgeting for which the Department of Education, like other departments, was unprepared. The Department set about the long and difficult process of establishing program budgeting and conditioning head office and regional directors to new responsibilities and procedures.

The Department, therefore, began 1987 with three clear challenges: to implement corporate management, to implement program management/budgeting, and to succeed in entreating people within the total state education community to adopt new attitudes and approaches towards the developing structures. Strategic planning was necessary and had to be effective. The task was made more difficult by the fact that a significant number of valuable senior officers opted for early retirement, taking with them a wealth of knowledge, experience and sheer ability. The ranks of regional directors were severely hit.

To advise the Policy Committee and to supervise many aspects of the Department's strategic planning, the Steering Committee for the Implementation of New Organisational Structures (SCINOS) was established. SCINOS was chaired by Richard Warry, the Assistant Director-General (Services), and its membership comprised representative head office and regional directors. SCINOS came into existence at a critical time in the Department's history. New management procedures, previously mentioned, were being established. Funding was being reduced in real terms as governments, both Commonwealth and state, experienced financial difficulties. The Public Sector Review Committee was advocating devolution of more authority to chief executives with an accompanying higher level of accountability. Internal frictions were developing as the Policy Committee pursued its intentions to streamline the Department by consolidating some of the functions previously managed in disparate ways by various divisions and regions.

One of the on-going tasks assumed by SCINOS was communication within the Department. The pressures on the Department and the friction-causing changes occurring demanded that effective ways be found to communicate with the wider community, schools and the various sections of the Department itself. During its life SCINOS

produced several documents collectively called Meeting the Challenge.

Meeting the Challenge was accompanied by trouble. The publications' language and the concepts being presented provided interpretation problems for many of the audience with the result that, regrettably, much of the information provided was poorly translated by some readers. This made the process of change within Queensland during 1987-88 more laborious and painful than it needed to be.

The work of SCINOS was delayed also by events beyond the control of the Department:

- The Queensland State Government was racked by internal strife during late 1987 and this culminated in a change in Premier and a new Cabinet.
- Lin Powell was replaced by Brian Littleproud, another teacher, as Minister for Education. Littleproud, quite naturally, wished to test the educational climate before pursuing any of the proposed changes that were generating debate throughout the educational community.
- TAFE was excised from the Department and incorporated in a new department called the Department of Employment, Vocational Education and Training (DEVET).

In spite of this, many felt SCINOS was remarkably successful and, by the end of 1988, had effectively completed

> the restructuring of the Department, provided convincing evidence of the efficiency of 'top-down' strategies when certain conditions have been satisfied. In the case of the Department of Education those conditions were:
>
> - a general consensus among opinion leaders as to what the nature of the organisational problem was;
> - a conditioning process based on the communication of information to staff over a period of time about the rationale for change;
> - a strong belief that changes to the existing organisational structures and decision-making processes were necessary to remedy the perceived dysfunctions;
> - the firm commitment of the Minister and the Policy Committee to the concept of corporate management as an effective means of addressing the problems identified;

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- an external environment generating pressures that were congruent with the internal conventional wisdom supporting reform;
- the existence of successful precedent in other systems; and
- the possession of a high degree of technical competence and socio-political skills among the key actors most directly involved in the change process, in this case the members of SCINOS (Kidston 1989, pp 24-25).

By the beginning of 1989 the Department was organised in the form suggested by the Hinchy Task Group:

- *Head office divisions* performed clear functional service rôles consistent with the need to have centralised expertise in management areas such as finance and audit, personnel, research and development of broad curricula, facilities and computerised systems.
- *Regional offices* had extended responsibilities in the delivery of services, carefully integrated by strengthened regional teams, and with a commission to manage a devolution of decision-making to schools through effective and harmonious relations with parent groups and school communities.

External Pressures

The structures of the new administrative procedures were in place by 1989, but difficulties clearly remained:

- The State Government was determined to push devolution of responsibility to schools at a greater rate than the Departmental Policy Committee felt possible. The Government wanted the administration of all funds, including those for telephones and electricity, disbursed to schools from the beginning of 1989.
- The Minister and the Director-General were successful in having the Government's position modified. The modification was insufficient to appease the QTU and some principals who believed too much responsibility was being placed on schools in this regard, given that schools were coping with significant curriculum changes.
- Some principals, unaware of the extent of Government policy and unaware of the action of the Minister and Director-General,

publicly blamed the most senior officers of the Department for the additional pressures.

- New efforts to develop co-operation and understanding with the non-State schools, especially in the curriculum-development field, generated friction with the QTU.
- Significant distractions resulted from on-going industrial award discussions between the QTU and the Department, and also as a result of a long-term investigation of principals' salaries scales.

While strenuous efforts were made by the Policy Committee to project the potential advantages of the administrative structures in place, the corporate management philosophy and the program budget/management procedures, those groups and individuals experiencing most difficulty continued their protest and criticism.

Some critics, including a few regional directors, claimed that the corporate management structures were failing because critical decisions were being taken before full consultation with all the key players occurred. They pointed to what they perceived as vaguely identified objectives, unclear priorities and strategies, and monitoring and evaluation procedures that required honing before the Policy Committee could be sure of the accuracy of feedback provided.

However, the Policy Committee was confident that the structures themselves were appropriate. The Policy Committee recognised that at least a year of adjustment and consolidation would be necessary before all officers (including principals) understood their responsibilities within corporate management and gained an understanding of the new operation of the Department as a whole, and an appreciation of its new relationships with other departments, especially Treasury.

An over-riding factor in 1989 which could be appreciated by only the most senior officers of the Department was the furious push by the Government itself to place a maximum of decision-making in schools. With an election looming, no time was given to the Department to consult or co-operatively plan and provide supportive inservice programs for school communities. The best that the Department could do was provide full instructions, directions and guidelines that had been internally developed. This was done.

The arrival in schools of such papers served to confirm the thinking of the critics who believed they provided evidence of failure or lack of faith on the part of Policy Committee. In reality they provided evidence of the best a government department system can manage when direction for almost immediate action comes from outside the system.

The corporate management structures in place by early 1989 appeared appropriate, but at that early stage were not yet effective. Effective corporate management is possible within a government department provided all parties

- understand and respect the role of others;
- recognise that a government department is susceptible to the vagaries of the government itself;
- accept responsibility to provide constructive, unemotional feedback and evaluation;
- realize that government departments have momenta of their own and that change through evolution is preferable to change through revolution -- but evolution takes time; and
- accept that some decisions will, in the early stages of change, still have to be made by the executive pending the refinement of corporate strategic decision-making skills and processes.

Minister Littleproud and his Department did not have time on their side in 1989. Nevertheless, the benefits to students, accruing from the changing structures, were already becoming apparent. A few examples serve to justify the structural changes :

- early childhood education programs spanning P-3 and the philosophy underpinning them were generally established ;
- imaginative senior schooling programs were in place in progressive secondary schools ;
- the first principals to gain positions across old divisional boundaries were bringing new insights and understandings to their roles ;
- total-system programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were being developed, free of divisional shackles ;
- system-wide application of new technologies to teaching was occurring ;
- planning of buildings and facilities was being conducted on a system basis ;
- schools were gaining power to make their own decisions in relation to the purchase of resources and materials in tune with the schools' own long-term plans ; and
- the delivery of distance education had been revolutionised through decentralisation and the use of a wide range of new technologies.

The election of December 1989 brought a change of government and the short review of the Department of Education was undertaken. Many believe that hasty judgements were made before full acquaintance with the situation had been achieved.

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Focus on Schools

One of the first decisions of the current Government was to review the operations of various departments. This was a clear signal that the new Government intended to restructure the Queensland State Public Service on the bases of 'the principles of efficiency, effectiveness, impartiality and accountability' already mentioned. The Department of Education was reviewed by a committee of four which was comprised of an external consultant and middle level officers of the Department itself. The committee made only one recommendation and that was that an in-depth review should follow.

The new Minister, Paul Braddy, established a Policy Unit which commenced a statewide consultative process under the banner of 'Education: Have Your Say'. An interim report, based on submissions born of questionnaires, was used to generate further debate. A final report called *Focus on Schools : The Future Organisation of Educational Services for Students* was made public in October 1990.

Focus on Schools appears to have restated in 1990 the philosophy and policies that underpinned the May 1987 statement of the Department's purposes and rôle. The new focus aims for:

- a flatter administrative structure;
- movement of much decision-making to regions and schools;
- greater community participation in the management of schools;
- determination to provide quality education for all clients;
- improved professional development of teachers; and
- determination to place the classroom rather than the bureaucracy at the centre of the Department's operations.

These views were as strongly held by Powell in 1983 and Littleproud in 1987 as they are by Braddy in 1991. The search continues for

- improved decision-making processes;
- more accurate reporting procedures;
- greater consultation and involvement in education matters; and
- trust and openness.

Conclusion

Machiavelli continued his comment on the difficulties encountered by change agents by observing :

> It is necessary, however, in order to investigate thoroughly this question, to examine whether these innovators are independent,or whether they depend upon others, that is to say, whether in order to carry out their designs they have to entreat or are able to compel. In the first case they invariably succeed ill, and accomplish nothing; but when they can depend upon their own strength and are able to use force, they rarely fail. Thus it comes about that all armed prophets have conquered and unarmed ones failed (Machiavelli 1940, p.22).

The current restructuring of the Queensland Department of Education is being accompanied by an extensive shift of existing personnel and the employment, in some instances in senior positions, of officers from outside the system or from outside the state. A significant number of people who successfully held responsible positions prior to December 1989 are being offered early-retirement or retrenchment packages. It can only be assumed that people being employed or deployed to new responsible positions are perceived to be committed to the restructuring process presently occurring. The present Minister will be able to depend upon his own 'strength' and 'force', whereas his predecessors opted to 'entreat' existing officers. The present situation indicates that Braddy's approach may have more immediate success, in terms of acceptance of the new structures, than that of his two predecessors . Whether the long-term results will meet the common corporate goals that have been espoused in one form or another for a decade is another question. The 'armed prophets' approach undoubtedly is having a destabilising effect on the administrative arm of the system and, with the spilling of the Principal - Band II positions, is beginning to affect schools themselves. The future will show whether this approach brings long-term benefits in its wake. Moses, Cyrus, Theseus and Romulus (Machiavelli's examples) could hardly have achieved had they been disarmed. Modern history teems with examples of 'armed prophets' who have wrought very mixed long-term results.

The rhetoric which wraps *Focus on Schools* has generated high expectations from schools and their communities. It remains to be seen whether these expectations can be met, given that the present Department of Education regime must cope with the same difficulties faced by its predecessors, viz.

- Government directions ;
- some internal misunderstandings and misrepresentations ;
- human failure in the communication channels ;
- changes in funding levels ;
- pressure from other departments ; and

- demands for adjustments to meet changing social and economic conditions.

Education system administrators today, like their predecessors, will come to realise that the secret of walking on water is knowing where the stones are.

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Chapter 7

RESTRUCTURING IN NEW SOUTH WALES

D.A. Swan and R.B. Winder

The Department of School Education in New South Wales, previously titled the Department of Education, and before that, the Department of Public Instruction, is said to be one of the largest centralised systems of education in the world, both in terms of students and teachers, and in geographical area. There were in 1989 2,230 schools, 58,461 employees, including 46,850 teachers, and 749,263 students.

The Department is directly responsible to a Minister of the Crown and through him/her to Parliament. Contemporary political processes and the development of media and communications technology have ensured that Ministerial accountability can be more effectively exercised on a daily basis than was possible in earlier days. Interventions by Ministers are, understandably, ongoing, and relate to matters of policy, resources, personnel and procedures. Frequently, Ministerial action is in response to some public issue or political activity. This situation is not unique to NSW, or Australia.

The Annual Report of the Department, for 1989, describes the services provided, as follows:

> **Educational Provision**
>
> The Department of School Education provides full-time primary and secondary education for children in NSW Primary education covers the seven years from Kindergarten to Year 6 and secondary education the six years from Year 7 to Year 12. Schooling is compulsory for all children aged between six and 15 years.
>
> Most students begin school in Kindergarten at age five and continue at least to the School Certificate (Year 10) when they are aged about 16. Almost half proceed to Year 12 when they sit for the Higher School Certificate examination. Preschool programs for children under five are also available at some primary schools.

As well as regular primary and high schools, the Department provides schools and services for those students who have particular needs. For children remote from centres of population and for those with a physical, emotional or intellectual disability, or behavioural disturbance, the Department provides alternative access to schooling through the Correspondence School and its regional centres, the School of the Air, hospital schools, community care schools, schools for blind and deaf children, and other schools for specific purposes.

The Student Population

At the census of students in June 1989 there were 749,263 students in NSW government schools. These comprised 434,098 primary students, 310,765 secondary students and 4,400 students enrolled in specific purpose schools. In addition, 3,662 children attended departmental preschool classes either full-time or on a part-time basis.

Over the last 20 years enrolments in NSW government schools have grown from 745,815 in 1969 to a peak of 811,940 in 1978 and have fallen to 749,263 this year.

Primary enrolments were stable during 1988/89. In 1989 the highest enrolments were in the initial years of primary education: Year 1 (65,800), Year 2 (63,480) and Kindergarten (63,342). The structure of primary enrolments in 1989 is such that enrolment in the junior primary years exceeds that of the senior primary years. This, coupled with stable birth rates, means that primary enrolments will show some growth over the next few years.

This year secondary enrolments declined by 7,719 students. This decline was the result of smaller numbers of students entering secondary education from the primary years. It is anticipated that this trend will continue over the next few years as the low birth rate cohorts of the mid 1970s progress through the secondary years.

While total secondary enrolments declined the percentage of students continuing their studies to Years 10, 11, and 12 increased again in 1989. In 1984 the Year-12 retention rate was 33.82 per cent for males, 38.42 per cent for females and 36.07 per cent for all students. The Year 7-12 retention rate in 1989 was 45.04 per cent for males, 53.26 per cent for females and 49.05 per cent for all students.

Expenditure

Finance is allocated to the Department as either recurrent funds for salaries and other continuing operating costs or as capital funds for construction and additions to school buildings and grounds.

Recurrent Funds

The Department's recurrent fund from State and Commonwealth Government sources are allocated by the Treasurer in three program areas. Preschool and Primary Education in Government and Non-Government Schools, Secondary Education in Government and Non-Government Schools; and Administrative, Professional and General Support Services. Funds within each program area are further classified as Salaries and Other Employee Payments, Operating Expenses, Plant and Equipment, Grants and Subsidies, and Other Services.

In 1988/89 total expenditure from all sources on recurrent services totalled $2,802 billion. Of this sum, $2.674 billion was spent in the primary and secondary program areas for the support of schools and students. The balance of expenditure ($128 billion) was incurred in the provision of administrative and central educational support including curriculum development, teacher development and support for the education of students with disabilities.

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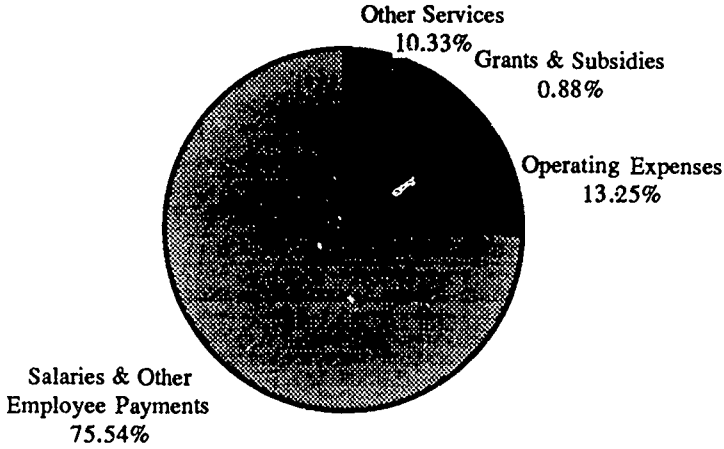
NSW DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION:
RECURRENT EXPENDITURE CONSOLIDATED FUND
1988/89



Major Capital Works

In 1988/89 $113.13 million was spent on major works projects which included the commencement of 46 new schools and upgrading projects.

Minor Capital Works Program

For 1989/90 a minor works program has been developed involving an expenditure of $15 million ($14.5 million in 1988/89).

Capital Funds

Capital expenditure in 1988/89 totalled $211.5 million of which $85.0 million related to primary program areas, $122.6 million to secondary program areas and $3.9 million to administrative programs.

State Governance

From the late seventies until March 1988, Labor Governments controlled New South Wales with majorities in both the Legislative Assembly (the Lower House) and the Legislative Council (the Upper House). During that period, *i.e.* 1976 to 1987, there were five changes in the position of Minister for Education, with one Minister serving twice in the position.

In 1988, the Liberal/Country Party Coalition assumed office with a significant majority in the Legislative Assembly. However, it failed to gain a majority in the Legislative Council where the Independents held the balance of power. The coalition Government claimed sweeping public support for its educational reform policies, some of which had earlier found electorate support in overseas countries such as Great Britain. In NSW there have been public protest rallies directed against these education policies. The Minister of the day initiated major reviews of the education system and was in the process of implementing major reforms when he resigned from the Ministry in 1990 and was replaced by the second Liberal Party Minister to hold this office since the government assumed power in 1988.

Public Sector Management

Upon assumption of office in 1976, the Labor Government, consistent with its electoral promises, initiated a review of the role and responsibilities of the New South Wales Public Service. The resultant Wilenski Report was generally accepted by the Government. The Government also proceeded towards the setting up of an Education Commission, following a committee of review led by Professor J. Hagan. The result was seen in two Acts of Parliament which had direct relevance to the management of the Department of Education.

The Public Service Act 1979 made the Director-General of Education responsible to the Minister of Education for the general conduct and the efficient, effective and economical management of the functions and activities of the Department. Prior to this Act, the Director General was responsible to the Public Service Board for these functions.

The Education Commission Act 1980 made the Director-General of Education responsible to the Minister for the general conduct and the efficient, effective and economical management of the functions and activities of the Education Teaching Service including:

- classifying schools;
- determining teaching staff establishments;

- determining procedures for the appointment, promotion and transfer of teachers;
- maintaining discipline.

The Education Commission was given overall responsibility for employment, in relation to teachers salaries and conditions of service. It also had policy advisory functions.

Under these two Acts the Director-General and his officers were required to relate to the Premier's Department on matters concerning staff numbers and administrative variations. The Premier's Department was responsible for reviews of the Department and its activities.

In 1988 the Liberal/Country Party Government enacted legislation known as the Public Sector Management Act which amended the arrangements for major agencies charged with oversight and co-ordination. However, the responsibilities of the Director-General outlined in the Public Service Act of 1979 were not altered.

Further, another 1988 Act terminated the existence of the Education Commission, the responsibilities of that body for setting teachers conditions and salaries being transferred to the Secretary, Ministry for Education and Youth Affairs. The responsibilities of the Director-General as outlined in the Education Commission Act of 1980 were retained. The 1988 Act created the Office of Public Management under the direct control of the Premier with responsibilities for monitoring the efficiency and effectiveness of all government departments and their senior executives who were now employed in a Senior Executive Service with contracts of employment for periods of up to five years.

Some Major Developments in the Administration of Education in the State

Although often perceived as 'monolithic' and 'centralised', it is a fact that the Department has participated in on-going reforms to its structure and operations. These changes need to be viewed in the context of political and community expectations. The reforms have included the following: -

The Separation of Functions

- A separate Department of Technical Education was established in 1949.
- Tertiary education was given a separate administration in 1969.
- In 1971 the Ministry of Cultural Activities was established and the NSW Film Council, the Opera House Trust, the Library of

NSW, the Art Gallery of NSW, the Sydney Observatory and the Australian Museum were transferred from Education to the new Ministry.

- Following the establishment of the Ministry of Sport, the National Fitness and Recreation Service was also separated from the Department of Education.

Delegation and Decentralisation

Decentralisation of education administration in NSW began in 1948 with the establishment of an area/regional office at Wagga Wagga. In 1952 further regional offices were established at Lismore, Newcastle, Bathurst, Wollongong and Parramatta. In 1956 a region was established at Tamworth and in 1966 regions were established at North Sydney, St. George and Central Metropolitan (these two were later amalgamated in the early 1980's). In 1968 a region was established at Liverpool.

The establishment of these regions was intended to promote a more efficient and responsive administration of the Department by bringing administration closer to the community. A concomitant was to encourage in the community a more active interest in educational services.

Re-organisation of the Department of Education

In its role of supporting the Minister and Parliament, the Department has undertaken reorganisations of its structure. These changes are additional to the separation of functions and the enduring programme of regionalization. The changes included:

(a) The Divisional structure (Primary/Secondary) of the Department was abandoned in 1976, and the Primary/Infant sections progressively integrated. This was consistent with the concept of schooling as a continuing experience for students from Kindergarten to Year 12.

(b) The central administration was progressively changed to a functional structure. Directorates were established in Studies, Industrial Relations, Personnel, Properties, etc. A Policy Support Unit was established and a community Relations Unit developed.

(c) To support the work of schools, and to enhance the skills and effectiveness of classroom teachers, the consultancy service was expanded in major ways between 1977 and 1988. Prior to 1977, there were 40 consultants - this number peaking in the mid

eighties at about 500, largely assigned to Regions. A significant number of these consultants remain in place in 1991.

(d) The operational mode for formulating departmental advice on policy, developing guidelines and procedures and generally managing the administration has been changed progressively to a corporate mode. For some years prior to 1976 Regional Directors met as a group with other senior staff from the Head Office. Since 1976 these meetings became more frequent, more formal and more effectively integrated into the overall operations of management.

Meetings with Principals of schools were and are held regularly at District, Regional and Central/State wide levels. Through these meetings Principals gained direct access to education administrators at all levels.

In addition, policy and planning structures were enhanced by the establishment of a Policy Support Unit and the production and dissemination of a range of key documents such as 'Corporate Goals and Practices' Corporatisation of the Department's management has been evident for over two decades.

Proliferation of Agencies

As the Department of Education divested itself of activities, developed a regionalized operation and changed its central structure to a functional format, there was a proliferation of other agencies, initiated at the State and Commonwealth level, all claiming and gaining quite detailed on-going roles in forming and/or reviewing policies and procedures for school level education. These agencies (at the State level) included the Ministry for Education, the Ethnic Affairs Commission, the Auditor-General, the Disabilities Council, the Education Commission, the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee, the Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment, the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group and the Anti-Discrimination Board. These were additional to the many agencies of the Commonwealth Government, and additional to the State level statutory agencies in which the Department participated, such as the Boards setting curriculum and examinations for secondary education.

Against this background, in 1990-91 there are initiatives being taken and proposals advanced for a more uniform and national approach to education, with common curriculum, common credentialling of student achievement, common benchmarks for teacher's salaries - perhaps later, even a Federal award, greater portability of teachers academic awards and

commonality in career paths and promotions structures. Dialogue with all of these agencies has, of necessity, been a centralised activity.

Non-Government Schools

Prior to 1987, non-government schools were required to meet certain conditions for registration. They also were eligible for per capita grants and government subsidies. Post primary students in these schools were not required to meet the conditions of the two Statutory Boards responsible for Secondary Education unless they were candidates for the award of the School Certificate and Higher School Certificate.

The Education and Public Instruction Act 1987 made it necessary for all non-government schools providing education at the secondary level to meet the requirements of the Board of Secondary Education (which had replaced the two Statutory Boards) with registration now being the ultimate responsibility of the Minister, directly or through his/her control over the making of regulations.

With a change of government in 1988, certain sectors of the non-government schools sought to have this 'tighter control' over their activities repealed and to return to the previous situation where non-government schools should have the freedom to be registered without having to meet the requirements for accreditation if they did not wish their students to receive the Board's Certificates. This view has been affirmed in the 1990 legislation.

With the current reorganisation of the education portfolio, following the reviews by Scott and Carrick, existing functions relating to non-government schools and systems previously the responsibility of the Department of School Education have been transferred to the Ministry of Education. Thus, some long-standing arrangements between the Department and the non-government sector through curriculum development, inservice training and funding of per capita grants will be changed. The Ministry is now, in 1990, the agency having responsibility for policy relating to the funding of non-government schools. The Department of School Education is just another education system, to be seen alongside the Catholic and other systemic educational providers.

The Management Review

The Hon Dr Terry Metherell, MP, Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, announced the appointment in April 1988 of a Management Review to examine all aspects of his portfolio. The

Review commenced its work in late June 1988. The Terms of Reference for the Review were as follows:

(i) Review operational structures within the Departments of Education and TAFE and the Ministry of Education and Youth Affairs in terms of their efficiency and effectiveness in achieving their purposes and government goals.

(ii) Review administrative arrangements including relationships at regional level in the Departments of Education and TAFE.

(iii) Review relationships at the central level between the Department of Education, Department of TAFE and the Ministry of Education and Youth Affairs.

(iv) Identify desirable relationships between the Education portfolio and the employment and training functions in the Department of Industrial Relations and Employment.

The Director of the Review was Dr Brian Scott, a leading businessman and consultant who has been previously involved in a number of reviews relating to public education in Australia.

The Management Review maintained an independent office with a small core staff. It took a consultative approach to its task through on-site visits, interviews and liaison, and special workshops. The Review drew upon nearly 400 submissions made to it by interested groups and individuals.

The Management Review of the Education Portfolio in NSW resulted in the publication of a number of reports to the Minister. The two Reports which focused on school education were *Schools Renewal* (an independent briefing report by the Director of the Management Review, June 1989) and *School-Centred Education*, (Management Review, March 1990). These Reports are now being implemented, except that in mid-1991 the Greiner Government announced the abolition of 800 positions from the Central Executive of 1100 positions.

For reasons of brevity and accuracy in describing the changes to the administration of education in NSW, the authors have quoted extensively from the first of these reports. The second report contains much more detail, including documentation of perceptions which supported the changes recommended and the list of consultants who contributed to the Review.

A Changing Perspective

Dr Brian Scott described the changing context of public school education in NSW as follows:

> For over 100 years, management of the State school system has been the responsibility of the Department of Education (originally the Department of Public Instruction). During that time, the Department's operations have adjusted to enormous changes in student population and locations, and in parent and community expectations of education.
>
> The social, economic and technological environment of schools has literally been transformed. Further major changes are imminent. It is time to ensure that schools in the future will be capable of reflecting all of the modern potential for improving children's universal access to quality education.
>
> Making schools educationally effective and efficient organisations is therefore the prime aim of the Review's strategy for reform. It follows that the Department's administrative structures and procedures should support the school.

In the context of Dr Scott's remarks, the authors of this paper point out that the 1970s saw emphasis on social issues in schools, funding being provided in many cases through the Commonwealth Schools Commission, whereas the 1980s saw a change in direction towards more definitive curriculum content and appropriate support for and monitoring of curriculum in schools.

Dr Scott recommended as follows:

> **Empowering schools for renewal**
>
> There is a long-standing and deeply-held belief among administrators of the State education system that it provides for all students on an equitable basis. The belief is called on to justify many policies, systems and programs introduced on a State-wide, across-the-board basis.
>
> On the evidence, the Review has concluded that it is simply not true that students all over the State have access to the same education: the quality of education provision varies greatly from region to region, district to district, and school to school.
>
> The review recommends:

The State system should not only recognise that variations between schools exist; it should encourage and expect schools to be different at the same time fostering excellence and ensuring that deficiencies in quality and provision are corrected.

The Schools Renewal Strategy gives schools the power to bring about dynamic grassroots change, to take the necessary educational and administrative decisions to improve the quality of teaching and learning, and to assist teachers to reach a much greater degree of professional achievement.

It does this:

- By giving schools much greater control over their own resources; and
- By providing system support for school-based development.

Turning the organisation downside up

Focussing power and resources in the schools entails fundamental changes to the way the education system is organised.

The existing structure of the Department of Education is generally perceived as a 'top down' form with authority heavily concentrated at Head Office.

The Management Review believes this hierarchical structure should be replaced by one which puts the school at the centre of a decentralised support structure.

The Management Review recommends that:

- A decentralised basis of organisation structure needs to be adopted, whereby decisions and actions take place as near to the school as possible, consistent with sound principles of educational administration.

There are important consequences of this recommendation:

Head Office Staff Resources

The number of departmental staff concentrated in what has been known as Head Office needs to be greatly reduced - by more than half. Those who remain should mainly focus on policy and planning.

The Review also recommends that:

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- The reduced Head office should, in future, become known as the Central Executive.

Regional Resources

Some former Head Office resources would be deployed in the Regions. Under the new proposals, the Regions would have significantly expanded management responsibilities and the size of their administrations would require moderate increases. However, regional staff would be charged with decentralising functions and decision-making to the schools to the greatest degree possible. In no way would the Regions become mini-Head Office bureaucracies.

Education Resource Centres

In a major new initiative, the Review recommends that:

- About 40 new support and access units for teachers and school communities (about four per region) should be established throughout the State. These units, to be called Education Resource Centres, should be typically located within one hour's travel of local schools and would be resources to give strong professional support for principals and teachers.

Under the Schools Renewal Strategy, schools would assume, over a three-year period, greatly increased discretion over two essential resources - people and money. As a consequence, principals and their executive staff would be able to guide the future of their schools much more directly and progressively.

Each school should develop its own Renewal Plan as the basis for its on-going program of school improvement and professional development.

An individual school's Renewal Plan would be a simple document outlining a program of action for achieving the school's agreed educational goals and priorities over five years. The plan would include indicative resourcing levels, both financial and staffing, together with a yearly evaluation program.

While the principal would clearly have overall responsibility for development and execution, the Renewal Plan should reflect the aspirations and intentions of

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executive, teaching and other support staff as well as parents and the community.

The School Renewal Plan should provide important input to the Regional Plan and thus to the Department's overall planning process. Ultimately this process will form the basis of a new service-wide performance budgeting approach.

School Personnel should also be able to choose the type and level of professional development and skills training which best support their plan. As well, they should be able to purchase important goods and services and to add to or modify the school's facilities.

The outcomes of the School Renewal Plan - that is, the school's performance in achieving its goals - should be published annually in a School Report.

School budgets should be introduced on a progressive basis for all schools in the State over a three-year period. Appropriate school staff, including the principal, must receive the necessary prior training in financial management and budgeting techniques.

To this end, school budgeting will need to have these features:

(i) Within the total resources available to the Department through the State budgetary process, each school should be allocated a specific annual budget in money terms - a so-called global budget - calculated on a needs basis;

(ii) School budgets would initially be closely based on present levels of departmental expenditure and then progressively should come to reflect particular circumstances. There would be immediate gains from more flexible use of existing funding. In addition, special needs and entitlements would be met from regional funds and, when applicable, from dedicated Commonwealth or State funds.

Global budgets for each school year should be made known well before the start of that school year.

Audited annual reporting should be required for each school.

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School Staffing

Schools have traditionally been staffed centrally from a State-wide pool of teachers and public servants.

A transfer system has long been in place whereby teachers who accept postings to remote or 'undesirable' locations win transfer points for faster promotion and transfer to 'desirable' locations later on. The Government has now decided, November, 1990, that the transfer points system will be retained.

The Review recommends the following changes to school staffing arrangements be implemented on a 'phase-in' basis within five years:

(i) Principals should be recruited on an open application basis for a fixed term of five years. Each Region's chief executive should be primarily responsible for making appointments which achieve the best fit between school needs and principal capabilities. Community involvement should increasingly be sought in selection processes, as in other school policy issues.

(ii) Principals should be primarily responsible for selecting their own executive staff by advertising across the State and then participating in the selection process. (For an interim period, both transfer applicants and promotion candidates may need to be considered).

(iii) Subsequently, all other teachers should be selected by the principal in association with a senior regional officer on the basis of merit, with appropriate skills and experience as well as assessment reports being considered. Appeals should be considered only on grounds of due process.

(iv) Within broad indicative categories based on student enrolments, location, etc., principals should be able to determine the composition of their staffing complement, including non-teaching staff.

(v) New and comprehensive staff assessment systems should be developed by the new Human Resources Division in Central Executive. The system should

be discussed at Region and school levels, pilot programs organised, and a communications network established.

Flexibility will be needed in attracting teachers to the comparatively small number of schools which are difficult to staff, so that teachers in these schools are adequately rewarded and assured of relocation at the end of their appointment period.

The Management Review recognises that these proposals represent a radical change in the way NSW State Schools are staffed. Radical change, if imposed too rapidly, can be very destabilizing. For this reason, an implementation strategy based on systematic trialling and evaluation is essential.

Cluster Units

A new kind of schools management unit, based on a 'Cluster' of schools should replace the current District Inspectorate function.

The new cluster management model should give schools maximum support where it will be most effective. By linking clusters directly to schools on one hand and Regions on the other, it also creates a clear line of accountability for school principals.

The arrangement calls for the establishment of up to 16 clusters in a Region, each cluster encompassing about 14 schools. The number of clusters in a particular Region will vary according to the number of enrolments, with boundaries generally following natural geographic and social configurations and primary secondary feeder school arrangements.

Clusters would be smaller than current Districts, providing a more manageable educational and administrative grouping and therefore the opportunity for a much closer, more regular and more mutually supportive professional relationship between the Principal and the Cluster Director.

Leadership of a cluster assumes a vital role in both management and educational leadership under the Schools Renewal Strategy. Specifically, the Management Review recommends that:

The position of Cluster Director should be created as the most senior field executive role in the Department.

Principals of all schools within the Cluster should report directly to the Cluster Director, and the Cluster Director in turn reports directly to the Region's chief executive. Under these arrangements, the Cluster Director would have full accountability for the administrative and educational performance of schools with the Cluster.

Educational Audit

The new structures call for the establishment of a special educational audit function. Educational auditors would have responsibility for ensuring that educational quality is assured on a Department-wide basis by monitoring performance of schools, clusters and Regions. They would thus assume, in a different and much more targetted and effective way, a specifically inspectorial role in relation to government schools...

Regional Support

The Department's 10 regional administrations have in recent years assumed a more active management role in support of schools.

The Review believes that within the overall framework of support for schools, a Region is best able to provide the necessary general planning, professional support and administrative functions to allow schools to operate more efficiently and effectively. It therefore recommends that:

Regional management

Under the Schools Renewal Strategy, each Region would become responsible for overall educational and management performance for all schools within its boundaries. The Regions would have greatly increased authority. Existing structures would be strengthened, reflecting a clear line of accountability from Central Executive to each principal.

Regional staff would assume most of the operating functions currently carried out at Head Office, and simpler systems would be introduced. They would operate with considerably increased autonomy while recognising that, under the Schools Renewal Strategy, they also must delegate operational authority to principals to manage their schools. Principals in turn would become accountable for

performance in line with policy guidelines provided by the Central Executive.

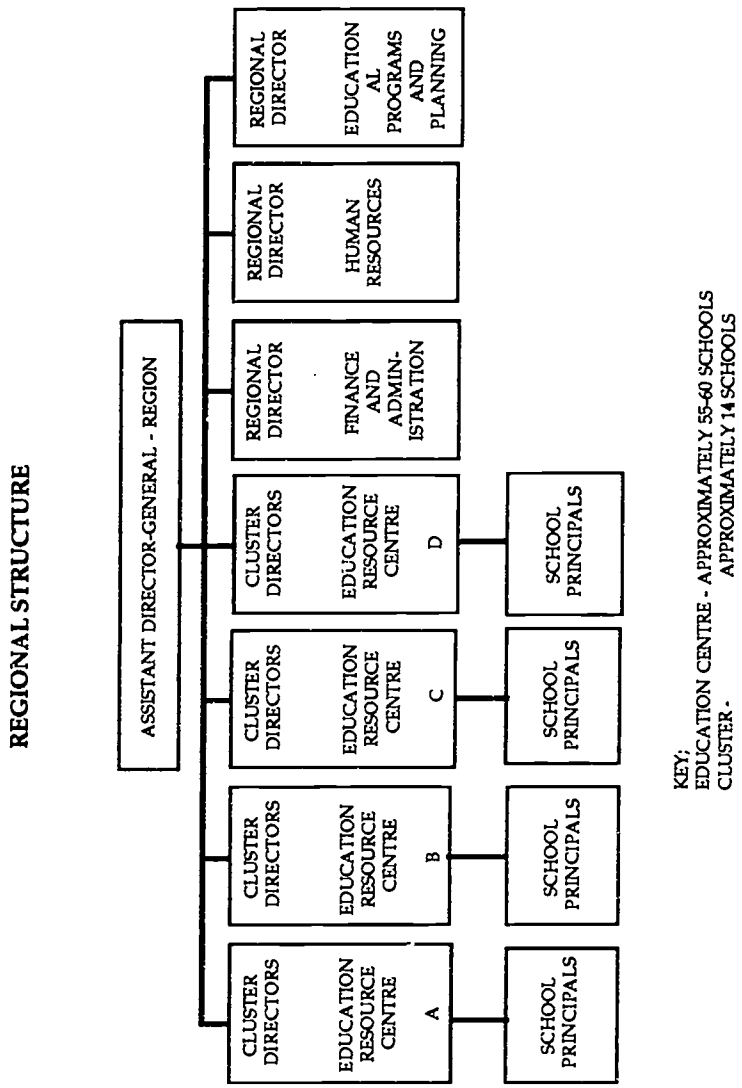
1. The Regional Plan

The blueprint for the development and support of schools in a Region is seen as a Regional Plan. The plan would be based on specific educational and administrative performance goals and prepared in accordance with planning guidelines developed on a consultative basis by the Central Executive. Regional Plans would be developed on a five-year rolling basis but assessed annually as part of the budgetary process.

2. The Regional Budget

Regions would receive a program-based global budget which also would progressively become linked to performance goals. In addition to regional operating costs, the budget would cover, among other things, school budgets, special grants, education programs, professional development programs, student welfare, minor and major capital works (within specific limits), cyclical maintenance, and major plant and equipment purchases. The size of the budget would be determined by the Central Executive, the Regional Plan being one key element in decision-making. The region's financial accounts will be audited annually and become part of an annual report available to the public.

An organisation chart showing the proposed new regional organisation is shown below.



Head Office

The present Head Office of the Department is large, comprising over 2,000 people in 13 directorates and three other units, and it is charged with an exceedingly wide range of administrative, educational and operational tasks.

In the eyes of many teachers and support staff in schools, Head Office is a remote and irrelevant part of their daily professional lives. Its activities are not widely appreciated, nor are the often very earnest endeavours of those who work there.

A considerable proportion of the time of many senior Head Office staff is devoted to gathering and providing information for government. For example, a massive amount of time and effort goes into responding to ministerial mail from the community at large. The Review recognises that many Head Office requests to schools are responding to governmental rather than to departmental demands.

The Review believes there is urgent need, as part of the Schools Renewal Strategy:

- To devolve most operational management to Regions and schools;
- To simplify structures and responsibilities so as to give a clear line of accountability to and from schools;
- To reduce very substantially the resources at the centre: redistributing some to Regions and schools, but also opening up opportunities for education services and support coming from outside;
- To loosen significantly, rigid centrally-decided formulae relating to staffing, budgets and other resources; and
- To link financial and budgetary processes to educational outcomes and performance.

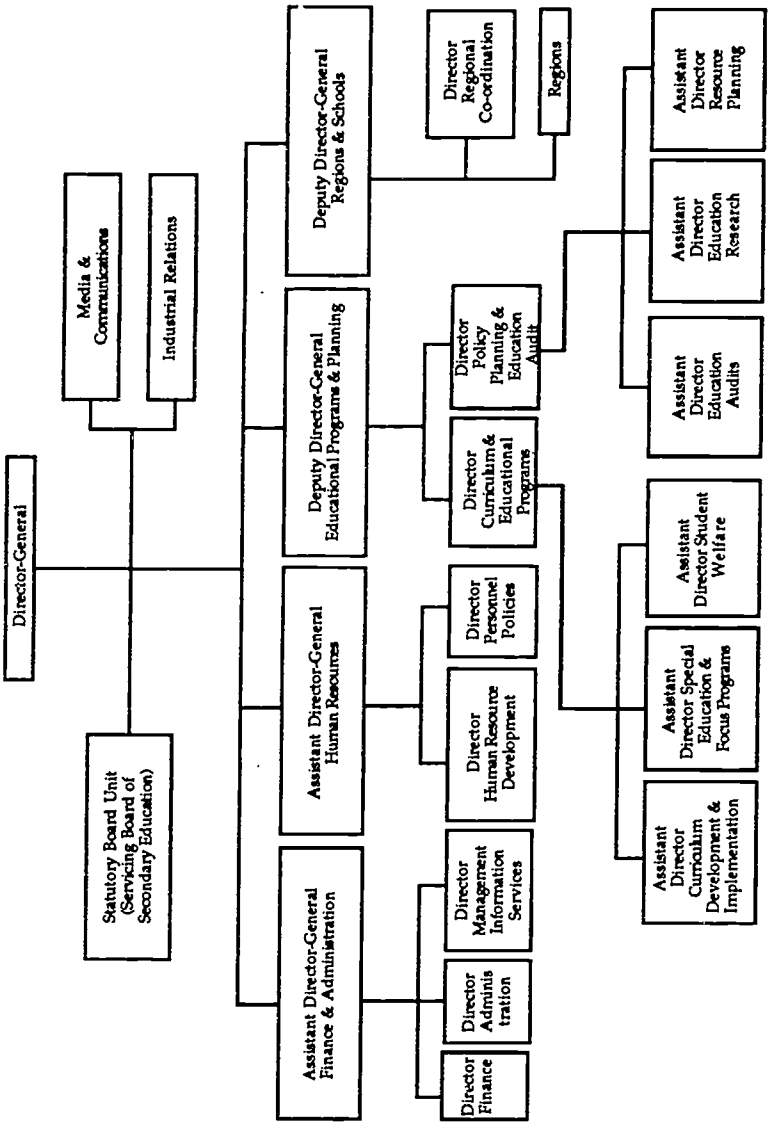
Future role and structure

The Review recommends that:

To support most effectively, the Central Executive should be largely confined to:

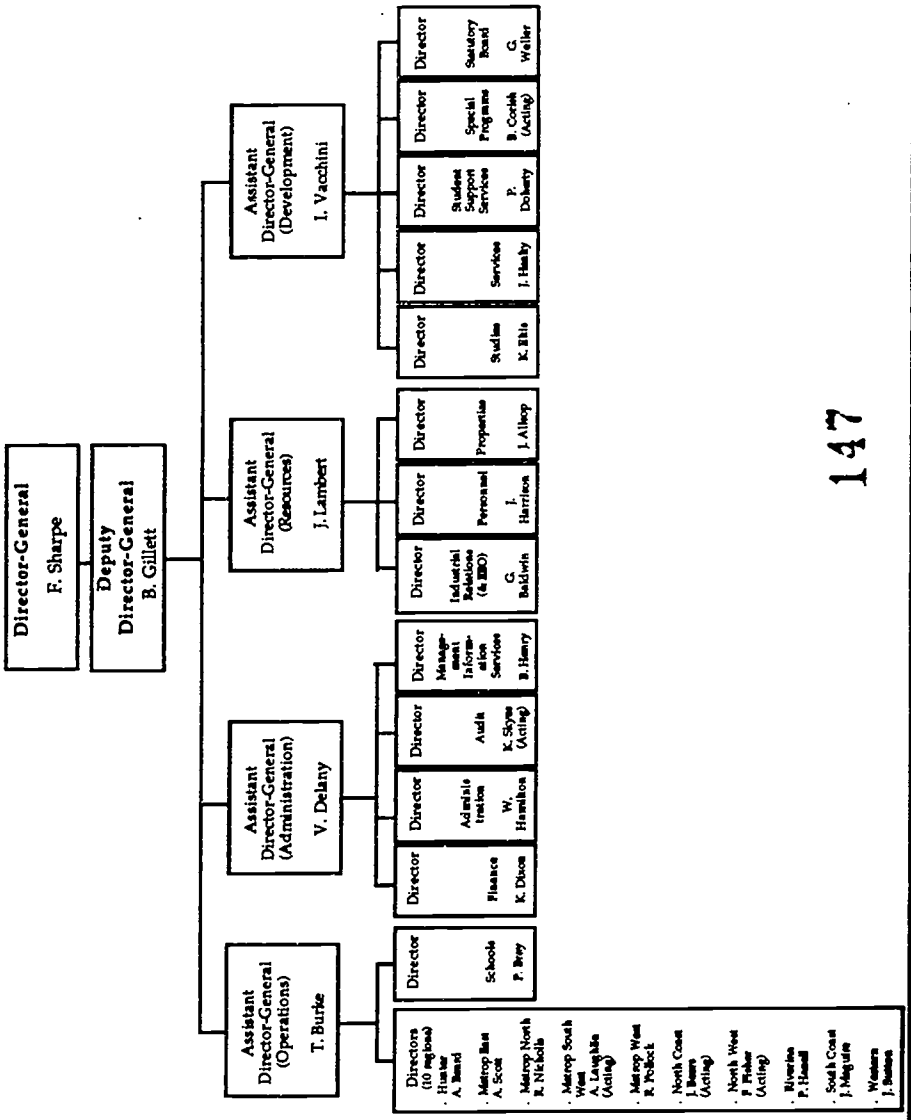
- Policy development and co-ordination;
- Department-wide general management oversight; and
- Corporate planning and co-ordination

CENTRAL EXECUTIVE STRUCTURE OF DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
as proposed by Dr Brian Scott in *Schools Renewal*, Sydney, 1989, p.20



DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION

Senior Executive as at 31 December 1989



Parent and Community Support

Very few school councils have been established in New South Wales: the tradition of local school governance which exists elsewhere in Australia and New Zealand has not developed to any real extent in this State. For this reason, the Review believes that mandatory introduction of school councils in the near future is inadvisable.

Parents and Citizens Associations are already carrying out some functions which fall within the usual charter of school councils. Where this is occurring, it should be expanded in a continuing program to encourage direct participation in school planning and governance. Participation should build to a stronger decision-making role over time.

With the longer term in mind, the Review recommends that:

- The school principals should, within the School Renewal Plan, include initiatives designed to encourage the formation of a School council representing parents, parent and citizen groups, local business and industry and, where considered appropriate, students.

  The Review recognises that in some country and even metropolitan areas, parent and community input into school management might be more appropriately provided at cluster level. In these cases, the Cluster Director should take the initiative in conjunction with the Principals involved.

  The Review believes considerable training and support of potential school councillors is needed before councils can take over a full-scale governance role. It therefore recommends that as an initial step:

- The Department should undertake a State-wide program to promote the establishment of school councils and to familiarise parents and others with the roles and responsibilities involved.

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Committee of Review

In September 1988 the Government announced the commencement of a review of the *Education and Public Instruction Act 1987* and of ways of further improving the quality of education in NSW schools. The Committee of Review, chaired by the Hon. Sir John Carrick and comprising 14 persons representing a wide cross-section of the community, undertook a wide-ranging process of consultation and information gathering. The Department provided the support staff for the Review. The Committee's report was presented to the Government on 5 September 1989.

The findings of the Committee supported the Government's policy of providing choice within the government school system, and also choice for parents between government and non-government schools. The Committee supported the right of parents to choose the best education for their child, without undue government intrusion or interference.

A major recommendation of the Committee was that a K-12 Board of Studies be established to develop curriculum guidelines, to provide advice to the Minister on courses for the School Certificate and the Higher School Certificate and to register schools. Other key recommendations of the Committee included:

- the registration of all schools, government and non-government, by the Board of Studies;
- spot checks of schools at random to ensure that they are meeting the requirements of registration;
- the separation of certification and registration requirements to allow non-government schools to operate within clear curriculum guidelines, even if not seeking to present students for the School Certificate and the Higher School Certificate.

The Committee emphasised the importance of the early childhood years. The Government is to set up a high level task force to report on all relevant aspects of early childhood education.

An Early Childhood Education Unit is to be established in the Department of School Education to provide advice to parents on parenting and to help co-ordinate planning for the development of child-care facilities on school grounds. Among other things the Committee supported:

- a decentralised government school system as recommended in the Scott Report;

- the value of standardised testing programs;
- flexible progression and grouping of students in schools; and
- the provision of specialist high schools within the government school system.

The Carrick Committee also drafted a new Education Bill as an alternative to the existing 1987 Act, which was a revision of the original 1880 and 1916 legislation. The 1880-1916 Acts did not address issues such as freedom of choice, the quality of education, and the rights of parents. The Government used this draft as a starting point for its own Education Reform Bill, the draft of which was tabled in Parliament on 30 November 1989 for consideration by Parliament early in 1990.

Education Reform Act 1990

Following upon the Management Review (Dr Brian Scott) and the committee of Review of NSW Schools (Sir John Carrick) and after taking into account views expressed on the contents of the Draft Bill, the NSW Parliament passed the Education Reform Act 1990. This Act is a very comprehensive and very detailed piece of legislation, with some 130 sectional provisions. It includes items which have featured in previous education legislation in NSW, such as the objects of the Act, attendance of children at school, the establishment and registration of schools, the structure and membership of a Board of Studies having powers to award Certificates at the School Certificate (Year 10) and the Higher School Certificate (Year 12) level. It also included a number of other provisions which significantly affected school level education and the structure and functions of the Department of School Education. These new provisions included the following:

1. The school curriculum was delineated in legislation for the first time, in terms of key learning areas and minimum curriculum for both primary and secondary schools.

2. The Board of Studies assumed curriculum and examining responsibilities in relation to primary and secondary education, and notwithstanding Dr Scott's Report viewpoint, was established as a corporation (external to the Department in all ways) with a full time President.

3. Provisions for basic skills testing of school students.

4. Establishment of a School Closures Review Committee.

5. Approval of systems of non-government schools (not just individual schools as in previous legislation).

6. Registration for home schooling.

7. Conscientious objection to registration.

The Act enhanced the powers of the Minister, for example in relation to content of courses of study, and in selecting the membership of the Board. It also provided quite detailed procedural guidelines for administrative actions, including actions to be taken by the Minister and the Board in particular but rare circumstances. The governance of school level education was more explicitly located at Minister and state Government level.

In terms of this Act, the Department of School Education could be seen as just one of the education systems in NSW, responsibilities for curriculum being largely in the hands of the Board of Studies, now supported from within the Ministry of Education, Youth and Women's Affairs.

Ministry for Education and the Department of TAFE

Following a Management Review of the Ministry for Education, several functions, relating to adult education were removed and transferred to the Department of Technical and Further Education. This latter Department has now (1990) been changed into a Commission and relocated in another portfolio with another Minister, who has responsibilities for Industrial Relations and Training.

The Ministry for Education, originally established as a co-ordinating unit for a diverse portfolio, to host support services to the Minister and to departments concerned with Education, TAFE, and Higher Education, in 1990 retains functions concerned mainly with school level education. However, it includes relatively small units relating to Youth, Womens' Affairs, Properties, Planning and Higher Education; the latter having decreased in size commensurate with the new structures involving the combining of institutions. The Minister is now the Minister for School Education & Youth Affairs, while the Ministry for Education is the Ministry for Education, Youth & Womens Affairs. As indicated above, it hosts the Board of Studies which has responsibility for Curriculum in all schools.[1]

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1 While this paper was in preparation, the NSW Labor Party stated (on 22 April 1991) that it favours abolishing the Ministry and returning functions to the Department of School Education. Two days later the Minister for School Education announced a rationalization of

Excellence Equity

In November 1989, the then Minister issued a white paper entitled *New South Wales Curriculum Reform* containing 79 proposals. Many of these have subsequently been incorporated in the Education Reform Act or are at various stages of implementation.

Ideology

Although it has not been expressed in the following ways in the Reports produced by Dr Brian Scott and Sir John Carrick, there is an ideology underlying many recent reforms to government activities, including education, in a number of nations and states. This ideology is seen by some observers to be more a matter of faith rather than a response to evidence of effectiveness. The ideology includes views such as the following:

1. The role of the private sector should be enhanced, that sector providing the services wherever possible. This sector is assumed to be more cost effective and efficient than the public sector.

2. The role of government should be a minimum one, with explicit controls and a minimum involvement in operational management. Existing public enterprises should be privatised and/or public sector activities scaled down to minimum levels.

3. Where public sector/government activity is retained, it should be concerned with aspects such as policy development and promulgation, setting of standards, allocation of priorities and funds and reviews of outcomes measured against objectives.

In relation to school level education, this ideology may lead to a structural model which resembles that now retained for some government assisted non-systemic non-government schools.

Assessment of Changes

It is quite apparent from press reports and from contact with people involved at a variety of levels of responsibility that there are supporters and opponents of the new administrative structures for school

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functions, a reduction in Ministry responsibilities and a relocation of some staff to within the Department of School Education.

level education in NSW. Supporters include people who viewed the previous arrangements, with a plethora of agencies intervening, as undesirable. Some of the concerns about the new arrangements are career personal, some are matters of high principle and some relate to longer term implications and educational outcomes. Some opposition may have arisen from the association of these structural changes with other education policy initiatives which have been taken by the NSW (Greiner) Government. Teachers seem to support the stated objectives of the NSW Government to provide 'quality education in Government schools' and to 'maintain the quality of teaching', but they have difficulty in reconciling these objectives with other government decisions, such as increasing class sizes and having more composite classes. Teacher morale is said to be low and this has been confirmed and documented by Dr Brian Scott, in his Report. The long term problem of teacher losses through resignation, particularly in key learning areas, continue apace and special initiatives are being taken to recruit staff.

After a period of intense and wide public protest early in the life of the (Greiner) Government, interest groups now appear to be waiting to assess the impact of the restructuring. Their close involvement and consultation in policy development during the late 1970s and 1980s resulted in a number of proposals for change, such as through the formation of school councils in 1974, 1975, and 1984, and through activities of the Education Commission. Very little change in these matters eventuated. There may be some cynicism about the reality of change as it effects the public and teacher involvement in decision making processes.

High expectations of involvement and in some cases very active participation by teachers and parents in the administration of specific educational programs characterised the 1970s and 1980s. These levels of involvement have declined markedly and may in part explain the perceived lack of responsiveness to recent proposals.

In the view of the authors it is too early yet to form an assessment of outcomes of the changes. There have been announcements of reductions in staff involved in administration within the Department of School Education (by some 1,000 positions) and the enhancement of resources at the Regional and School levels. There appears to be a move to give schools more freedom to use those resources which are available to them. There have been statements made that the sale of surplus property will be used to finance changes, but most proposed sales have not proceeded. The reforms now being implemented may require the provision of additional resources as well as a reallocation of priorities.

As for the structural changes, Dr Brian Scott says his 'recommendations resemble, in a number of respects, those adopted by Labor Governments in other States and in New Zealand' (Page XIV of Foreward to *School Centred Education*). The authors agree with this

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statement by Dr Scott, and add that this model of governance and management, 'a new centralism', is emerging in many developed nations.

The operational system being advanced is usually held to be based upon management theory and practice drawn from the private sector. It is presented in a variety of forms as 'devolution', as 'self-governing schools', 'as autonomous units', as 'bringing decision making as close as possible to be action', as 'empowering teachers and parents', and as 'removing the dead hand and incubus of bureaucracy', 'turning the organisational design upside down' or a 'system to support schools not control them'. The new system places great emphasis upon outcomes - measurement of performance and on program identification so that funding inputs and outcomes may be related. The rhetoric and the realities do not fit together easily.

Characteristics of the new system, world wide are as follows:

1. Establishment of quite specific goals and objectives by a small group, usually in or close to the legislature. Legislatures, Governors (USA) or Ministers for Education (Australia) have ever increasing and direct control. Power is more concentrated, less dispersed, despite some rhetoric to the contrary.

2. Much more detailed prescription than hereto-fore of parameters of educational activity through legislation (even the dimensions of and time allocations for curriculum may be enshrined in law) through detailed, explicit, comprehensive policy guidelines, categorical/condition laden grants of resources or withdrawal of resources.

3. Explicit accountability mechanisms for checking, assessing and evaluating and rewarding acceptable performance by schools and by individual practitioners, such as by public testing programs, program evaluations, personnel assessment/promotion/selection procedures, and even (state or national) performance indicators.

4. Confining the participation in policy making in education by parents, teachers, and students mainly to a range of choices at the school site level and the implementation level of operation This is often seen as a dimunition of the role of parents and teachers and other groups in the identification of needs and the formulation of broad educational policies. Governance of education is politically centralized, management in education is intended to be more decentralized with measures to ensure compliance.

5. Educators especially school principals trained in curriculum and pedagogy are envisaged largely as site managers, the curriculum

and pedagogy being controlled by non-educators, through remote and specific means.

In the view of the authors a number of important issues need attention. They include the following:

1. Whether this new centralism is more or less centralised than those structures which have existed in former years.

2. Whether the new structures are more or less controlling, constraining and even more rigid mechanisms than those of the past.

3. Whether this new system has sufficient flexibility to respond in market sensitive ways to changing social/economic/educational contexts.

4. Whether the new system's conceptual model, drawn from private sector management theory, has legitimate and enduring application to an education function which operates in fluid and overtly political environments.

5. Whether the increased politicization of education, with its concomitant, political centralization, is in the longer term interests of individuals and this nation.

6. Whether the structures adopted for the delivery of school level education have validity not only in terms of ideology but in terms of experience and expectations. By way of example, it is noted that over some decades, in New South Wales and other places, most non-government schools as well as government schools have moved **towards** an integrated systemic operation rather than **towards** 'autonomous units'. Over this same period, regionalization, decentralization and devolution have all been adopted to varying degrees by government and non-government school sectors.

7. Whether a situation where successive governments, or even just successive and well-intentioned Ministers, introduce reforms differing to those of predecessors, is one which provides a consistent line of development. In this context, it should be noted that the initiatives of Scott and Carrick in New South Wales have been accepted and implemented by the State Government but are even now, in mid 1991, subject to review and redirection.

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8. Whether the quality of teaching and the learning outcomes of students are enhanced by the reforms adopted.

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Chapter 8

IDEALS TO ACTION: CORPORATE MANAGEMENT WITHIN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Kerry Moir

Preface

For nearly two decades the Northern Territory has been a laboratory for change in education and its administration. In fact, Territorians sometimes observe, when faced with major changes announced in states and other territories via the seemingly inevitable 'glossies' that accompany them, 'so what'? For a variety of reasons, the Territory has been in a position to have tried most of the innovations and has occasionally been far enough advanced to be tactically withdrawing from some of their excesses just when states or other territories were taking them up.

Many factors explain the susceptibility of the Territory to change in educational management over the last twenty years. Up until 1973, South Australia controlled the schools in non-Aboriginal centres and the philosophies favoured by the various South Australian Directors-General, impacted strongly on administrative structures used in the Territory. The 1960s Director-General Alby Jones' philosophy of 'Authority and Freedom' was in vogue until it was superseded by the progressive views propounded by the last two educational administrators South Australia sent to the Territory, John Steinle and Hedley Beare.

The Commonwealth connection was another major factor. The Commonwealth had money and since the Territory represented a relatively insignificant area of expenditure, it was generous in its allocation of funds. The 1970s was the period when the Commonwealth moved into school expenditure in a big way, driven to do so both by political imperatives and by progressive attitudes. So, despite the claims of later Territory governments, when the Commonwealth moved out of Territory education in 1979, it left behind a well-funded system marked particularly by school facilities and services which were the envy of the rest of Australia, with the exception of the ACT. Moreover, the Canberra bureaucrats, with no experience themselves of actually running an education system, were inclined to accept the advice of the idealistic

professionals in the NT who were accountable only to Canberra and not to any local political reality.

Perhaps the best examples of what followed from this mixture are to be found in that novel creation of the 1970s - the Commonwealth Teaching Service - which set out with gusto to meet teacher aspirations, something it was well able to do since it had no responsibility or accountability itself for the education of children, only for the welfare of the teachers in the Service. For nearly a decade, the Territory assigned everyone below the top two administrative levels (Director and Assistant Director) to the four Bands of the Teaching Service whose highest level was Secondary Principal. Peer assessment flourished and a master-teacher category was introduced.

Commonwealth politics did intervene when Aboriginal education was absorbed into the new Northern Territory Education Division of the Department of Education in 1973. It was part of the general mainstreaming of Aboriginal issues following the national referendum which so decisively established the Commonwealth's responsibility in this area. Some might argue that in the long-term this has not been without its unfortunate effects since political realities have favoured closer attention to the demands of the more powerful individuals and groups in society, to the neglect of Aborigines. Even so, Aboriginal education in the Territory has led the nation with such developments as bilingual education, training of Aboriginal teachers and Aboriginalisation of school management and control to its credit.

The political demand for innovation in Territory education accelerated when control of the education portfolio passed to the Northern Territory Government in 1979. The new Government was anxious to show its mettle and for a few years at least its novice politicians were marked by a degree of idealism. The small size of Territory electorates and of the community as a whole, however, meant that Territory education was very early subject to the so-called politicisation or ministerialisation of its administration that has also come to characterise education systems in the Territories and in the states.

Despite political constraints, the personnel managing Territory education have been innovative. They have had only a small system to work with and so directions have been easily changed. Despite the vast distances between settlements, towns and cities, they have had good field communications - largely due to extensive use of the telephone as an administrative tool. In 1979 they had the opportunity to establish a new government education system - one that was unusual in Australia in that it was unencumbered by the baggage of tradition, entrenched bureaucracy and a self-perpetuating teacher cadre which had gone to school in the system, been trained in the system, taught in the system and eventually risen to manage the system.

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Rather, the Territory's teachers and educational administrators were a diverse lot. Open advertisement, nationally and internationally, meant appointees were drawn from a multitude of backgrounds and there was no ingrained pattern of behaviour to characterise the system which itself had no single culture and few myths to sustain one. Top positions did go to outsiders. Dr Jim Eedle was recruited from Britain but had a history of work in Africa. His successor, Mr Syd Saville, had been an agriculture teacher in early days, but had made a career in primary industries administration in Papua-New Guinea. The third Secretary was Mr Geoff Spring, an ex-Queensland school system person who came to the Territory via the Commonwealth's Curriculum Development Centre.

One other factor needs to be remembered when the Northern Territory system is placed under scrutiny. It is small scale only in terms of numbers of people. Otherwise it is full scale and has to provide the same range of services as the largest education system in Australia. It has to do so on the huge canvas of 1.348M square kilometres in a context which offers many unique challenges such as a quarter of the population being indigenous, a sparse and fragile infrastructure, a climate ranging from the tropics to the deserts and Asian neighbours closer than major Australian cities.

Focus

In the decade of the 1980s, corporate management was a topic which attracted much positive attention in the Northern Territory public sector. While the term 'corporate' was much overused and came to be applied to a range of management situations, it was generally accepted to embrace those which allowed the various branches of a corporate structure to have direct input into the decision making process, even if that did not entail a vote on the final conclusion reached by management. Proponents argued that a corporate approach which could allow staff to be organic parts of a corporate whole and imbue them with a holistic vision of the goals of the organisation, could result in increased efficiency, accountability and a sense of participation in the decision making process for members of the sector, despite the retention of a pyramidic management structure. Critics expressed fears that in adopting a private-sector model, real human-service issues would take second place to political or privately-oriented ones in the public service department involved. Others wondered whether new style 'managers' were really 'managing' and whether a change to a corporate model would preoccupy decision makers and prevent objective responses to difficult questions.

The decade of the 1990s has opened with a public shift by Government away from the practice of encouraging input into decision-making processes by members of the public. The Government has made

cuts to staffing, programmes and to public service functions, without resorting to the consultation processes it carefully set up in the 1980s. Whether this is a temporary response to a drastic financial situation by the ruling Northern Territory Country Liberal Government, or a longer term dismantling of what might now be seen as the cosmetic participative decision-making approach the Government favoured in the 1980s, remains to be seen.

This paper adopts an historical approach to provide a backdrop to help observers to understand the current situation. It follows the transition from dependency to self-government made by the Northern Territory in the 1970s; the gradual breaking down of old civil service traditions and their replacement by new methods of policy development in 1980s; and the advent of participative and locally based decision-making processes suited to the needs of a developing area like the Territory. To illustrate the transition, the education service is examined, from the time it began to take shape as a locally-run operation in the mid 1970s, through the series of policy and administrative changes of the 1980s which filled out the skeleton, up to the current situation in the early 1990s, where extraneous pressures have placed some of the central decision making processes in a state of flux.

From Civil Service to Corporate Management in the Northern Territory Public Sector

A corporate management structure is one which has the capacity for public and employee input into policy making. Such a structure has an aura of democratic morality and is therefore attractive to many policy makers today. It is a long way from the management style used prior to the 1980s in the Territory. That was modelled on the type of bureaucratic dictatorship which was popular in the Nineteenth Century and intruded into the Territory through the agency of various state and Commonwealth Governments until self government was granted to the area in 1978.

The colonial nature of our early administration was a direct result of the fact that responsibility for the Territory resided with the Commonwealth. The Territory was grouped with a number of other dependent areas for the purposes of central control and administration. Various Commonwealth Government departments managed aspects of that responsibility and Agents, acting on behalf of successive Governments, interpreted Federal Acts and their associated policies as they applied to the Territory. Departmental Directors did not usually discuss issues with local officers or with members of the public, but had absolute control over implementation of policy and programs.

In relation to instructions from Canberra, the chief civil servants were expected to display political neutrality and intellectual detachment

while carrying out government policy. At that time, governments were not primarily concerned with serving the public. Rather, the prevailing ethos was a notion of bureaucrats providing personal support to ministers, similar to the idea of service to the Crown – an idea spread to the colonies via the British Civil Service. Great importance was attached to the skills of public servants in: protecting the Minister; lessening his political exposure; and providing advice on steering a course between conflicting interest groups[1] (Baker, 1989).

By the 1980s, colonial-type administration no longer sat comfortably with politicians, the people such departments were supposed to service, or the self-appointed monitoring body for public sector performance - the local media. The public expected politicians to: be responsive; set policy directions for departments which came under their particular umbrella; provide opportunities for the constituents in their electorates to have input into policy formulation; monitor the activities of departments to ensure they functioned according to policy and budget guidelines set by Cabinet or by the Commonwealth. Politicians had to accept that in small electorates (often with less than 2000 electors), like those in the Northern Territory, they were visible, accessible and held accountable for what happened in their sphere of influence, and a very few votes could reverse an election result.

For bureaucrats, the spread of the corporate management style into the public sector diminished opportunities to set and pursue policy according to their personal professional priorities. Wider considerations impinged on departmental independence, and public accountability was the new byword. A variety of checks were accepted as necessary to measure bureaucrats' performance as managers once freed from old constraints, such as Public Service Boards, and to assess the effectiveness of the management processes in use in their departments.

Politicians, worried about public perceptions, gradually increased their involvement in actual decision making and interpretation of policy. They could not afford to let the public think that corporate management would lead them to hand over control of the direction of a department to its workforce. With the pressures of small electorates, they had to demonstrate they were in control and make their departments responsive to various Territory or Federal Government priorities. Consequently, as the 1980s progressed, internal reviews and 'outside' (by inference, unbiased) consultants, became familiar features of public service

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1 The Northcote-Trevelyan Report of 1854 established guiding principles for the senior civil service at a time when central government was trying to create a legal and economic policy framework within which to manage its relations with the states and to guide the activities of private business.

departmental activity in the Territory. In this respect the Territory was not different to the rest of Australia as in the States, the ministerialisation of departmental administration also proceeded apace and became a feature of the decade.

Northern Territory managers in the 1980s adopted the market orientation and metaphor and learnt how to survive scrutiny and to avoid public outcry. They showed they were open to change by being prepared to implement recommendations made as part of reviews, thereby demonstrating that their department could: adapt to the a private sector type of corporate management structure; live with buzz words like 'accountability' and 'efficiency'; learn to share power and to accept that politicians were seeking a more active, 'chief-executive' type role in the departments within their portfolios. Where bureacracies had operated on the basis of inflexible rules, the new emphasis on responsiveness meant rules had to be made to be broken.

The first set of Northern Territory politicians, elected in the initial flush of freedom from Canberra, attempted to display political neutrality in setting up the public service. Priorities for politicians changed in the 1980s as they experienced the realities of political survival and concentrated on fostering the development of 'financial management initiatives which stress devolution of responsibility, performance indicators and accountability' (Hawkes, 1989).

Ministers in the 1990s have already discovered that deteriorating economic conditions have sent the management pendulum swinging back to the pre-self-government days. Priorities have changed again and Ministers have had to drop both idealism and the corporate mode in the face of a new phenomena - the Estimates Review Committee[2]. Chaired by the Chief Minister, it was set up to scrutinise all public service functions and budgets in order to slash public-sector spending in response to an unprecedented projected debt level.

In carrying out its tasks, the Committee reverted to an essentially autocratic management style, with the Chief Minister expecting Ministers, and they in turn expecting departmental heads, to work to the old civil service mode of unquestioning compliance with the demands of the current process of management, including secrecy provisions and a circumvention of consultative mechanisms. This is the Chief Minster's response to the economic crisis and is his way of forging a new 'partnership' between Government and the public sector in order that the Territory's economic future 'can be assured' into the twenty first century. The Estimates Review Committee, acting outside usual departmental channels, is seen by the Chief Minister as the remedy for recalcitrant

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2 The Estimates Review Committee was set up at the end of 1990 and reported in April 1991

Secretaries, and even Ministers who have not saved enough money by cutting staff and programs.

History of Administration of Northern Territory Education prior to Self-government

The period prior to 1978, when the Northern Territory gained self-government, provided an historical model for the current change in relationship between the Territory Government and the public service. Many of the administrative patterns set up from the mid 1970s into the 1980s reflected Territory Government and public service efforts to move away from colonial-type structures of organisation and management. Northern Territory involvement with ministers and civil servants from Commonwealth and state governments stretched back as far as 1863, when its present name was proclaimed and South Australia accepted responsibility for its governance. The connection with South Australia continued in the community education sphere until 1975, when that state finally severed its ties with the education system in the Northern Territory. The Territory links with the Commonwealth began in 1911 when it assumed general financial and administrative control from South Australia. This entailed ensuring there was an effective public service providing infrastructure and services for the community, including funding educational facilities for main centres and providing a separate education system for Aborigines from 1937 onwards (Northern Territory Department of Education, 1982).

By 1968, the arrangements for the provision and delivery of education to the people of the Territory were: the Northern Territory Education Branch, which was part of the Commonwealth Department of the Interior, took responsibility for building, equipping and maintaining schools in the Territory; South Australia provided teaching and curriculum support; Western Australia set up mechanisms to incorporate the area into its supply chain; Canberra ran specialist Aboriginal education with the help of local welfare personnel (Parish, 1990; Dept of Education and Science, 1971) and a variety of church groups. There was a dual school administrative system with separate welfare (Aboriginal) and community school sections, both led by directors. In 1973, Dr Beare, then Director of the community schools, carried out the amalgamation of the two school systems under the Commonwealth Department of Education at the behest of the new Federal Labor Government, with himself as Director and with Mr J Gallacher (former Director of the Aboriginal Education Branch), assuming the role of Assistant Director of this new Division of the Commonwealth Department of Education (Urvet, 1980). They helped shape a very different education system from the traditional style which had been in place in the Territory and still was

in neighbouring States (Northern Territory Department of Education, 1982).

The need to create a new education system for the Territory was overtaken by events in the early 1970s. In 1970, South Australia announced its intention to end its involvement with education in the Territory by 1975. One reason was a projected shortage of teachers in the coming years and another was the difficulty involved in running a fast-growing system from so far away[3] (Department of Education and Science, 1971; Report on NTTS, 1979). In the same year, the Commonwealth Government announced it had decided to establish a Commonwealth Teaching Service to provide teachers in areas for which it was responsible. The appropriate act was passed in 1972, and included provision for supply of teachers for the Northern Territory (Neal/Radford, 1973).

The establishment of the Commonwealth Teaching Service was a significant event - it was the first new teaching service to be created in Australia since the end of the nineteenth century. It was revolutionary in its philosophy of decentralisation and in its emphasis on power sharing between local groups with a stake in the education process - parents, community members, teachers, students and the central administration. The Commonwealth Teaching Service was led by a Commissioner based in Canberra through the channel of a secretariat located in Darwin. The Commissioner's representatives, in turn, liaised with the Northern Territory Education Department which had responsibility for all functions except some teacher personnel matters (Report on NTTS, 1979).

Unfortunately, within the Northern Territory, the separation of power caused friction. The Teaching Service had full or part responsibility for such personnel functions as recruitment, promotion, discipline and conditions of service. The Education Department was expected to cover matters concerned with: the process of teaching; the deployment of teachers; the administration of personnel; and the provision of facilities, resources and curriculum. The overlap of jurisdiction provided the opportunity for confusion and conflict of loyalties as the Commonwealth Teaching Service saw its role as being much larger than just providing the teachers requested by the Department and adopted processes which inevitably led teacher unions to using it as a power base for leverage against the Authority.

The Commonwealth Teaching Service continued to operate in the Northern Territory even after the 1979 transfer of responsibility for education from Canberra to the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly.

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3 The South Australian decision was influenced by the Karmel Report (1969) which made certain recommendations to use scarce state resources for its own educational purposes.

The first local Minister for Education set up a Working Party to recommend to the Government what philosophy and shape the education service should take (Report on NTTS, 1979). He was, at the time, very keen on participative power-sharing mechanisms and although he did not want a teaching service separate from the public service, he accepted the Working Party's recommendation that the 1970s model of a division of power between the Teaching Service and the Education Department was a desirable allocation of responsibilities within the portfolio.

The 1979 Education Act was quite innovative for its time and besides establishing the basic administrative framework and outlining the powers of the Minister and the Secretary, allowed for an Education Advisory Council to be set up to provide advice direct to the Education Minister. The Government followed up its 1979 Act with a separate Northern Territory Teaching Service Act, passed in 1981 (ibid). This Act was notable for the provision it made for a Teacher Advisory Council, chaired by the Commissioner, with equal representation of union and department interests, and charged with the task of providing advice on a wide range of pertinent matters.

Policy making in the nineteen eighties

The new Government acknowledged the very important role that education should play in the development of the Northern Territory. It was a rapidly expanding responsibility and in 1980 absorbed approximately 40 percent of the Northern Territory budget and one third of its public servants. The importance of the Education Department was acknowledged by the Chief Minister allocating it as a single portfolio to one of the five Cabinet Members, in preference to combining it with another portfolio or vesting control in a statutory authority. It was argued that an authority might not be as representative of community interests as the Territory Cabinet and, even more worrying, might come to be dominated by 'bureaucrats, professionals and vested lay interests' (Urvet, 1980).

This was a decision crucial to the future direction of education in the Territory. By placing control of education in the political sphere, the Government signalled its intention to ensure that education would remain subject to the wishes and priorities of Government (Education Advisory Group, 1978). In 1980 the Northern Territory still had many 'frontier' characteristics, and the Government presented the argument to the public that it needed to keep control of educational policy so that it could design a system capable of providing the best educational opportunities.

Financial arrangements made with the Commonwealth on transfer of the function needed to reflect the Northern Territory's special disadvantages including: vast distances between major settlements; trying

climatic conditions; and a small and scattered population and lack of a private education system which could share the costs of providing an educational service (see appendix 1). These were factors which all contributed to the highest per-capita cost in Australia. However, just as the new local Country Liberal Government was taking control of the education service in the Territory, it found Australia in a less comfortable economic position than it had enjoyed in earlier decades. Consequently, the Government faced an uphill battle in securing equitable funding arrangements with the Commonwealth Government (Mathews; 1989).

The Territory Government sought, and won, the assistance of the Commonwealth Grants Commission as an arbiter in its fight to obtain special funding arrangements for education. This request was grudgingly acceded to by the Commonwealth Government and a Memorandum of Understanding, which established the financial arrangements for self-government and the ratifying legislation was signed. It included among its many provisions one that covered education and ensured that the Territory would be eligible to apply for special financial assistance through the Commonwealth Grants Commission on the same basis as a claimant State (ibid).

The Memorandum formed the basis of Northern Territory funding levels until 1987 and, with a flow of money assured, the local Country Liberal Government began to develop educational policies for the 1980s and to set up an administrative structure capable of translating policy into action. The initial leadership in education in the 1980s was provided by Dr James Eedle who had assumed control of the Northern Territory Division of the Commonwealth Department of Education from his predecessors, Dr Hedley Beare and Mr Jim Gallacher, in 1975 (NT Department of Education Annual Reports 1974-1975).

Dr Beare and other educators in the Territory pioneered a new shape for an education administration in 1973-1974 and much of it remained to form the basic structure for the Education Department of the early 1980s because for a time it appealed to the new Minister as a model for corporate management. Dr Beare described the system in his parting report in 1974, as:

> incorporating increased and increasing responsibility for schools and their parent community, incorporating involvement of Principals and staff in the global policy-making for the system, and an administrative design based on functional and service lines rather than on levels of schooling ...' Further he said that 'interchangeability of staff between school, authority and field positions is a reality rather than an idea ...we are working on the frontiers of professionalism...by separating the work of the education authority from the work of a professional career service (the

> CTS) we have been able to tease out some of the entwined strands which have caused problems in Southern School Systems.' (NT Department of Education, Vol 2, No 4, 1974).

Certainly Dr Beare left a system which was very popular with teachers as they had the scope to operate independently, but which concerned administrators who felt unable to control it. Dr Eedle's annual report in 1978 warned teachers that, when the transfer of power to the Northern Territory Legislature was made, the new Government would not allow schools to 'drift away into individual, independent school republics accountable only to a handful of incompletely representative school councillors...we are all part of the broader national system. We are all accountable not only to our immediate time and place but on a much broader canvas...It is up to us to demonstrate a positive sense of purpose and sense of direction in order to discharge effectively our great responsibilities to the public' (NT Department of Education, Vol 15, No 2, 1977).

Dr Eedle had highlighted the need for the service to be accountable and to have common direction and thereby he had identified the theme for the 1980s. The new Minister for Education was in the enviable position of being able to ask his Secretary for Education to establish a modern corporate-style structure of educational administration which would allow for power sharing between the Government, the education professionals within the education system and the various pressure groups, particularly parents, in the community. The groundwork achieved in the 1970s helped the Government reach its objective without inflicting a major trauma on the Education Department by demanding the dismantling of old entrenched hierarchical power structures. They had gone with the extra-Territory powers which had influenced Territory education in the past. The Territory had the opposite problem - that of trying to rein in the schools which had become separate entities with their own individual curriculum offerings, teaching methods, assessment and reporting procedures.

Schools in the 1980s were to be controlled more closely and their activities and standards monitored through regular school appraisal and via their own incorporated and widely representative school councils which would take responsibility for a variety of devolved functions. Comparability in all aspects of education for particular age cohorts became a priority and the Education Department moved to initiate educational debate on these matters.

The administrative structure set up to implement Government policy reflected the tenet that education was a lifelong process and all phases were linked. Administrative divisions or branches were created on the basis of interrelated functions and services as opposed to sections

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dealing with all aspects of education of age cohorts. These were adjusted at various times to cater for the expansion of the system, the starting and finishing of special projects or to accommodate the recommendations of reviews or the results of mergers, restructures and amalgamations.

Policy Reviews in the 1980s

One problem facing the Secretary of the Education Department in the early 1980s was that, with the establishment of the Northern Territory Teaching Service modelled on the Commonwealth Teaching Service, employment, eligibility for promotion, conditions of service and discipline of teachers were not his responsibility. They were, instead, subject to the edicts of an independent Commissioner, first appointed in 1981. The detail of the dual system was the work of a representative working party which had reviewed the situation at the time of the transfer of the education function and recommended that a system of separation of powers be accepted and written into a Teaching Service Act, as distinct from the Education Act passed in 1979 (NT Department of Education Report, 1979).

The appointment of a Commissioner responsible for promotion procedures effectively removed that function from the Education Department. The Commissioner controlled eligibility and the Secretary, selection, subject to the approval of the procedures being given by the Commissioner. Under the Peer Assessment scheme, teachers reported on each other's performance and then a panel, under the control of the Commissioner, judged applicants' suitability for promotion. Selection of staff for placement in vacant positions was made via a series of committees comprising representatives from teacher unions, parent organisations and the Department. These committees then made recommendations to the Secretary who had the final say (apart from the appeals process which was controlled by the Commissioner) in whether an officer could take up a position. Thus, the Education Department had little say in the identification of promotees and circumscribed input into the selection, of its school-based educational administration staff. The tension inherent in this situation, where there was a teaching service with no accountability for students' education and a school system lacking effective control of its teachers, was only resolved when the Minister effectively circumscribed the power of the Commissioner by delegating powers to the Secretary.

In 1983, in an effort to balance professional control of education policy making and to involve the public in the education process, the Country Liberal Government sought public input on the future directions of the Territory education system via submissions on the contents of a green paper entitled, *Directions for the Eighties*. Through it, the

Government emphasised it was in charge of the educational directions to be taken by public and private schools and higher educational institutions in the Territory (Government of the NT, 1983).

The policy suggestions were aimed at continuing the redirection of the education system away from the 1970s model of school autonomy and towards the 1980s model of accountability. The document excited a great deal of interest and comment from the media, and members of the community, encouraged by the press, presented arguments against school-based control of curriculum, assessment and credentialling. Such moves, it was suggested, had lowered standards. Teacher concern for equity and participation issues was blamed for diverting attention away from the need for students to: learn basic skills; undergo testing to measure their progress in core curriculum; and have centrally accredited and issued certificates to show achievement in departmentally accredited courses.

The Country Liberal Government used the *Directions* document to reassure community interest and pressure groups that, as members of the electorate, they could have access direct to the Minister. Access was achieved formally, through the agency of various statutory advisory councils and committees and informally, through contact with him via his electoral or ministerial offices. The important role to be played by independent, non-education staff chairpersons of school councils in supporting the Government's education policies was acknowledged by allowing a line of communication to stretch direct from the Minister to the Council, bypassing the Education Department and its representative in the schools, the principal. In this way it was hoped to continue to prevent the education process from being hijacked by professionals who might try, once again, to move too far away from the newly established standards and curriculum offerings[4].

Following the success of the first consultative exercise, the Government gave the revised document the status of a White Paper and moved on to another public policy-making exercise in late 1985. This time the Government aim was to win support for the restructuring of secondary education into junior and senior high schools. This was not a new idea to the Territory, but the Government had now decided to adopt it. The Minister for Education sent leaflets to all families in the Northern Territory to offset opposition mounted by targeted schools, their councils and the Northern Territory Teachers' Federation, to try to present the Government position direct to the electorate rather than through the

4 In fact, of course, principals and teachers are powerfully placed on school councils and have been able to persuade parents and community members to side with them in debates on educational issues affecting school communities.

agency of third parties which might distort the picture (NT Department of Education, 1985:a).

Enlisting the support of stake-holders, such as the students, teachers, parents and the employers, in planning educational directions proved to be a very successful marketing strategy and, in 1987, the Government undertook its third major public relations exercise. The glossy publication was entitled, *Towards the 90s: Excellence, Accountability and Devolution* (Government of NT, 1987). Some of the ideas presented in the publication had been put to the Territory Government by American educationalist, Lamar Alexander. He had been asked to come to the Territory following his attendance at the inaugural Joint Conference of the Australian Education Council and the Education Commission of the United States. This conference, together with the subsequent visit by Alexander (a former Governor of Tennessee and more recently appointed Secretary of Education in the Bush Administration), focused attention on the pursuit of excellence and accountability as being the primary goals of an education system.

The Government endorsed *Towards the 90s*, believing there would be broad acceptance its philosophical stance. When it was presented to the public for the first time, there was an outpouring of opposition, including some by academics questioning the wisdom and educational justification for the introduction of some of the suggested strategies to be implemented in the Government's quest to improve standards. Academics who had come to Darwin to work in the education and sociology faculties at the Darwin Institute of Technology and at the new University College spoke out and their arguments gave a historical and pedagogical dimension to the opposition. As a result of public submissions, some adjustments to the policies were made and the new policies were publicised in a final document called *Towards The 90's*.

All of these exercises provided policy directions for the Education Department and resulted in change in the structure and organisation of the education system. They showed that the Country Liberal Government was wary of the motives of professionals and that it believed that a partnership between itself and the electorate could better shape the education system in accordance with party philosophy.

The final policy document, entitled, *Teaching in Tomorrow's Territory*, was released to the public in November 1989 (NT Department of Education, 1989). It was produced as a result of the award restructuring process going on in workplaces around Australia. Again it had a foreword written by an Education Minister who stated that one of the major aims behind restructuring was to develop a 'more productive and efficient teaching service' (ibid). The Government was using a successful strategy of going direct to the electorate to avoid distortion of its arguments and again trying to enlist public support for its education

policies and its efforts to introduce quality control over the performance of teachers.

On each occasion that the Government asked for public input into policy making, the response was immediate, often vocal and not always in support of a proposed policy. It was determined, however, to forge links with supporters of accountability and of the centralised system. The Education Department participated in the exercises by presenting detailed policy documents which provided arguments in defence of particular Government initiatives. Not all survived the consultation process and opposition arguments sometimes won over the public and the Government, meaning ideas for change were modified or abandoned. Either way, the aim of the first Education Minister, Jim Robertson, to broaden the base of public involvement in decision making, had been achieved by the time the Territory was up to its latest Education Minister, Shane Stone, in 1990.

Administrative Restructuring in the 1980s

The passing of the 1979 Act was the trigger for a major restructuring of the Education Department. Within the Northern and Southern Divisions came a number of branches based around educational functions. Moves were made very early in the 1980s to establish an Executive Group comprising deputies and branch heads charged with the responsibility of providing advice to the Secretary as and when required and with meeting regularly to make policy decisions. By bringing senior officers together, information could be shared and they could have input to policy-making at the highest levels.

The initial structure was placed under scrutiny in 1981 in what was to be the first of a number of reviews of aspects of management. While the various reviews undertaken in the 1980s differed in scope, methodology and focus, this exercise was designed to optimise the effectiveness and efficiency of the delivery of education to students and to bring the administrative machinery up to date to ensure it was able to cater for all sectors of the expanding system. As the decade progressed, reviews were also held, with increasing frequency, in response to specific situations such as: economic crises caused by a blowout in spending or a drop in Federal funding; a realignment of priorities; a change in policy; a political imperative or promise.

The first major review was conducted by PA Management Consultants. It scrutinised the Department's decision-making processes, as well as some aspects of the administrative structure. The recommendations were implemented in full and resulted in the streamlining of the decision-making process and changes to the allocation of clerical tasks within branches. The second review in 1981 looked

beyond the central office to field-based program staffing and it was undertaken jointly by the Department and the Office of the Public Service Commissioner. It resulted in an increase in school staffing levels. These were priority areas that had been waiting for action from before the change-over to Northern Territory control and there was no argument about the need for change (NT Department of Education, 1985:d).

Decisions about whether to create new branches and move towards regionalisation of services were also priorities, but they were complicated by the division of power between the Director of the Education Department and the Teaching Service Commissioner[5] (NT Department of Education, 1975:c). The extent of the powers held by each was defined by acts, and sets of regulations delineated the detail of their responsibilities. This did not prevent power struggles arising and while early reviews identified a number of areas of conflict, little could be done to ease the situation until the Secretary achieved dominance through Ministerial delegation of powers in 1984.

Other reviews conducted in 1981 by the Education Department and/or the Public Service Commissioner's Office aimed to look at reorganising operations within: the Northern and Southern Region; Technical and Further Education; Educational Facilities; and Planning and Coordination and School Library Services. The reports were all accepted and implemented by the Government in 1982 with the result that there was` a redistribution of power from the Northern Division to some of the regional and functional sectors of the Department. The Education Department was in a constant state of flux but, because staff had seen so many changes since self-government, there was a resigned acceptance of the inevitability of adjustments as a new system settled into a satisfactory organisational shape and management routine.

Most reviews at this time were not kept secret and those conducted by outside consultants attracted a lot of notice from office-based personnel but excited minimal interest in the field, as schools saw them as having little effect on their operations. Brief overviews were printed in the staff bulletins or were sent out to affected personnel via circular. Sometimes staff input into particular reviews was called for, and this could arouse interest amongst staff involved but generally information to staff was given out after the event and was not intended to elicit responses.

Price Waterhouse was another external consulting group brought in to review a specific aspect of the Department's administrative operations and to make recommendations about future technological requirements in such areas as computer installation and functions. The benefits of the exercise could be recognised as the consultant's

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5 Dr N. Stewart held the position from 1981 until the Service's separate infrastructure was disbanded by political intervention in 1984.

recommendations were gradually implemented, resulting in improved central office administrative efficiency and the ability to offer a better service to staff in the field.

A major field review of primary school staffing was undertaken, in 1982, jointly by the Education Department, the Northern Territory Teaching Service and the Northern Territory Teachers' Federation. It was an example of cooperation between factions which did not usually work together. The outcome was a change in the way staffing was viewed, resulting in the establishment of the principle of an overall staff-student ratio, and a change in the staffing ratio for primary schools to apply from the beginning of 1984 (NT Department of Education, 1985:d).

Besides reviews, a number of other working parties and widely representative committees produced reports in the early 1980s which led to change in established practice and/or the introduction of new policies and/or procedures. A large proportion of the changes centred on the introduction of core curriculum and certification by the Curriculum Branch which also focused its attention on: satellite education; introduction of student assessment schemes for particular year cohorts; and introduction of moderation of the secondary core curriculum (NT Department of Education Annual Reports, 1980-85).

Not all reviews were initiated by Education Department personnel. While only one political party held power in the Northern Territory in the 1980s, thereby minimising changes of policy due to varying political imperatives and election promises, there were a number of Education Ministers - each with different educational experiences and each with definite ideas on changes needed and areas that should not be touched. In many cases their own interests coloured the emphasis they gave to certain projects, such as the establishment of the University (Harris, 1986-1987). The directions of funds and resources to a particular scheme favoured by one minister sometimes ceased after he left the portfolio to be followed by a new minister with different priorities. The assertion of ministerial control over the bureaucracy may have been marked by the transfer of Dr Eedle from Secretary to Planning Vice-Chancellor of the prospective Northern Territory University in 1981. He was replaced by Mr Syd Saville, a former agriculture teacher from Papua New Guinea, who transferred in from his position as Regional Director of Health, Alice Springs.

Public service wide reviews also affected the Education Department. In 1984 a review of funding preparatory to the ending of the Memorandum of Understanding, which had provided generous establishment funding for the Northern Territory until 1987, was undertaken by the Department of the Treasury (NT Department of Education, Circ 85/34 re Staffing; NT Department of Education, 1985:d). Its conclusions helped shape the budget for the next few years, although internal Education Department allocations to projects still had to occur so

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that new initiatives which flowed from such policy documents as *Directions for the Eighties* could be funded. While a number of new policies were supported at the outset of the budgetary period, it was accepted that this could be subject to change.

One direct result of the requirement for longer term budget predictions was the decision taken by the Education Department to develop a corporate plan. While such a document was commonplace in the private sector, the public service found it difficult to devise a long term plan when it was subject to so many extraneous forces which could lead a department to have to change its priorities overnight. Another factor was the Public Service tradition of incremental, rather than program based funding, that is, where money is added on each year to enable existing programs to run.

The corporate planning exercise within the Department was initially led by a consultant from the Administrative Staff College at Mount Eliza. It revealed a number of organisational difficulties and the discovery of these coincided with the instigation of new administrative arrangements across the Public Service, as foreshadowed by the Chief Minister in December, 1984. It was therefore opportune to have a major shakeup in the organisational structure. Significant budgetary pressures were starting to be felt as the recession, which had begun in 1983, began to bite. The Commonwealth had 'pump-primed' a number of new initiatives such as 'Homeland Centres' for remote Aboriginals and the Commonwealth made it clear that it now expected the Territory Government to start contributing to the costs and to plan to take over the projects in the near future.

The 1984/5 Review was the most extensive analysis and restructuring undertaken by the Education Department prior to the 1991 Review and it is interesting to look at the processes used in the two operations (NT Department of Education, 1985:a, b, c, d). The year 1985 saw a full scale exercise in corporate management, with the action taking place after various public statements had been made by politicians; information letters had been sent out; and key management personnel with roles to play identified and meetings to discuss aspects of the impending restructure held. The first official warning to staff as to the extent of the exercise came in a letter from the then Education Minister, Tom Harris. He stated that the transfer of personnel delegations from the Teaching Service Commissioner's portfolio to the Education Department was being undertaken at the same time as wider changes were taking place in the public sector.

The review was conducted in stages and it was projected that any changes which emerged should be implemented in 1986, with the savings reflected in future budgets. Minister Harris stated in his letter that the aims of the exercise were to: improve the range of services to students, parents and the wider community; regionalise administrative

responsibilities to reduce the effects of a distant fragmented administration on individuals; lower indirect costs; and set up a Personnel Branch to take over some of the functions of the old Commissioner's Office (Harris, 1985). The Personnel Branch began functioning in 1985 and shortly afterwards the rest of the Teaching Service Commissioner's duties were transferred to the Public Service Commissioner's Office.

The restructuring process itself had a number of stages. Firstly staff from other authorities and departments targeted for dissolution or cut back in the wider public sector, were transferred to the Education Department which was itself restructured to accommodate the new functions it was to take on and the staff it was to absorb. The management decisions which led to the changes were similar to those used to streamline operations in the private sector and appealed to politicians who were trying to convince the electorate that they were being responsive to economic conditions.

At the same time, both the Treasurer and the Chief Minister called for the public sector to economise in the face of impending cuts attendant on the end of the period covered by the Memorandum of Understanding. The Chief Minister also stated that the rationale for the selection of authorities and departments to be merged with the Education Department was their common focus on the post-compulsory student sector. There were three major players in that field: the Darwin Community College which had a Territory-wide mandate; the Vocational Training Commission, which was an independent authority and the Education Department itself, which controlled adult educators in Aboriginal communities. Until 1984, the TAFE sector remained very fragmented and the Minister accepted the advice from the Secretary that the best way to meet the current and future demands for TAFE services was to establish a separate TAFE Division, uniting all the agencies with TAFE responsibilities. At this stage, care was taken to ensure the division could run parallel to the schools division so that integrated services at the community and regional level could operate (NT Department of Education, 1985:d).

Through the medium of the Secretary of the Education Department, all office based staff were told that the Chief Minister was looking for 'simple, effective structures to remove duplication' and that he did not wish to 'perpetuate structures after they had achieved major purposes for which they had been set up.' The Education Department took the opportunity to reduce head office staff concentration by decentralising many of its advisory staff to Regions (Department of Education Circ 85/24).

The Secretary announced that in deciding his plan of action he had consulted the Executive Group and, in order that 'planning for any changes is thorough and that staff affected, particularly through change of location, can be fully consulted, I have established a task force...

comprising action officers from all Branches, to ensure that any transition is as smooth as possible...' (ibid).

This was the model of planning and actioning change which was followed, during a number of subsequent reviews. The same Secretary, Mr G.J. Spring, was in charge of the Education Department from 1984 onwards. His professional background and strong and demonstrated commitment to the Department went a long way towards minimising damage which might have been inflicted on such a large Department by politicians who saw it as a popular target from which to extract savings. He is currently (1991) the longest serving Director-General of Education in Australia and this 'permanency' may be seen as contributing to the relative stability and incremental changes that have set the Territory education scene apart by comparison with the revolutions experienced elsewhere.

At the time of the 1985 review there was another project favoured by the Government which had the potential to soak up any savings made by cuts. A University Planning Unit had existed since 1981 but now there was a Government proposal to set up a University College tied to the University of Queensland. The problem was that the Federal Government did not want to fund it at this point and to stand alone would require a considerable injection of money to set it up and maintain it until the Federal Government could be convinced to fund it. The Country Liberal Government felt it had an obligation to pursue this priority, partly because it had made electoral promises that it would move to transform the Darwin Community College into a combined TAFE/University. The Government managed to find the necessary funds and, in 1987, the University College opened its doors, despite a lack of support from the Federal Government (Harris, 1986-1987).

In 1987, the Planning and Coordination Branch undertook another review of all administrative areas of the Education Department. This exercise was subsumed by a system-wide review of the Public Service by the Commissioner with the aim of reducing the overall number of public servants (PS Bulletin, 2/87). Very little evidence of any large scale changes within the Education Department structure can be detected as a result of this internal activities analysis, as subsequent reorganisation had more to do with staff cut backs occurring as offshoots of the public service review than the internal exercise[6].

By 1988, the Education Department was still making internal adjustments to its administrative structure to meet changing local priorities. These activities were overshadowed during the next two years by the review of Northern Territory Public Service classifications by consultants Cullen Egan Dell and by the national preoccupation with

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6 No report was published, but personal papers kept by the co-ordinator confirm this.

wage restructuring, broad banding and associated changes to the public service structure (NT Department of Education, 1989).

The Costs of Corporate Management in the 1980s

The Territory Government in 1991 appears to believe that the years of participative management in the public sector have resulted in a public service which is unable or unwilling to control spending, reduce programs or costs. Cutbacks are necessary, the Government claims, to offset decreasing Commonwealth funding. It has chosen to deal with its economic problems by taking the drastic step of temporarily removing the right to make independent decisions on economic management and programming from Ministers, departmental and authority heads.

This action has resulted in a blanket of uncertainty being spread over the Public Service by the activities of a shadowy, but all powerful, Estimates Review Committee. It has operated in a closed 'in camera' mode and all information on its activities was embargoed until it chose to release its report to the public. While it heard evidence presented by various department and authority heads, the public sector was left to operate in damage-control mode, with a reduced service being the best that could be offered while a Government-imposed freeze on all appointments, except in essential services, was in place.

The Review Committee Report contained outlines of the magnitude of the cuts needed to reign in spending and to reduce the projected deficit. The detail was to be filled in by managers when they tried to devise ways to achieve the new financial targets. The committee specifically demanded and got program reductions by elimination altogether or by reduced scope of service. Its recommendations have already led to dislocation and bewilderment among the officers displaced because their duties no longer exist or who are identified as being 'at risk'. Structurally, so far, the recommendations have resulted in the; decimation of some public service departments; abolition of some independent authorities; and merger of other services.

While the effects on affected personnel are all too clear, it is too early to make an estimate of the financial benefits to the Northern Territory, because the exercise is so broad in its implications that it is expected to take at least two years to implement fully. This time will be spent in relocating affected staff. While each Department put its view to the Committee, through its Secretary and Minister, on how it saw savings could be made, the scale of cuts and the decision on what should stay, go, close or merge was made by the Committee. The Education Department proposed thirteen strategies which were largely accepted. They involve a mixture of downsizing along the lines most of the states have pursued in recent years such as: closing schools; reducing advisory

staff; privatising administrative functions; and speeding up reform processes already well established, such as devolution of responsibilities to school councils.

The current review exercise has revealed that the Country Liberal Government still believes, as it did in 1977, that it has the right, responsibility and the duty to make wide-ranging decisions affecting the future of the Northern Territory. The 1991 model is indicative of the seriousness of the economic problems affecting the Northern Territory today, a situation clearly not in evidence at the time of the 1985 review. The Northern Territory Country Liberal Government is determined to present a picture of a Government acting appropriately to prevent potential economic problems. The example of Victoria's economic demise has been enough to stiffen the backbone of the Country Liberal Government and let it apparently decide that criticism for abandoning the corporate management style is preferable to defeat at the polls.

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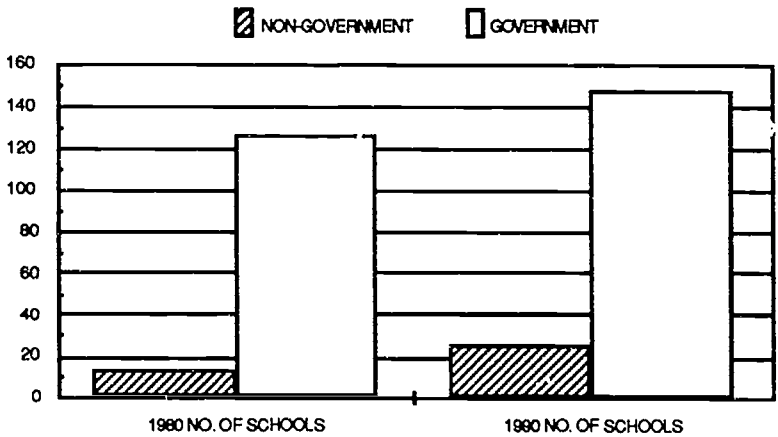
NUMBER OF SCHOOLS

NORTHERN TERRITORY 1980 & 1990



NUMBER OF STUDENTS

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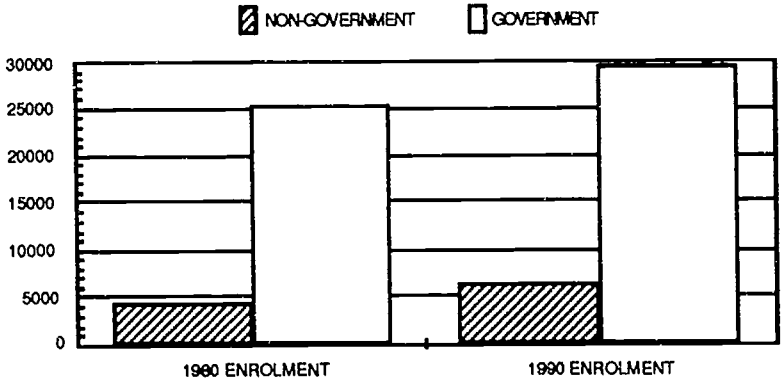
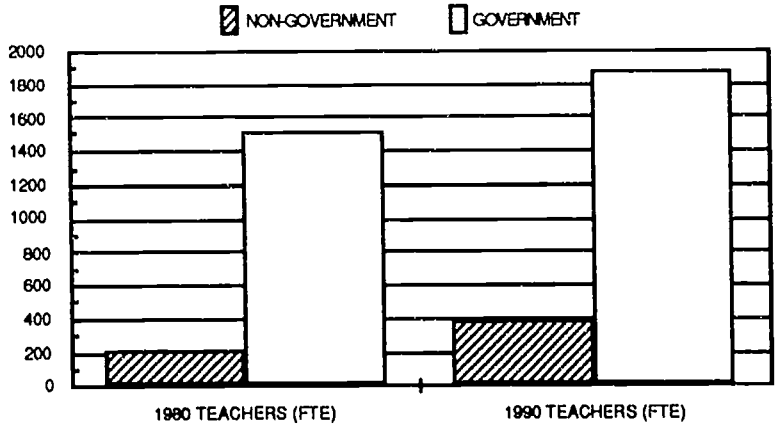


NUMBER OF TEACHERS

NORTHERN TERRITORY 1980 & 1990



NUMBER OF SCHOOLS IN NT

1980	Primary	High School	Aboriginal School	Area School	Residential College	Special Schools	School of the Air	Distance Education	Pastoral Property	TOTAL
NON-GOVERNMENT	5	1	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	13
GOVERNMENT	35	6	55	4	3	0	2	1	15	121
TOTAL	40	7	61	5	3	0	2	1	15	134
1990										
GOVERNMENT	44	11	59	3	1	7	2	1	17	145
NON-GOVERNMENT	14	3	6	1	2	0	0	0	0	26
TOTAL	58	14	65	4	3	7	2	1	17	171

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Chapter 9

CHANGES IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATION: SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Bryce Saint

Introduction

Government school enrolments in South Australia over the period 1979-1989 declined by nearly 20 percent. In February 1979, R-7 enrolments were 144,705 and 8-12 were 82,486, with a total system enrolment of 225,191. In 1989, enrolments for R-7 were 109,959 and for 8-12, 72,128, with a total of 182,087.

Currently, there are 77 Junior Primary Schools, 515 Primary Schools, 104 High Schools, 51 Area Schools, 29 Rural Schools, 16 Aboriginal Schools, and 68 Special Schools or Units. Of these 860 schools, the greatest concentration is in the metropolitan area of Adelaide. Most of the remainder are located in the settled areas of South Australia up to approximately 800kms from Adelaide, with a small number at a greater distance.

Early Signs of Administrative Changes

Four important signals of administrative changes in South Australia occurred in the decade before the period of this study. Addressed to Principals of all Departmental schools, the first signal was a Memorandum dated August 1970 from the Director-General of Education. Described as a landmark in the history of Australian education, the *Freedom and Authority in the Schools* Memorandum defined 'what is meant by the freedom you and your staff have been exhorted to use in the schools'. The Head was described as 'in undisputed control' of the school where 'the general well-being and education of the students must be the prime concern'. The Memorandum challenged schools to consider variations in courses, alterations to time-tables, organisation and government within the schools, experimentation with teaching methods, assessment of student achievement and extra-curriculum activities.

'Acceptable schemes of organisation' and 'acceptable methods of teaching and learning' were described.

It is important to understand that the Memorandum was issued in an administrative and educational setting which was strongly centralised, compartmentalised and authoritarian. With its emphasis on learning and the learning community, the Memorandum was a sign and trigger for other administrative changes occurring over the next two decades.

A report by the Superintendent of Primary Schools, dated 26 November 1966 and entitled, *A Proposal for Setting Up Education Regions in South Australia*, was the second signal for change. In a Minute dated 25 May 1971 the Minister of Education proposed to the Director-General of Education the establishment of further regional education offices because 'there are considerable advantages to be achieved by regionalisation'. These were testing steps in decentralisation of administration, in community response to local involvement and, most importantly, in development of whole-of-system, less compartmentalised management. Progressively, country areas of South Australian were regionalised and, in May 1974, the first metropolitan regional office was established at Elizabeth.

In 1971, the Government received the third signal for change, the *Report of the Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, 1969-1970* generally referred to as the Karmel Report after the Enquiry's Chair, Professor Peter Karmel. The Report had a significant impact on education and its management for at least the next decade. Apart from helping to clarify ideas on educational practices and the purposes of schools, the report influenced senior administrative structures, community participation, special services and the professionalism of educators and administrators.

The redrafted *Education Act 1972* was the fourth signal for change. A comparison of the role of School Committees under the previous Act and School Councils under the 1972 Act with its provision for direct government grants to schools indicates a legislated shift in importance of the school community in the total administrative apparatus.

The R-12 perspective also had been emphasised by the appointments of two Deputy Directors-General, one with responsibility for Schools, and the future functional nature of Central Office organisation was evident from the formation of an Educational Facilities Directorate.

Relationships between the Education Department and the school community were of specific concern in these changes. In its submission to the Schools Commission of December 1974, the Education Department of South Australia set out its 'Major Aims of Regionalisation'. They concerned quality education, decision-making close to areas of concern, local knowledge, cooperation and support, R-12

cooperation and coordination and improved relationships between the Department and the School community.

Reorganisation from 1978 to 1984

Functional and Regional Directorate

Formation of functional central office directorates, completion of regionalisation and establishment of more broadly representative senior committees were the main features of administrative re-organisation from 1978 to 1984.

In 1979, the Operations Review Directorate was deleted, a Management and School Services Directorate replaced Administration and Finance, and in 1983, a Deputy Director-General of Education was appointed with the two former deputy positions being re-titled Assistant Director-General. The functions of Directorates underwent little change during the period. Two senior committees, Policy and Management met regularly to advise the Director-General.

Minor tensions existing between central and regional office activities and responsibilities were resolved by negotiation. Regular regional director meetings chaired by the Deputy Director-General of Education (Schools) maintained information links between the centre and regions, and between regions, so that consistency across the system and differences reflecting the characteristics of regions were well-balanced.

Three examples illustrate that central directorates were able to concentrate on whole-of-system policy. First, by what the Director-General of Education described as 'the culmination of an extensive, cooperative and consultative venture in educational policy development', the Curriculum Directorate produced in 1981 the document *Into the 80s: Our Schools and Their Purposes* containing 'policy statements which clearly indicate the educational framework within which government schools will operate (and which) provide an appropriate balance between central direction and local needs'. Second, the Joint Education Department - South Australian Institute of Teachers Information and Feedback Assignment (JESIDA) was a response to a statement by the President of the South Australian Institute of Teachers on implications of falling enrolments on teacher mobility (November 1979) and his wish to 'see better solutions, not from the top, bur from all involved'. A report following major surveys in 1980-81 made no recommendations but produced extensive information and opinions which influenced later personnel policies. Third, further school and school council involvement in funding and fund management followed direct payment of school grants to school councils. The School Finance Advisory Committee provided assistance to schools and school councils and the School Loans Advisory

Committee advised the Minister on applications by school councils for commercially negotiated loans to purchase certain school buildings and equipment, part of the cost being paid by the Minister and the school council loan being guaranteed by the Minister.

Schools, local communities and other agencies appreciated the immediacy, accessibility and knowledge of regional officers with the result that very few operational matters were referred to central office administrators. Frequent contact engendered trust and predictability. The R-12 view reduced sectionalism and encouraged openness and contact between levels.

Regionally-based principal education officers (previously inspectors, now superintendents) acted as system-wide coordinators for curriculum areas and special projects. Local information about individual teachers and schools helped to make staffing punctual and effective.

Local cooperation between government agencies reduced administrative costs. Regionally-based support services offered prompt, tailored assistance to schools. Principals and teachers became part of the decision-making procedures for support services, teacher development programmes and school loans applications.

Major Administrative Changes

By 1982, the Director-General of Education was proposing major adjustments to the five central and ten regional directorate organisation, a plan strongly in the tradition of the previous decade's decentralisation and devolution. The 1978 organisation had developed imbalance, tensions and extra costs; there were also new programmes to be accommodated and funded. Analysis of the conditions then reveals that:

- Central office directorates with functional responsibilities had marked differences in scope and responsibility. With a decline in enrolments, a large reduction in funding, and transfer of some functions to Regions, continuation of a central Educational Facilities Directorate was not justified.

- Because of local knowledge, regional personnel became increasingly involved in staffing of schools under guidelines and directions of the central Personnel Directorate. Changed operations and new policy issues warranted a review of the Personnel Directorate.

- The Curriculum Directorate was regarded as huge and there was concern about the size and alignment of this out-of-school resource. Departmental authority in curriculum had become

ambiguous with schools modifying and preparing curriculum without sufficient regard to consistency.

- Research and Planning had reduced functions due to declining enrolments and changed information needs.

- Manual records of payroll and leave personnel records had been put on computer which made them accessible in locations closer to schools.

- In a prolonged industrial hearing, a new Education Officer 6 (ED-6) classification equivalent in status and salary to central office director Executive Officer 3 (EO-3) was awarded to Regional Directors on Ed-5, while regional directors on ED-4 were reclassified to ED-5.

- The strength of central functional directorates tended to assert vested sectional interests and to fragment whole-of-system advice and policy. Regional directorates varied in size, the largest in 1979 having 162 schools and 62,248 students and the smallest having 28 schools and 6,480 students. Such imbalances of size made further administrative de-centralisation to existing regions uneconomic and impractical. The existence of five central and ten regional directorates meant a wide dispersion of control and, importantly, strong competition for administrative and support resources.

- The Director-General of Education wished to form an Evaluation Review Unit with considerable independence to report on the quality of teaching, curriculum and administration.

- Newly developed programmes such as Girls in Education, Computers and Technology, Multicultural Education and Social Justice required formal organisational responses.

Cabinet approval was given in July 1982 for a reorganised administration with a corporate structure of Director-General, Deputy Director-General, four central office directorates (curriculum, special programmes, personnel and central service, and resources) and four operational zone directorates, all city based with headquarters in existing metropolitan regional offices and formed by clustering existing regions.

A change of government following the 1982 elections caused an abandonment of the first plan and, after extensive consultation with school, parent and community groups, and with the Public Service Board,

the new Minister announced in a Ministerial statement dated 10 August 1983 that Cabinet had approved an administrative reorganisation.

The plan was for five area directorates, two based in the country at Whyalla and Murray Bridge, and three metropolitan offices at Elizabeth, Norwood and Noarlunga. Two central directorates would be responsible for Curriculum and Resources. From the former plan, the central office structure had been halved and the field structure had been increased with, most importantly, two offices located in country centres.

The Ministerial statement gave the following objectives for the reorganisation:

- Maximum resources to be located in the field, either in schools or in regional centres. A prime aim is to reduce the level of resources being consumed in areas other than schools, without reducing services.

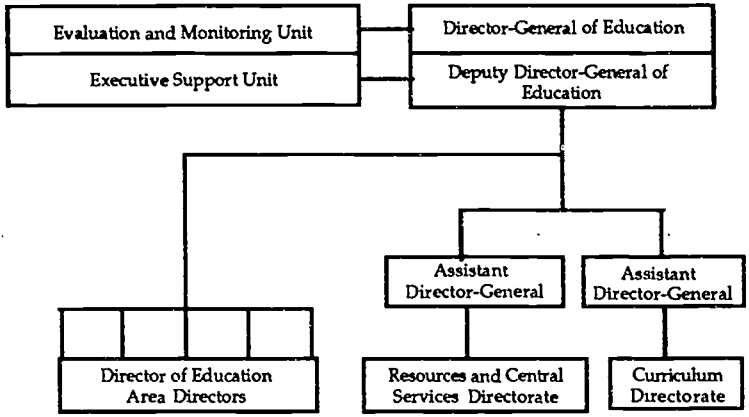
- Central management must be designed to provide policy direction, leadership, resource control and monitoring of effectiveness through a lean, efficient, corporate structure.

- Where efficiency in the use of resources is a major consideration, a central service should be provided.

- Simplication of decision-making processes between the Education Department executive and schools, supported by clearly enunciated policy and defined levels of accountability and responsibility.

Other points made by the Minister were that educational policy development was to move closer to schools, decisions affecting school operations should be made as close as possible to schools with central office concentrating on policy making and advising, and an executive structure would be formed. In a memorandum dated 7 September 1983 addressed to principals and staffs of Departmental schools, the Director-General of Education said that the reorganisation would make decision-makers more identifiable and decisions more immediate and sensitive to local needs. The aim was 'to improve services to schools by placing more decision-making powers nearer to them, getting rid of duplication and making better use of resources'.

The general structure is indicated by the following diagram:



Areas were to be more equal in size and responsibility than Regions had been.

It should be noted that the language and tradition of reorganisation here correspond with later reorganisations - resources and decision-making close to schools, decision-makers identifiable, decisions immediate and sensitive, and central office small, efficient and concerned with policy. Management language and practices were introduced - corporate structure, executive management.

Implementing the Reorganisation

The reorganisation involved a reduction of executive positions, some changed skill requirements at executive level, and a surplus of senior officers. The Government's decision to establish two country located Area Offices meant that just less than 2/5ths of all positions concerned with operations would be located at Murray Bridge (80 kms from Adelaide) or Whyalla (400 kms from Adelaide). For many of the existing Adelaide based personnel, mobility was unknown, unexpected and threatening because of family, financial or cultural interests.

The Public Service Association had understandings with the Minister and Director-General of Education that there would be no spill of positions, that relocations would be negotiable, that Association members would not be compulsorily transferred, that clerical officers would not be relocated in lesser positions and that retraining would be given to volunteer officers who relocated and needed new skills. Because each Area office would offer administrative and educational services previously sited in Central Office (eg. payroll, teacher placement records,

financial control, leave records), there would be a larger number of teams to be supervised and hence considerable opportunities for promotion. The reorganisation announcement contained leadership and management outlines but no detailed scheme of operations or implementation. Executive and Education Officers would be assigned to locations and duties.

Following advertisement of all EO-3 positions except Curriculum, the Director-General of Education assigned officers to duties. There was one appointment from outside the Public Service to the Resources Directorate, there were two promotions, and one officer retired. Four EO-3 officers were assigned to executive appointments not shown on the organisation chart.

With representation from Area Directors, Resources, Equal Opportunities and the Public Service Board, a Reorganisation Task Force was formed to plan the structure and implement the plan. Management principles declared at the outset became crucial indicators for the structure *e.g.* procedures and authorities should be prepared and approved to eliminate centrally based supervision or coordination of de-centralised activities; decision-making and responsibility should be delegated as far as possible and should be corporate; and coordination and liaison with other agencies should be achieved by rotation of duties amongst appropriate officers. Effective management and service were paramount over established practices and personal or professional self-interest; and accommodation and current technologies for management and information must be available and operable before duties were delegated and de-centralised.

The 1985 organisation arrangements reflected the structure outlined by the Minister and Director-General in September, 1983. Staffing and delegations affecting Area Offices were greatly increased.

A Deputy Director and four Assistant Directors were included in each Area office to manage decentralised functions and additional Superintendents of Schools were appointed to manage district officers in the country, to provide the major contact between Area offices and schools, to contribute to school and staff development programmes and to assist in curriculum monitoring and approval.

Administrative and clerical officer positions were considerably increased in Area offices to manage de-centralized operations and administration. Centrally, the Resources Directorate reflected the policy and resource control specifications of the reorganisation and Curriculum Directorate adjusted the duties of its fewer assistant directors and superintendents to develop R-12 curriculum policies and to lead equity units in special education, education for girls and multi-cultural education. There was also a Co-ordinator of Aboriginal education at Ed-5 level.

Implementation of the decentralised structure with operations re-located as far as 400 kms from Adelaide and with approximately 40

percent of centrally located clerical positions transferred to Area offices presented difficulties. Routine operations such as payroll and payment of accounts could not be interrupted or delayed during the development of new procedures and the office-by-office transfer to operations to Areas. Area officers had to provide additional accommodation, staffing and technology, and these became available at different times within and across Areas. Resources had to be allocated to new cost centres. Training and retraining were necessary with country-based staff largely recruited locally. Social implications for officers unused to mobility were considerable and a small number of officers suffered deep anxiety. For a period, in response to members' resolutions the Public Service Association (PSA) advised the Education Department that an industrial dispute existed and that interruptions to work practices could follow.

Implementation was a co-operative, consultative process. 'Reorganisation Updates' informed officers of progress and plans. The Public Service Association was informed, consulted and represented on some working parties. A special reorganisation removals assistance offer was made to officers required to move house. Negotiated, known, open procedures were established for the placement process to avoid nepotism, injustice and imbalance. Recruitment to vacancies remaining after the placement process was managed by Directors. At the end of these processes, professional mis-matching and personal special conditions left very, very few officers unplaced out of a departmental establishment exceeding 800 positions.

There was criticism that the reorganisation had taken more than two and a half years from the date of cabinet approval but the changes to organisation, resource management, decision-making loci, relationships with schools and corporate administration were fundamental, achieved without disruption to services or long term industrial hostility and more wide-ranging than any changes in the 115 years of government administered schooling in South Australia.

Further Changes, 1986 to 1988

Public administration of education during this period was affected by what is known as the 1986/87 Budget Strategy and by re-assignments, re-deployments and retirements of senior officers.

As a result of Government instructions to reduce staffing to achieve savings of $3.46m in the remainder of the 1986/87 financial year and $7.89m in a full year, the Director-General of Education identified 67 positions to be vacated. Positions included seconded teachers, release time scholarships and public servants. Public servant 'Affected Officers' included Area deputy directors, Area assistant directors (Student, School and Community Services) for whom roles had been difficult to shape,

senior officers who had undertaken special duties during the reorganisation, unplaced officers (*eg.* research officers) and officers in classifications reduced in number as part of the Budget Strategy *e.g.*, Superintendents.

Options offered to 'Affected Officers' included filling identified vacancies by permanent re-assignment, temporary re-assignment or permanent re-deployment to other agencies, permanent or temporary return to the teaching service and retirement with a financial incentive scheme based on age and final salary.

The process occurred within stated guiding principles and individual criteria to ensure openness, justice, the maintenance of participation rates for women and family stability and to avoid mis-match of skills to tasks. Guarantees were given that current classifications, salary levels and service conditions would be preserved.

Officers affected by the 67 positions to be vacated took up Budget Strategy options as follows:

	May 1987	March 1988
Re-assigned to a departmental vacancy	19	22
Returned to schools	3	5
Reassigned to out-of-school project	28	18
Redeployed to another agency	3	4
Retired	12	13
Resigned/Leave without pay	2	6
Totals	67	68

In the period 1986-88, of the fifteen officers at Director level and above during the 1984 reorganisation, nine had retired or been redeployed. Of the remaining six, an Assistant Director-General and a Director were redeployed during the next two years, a redeployed Director returned to the Department and a Director resigned to take up an interstate appointment. By the end of 1990, four Senior Executive members of 1984 remained.

Outcomes of the 1984 Reorganisation

Any assessment of the outcomes of reorganisation is difficult because of the absence in some factors of impartial evidence. For example, the criterion of improved service to schools would require extensive surveys and analysis. Ever the criterion of improved resource management is obscure. In most cases, but certainly not all in either metropolitan or country areas, area offices are geographically closer to schools than central office, but distance is not a simple determinant in service quality.

Serving the needs of schools has also been affected by other factors like the 86/87 Budget Strategy, the Yerbury Report on personnel practices, the Cox Report on superintendents, changed industrial and economic conditions, new legislation, teacher promotion opportunities, community expectations and teacher morale.

A somewhat cynical view is that changes in administration go unnoticed in schools and that schools go on regardless. There exist, however, inevitable educational, professional and cultural links between the administration and schools. It also should be said that the quality of those links depends on management style as much as on management structure. There is too little tested evidence to draw firm conclusions on changes to school service.

The most comprehensive review of the Education Department was conducted by the Public Accounts Committee of the South Australian Parliament in an inquiry entitled, *The 1983-86 Reorganisation of the Education Department*. The Committee's report was published on 1 December 1988. In the section, *Issues in Summary*, the Committee

- found it difficult to assess the extent to which imprecisely stated goals were achieved (p.9);
- reported it remained uncertain about the extent to which the organisation resulted in staff savings or may have led to additional staff costs;
- was uncertain whether the reorganisation has led a reduction in out-of-school resources (p.10);
- found it difficult to substantiate the Department's claim that it has improved its financial management (p.10); and
- noted that some heads of schools perceived the reorganisation to be largely irrelevant.

The Report was critical of 'an excessive amount of consultation' and 'this extended period of consultation', and it commented frequently on lack of or problems with evidence, information and audit trails.

In stating the obvious that 'improved management is needed much more than an altered management structure', the Report may have revealed a further superficial understanding of the scope and educational objectives of the reorganisation, and the time over which management improvements are achieved and substantiated.

A high priority goal of the reorganisation involved resources management - to reduce the level of resources being consumed in areas other than schools and to improve resource control. Two methods were

adopted to achieve this expectation, recruitment of financial and administrative skills from outside the Department, and the location of senior management personnel in the Area office.

The Director of Education (Resources), the Assistant Director (Finance) and eleven out of twenty Area personnel, administration, facilities and finance senior officers were recruited from outside the Department.

The Public Accounts Committee Report was equivocal in assessing resource management outcomes of the reorganisation. In analysing salary and wages expenditures for the year before the reorganisation and the next three years (82/83 - 85/86), the Report concluded that 'the data does not support a case of the reorganisation resulting in improved budget management' (p.88). The Committee, however, recognised the greater skills available to the Department as a result of the reorganisation.

In the reorganisation, school staff recruitment, placement, selection, leave and records were entirely decentralised but, in many ways, the necessary systems coordination has not resulted in local control. Under corporate management, Area Assistant Directors (Personnel) have responsibilities for particular aspects of staffing to ensure system-wide equity. Staffing operations to this extent are therefore still managed from a relocated centre.

As a result of Professor Dianne Yerbury's Report, *Review of Personnel Policies and Practice* (February 1987), the position of Director of Education (Personnel) was created in the central office to manage systems policies, negotiations and practices. The appointment should be seen less as a recentralization and more as filling a gap in policy development needs in a specialised resource area.

The proximity to schools and the increase in numbers of staffing officers (seconded teachers) in Area offices, however, have been important in times of reduced enrolments, reduced teacher numbers and compulsory teacher mobility. Subsequent actions have been designed to overcome Yerbury's observation of structural problems inherent in the reorganised personnel function.

Facilities Officers in Areas are in the Administrative Officer classification and some have a building or project management background rather than education. The location of facilities and planning personnel in the Area office must significantly reduce communication delays between central and local decision makers and hence expedite more major projects and increase efficiency. Asset management and disposal resulting from educational programme decisions have become more predictable, more immediate and more acceptable because of local departmental and community participation and trust.

In order to define more clearly curriculum responsibilities in the reorganised administration and schools, to clarify the Department's

authority in what is taught in schools, to assess priorities for curriculum review, to programme manageable curriculum projects and to make best use of limited support services, the Curriculum Directorate issued a policy statement, *Curriculum Authority and Responsibility*, which began a process of monitoring and approval to clarify departmental supervision of curriculum development and quality. A *Curriculum Consultative Committee* with reactive and pro-active functions and with school representation was formed, and *Corporate Curriculum Priorities* or emphases were declared for a triennial period.

Because of reduced numbers and modified role arising out of the Cox Report (*Review of Superintendents in the Education Department of South Australia*, August 1987), Superintendents of schools, by anecdotal evidence, seem to make fewer visitations to schools and offer less curriculum, teaching and management advice to principals and teachers. As a result of the reorganisation and the Cox Report, Superintendents have more formal interactions with schools.

Seeking greater control over what is taught in schools, the Department has involved Superintendents in the process of formal curriculum monitoring and approval to give the community greater assurance about the propriety of curriculum used within a school.

Superintendents not attached to Area or Curriculum Directorates are core personnel in the operations of the Education Review Unit. Separation of Superintendent functions may reduce what the 58th Report of the Public Accounts Committee called the overlap of roles between the 'large and diverse' Studies Directorate and Area offices and/or duplication of services.

With the formation of Areas, all operations were managed at Area level whereas, previously, there were problems of demarcation between region and functional central directorates. Reorganisation missed the opportunity of involving schools in decentralisation as no additional authority was delegated to principals or school councils.

The degree of real devolution to any level is, however, debatable. Although there exists a policy of letting the managers manage, the principle of responsible government and the terms of the Education Act mean that all administrative decisions may be reviewed by the Director-General of Education who is responsible to the Minister. An industrial viewpoint put by officers of the South Australian Institute of Teachers is that there has been no devolution because power resides with the Minister and Government. By convention and law, power does reside with Government but it should be said that very few educational or administrative decisions made within delegations are ever called up for review.

The South Australian Institute of Teachers is cautious about devolution *per se*. Perceived adverse industrial effects of what is happening in New Zealand have been discussed by a Vice-President in the

Institute's Teachers Journal and a research officer has written that devolution 'integrates many of the separate concerns which the union deals with in both a creative and defensive role'. An article under the headline *Devolution Watch* in the Teachers Journal, 17 October 1990 asks teachers to consider if devolution will shift blame to schools, create local boards to replace bureaucracies and bypass staff, make the principal a manager first and educator second, and reduce costs by industrially unacceptable methods.

Under the Government Management and Employment Act 1985, all heads of government agencies in South Australia were given the title Chief Executive Officer, a title used commonly by large corporations. The title is interesting for two reasons. First, it assumes a practice of line management and of control by executive directors involved in corporate decision-making. Second, it infers that heads of agencies or departments are interchangeable professional administrators first and experienced, skilled professionals in a field of government activity second.

When the CEO position in the Education Department was advertised recently, experience in education was specified as a requirement but that may not always be the case. In South Australia, the Education Act retains the title of Director-General of Education for the Departmental leader and it is that title by which the incumbent is known.

The Senior Executive consists of directors and above, and the Equal Opportunities Officer. It meets regularly to consider and recommend policy to the Director-General who chairs the meeting. Although newly created positions have recently modified the balance, Area Directors with their close links to schools bring a strong field opinion.

For a number of years, Programme-Performance Budget Papers in South Australia were required to describe programmes and anticipated performance from the expenditure of funds.

Following reports from a general planning conference held in January 1985, the Senior Executive issued a departmental statement of purposes after the style of mission/aims/goals/purposes statements of community organisations, corporations and some other government agencies. Whilst necessarily general, the purposes were more than a 'wish list' and reflected educational ideas and priorities.

The Senior Executive also recommended a form of Directorate Objectives, Strategic and Project Plans which were linked to officer performance appraisals but little development of these schemes was achieved during the next two years.

Further Changes, 1988 to 1990

At the time of the retirement of the Director-General of Education in March 1988 after more than ten years in that position, the Senior Executive was a two tier committee consisting of Director-General of Education and assigned directors in Area and central offices.

A new Director General of Education was appointed from interstate. At about the same time, a former officer of the Department returned to South Australia with the title of Associate Director-General of Education and with special responsibilities for curriculum.

The organisation chart for December 1989 is obviously inherited from the 1984 reorganisation and resembles closely the 1986 model with some variation in the status of officers. One senior position not included in the basic government approved 1983 scheme, Director of Education (Personnel), has been created in accordance with a recommendation of the Yerbury Report. Two other senior positions, Director of Evaluation and Review, and Assistant Director, Policy and Planning fulfil the original intentions of the 1983 plan. During 1990, two further Associate Directors-General of Education positions were created, appearing to reinstate a three tier Senior Executive. The new positions have responsibilities for Resources, indicating the importance of financial control, and Schools which appears to intervene in communications between Area Directors and Director-General and hence to contravene reorganisation principles but which has the obvious function of coordination and of providing the Directorate-General with a single point of advice and information to and from the field.

Assignment of senior officers became a practice of the 1984 reorganisaton. To increase further flexibility and mobility in senior appointments, recent recruitment and promotion have been on three to five year contracts or similar periods of limited tenure.

The 1988 Annual Report of Director-General of Education signalled the preparation of a *Three Year Plan* to 'provide young South Australians with the skills necessary to live and work in the twenty first century'. Literacy, science, technology and mathematics would have special attention; young people would be prepared for the realities of the working environment; parents would have increased participation in the schooling of their children and operation of their local school; and improved measures for classroom discipline and behaviour, responsible equal opportunities in education for all students, high staff morale and career opportunities were other features. Explicit for the first time are objectives related to staff morale, staff performance and public confidence in education, factors which are as much influenced by industrial and economic conditions as they are by administration.

An agreement negotiated between Government and the South Australian Institute of Teachers in the latter half of 1989 added new

elements to the context of educational administration in South Australia. The guarantee had four components, a two tier staffing formula, a guarantee of sufficient staff to maintain school programmes regardless of enrolment decline, a guarantee of minimum course offerings in schools with years 11 and 12 students, and a guarantee of teachers to offer a full programme students in years 8 to 10.

The agreement also included additional preparation time for R-7 teachers, a new placement scheme to assist mobility, introduction of limited tenure promotion positions with key teacher and assistant principal positions, some incentives for country service, and reductions in contract employment. The South Australian Institute of Teachers saw a guarantee as a landmark assurance of student rights, improvements to teaching conditions and educational quality.

An Evaluation and Monitoring Unit attached to the Directorate-General was a part of the 1983 government approved reorganisation. In reviewing the role and function of superintendents in 1987, Professor Ian Cox recommended the formation of a Quality Assurance Unit and the transfer of some superintendents to that Unit. Activities of an Internal Audit section with a charter to review the administration and of an Audit Committee chaired by the Director-General of Education were incorporated into the Education Review Unit.

The Education Review Unit (ERU) was officially opened by the Director-General of Education on 27 October 1989 following appointment of its first Director in April 1989. The Director is responsible to the Director-General of Education and is a member of Senior Executive.

The primary function of the ERU is 'to provide independent professional advice and judgement on aspects of the organisation and conduct of education influencing the learning of students' and to conduct 'reviews and evaluations of the Department's policies and programmes and of the effectiveness and efficiency of individual organisational units'. Thus schools, administration, programmes and policies are included.

Reviews of schools and units will be guided by achievements of the school or unit related to outcomes of internally prepared, stated and approved objectives. In the case of schools, these objectives are part of a School Development Plan which each school is required to prepare. Reviews also check unit compliance with Departmental policy and Government legislation.

Schools are to be reviewed on a three year cycle, other units at least once every five years, and policies and programmes as indicated by the Director-General of Education or as advised by ERU. A schools review team normally comprises an ERU superintendent as manager, the principal of the school to be reviewed, a principal or deputy from another school, a community member, and a person with specific expertise as required. The review may take three to four days and includes interviews

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with students, teachers and parents, the questions being flexible and open-ended. Most of the review programme is qualitative with its purpose being improvement and development. Reports of reviews influence performance management plans which set out objectives, strategies and expectations of individual officers and principals.

Assessing the outcomes of this period of administration is difficult because the period is too recent, the new team of senior officers has adjusted and re-shaped operations and communications, and there has arisen a series of industrial conditions which have affected relationships within the educational scene. The rationalisation and consolidation of schools and programmes in the light of declining enrolments are a continuing achievement. In particular, secondary schools in adjoining districts are cooperating or combining to offer wider ranges of courses, improved re-entry conditions, and specialist accommodation and courses for years 11 and 12 affected by new assessment procedures. An Open Access Strategy aimed to enrich distance education and developed over a number of years will include modern electronic technologies.

The Education Review Unit has set out on the task of qualitative review and its procedures appear to have been well accepted in schools and units. The process, however, has its critics. In an article, 'Reviewing the Reviewers', in the *South Australian Teachers Journal*, 20 June 1990, Alan Reid, (Underdale Campus, South Australian College of Advanced Education) analysed the management principles, and 'the broader political and educational context' of the ERU. Reid argued that corporate management distinguishes the senior bureaucrats who conceive ideas, teachers who implement them and reviewers who check that implementers are doing the job set for them by conceivers. The process wrongly assumes segregated components in education management and it intensifies teacher work as extra demands are made on schools. The review process is undemocratic as it is imposed and its recommendations are mandatory. Three articles in the 25 July *Journal* by a principal who had worked with ERU for one term, a principal whose school had been reviewed and a reporter who had surveyed a reviewed school commended the activities of ERU and its personal and professional development, its valuable feedback and its contribution to school educational focus.

Teacher Morale

In South Australia, the majority of teachers are experienced, confident practitioners, yet there is concern about the loss of teacher morale. The extent to which the disillusionment is attributable to changes in public administration of education is dubious. Indeed many teachers consider that changes in administrative structure are irrelevant to their work in the classroom. Teachers become unsure, resentful and

impatient with what they perceive to be the political and administrative panacea to problems - that change in itself is a cure.

Fluctuations in teacher morale during the period of this study may give a clearer insight into the causes of ebb and flow. Teacher morale seemed highest at the beginning of this period when enrolments were high, all teachers gained permanent employment or re-employment, promotion was rapid, placement vacancies allowed high teacher mobility, resources were increasing, teacher development and support services were readily available, student behaviour and classroom control presented fewer problems, teacher salaries were proportionately increased, and metropolitan placements were generally available.

Reductions in student enrolments and the extensive modifications to curriculum to meet changed community values and needs were early symptoms of the current state. Fewer students meant some gains - but the number of schools was not increasing at the previous rate. Career prospects and teacher mobility suddenly diminished.

New courses demanded new teacher skills which administrators had not needed. The enrichment of curriculum was professionally exciting but, to many teachers, the issue seemed uncontrolled and presented extra demands.

Increasingly, permanent vacancies for new appointees were mainly in country areas and, to improve mobility, compulsory country service for teachers with metropolitan experience only was introduced. To increase flexibility, temporary vacancies were filled by teachers on contract and by permanent teachers. Then teachers were displaced from over-staffed schools. Stability of appointment was further removed by the introduction of limited tenure in promotion positions and by the ten year strategy, a variation of a Yerbury Report recommendation aimed at inserting predictable mobility into service conditions, so that after ten years in a school, a teacher's placement was declared vacant.

Declining enrolments and financial constraints also reduced support services and study leave, and short term out-of-school experiences that often gave a professional boost. New promotion or leadership selection procedures changed career expectations. Introduction of the ERU, requirements for School Development Plans, and the need for curriculum approval were additional duties that were often seen as distracting teachers from classroom duties.

Over a little more than one decade, the ethos of teaching had changed. In the eyes of teachers, the decisions diminished their sense of professional worth and job satisfaction. South Australian Institute of Teachers vice-president Phil Endersby wrote in the *South Australian Teachers Journal*, 25 July 1990: 'Teaching is a deeply wounded profession'.

A coincidence of circumstances towards the end of 1990 became a major threat to morale. Maintenance of teacher numbers was a part of

the Curriculum Guarantee agreed between the Government and Institute of Teachers. When the Teachers Salaries Board awarded higher salaries to teachers in South Australia than applied in any other state, the Government was suddenly faced with a financial dilemma. To make the salary rise 'affordable', the Government responded by reducing the number of teacher positions by 795, just at the time when a large number of teachers were displaced due to the ten year strategy.

The reaction by officers of the South Australian Institute of Teachers was instant and fierce. President David Tonkin said: 'The government's attack on learning conditions in schools is an act of complete hypocrisy, dishonesty and betrayal'.

A distinction should be obvious between effects on teacher morale of changes in administrative organisation and of changes made by administrators in management responding to altered conditions. The loss of morale apparent in South Australia is a product of the latter and the political-industrial disharmony between Government and the South Australian Institute of Teachers.

The Political Role in Administration

Education, being a process of shaping values and developing skills, is and always has been political. The exercise of political will is seen in boards of independent schools, state school councils, curriculum writers, students in classrooms, administrators, teacher meetings and associations, extra-curricular clubs, general parent meetings and particularly in educational situations where a service or condition is perceived to be threatened or not acknowledged.

Political action of the kind described is an intention to perpetuate or establish individual or group will. It may even appear harmless, but it often distorts. Ministers, of course, are politicians and will make political decisions but more recent programmes like social justice and equity, parent participation and changes to school funding have been a part of political platforms and have wide community support. There is a view that Government activity in education is now more overt and intrusive but that may simply be a natural outcome of media methods, economic conditions and increased educational accountability.

In South Australia, the cost of the Office of the Minister has increased in the last decade or so. In the middle 1970s, the Office was staffed by a personal assistant and public service staff of secretary, clerk and typist. Current staffing levels are not available but, in 1986, staff included two Ministerial appointments as personal assistant and press officer and twelve public service staff of ED4 director, two administrative level officers for finance and management and nine clerical officers for appointments, filing and registry, and word processing.

Related Agencies

Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia (SSABSA)

During the period of this study, changes have occurred in senior student certification and in post-compulsory education.

Parallel certificates of the statutory Public Examination Board and the Education Department Secondary School Certificate were incompatible in assessment procedures, were confusing to students, parents and employers, had intrinsic problems of external examinations, were limited in course offerings and lacked comparability of achievement between the two certificates. In 1983, Parliament passed the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia Act 1983 and set up machinery for a statutory body to fulfil the needs of Year 12 certification. In brief, the Board (SSABSA) was required to prepare and approve syllabuses, assess achievements, record assessments, and undertake or commission research into methods of assessment.

The Board consists of representatives from educational institutions and interests, unions and the Commissioner for Equal Opportunities. As a result of a unilateral statement by the University of Adelaide in 1987 that it would require English as a compulsory matriculation subject and that it favoured a two year matriculation, the Government set up *The Enquiry Into Immediate Post-Compulsory Education* chaired by Mr Kevin Gilding. The Report of the Enquiry made 104 recommendations and effected changes in the nature, pattern and certification of post-compulsory education. The report argued that 'post-compulsory education be regarded as a two year (or equivalent) phase in its own right and be planned as a coherent, co-ordinated set of experiences' (Rec 5). It said that confidence in standards of literacy should be assured (Rec 17), and the Year 12 Certificate should record achievements in an arrangement and number of units to a specified curriculum pattern with defined successful achievement in a declared proportion of units (Rec 40).

The SSABSA will have syllabus approval and assessment responsibilities for the new South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE), a certificate of completion of secondary education. The South Australian Certificate of Education is being introduced to:

> encourage the successful completion of secondary education; foster students' acquisition of the skills and knowledge necessary for successful participation in contemporary Australian society for the full range of senior secondary students and to the highest level possible; expand student's general education and provide a broadly based and challenging preparation for entry into employment, training

and higher education; signify students' preparedness to enter post-school studies and employment; be a certificate that is valued by the community and by those to whom it is awarded.

Childrens Services Office

Before 1983, pre-school education was largely provided by the Kindergarten Union of South Australia, an autonomous statutory body almost entirely financed from tax revenue but not answerable to Ministerial direction, and the Education Department of South Australia. A Ministerially appointed Childhood Services Council allocated resources and established policies. There were, however, considerable problems of overlaps of bureaucratic activity, intense competition for funds, reliance on submissions rather than planning based on researched needs, lack of co-ordination and stability in child care services and no formal mechanism for managing health, education and welfare services to young children and their families.

In 1983, the Government commissioned Ms Marie Coleman to investigate early childhood services. In her Report, *Review of Early Childhood Services in South Australia,* Coleman recommended that 'a single State Ministerial Department be created to plan, resource, administer and regulate all early childhood education and care services, Out-of-School Hours and Vacation Care services, neighbourhood houses, playgroups and toy library services'.

Parliament enacted the *Children's Services Act 1985* which provided for the establishment of the Children's Services Office to be headed by a Director of Children's Services whose appointment would be outside the Public Service Act and for a contracted period. The Children's Services Office was established on 1 July 1985.

Apart from the Director, the office has two directorates centrally, one for Resources and the second for Policy, Planning and Programs, and six regional directorates with operational responsibilities. There is a three tier consultative system with a State Consultative Committee and active participation by parents is encouraged in all services.

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Appendix 1

Ministerial and Departmental Leadership during the period of study:

Ministers of Education

Hon. Hugh Hudson	2 June 1970 - 24 June 1975
Hon. Don Hopgood	24 June 1975 - 18 September 1979
Hon. Harold Allison	18 September 1979 - 10 November 1982
Hon. Lyn Arnold	10 November 1982 - 18 December 1985
Hon. Greg Crafter	18 December 1985 -

Directors-General of Education

Mr (now Dr) Alby W. Jones	1 March 1970 - 1 September 1977
Mr John R. Steinle	2 September 1977 - 30 March 1988
Dr Lew G. Boston	14 June 1988 -

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Chapter 10

RESTRUCTURING EDUCATION IN TASMANIA: A TURBULENT END TO A DECADE OF TRANQUILITY

Brian J. Caldwell

Introduction

Two broad trends have been evident, nationally and internationally, in the restructuring of public education over the last decade. Central agencies have become leaner and flatter, with a sharper focus on the determination of goals, priorities and frameworks for accountability. At the same time, schools have assumed greater authority and responsibility to make decisions, especially in respect to the manner in which resources are allocated. These represent simultaneous shifts along the centralisation-decentralisation continuum in the governance of public education. In several Australian states, these occurred throughout the decade in a series of dislocating changes, including the displacement of many senior officers at the central and regional levels.

In contrast, if the last year is discounted, the decade from 1981 was one of tranquility in Australia's island state of Tasmania. An orderly restructure of central and regional arrangements in 1983 was sustained with little further change until mid 1989 by which date Tasmania had the nation's longest serving Director-General and Minister. The rapid turnover or substantial replacement of senior officers which occurred in most states had no counterpart in Tasmania.

From a schools' perspective, Tasmania began the decade with a higher level of decentralised decision-making in resource allocation than any other state, with evolutionary development toward self-management in succeeding years. Despite recommendations for school councils in a White Paper in 1981, only a handful of communities were empowered in school based decision making. Educationalists tended to look askance at events in other states, notably Victoria, where school councils were given policy making powers in 1983 and where restructuring at the central and regional level seemed to accompany every frequent change in minister. There was confidence that the state could be buffered against such events,

with change to occur only when necessary and then in evolutionary fashion for sound educational reasons.

Tranquility turned to turbulence as the decade drew to a close. The Field government, elected in 1989, declared a financial crisis in early 1990 and ordered massive cuts in educational expenditure after accepting most of the recommendations of a hastily conducted management review which called for a drastic reduction in central staff, a thrust toward self-management, and the abolition of regions and the creation of districts. An unprecedented number of staff redundancies were effected in late 1990 and early 1991. In an aftermath which has no counterpart in the nation, a constitutional crisis for the minority Field government in early April 1991 was averted only by the resignation of the Minister for Education and the Arts, following Notice of a Motion of No Confidence in his implementation of reform.

For many, these events constituted the worst case scenario for restructuring education in Tasmania: a revolution rather than an evolution, a change to cut costs rather than achieve educational benefits, with implementation in the hands of an administration which, from mid 1989, had two of its three most senior officers with no previous experience in the field of education. For others, this was a long overdue correction in a state which had sustained a centralised structure far longer than necessary and which, paradoxically, had furnished a model for self-management which had proved helpful in other school systems, nationally and internationally.

Scope and Organisation

This paper deals with a decade of events in Tasmania, from the publication of the White Paper on Tasmanian Schools and Colleges in May 1981 (Tasmania, 1981) to the final appointments in the new structural arrangements in May 1991. This decade was framed by two major reviews of management in education: the review of efficiency and effectiveness of the Education Department conducted by Phillip Hughes, Professor of Education at The University of Tasmania and a former Deputy Director-General of Education in Tasmania, whose report (Hughes 1982) was presented in July 1982; and the review of the Department of Education and the Arts conducted by Cresap, a Melbourne based firm of management consultants, whose report (Cresap 1990) was presented in September 1990.

The first section of the paper provides a brief description of the major features of the system of education in Tasmania, and a broad overview of structural arrangements in the years preceding the decade under consideration. The second section deals with events from the publication of the White Paper in 1981 to the election of the Field

government in 1989, the years of tranquility marked by generally stable structures at central and regional levels and evolution toward school self-management. Then follows a more detailed account of events since June 1989, especially those associated with the financial crisis of 1990, the Cresap review, and the dramatic restructure in late 1990 and early 1991 culminating in the resignation of Peter Patmore, Minister of Education and the Arts in April 1991 and the finalisation of appointments in May 1991. This was the year of turbulence marked by cuts at the centre, the thrust toward school self-management, and the abolition of regions and the move to a district arrangements. The final section contains an analysis of these events, with three major themes being identified: the focus on cost-cutting, the achievement of the financial objectives of the restructure, and the absence of an educational framework.

The Context

In 1990 there were 277 government schools in Tasmania, including 165 primary (K-6), 34 secondary (7-10), 25 district high (K-10, K- 11 or K-12), 8 colleges (11-12), 21 unlinked kindergartens, 19 special schools and 1 school of distance education. A total of 69, 682 students (full time equivalent) were enrolled. The stability of the last five years is indicated by the fact that, from 1985 to 1990, student enrolment fell by 0.6 percent, the number of schools fell by 2.5 percent and average enrolment per school increased by 1.2 per cent. Among the different types of schools, changes in enrolments from 1985 to 1990 included an increase of 1.9 per cent in primary schools; a decrease in secondary and district high schools of 13.9 per cent and 11.4 per cent, respectively; an increase in colleges of 65.6 per cent; and a decrease in special schools of 22.0 per cent (these data from Cresap, 1990).

As far as geographic characteristics, number of schools and enrolments are concerned, the government system in Tasmania is similar to a country region in Victoria or New South Wales. The Department of Education and the Arts is headed by the Secretary (Education and the Arts), a position formerly designated Director- General of Education, a Deputy Secretary (Education), a Deputy Secretary (Arts) and a Deputy Secretary (Corporate Services). From 1970 to 1991, the state was organised into three administrative regions based on 002, 003 and 004 area codes in the telephone system, based in Hobart, Launceston and Burnie, respectively. Eight districts were created in the recent restructure.

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Foundations

The Education Department of Tasmania, responsible to a Minister of the Crown and with a permanent Director as chief executive, was created on January 1, 1886, following a Royal Commission which commenced in 1883. The 1885 Education Act establishing the system was the sixth piece of legislation in Australia and New Zealand which called for compulsory publicly funded education. Tasmania thus had the experience of these other colonies in charting its course.

Of interest in the light of current issues and national and international comparisons is the concern at the time of foundation for the balance of central and local control. Editorials in Hobart's daily newspaper, *The Mercury*, expressed alarm at the work of the Royal Commission, 'believing that its upshot would be the imposition of a heartless bureaucratic uniformity on the education system by an all-sufficing and all-knowing State' (Phillips, 1985, p. 60). Local Boards of Advice had been established in 1868 under an Act to make provision for the better education of the people of Tasmania. They were given responsibility for school records, minor repairs, raising attendances and collecting fees. The Royal Commission of 1883 reported critically on the roles of these bodies:

> The position of members of Local Boards has been so completely false; so fertile of vexatious duties and irksome responsibilities; so barren of dignity and real usefulness, that eligible persons have either stood aloof altogether, or having accepted the position, have found it impossible to take continuous interest in their unprofitable labour (cited in Phillips, 1985, p. 77).

The Education Act of 1885 included provision for District Boards of Advice along lines recommended by the 1883 Royal Commission. However, their powers were curtailed following a critical report in 1904 by W.L. Neale, an Inspector of Schools from South Australia who was invited to conduct a review of education in Tasmania. Neale was subsequently appointed Director of Education in 1905. His position on Boards became one issue in a Royal Commission which recommended his dismissal in 1909. Tensions in the centralisation-decentralisation continuum were as evident at this time in Australia and New Zealand as they are almost one hundred years later. For example, Peter Goyen, Inspector of Schools for the Otago Education Board in New Zealand, and subsequently a member of the Royal Commission which recommended the dismissal of W.L. Neale, reported on the condition of education in Australia and New Zealand following his tour of the former in 1902.

Commenting on 'the unwisdom of centralising in one city the entire management of a nation', he asserted that:

> in New Zealand everybody is interested, because everybody shares in its management . . . and local interest is a living part of the system. There is nothing like it in Australia. In Victoria and other Australian States there are no School Committees and no Education Boards, for the Boards of Advice answer to neither and so far as I could gather, have not a whit of influence, whether for good or for evil. The Department is everything and its influence everywhere, and every school is regarded not as a local institution in which every resident has a living interest, but as part and parcel of a huge machine controlled from the capital city . . . I do not hesitate to say that, in my judgment, the Australian Departments of Education are pursuing a policy that is highly detrimental to the intellectual life of the States (cited in Phillips, 1985, pp. 84-85).

The level of centralisation observed by Goyen remained for more than eighty years in most Australian states whereas the relatively high levels of local interest and influence in New Zealand were generally sustained, accounting in part for the manner in which school boards in the latter were able to assume major responsibilities for self-management in the late 1980s in the wake of the Picot Report (Picot, 1988; Lange, 1988).

In Tasmania, the District Boards of Advice soon withered and there has, subsequently, been little formal opportunity for the community to influence the course of events at the local level. This situation will change as a result of the recent restructure and the thrust toward school self-management.

Structural Change in the 1960s and 1970s

In the 1960s, the Director of Education in Tasmania was supported by a Deputy Director and Superintendents responsible for Primary, Secondary and Technical Education as well as for Home Arts, Curriculum Research, Research and Special Education, Teacher Training and Assistant to the Director. The public service strand of the Department was headed by a Senior Superintendent who ranked third in seniority.

The first Regional Directors were appointed in 1969, with major responsibilities for staffing being transferred to regional offices in 1973. The central office was strengthened with the appointment of Superintendents of Buildings, Planning, Recreation and Inservice

Education. The rapid increase in grants from Commonwealth sources following the creation of the Australian Schools Commission resulted in the rapid growth of support services. Significantly, a decision was made in Tasmania to decentralise to the school level most of the recurrent grants received from Commonwealth sources, a decision which meant that principals of Tasmanian schools had greater responsibility for the allocation of resources than their counterparts on the mainland, an advantage which has been sustained to the present.

In 1976, a significant restructure saw the creation of a Division of Schools and Colleges led by a Director and three Deputy Directors responsible for Primary Education, Secondary Education and TAFE. At the same time, a Division of Services was created, with responsibility for curriculum, staff development and educational resource services. There was steady growth in the number of people providing support from central and regional offices.

In 1978, the Division of Schools and Colleges was abandoned, to be replaced by separate Divisions of Primary Education, Secondary Education and Further Education, with the Division of Further Education responsible for senior secondary (11-12) schools as well as for technical and further education (TAFE).

The Decade of Tranquility

The 1980s are adjudged in this paper as the decade of tranquility, despite the continuing change experienced in schools around the state. The descriptor is selected because these changes tended to be incremental in nature and because the contrast with the turbulence in most other states was palpable. There was only one restructure of significance following acceptance of the major recommendations in the Hughes Report of 1982. What follows is a brief account of the significant events, commencing with the White Paper of 1981.

The White Paper (1981)

The Labor Government published the White Paper on Tasmanian Schools and Colleges in May 1981 (Tasmania, 1981). In the context of developments elsewhere, it is noteworthy that this followed shortly after a much publicised White Paper on education was published in Victoria. The Tasmanian paper called for a review of curriculum, giving particular attention to literacy and numeracy, students with special talents, adult and lifelong learning, Aboriginal education, handicapped children and disadvantaged students. There was provision for school based program

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evaluation and an expectation that all teachers would engage in inservice education.

As far as structures were concerned, the White Paper called for the progressive transfer of responsibility to schools and colleges, especially in the areas of staffing, maintenance and minor works, and budgeting: 'By the end of the 1980s schools and colleges will be preparing the budget for most of their day to day running costs and even for some salaries' (Tasmania, 1981, p. 125). Schools were expected to provide reports on their programs and to plan inservice programs to meet the needs of staff. The government expressed its wish that all schools and colleges have councils and expected that most would have them by 1985. More responsibilities were to be transferred to regions. Administrative flexibility was expected, with fewer permanent appointments at the central and regional levels.

The Labor Government was defeated in the elections in early 1982 and thus was not able to act on these policy intentions. It did, however, act on its intention to conduct an 'efficiency audit' and review the administration of the Education Department and the manner in which it was organised. It commissioned Professor Phillip Hughes, then Dean of Education at the University of Tasmania and a former Deputy Director-General of Education in Tasmania to conduct this review. The incoming Liberal Government of Robin Gray confirmed this commission when it took office in May 1982. The Hughes Report appeared shortly thereafter in July 1982.

The Hughes Report

Phillip Hughes, a highly respected educationalist, already had extensive experience and influence in the restructuring of education by the time he was commissioned to conduct a review of the efficiency and effectiveness of the Education Department in Tasmania. He was commissioned to review education in the Australian Capital Territory in the early 1970s and became the first Chair of the ACT Schools Authority on acceptance of his recommendations by the Commonwealth. Most members of his Review Team in Tasmania also had extensive experience in education.

Hughes identified ten issues to be addressed in the review: organisational structure of the Education Department; the management of Further Education; the management and coordination of support services; financial management and budgeting for programs and services; policy making and providing advice for the Minister and Director-General; devolution of responsibilities to schools and colleges; lines of responsibility, the use of committees, and the delegation of authority; the

dual employment structure and issues related to employment in the administration; staff development; and accommodation.

Significant recommendations as far as restructuring was concerned, especially in the light of subsequent events and the recent restructure, were as follows:

1. The new administrative structure at the centre should include an Office of the Director-General and Divisions of Educational Programs, Resources and TAFE. Significantly, the former Divisions of Primary Education and Secondary Education should be abandoned.

2. The regional structure should be retained. Superintendents based in regions should each be responsible for a number of primary and secondary schools grouped on the basis of geographical location, thus abandoning their former roles as specialists in the fields of primary or secondary education.

3. There should be an enhanced capacity at the centre for policy making and for corporate planning, with the latter involving the preparation of strategic and operational plans through a comprehensive ongoing cycle of goal setting, planning, budgeting and evaluation. Particular attention should be given to program budgeting as an approach to relating resources to educational plans and priorities.

4. The already high level of responsibility for budgeting at the school and college levels should be extended in a series of trials and phases of implementation from 1983 to 1989 (thus achieving one of the objectives in the White Paper).

5. Sources of additional revenue and cost savings were identified in the Report, with projections of staffing levels calling for an eventual reduction of non-school staff of about 10 per cent.

The government accepted most of the recommendations of the Hughes Report, acting through an implementation committee chaired by the Minister. Noteworthy was the adoption of the proposed administrative structure and some reductions in the numbers of non- school based staff. Recommendations not taken up included the proposed change in roles of regional superintendents. While there was no systematically planned extension of budget responsibility to schools and colleges, there were incremental changes in the direction of decentralisation as the years passed, increasing the size and diversity of grants to schools and removing restrictions placed on their deployment. A capacity for strategic planning

was developed toward the end of the decade but linkages between policies, priorities, plans and resources were not developed to the extent intended.

Incremental Change within Existing Structures

Incremental change proceeded until mid 1990 within the structures established on the basis of recommendations in the Hughes Report. In many respects, a broader view of restructuring was evident. These were the years of curriculum review and reform, especially at the secondary level; the development of new approaches to assessment and reporting; and the introduction of the Tasmanian Certificate of Education, implementation of which is still in progress. Restructuring in these years thus meant restructuring of the curriculum and restructuring of approaches to learning, teaching, assessment, reporting and certification.

Restructuring of the work place for teachers has also proceeded, notably through the introduction of a Common Administrative Structure in secondary schools and colleges and, more recently, the introduction of the Advanced Skills Teacher Scale, being part of the national initiative in award restructuring.

Stability and continuity at the senior levels of the system were indicated by the fact that Mr Ken Axton became the longest serving Director-General or equivalent in the nation and Mr Peter Rae the longest serving Minister of Education. Both became influential on the national scene through their chairmanship of councils and committees. This state of affairs came to an abrupt halt with the defeat of the Gray Liberal Government in June 1989. The general election of April 1989 led to an inconclusive result until the House of Assembly met and a motion of no confidence was passed on the combined vote of Labor and Green Independents, whose members established an Accord which would ensure that Michael Field could form a minority government. Rae lost his seat in the election. Axton, whose contract had been renewed by the Gray Government shortly before its fall, took early retirement.

The Field Government adopted a new terminology in the appointment of senior officers, with Mr Bruce Davis, former head of Lands, Parks and Wildlife appointed Secretary (Education and the Arts). Dr Don Levis, former Deputy Director-General of Education with extensive experience in the tertiary and, more recently, the schools sector through regional administration, became Deputy Secretary (Education). Mr Jeremy Compton, former Deputy Director-General (Resources) and an experienced manager in the transport system in Victoria, became Deputy Secretary (Corporate Services). Thus, by late 1989, two of the top three positions in education were filled by people whose professional training and experience lay outside the field of education, with the third having most of his educational experience in the tertiary sector. The stage was

thus set for a year of the most dramatic change in the recent history of state education in Tasmania.

Year of Turbulence

Financial Crisis

There was little indication in the early months of the Field Government that there would be major restructuring in education. An attempt to close a number of small schools early in its term of office was thwarted by the opposition of virtually every interest group in the state. No argument on educational or efficiency grounds could be sustained at the time.

Soon after taking office, however, Michael Field, who serves as Treasurer in addition to Premier, announced that the state was facing a financial crisis. Budget background papers for 1989-90 had, in fact, warned of the difficulty, drawing attention to the fact that debt charges as a proportion of recurrent budget had increased at an annual rate of about 18 per cent since 1984-85, and concluding:

> Treasury is firmly of the view that the Works and Services Program should be wound back to a long term sustainable level. The consequence of not making a significant change in direction is escalating financing costs which will constrain future budget flexibility and policy with inevitable reductions in recurrent spending and/or taxation increases. (Tasmania, Treasury, 1989, p. 5).

By 1990 the situation was even more precarious, with warnings of a state heading toward bankruptcy. There were expectations of an eight per cent cut across all portfolios. The pressure on education was acute, as explained by Mr Bruce Davis, Secretary (Education and the Arts):

> Currently education spending is about 23 percent of the State's recurrent expenditure. However it is a much larger percentage of the outlays over which there is budget discretion. Debt servicing, statutory payments and other outlays mean about 40 percent of the variable budget is spent on education. Education cannot be left outside any program designed to correct this propensity to overspend which Tasmanians have come to describe as a credit-card mentality (Davis, 1990, p. 1).

The Premier, supported by other ministers and Treasury officials, made clear in many public statements that the state faced a financial crisis and that major cutbacks lay ahead. Apart from members of the former government, at whose feet the blame for the predicament had been laid, there seemed to be general acceptance in the community that the position was as serious as the Premier claimed. This was generally the case among stake-holders in education, including the Tasmanian Teachers Federation to which 97 per cent of teachers in primary and secondary schools belong. In contrast to the climate which prevailed at the time of the aborted attempt to close some small schools, the public was to a large extent prepared for what was to follow.

By mid 1990, there were rumours of massive cuts in education, with at least one document purporting to have been prepared by department officers in circulation, projecting the loss of many hundreds of classroom teachers. However, the government determined that an external rather than internal review was required.

The Cresap Review

On June 20, 1990, the government commissioned a Melbourne based consultancy firm, Cresap, to conduct a review of the Department of Education and the Arts. Team leader was Mr Mike Richards, a senior consultant in the company, who was formerly Director of Policy and Research in the Department of Premier and Cabinet in Victoria, serving while John Cain was Premier. Cresap was to report by September 14, 1990. Its objective was:

> To review the operation of the Department of Education and the Arts in Tasmania and identify areas in the operation of the Department and the school system where greater efficiencies and cost-effectiveness can be achieved while maintaining the quality of education. The Review shall also examine library and museum facilities and services (Cresap, 1990).

Included in areas to be examined were the management structure of the Department, including its regional arrangements, with recommendations to be made on structures to maximise efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of services. There was a particular charge to examine 'the feasibility of the devolution of authority to at least the regional level, but particularly the school or college level' (Cresap, 1990).

Mike Richards, in a recent commentary on Cresap's work in Tasmania, outlined the context in the following terms; it is cited at length here because of the construction he places on public sector

expenditure and his explicit statement of the Field Government's charge to the Cresap team:

> An assignment to reduce expenditure on education in Tasmania has to be seen in the context of the times. If the 1980s were the decade when state governments (mostly Labor ones) spent money on essential services in the belief that more money necessarily meant better quality services, then the '90s hopefully will be the decade when the public sector finally rids itself of that misguided and expensive notion.
>
> . . . While big spending state government departments like health and transport are frequently to be numbered among the inefficient government agencies, reducing expenditure and becoming more efficient should also be imperative for many of the country's education departments. In many states in the 1980s expenditure on education grew dramatically with often no significant impact on the quality of education.
>
> That was the broad context in which the Tasmanian Government last year commissioned Cresap to undertake a review of the Tasmanian Department of Education and the Arts. But the Government's reasons were quite specific. First, there was the recognition by the Field Labor Government that the state budget situation was perilous, and that unless very severe reductions in expenditure could be effected across all portfolios, the growing Tasmanian debt -- a product of successive administrations of both major parties over the years -- would bankrupt the state. The Government was widely applauded by the business community and economic analysts for adopting that responsible budget approach.
>
> The second factor was the response by the Government to Commonwealth Grants Commission analyses showing Tasmanian education in particular had been substantially over-resourced and that there were serious inefficiencies in the delivery of educational services. (Richards, 1991, p. 5)

Cresap was commissioned on June 20, presented an Interim Report on August 31 and submitted a final report on September 14. An Advisory Committee was established 'to guide and monitor the progress of the Review, receive reports from the consultants, raise issues of concern to constituent members, respond to matter put to it by the consultants and

generally canvas issues having an impact on the work of the Review' (Cresap, 1990, p. 10). Representatives of key interest groups were invited to join the Advisory Committee which met on six occasions. During or subsequent to the fourth meeting, representatives of some teacher, senior staff and principals' organisations as well as the Tasmanian Arts Advisory Council and Federated Miscellaneous Workers Union withdrew from the Committee. Submissions were received from 231 individuals or organisations, four surveys were conducted of principals, regional superintendents, departmental staff and service users, and 28 schools were visited.

The Case for Over-Resourcing

The case for over-resourcing in education as presented by Cresap (1990, pp. 3 - 4) was based on data derived from the Commonwealth Grants Commission for 1985 and National Schools Statistics for 1989. Expenditure per student at the primary level in Tasmania in 1989 was $3,495 compared to a national average of $3,200. Primary education was thus deemed to be over-resourced by 9.2 per cent or $11.2 million. Expenditure per student at the secondary level in Tasmania in 1989 was $5,337 compared to a national average of $4,674. Secondary education was thus deemed to be over-resourced by 14.2 per cent or $18.2 million. Total over-resourcing was thus determined to be $29.4 million. Similar comparisons led to observations that Tasmania had almost twice the national average of out of school staff and that expenditure on school facilities was 69 per cent above the national average. The Cresap team was careful to note that 'these comparisons were not used . . . other than to indicate possible areas of investigation' (Cresap, 1990, p. 4).

Data published since the release of the Cresap report led to similar observations about educational expenditure in Tasmania. A paper prepared for the Economic Planning Advisory Council by the Institute of Public Affairs (EPAC, 1990) provided a range of state by state comparisons, employing the national average as the standard in each instance. In neither of these reports is there justification for the adoption of an average figure as a standard and no account is taken of the largely rural nature of Tasmania. In a post-review analysis, Richards drew attention to updated Commonwealth Grants Commission data 'which allowed for interstate differences in scale, population dispersion and socio-economic status' and observed that 'Tasmania was still over-funded and over-staffed' in all areas under consideration (Richards, 1991, p. 6).

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The Cresap recommendations

The following is a summary of the major recommendations of Cresap:

- Schools to be grouped into eight districts, instead of three regions, with districts having a say in decision making.
- School funding at the district level to be on a per pupil basis.
- Each school to have a greater level of self-management and a school council with significant input into school operations.
- Decisions about closing small schools to be handled locally. Districts might underwrite small 'uneconomic' schools by resource trade-offs at the district level.
- Closure of school farms in favour of several 'centres of excellence' in agricultural-rural studies.
- Productivity savings to be achieved by cleaners and ground-staff, or cleaning work to be contracted out.
- Greater parity of class contact hours between teachers in secondary colleges and high schools.
- Streamlining of the Curriculum Services Branch.
- Abolition of a state-funded living- away-from home allowance for tertiary students.
- Restructuring of the Learn-to-Swim program: Grade 3 and 4 students to be on a cost recovery basis ($20 fee per student); Grades 5 and 6 to be funded through corporate sponsorship.
- Abolition of hostel accommodation for rural students in favour of private boarding.
- Outdoor education services to be operated on a cost recovery basis where possible (Richards, 1991, p.6).

Full-year savings were calculated to be $43 million, with staff reductions accounting for most of this amount: 502 teaching and 554 non-teaching positions. The anticipated impact on student-teacher ratios was an increase at the primary level from 17.7 to 18.8 (national average 18.2) and, at the secondary level, from 10.2 to 11.9 (national average 12.2).

Implementation

The Cresap Report was accepted by the Government in principle, with some recommendations being later rejected, including those related to the

creation of 'centres of excellence' in agricultural- rural studies and the contracting out of school cleaning services. Nineteen implementation committees were established and, by April 30, 1991, most of the structural changes had been accomplished. Attention is given here to four aspects of implementation: redundancy arrangements, the creation of districts, mobilisation for self-management, and the political aftermath.

Redundancy Arrangements

A key mechanism for structural change was the provision for redundancies. The Field Government had secured an agreement from the Commonwealth to provide a grant of $40 million, in addition to a borrowing capacity of $50 million, to meet the costs of redundancies in return for a guarantee of long-term cost savings in the public sector. Approximately $48 million was used to fund redundancies in the Department of Education and the Arts.

The approach used in the redundancy program was summarised in a presentation by departmental officers to the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee (Department of Education and the Arts, 1991a). All employees were invited to express an interest in redundancy, with responses received from approximately 3,300. Less than one in three of these received a formal offer to take up a redundancy. Close to 1,000 staff accepted redundancies resulting in an annual saving of over $50 million of which just under $30 million was in direct salary savings. Departmental responses to expressions of interest were guided by the following:

> . . . the Department had to respond to the expressions of interest from three structural considerations: the changing demand for subject areas in teaching, the age and sex composition of the staff and the fact that specific services or functions were to [be] closed down in line with Cresap recommendations (Department of Education and the Arts, 1991a).

A three step process was followed in determining redundancies at the school level. First, the relevant staffing formulae determined by Cresap were applied to schools, with principals requested to identify positions surplus to requirements. This information was aggregated by subject area and region. At the same time, expressions of interest in redundancy were aggregated on the same basis. The second step involved a matching of the two aggregations by regional superintendents who then forwarded recommendations on redundancies to head office. Staff at head office then prepared a list of people to whom redundancies would be

offered, with priorities determined primarily on the basis of subject area and cost and, secondarily, on the basis of age and gender composition.

Creation of Districts

Another significant feature of the restructure was the abolition of regions in favour of eight districts, each with a staff of four people: Superintendent, Assistant to the Superintendent, Executive Officer and Secretary. Curriculum consultants in high priority areas of need were located in three centres around the state, with fewer than fifteen persons in each instance.

A key issue as far as districts were concerned was the extent to which there would be any cost savings. In response to a question in the Legislative Assembly (Milne, 1991), the Minister for Education and the Arts provided data suggesting a reduction in overall costs of 41 per cent from $10.258 million to $6.053 million, in moving from regional to district operations (Aird, 1991).

Mobilising for Self-management

Mobilising for self-management was, in some respects, a relatively straightforward operation compared to experience in other parts of Australia and overseas. As noted earlier in the paper, Tasmania has had long experience with school-based budgeting, having decentralised most of the recurrent grant from Commonwealth sources since the mid 1970s. An educational needs index has been utilised from the outset. Decentralisation increased in evolutionary fashion throughout the 1980s so that, even prior to the Cresap review, schools were responsible for allocating most of their budgets, the main exception being salaries of permanent teachers. A School Resource Package (Department of Education and the Arts, 1990) for an even higher level of self-management was announced in November 1990, within two months of the release of the Cresap Report.

A noteworthy development was the appointment of Jim Spinks as Superintendent (School Self-Management) for a period of twelve months. Spinks is well known in other states and, especially, in New Zealand and Britain (England and Wales), for his publications, consultancy work and training programs on self-management based on his experience as Principal, Rosebery District High School. Associated with his work is a draft policy on school self- management (Department of Education and the Arts, 1991b) which includes a relatively detailed specification of the roles and responsibilities of the centre, districts and schools within a framework

of centrally-determined policies, priorities and approaches to resource allocation and accountability.

Tasmania was relatively unprepared for one aspect of self-management covered in the Cresap Report, namely, the introduction of school councils. Although recommended in the White Paper of 1981, they remained an option, taken up by few schools. In contrast, most states of Australia and most school systems in other comparable nations maintained, introduced or re-introduced some form of school-based decision making with important roles for parents and other members of the school community.

Political Aftermath

The recommendations of Cresap and the government response have drawn strong reactions from many quarters, notably the two teacher unions. While each supported aspects of the Cresap report, major concerns were expressed in respect to the impact on schools of reductions in the numbers of teachers.

The Tasmanian Teachers' Federation considered the cuts to be excessive, commissioning a review of the Cresap report from economists at the University of Tasmania which concluded that 'there are grounds to consider the total level of cuts to be greater than required to meet the long term budget objective of stabilising the growth in debt service levels' and recommended the retaining of some 75 positions at a cost of about $2.5 million (Felmingham and Attwater, 1990, p. 1). The Secondary Colleges Staff Association expressed its concern at the industrial and educational effects of the decision, in line with Cresap recommendations, to increase the teaching load of secondary college teachers (Grades 11 - 12) to achieve parity in teaching hours with colleagues in secondary schools (Grades 7 - 10). The Association reported an increase in load for 40 per cent of teachers, a 10 per cent reduction in instructional time in each subject, fewer opportunities to provide individual assistance for students, and less time for marking (Moran, 1991).

A significant event in the aftermath was the resignation of the Minister of Education and the Arts, Peter Patmore, following Notice of a Motion of No Confidence in his performance in implementing the reforms, initiated in the House of Assembly by Christine Milne, spokesperson on education for the Green Independents. The Motion of No Confidence included reference to an alleged failure to properly oversee the redundancy program for secondary colleges, resulting in under-staffing in 1991, despite an apparent commitment that this would not occur (Patmore, 1990). Secondary colleges had opened in 1991 with much higher enrolments than had been forecast by departmental officers. A total

of twelve charges were included in the motion, with most alleging the under-resourcing of education.

The Motion of No Confidence was never debated. However, it provoked a constitutional crisis which threatened the possibility that the government would resign, with an election to follow. The matter was resolved when the Minister submitted his resignation.

Analysis

The major features of the post-Cresap restructure are similar to those found elsewhere, nationally and internationally: leaner, flatter central agencies and greater school self-management. In an historical context as far as Tasmania is concerned, the outcomes mark a major break from patterns of management which have evolved in recent decades and a continuation of the debate between the balance of central and local influence which was evident in the years before and after the foundation of the system in 1886. School councils are now expected, ten years following their earlier recommendation in the 1981 White Paper.

Three broad and related themes are selected for particular comment: the focus on cost-cutting, the achievement of the financial objectives of the restructure, and the absence of an educational framework.

Cost-cutting Focus

The first theme is the narrow focus of restructuring in Tasmania as it has occurred in the last year: it has occurred clearly and unambiguously as a result of a need to cut costs. The Cresap Report did not deal with educational issues or provide a comprehensive explanation of how the particular patterns of organisation and levels of staffing will ensure that the quality of education will be maintained. In these respects, it cannot be compared to reports such as those by Scott (1990) which provided the basis for restructuring in New South Wales. It is a short and simple statement which specifies structures, staff and savings.

Despite these limitations, the particular patterns of organisation which were recommended by Cresap are generally no different to those recommended elsewhere and are now becoming the norm in the public sector in most comparable nations: lean and flat structures, and self-management within a centrally determined framework. Moreover, the response in Tasmania was no different to that which occurred at about the same time or subsequently in Victoria and New South Wales as those states were confronted by financial difficulties of one kind or another. When faced with the need to cut costs, governments have set their priorities so that cuts are felt most severely at the central and regional

levels although schools have experienced reductions in numbers of teachers and levels of support services.

It may be argued that Cresap was indeed addressing matters related to the quality of education as it sought to identify ways of achieving greater efficiencies and cost effectiveness. After all, every instance of duplicated or unnecessary expenditure, and every instance of continued support for a program which may no longer have high priority, may divert resources from programs and priorities intended to address issues of quality and equity. However, the connections between efficiency and effectiveness on the one hand and quality and equity on the other were not made clear. In general, it seems that these connections have not been made as a matter of course in the ongoing management of education in Tasmania, so to some extent the Cresap review was highlighting a continuing shortcoming.

Restructuring in Tasmania and elsewhere suggests the need for ongoing and systematic study of costs and benefits of services to schools. An example of such a study, conducted recently in New York and now being replicated in different systems around the United States, yielded findings which have dramatically highlighted the costs involved. Bruce Cooper of Fordham University in New York and Robert Sarrel, former budget director of the New York City Board of Education, found (Wochsler, 1990) that less than one third of expenditure actually reached the classroom in New York City high schools, with 'overhead' amounting to $4,135 of total expenditure of $6,107 per student. What would such a study find in the Tasmanian or other Australian setting?

Achievement of Financial Objectives

The second theme is the speed and success of the transition as indicated by the achievement of budget goals, the adoption of a framework for the allocation of resources to schools, the establishment of new structures at central and district levels, and the finalisation of appointments to new positions. The reasons for these outcomes are identified as general acceptance in the community that the state was facing a financial crisis; the political will of the government, especially by the Premier and Minister of Education and the Arts, to stick to its course; the support and commitment of the Secretary of Education and the Arts and the Deputy Secretary (Corporate Services); the availability of funds from the Commonwealth to support a substantial program of staff redundancies; the associated fragmentation of the hitherto powerful culture which had been established in the years of stability; and the existing and extensive capability for school self-management, especially in respect to the allocation of resources, which had evolved since the mid 1970s. The apparent success of the restructure was achieved despite the threatened

constitutional crisis and the resignation of the Minister, the basis of which were allegations of mismanagement in the implementation of reforms.

While progress had been made in the evolution of self-management throughout the 1980s, there was general inertia by successive governments in respect to other reforms such as school- based decision making through bodies such as school councils, and the development of a comprehensive framework of policies, priorities and approaches to accountability, despite the rhetoric of support for strategic planning along these lines. Moreover, the Gray government had, for the most part, resisted calls from the Commonwealth government to reduce public sector expenditure in the light of alleged over-resourcing when state by state comparisons were made. It appears that the current government had little faith that major structural reform in education could be accomplished through the processes of internal planning, and that expenditure of more than $700,000 on the external Cresap review was justified if accompanied by strength of will on the part of the Premier, Minister and senior officers of the Department as well as a public information exercise to inform the public about the state's financial difficulties.

The Absence of an Educational Framework

A concern, at least in the short term, is the absence of educational goals, priorities and frameworks for accountability within which the thrust to school self-management will proceed. The absence of this educational component in centralised arrangements may jeopardise the long term success of the restructure from both efficiency and effectiveness perspectives. Furthermore, the achievement of long-term benefits as far as teaching and learning are concerned are dependent on restructuring the way things are done in schools, suggesting that the concept of restructuring in Tasmania, as elsewhere in Australia, must take on the broader connotations which are evident in some other nations, notably the United States.

The issue here is also the extent to which there should be a strong 'core' of educational leadership, direction and support in a system of self-managing government schools. Should the most senior officers be educationalists? Should the department retain a capacity for curriculum development and evaluation? Should there be strong support in the infrastructure for curriculum and student services to schools? What account should be taken of the needs of a small system in a state with a dispersed and largely rural population? What supporting roles can be played by organisations such as the Curriculum Development Corporation, a consortium based in Melbourne but funded by the states

and territories and the sales of its services, or by institutions such as the University of Tasmania where many staff have extensive experience in educational consultation, nationally and internationally? In the short term, the responses to these questions have been largely determined by the exigencies of the state's financial crisis.

Conclusion

The case of Tasmania is of special interest because the state was largely unaffected by the turbulence which characterised other states and territories in the 1980s. Yet the changes which eventuated differ only in scale from what transpired elsewhere. In the broad historical context, however, these events are another manifestation, shaped by conditions in the early 1990s, of a continuing contest as far as the role of government in education is concerned.

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Chapter 11

BETWIXT AND BETWEEN CHANGE : A VICTORIAN GAME

Phillip Creed

Introduction

One of the teaching strategies very rapidly acquired by neophyte teachers is to keep the students busy. Idle hands and minds are prey to Satan and make mischief. So it was with interest that the first edition of *The RIALTO* (Reorganise Incessantly And Leap Towards Oblivion) appeared at the end of 1990. This delightful satirical circular produced by school support centre staff takes its name from the Melbourne landmark which houses the Minister and state office of the Office of Schools Administration. This Office, once familiarly known as the Education Department, is the major component of what is now the Ministry of Education and Training. The name change became effective from January 1991.

The appearance of *The RIALTO* was, of course, harmless good fun. Even so, it reflects a deep seated and widespread malaise throughout the Ministry and this is a very serious issue. The President of the Institute of Senior Officers of Victorian Education Services recently wrote that regardless of the models of administration put in place, the outcomes have been the same - needless expenditure of scarce funds, loss of valuable programs, projects and services, loss of productivity loss of morale and the inevitable loss of talented and conscientious staff (Ikin, 1990). Is the Victorian picture so dismal? What has happened in this state with 526,576 students enrolled in 2038 Government schools (1547 primary schools) and with 258,130 students enrolled in 683 non-Government schools, two-thirds of them being Catholic? Superficially, the level of dissatisfaction is hard to understand in a state which, according to the Commonwealth Grants Commission, exceeds the seven-state standard for provision of educational services by a wider margin than any other state. This expenditure pattern reflects a situation where Victoria has the lowest or near equal lowest pupil-teacher ratios and class sizes in Australia.

The benefits from structural changes are masked in the prevailing climate throughout the administration of the system. In such a climate,

the words of the PA management consultants who led the first of the restructuring processes in 1981 can be seen to have been prophetic. In their Action Plan for change the consultants wrote that comprehensive change should be addressed with vigour, forceful direction and alacrity to achieve the benefits sought from the change and to prevent organisational malaise and indecision. Regretably, malaise and indecision has characterised the continuous change that has occurred since 1981.

Structural change and short term appointments of senior officials seems to have become a permanent feature of system administration. The expectation of further organisational change with a change of Ministers or a change of Government is now widespread among teachers and administrators. Structural change in Victoria is a story about the preferences of a succession of Ministers of Education. However, over arching these changes, consistent themes are emerging.

In this chapter these themes are identified and the outcomes of each of the successive changes are discussed in detail. Figure 1 shows the structure of the Department in 1979 and Figure 2 shows the organisational pattern in 1990. References to all the other structures are made throughout the text of this discussion.

Hunt-the Beginning of the Upheaval

When Alan Hunt was appointed Minister of Education in May 1979, following the return of the Liberal Government with a very narrow majority, he began the most extensive organisational change in the history of the Education Department. The clear perception around the corridors of the Department was that he was the strong man of the Party, appointed to put departmental affairs in order (Moore, 1985).

At that time the Education Department was structured with a Director-General of Education at its head, a deputy, four assistant directors-general with specific functional responsibilities, ten central office administrative divisions, and eleven regional offices. Included among the ten central divisions were four 'school' divisions, namely primary, secondary, technical and special schools divisions. Non-schools staff numbered approximately 4000, that is around seven per cent of total full-time departmental staff. About half of the non-school staff were public servants and the remainder were former teachers classified as professional officers.

Various sections of the administration of the Department had been subject to organisational review prior to 1979. Structural changes had occurred in times of rapid growth in student enrolments in order to meet the demands for services emanating from schools and the community. For example, the Special Services Division grew out of the Primary Schools Division in the 1960s and the Teacher Education Division was formed at

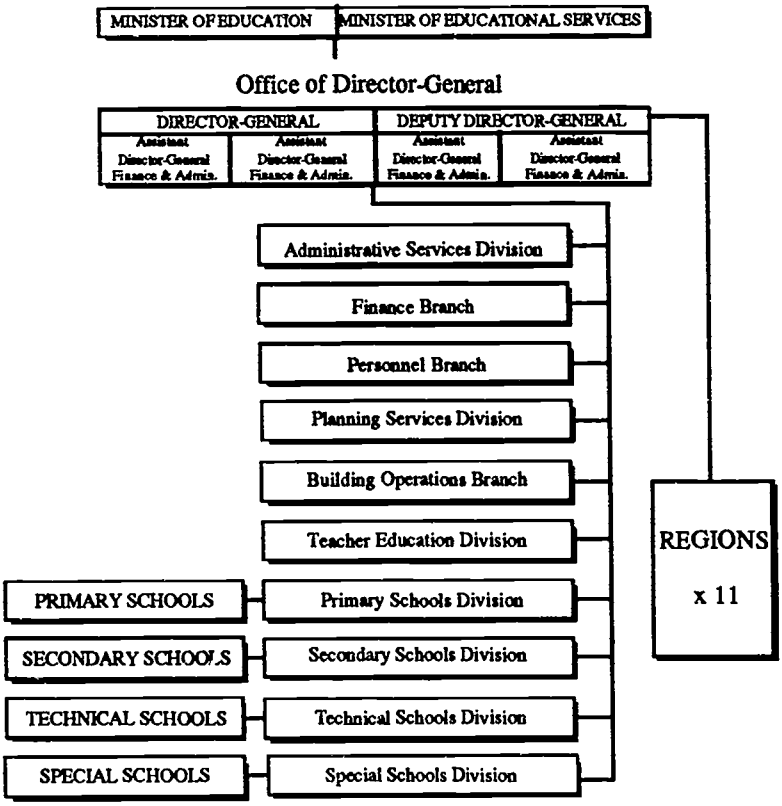

FIGURE 1.
Structure of the Education Department of Victoria (Schools) May 1979

Note : In neither Figure 1 or 2 are references made to Universities, TAFE, the statutory bodies or to the State and Regional Boards and School Councils. In 1990, a Portfolio Coordination Division and a Division of Further Education were responsible to the Chief Executive. Statutory bodies in existence were the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board, the State Board of Education, the State Training Board, the Victorian Post-Secondary Education Commission and a variety of Registration and Appeals Boards.

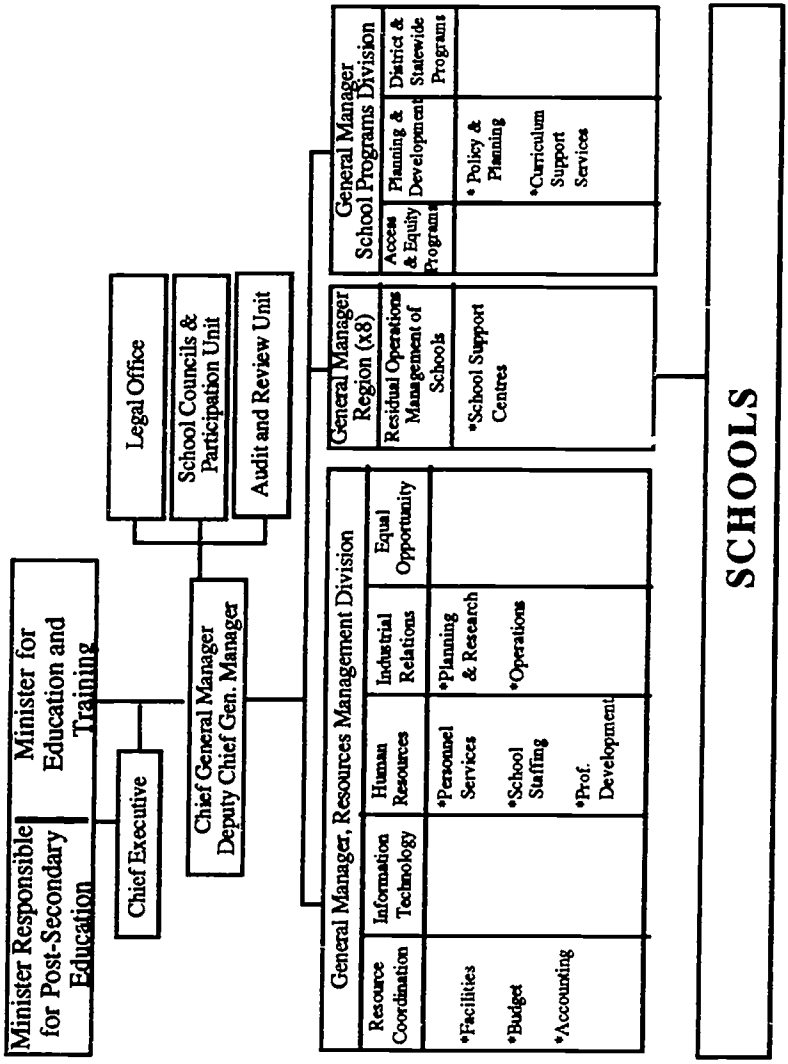

FIGURE 2: Structure of the Office of Schools Administration. (October 1990).

the same time. These changes, and many others, were initiated by the Director-General as the burdens on the Schools Divisions became excessive. The experiment with regions was initiated by the Minister in 1971 with the appointment of a regional director to each of three pilot regions. The stated purpose was to bring some measure of administration and decision-making closer to schools and the people connected with them. However, the regional directors were given no specific responsibilities. They were seen as trouble-shooters and public relations personnel.

In the *White Paper* these changes were described as the product of evolutionary development. A warning of what was to come can be found in the same paragraph. It was stated that many reforms will never be achieved without firm Government initiative and action. The scene was set for the brief skirmish over who was to be responsible for further structural change during the term of office of the new Minister. Of course, the outcome was never in doubt, though the Assistant Minister did express some concerns (Lacy, 1985).

A different perspective on the outcome of the structural review and implementation processes during 1979-81 was taken by many senior officers. Inadequate recognition had been given to the creation of the climate for organisational change by the Director-General at the time, Dr Shears. As the Deputy Director-General put it, the Ministers failed to take account of changes already set in motion and in fact subsumed them in their own organisational review (Moore 1985). Ever since 1979, the initiative for restructuring has been retained by Ministers and their party advisers.

Tweedledum and Tweedledee: Ministers and Directors-General

The magnitude of the role change for Directors-General and their officers in determining management structures and processes can be demonstrated by changes in the relationship between the Minister and the departmental head. The education journalist, Maslen (1986), used the phrase 'Tweedledum-Tweedledee' to describe the relationship between the long serving Minister Thompson and Dr. Laurie Shears prior to 1979. Both knew their roles as political and professional heads of the Department. The Director-General was safe in his role as permanent head. As Kirner (1985) wrote, he was well protected by the Education Act which required the Government to table the reasons for his dismissal in the Parliament and which allowed seven days for the community to 'pray' for his restoration to the job. The passage of the Education (Amendment) Act on the 13 October 1981 meant that the specific offices named in the Act had changed, so the position to which Dr Shears had been appointed

no longer existed. On the 17 October, the position of Director-General was among 15 positions advertised in the national newspapers.

A new way of changing the administrative head was found in 1985. On the 11 November, the Director-General, Dr. Norman Curry, resigned and on the following day the Minister announced the demise of the Department and the creation of a Ministry. The change was effected by an administrative device, that is by amending a schedule to the Public Service Act, 1974. All the powers of the Director-General were transferred to a new Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry. After considerable delay in Cabinet, Dr. Graham Allen was appointed to the position in mid 1986.

Following the 1988 election, a new Minister for Education was appointed. On the day that Dr Allen returned to duty after a long spell of sick-leave, he was told his contract of appointment was terminated. A senior public service officer from the Premier's Department, Ms Ann Morrow, was the new Minister's choice as Chief Executive.

Clearly, this last decade has seen the situation emerge where the head of the Department is the Minister's personal choice. This level of increased politicisation has also had implications for the appointment of senior officers within the Ministry. The creation of new positions and the choice of persons to fill those positions clearly signal directions for new policy development and implementation.

Retaining the Initiative for Change

The change of Government in 1982 brought with it a change in the nature of the exercise of Ministerial responsibility. The role of Ministers was changed to establish Cabinet as supreme, that is political supremacy, in Government affairs. The Premier, in prescribing the role of his Ministers, likened them to Executive Directors rather than chairmen of Boards of Directors (Halligan and O'Grady, 1984). Hence the role of Ministers vis-a-vis departmental heads was greatly strengthened. An incidental outcome of this change was a marked increase in the influence of interest groups exercised through direct negotiation and through representation on policy committees such as the State Board of Education and the Labor Party policy committee for Education. It is very much in the interests of political activists to reduce the influence of the department in favour of a Minister who is prey to their pressure and dependent upon their support.

For those in Government departments, a most obvious expression of this political influence is the appointment of Ministerial advisers. These people are appointed by Ministers to provide administrative support and often to mediate between Ministers and senior public servants. Under a Labor Government the advisers appointed were most frequently drawn from among the leadership of the teacher unions. For senior officers in

the Department, who previously dealt with advisers in their former roles, the change created significant difficulties. In recent times, the names of these advisers have appeared among those seeking pre-selections for safe Labor seats, thereby demonstrating the nature of these adviser positions. The contrast with the arrangements under the Liberals is quite marked. In 1979-1982 there was a Minister and Assistant Minister (later Minister for Educational Services) of Education and two junior assistants seconded from the department. From 1982 to 1985, there was a Minister for Education and two appointed advisers on salaries paid to senior officers.

Parallel and Contrasting Themes

The *White Paper* (1980) listed six key themes underlying the administration changes to which the Liberal Government was committed.

These were as follows :

- devolution and decentralization of power and responsibility where appropriate to local and regional units;
- increased participation by parents, community members, teachers and principals in education governance at all levels;
- improved consultation;
- economy and efficiency in management;
- effective co-ordination of functions and policies; and
- appropriate mechanisms for internal and external reviews of schools.

When Labor was elected in 1982, these themes for change were dispensed with though the spirit of some of them survived. Ministerial Paper One, *Decision-Making in Victorian Education*(1983), listed the principles which were to be given foremost and continuing consideration. To this day these principles remain significant. They were as follows:

- genuine devolution of authority and responsibility to the school community;
- collaborative decision-making processes;

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- a responsive bureaucracy, the main function of which is to service and assist schools;
- effectiveness of educational outcomes; and
- the active redress of disadvantage and discrimination.

In the statement of these five principles, the element of response to the Liberal themes is evident. Nevertheless, there was widespread acceptance of the Liberal themes. As Kirner (1985) wrote, the Parents and School Councils organisations had particularly welcomed the *White Paper* because of its apparent commitment to participation. The fact is that the *White Paper* had something in it for all the interested parties in education. The editor of the *White Paper* was Grant Harman, then a Reader in Education at the University of Melbourne. He skilfully shepherded the Ministers to consider a much broader range of themes than the single theme of decentralisation and as a consequence guaranteed widespread support (Harman, 1985). The Labor Government picked up the *White Paper* themes and modified them according to their philosophies. Senior public servants became adept at appealing to these principles when preparing position papers, though the Ministerial papers were set aside during the reign of Minister Cathie (1985-87) who had thought of them as filled with rhetoric. Kirner, elected as a Labor member in 1982, had been particularly influential in the formulation of these principles, as she had been in the preparation of the very comprehensive and well developed ALP policies published in 1982. When Kirner became Minister for Education in 1988, the Ministerial papers again resumed their pre-eminent place in directing thought. In restructuring, the principles were most important for determining the processes used in deciding structures.

The Hunt and Fordham Structures

The restructuring of the Education Department under Liberal Minister Hunt and Labor Minister Fordham (1979 to 1985) is well documented in Frazer et al (1985). The key actors in the process, including the Ministers contributed chapters to this publication and so it remains a case study useful for testing concepts of organisational change and administrative behaviour. The Hunt structure proposals and recommendations for change are found in the *Green Paper* (1980, the *White Paper* (1980) and in the PA management consultant's report, *The Rationale and Definition of the Proposed Organisation Structure*.

The Ministerial Statement tabled in Parliament on 10 September, 1981 outlined the basic structure, the expected functions of each unit and

what the Government hoped to achieve with the structure. The proposals were not fully implemented, following the change in Government in March 1982, but the essential structural changes as proposed did remain intact. Hence the Fordham restructure is best described as a modification of the Hunt proposals though the processes for implementation were very significantly changed.

The Hunt (1985) and Lacy (1985) diagnosis of the ills of the department amounted to a claim that duplication of functions existed on a grand scale and that the fundamental maxim of simplicity in organisational structure had been ignored. The Ministers had noted what the PA management consultants later identified as management dysfunctions in an organisation which had mixed management by functional division of responsibilities with division by school type and by geographical location (Dunstan, 1985). No surprises concerning structure were to be found in the Ministerial statement of September 1981 once this point had been recognized. The School Divisions were to be dismantled, the regional structure was to be strengthened and the central branches were to be organized by grouping like functions. Regional boundaries were to be re-aligned to conform to boundaries delineated by the State Co-ordination Council (SCC) except that country regions were to be paired to make five education regions and two SCC city regions were to be amalgamated to make seven education regions rather than eight. The one hundred Inspectors of Schools positions disappeared to be replaced by Senior Education Officers with consultancy rather than inspection functions. These officers were to become responsible to Regional Directors. School principals were to be responsible to regional Directors, not to central branch personnel. In the Ministerial statement, the Minister claimed that the new lines of authority would be short and clearly defined.

The Labor Government retained these radically different structural features in the restructuring that was eventually implemented, but the structures for consultation and for participative decision-making in the Department were substantially altered.

The Fordham Review

With the change of Government in 1982, the new Minister set about reviewing the proposed changes. The strategy employed provoked considerable interest because it was to reveal what the commitment to collaborative decision-making really meant. The panel eventually established consisted of three teacher union representatives, two parent representatives from the major parent and school council interest groups, a school principal, three newly appointed senior administrators, the chairperson of the Labor Party Education Committee and the two

Ministerial advisers. Fordham (1985) appointed the former Schools Commission chairman, Ken McKinnon, to chair the panel because he was a person acceptable to all interest groups.

The Liberal Government had used a consultation strategy which involved the formation of an Organisations Reference Group comprising members of sixteen organisations (Frazer et al, 1985), not including the three major teacher unions which had boycotted the group. However, Fordham had directly involved a select group of organisations in decision-making. The basis of representation was perceived influence and scope of membership. This pattern of membership has been reflected ever since in large scale reviews in the department, and later Ministry, of Education. Selection panels for senior officer positions and the composition of boards and school councils also reflect this pattern. Some organisations have been battling ever since for recognition, most notably the post-primary school councils association, school principals associations and the professional officers association.

The most significant structural outcomes of the Fordham Review were reformed school councils, the creation of regional boards and the formation of a State Board of Education. The proposed Curriculum Branch was re-arranged to create an Equal Opportunities Branch, thereby giving a higher profile to these functions consistent with the redressing disadvantage principle, though the chief source of funding for the operations of this Branch remained the Commonwealth Government. An Executive Director (Schools) was added to the two other second level positions, viz., the Executive Director (Personnel and Resources) and the Executive Director (Educational Programs), an appointment which altered the line of authority for regional directors.

After further delays in the appointments process, the new structure was put into place, but it was April 1983 before the Schools Divisions finally disappeared. In the meantime schools had continued to operate mostly oblivious to the disturbance and confusion that surrounded them. The most obvious effects had been on school principals who had lost many of the informal communications networks used for garnering scarce resources. However, schools could not remain insulated from the changes taking place around them for much longer.

Councils and Boards

The widespread support gained by the *White Paper* proposals was lost when Minister accepted the PA management consultants recommendation to tackle administrative re-organisation first and to leave redistribution of powers to a later date. The Labor Minister moved quickly to remedy this situation.

The reforming of school councils was of primary importance. Ministerial paper four set out the rationale for this reformation. Fordham implemented a major objective of the Government to shift the focus of education to the school. School councils were to have a major responsibility for deciding the educational policies of their schools. On 8 February 1984, the Education Act was amended to give effect to this policy. The first listed duty of the Council became to determine the general education policy within guidelines issued by the Minister. The amendment also set out the membership of the new councils. This change provided for parents to constitute no less than half a primary school council and one-third a post-primary school council. Teachers were to comprise no more than half a primary school council or one-third a post-primary school council. Provision was made for student membership of post-primary councils. Provision also was made for up to one-fifth of the total membership to be co-opted by the elected membership, thereby enabling local community representation on the Council.

The outcome of this policy change was that the primary teachers union mounted a vigorous campaign to ensure that teachers took up the total number of places available. The effect was that primary school councils which had been composed almost entirely of parents lost members of the community from the councils. Technical school councils were particularly affected. Their association protested strongly against the loss of expertise from business, industry and local government that had been available to councils.

The essential point to understand in these changes was the particular interpretation of devolution and participation given by the Minister. The thrust of the reform supported by the interest groups has been to promote the notion of partnership in school governance among parents, teachers and students in post-primary schools. Hence devolution in its current form needs to be understood as devolution to interest groups who are demanding a larger voice in educational decision-making.

Regional Boards were also established to provide for participation at regional level. The structuring of these boards (Ministerial Paper 5) was designed to ensure direct links with school councils. The majority of members were drawn from school councils. However, regional boards were destined to have a short life since they became victims of a subsequent restructuring.

The State Board of Education was constituted by a separate Act (1983). In the information circular available to the public and sent to schools, the Board claimed its establishment as the fulfilment of an ideal voiced in 1908 by Frank Tate, the first Director of Education in Victoria. He asserted then that the community was powerless through want of independent, authoritative and courageously-expressed information and criticism as to defects.

The *State Board of Education Act, 1983* set up the Board as responsible to the Minister, but independent of the Education Department. The Board claimed to be representative and expert through its membership, the staff supporting the Board and its capacity to engage experts in specific fields.

The membership of the Board followed the pattern established by the structure review panel set up by Fordham. McKinnon was the first chairman and two full-time deputy chairpersons were appointed - one a parent representative and the other a teacher unionist.

The Board operated in the form in which it was established till November 1990 when it also became modified in another restructuring exercise.

The Cathie Restructure

Following the re-election of the Labor Government with a narrow majority in 1985, Ian Cathie was appointed Minister for Education. Prior to his election as a member of Parliament, he had long experience as a teacher in government secondary schools, so his knowledge of the system was extensive. In February 1986, he appointed a Ministry Structures Project Team, thereby commencing a restructuring at least as comprehensive as that which had been undertaken by the Liberal Minister Hunt. By the time the team had finished its work, it had published a discussion paper titled *Taking Schools into the 1990s* (June 1986), a three volume *Ministry Structures Project Team Report* (October 1986), and the Government response titled *The Government Decision on the Report of the Ministry Structures Project Team* (1986). An implementation team, the Ministry Structures Unit, published what it described as a strategic plan for implementation titled, *The Structure and Organisation of the Schools Division*, in December 1987. This publication contains a letter from the Chief Executive, Dr Allen, reproducing the advice that the new branches and regions would be operational from 1 January, 1988 and the new structure would be in place by the end of that year. Before the year had passed, another election had been held and Minister Hogg, who had replaced Minister Cathie in a Cabinet reshuffle, was also replaced by a new Minister, namely, Joan Kirner.

When Minister Cathie announced the formation of a Ministry of Education in November 1985, he stated that the change was made in order to achieve two important and related objectives. These were to expedite the process of devolving functions, authority and resources to schools and regions and to improve the co-ordination of policy, resources and planning across the portfolio.

The problem of co-ordination had been well documented by the former Director-General and later Coordinator-General of Education, Dr Shears (1984). In a report to the Minister on administrative structures, he had recommended the name change from Department of Education to Ministry of Education and changes in several small but specialist advisory units while noting that Victoria had an unusually large number of statutory bodies (Shears, 1984). The response of the Minister was to create an office of the Chief Executive, the Education Executive Committee (EEC) and two new divisions - the Portfolio Policy Coordination Division and the Resources Co-ordination Division. These new small divisions were to operate beside the very large Schools Division in the Ministry. The Education Executive Committee comprised the Minister as Chairman, the Chief Executive, the General Manager Schools Division, and the chairmen of the Technical and Further Education Board, the Post Secondary Education Commission, the State Board of Education and the schools Curriculum and Assessment Board. The EEC met monthly to consider portfolio priorities and strategic direction. Much of its agenda was determined by the Minister and his advisers.

In the context of this discussion, the Cathie 'super-structure' is important because schools and Schools Division personnel viewed it as a substantial downgrading of the influence of their head in educational decision-making.

The devolution objective was identified by the Minister as requiring attention because of activities of the State Board. One of the responsibilities of the Board listed in the Act was to review the structure and functioning of the Department, following implementation of the Fordham restructure. The Board had found Deakin University education staff sympathetic to their philosophies of management and so commissioned them to interview senior staff and a small select group of parents and school staff as part of the review. On 9 October 1984, the Deakin report was presented to the Board. The key conclusion was that the impetus for devolution of authority to schools and regions had diminished markedly. The researchers found the impact on schools had been minimal and that school councils were slow to take up their new responsibilities. There was perceived resistance to regionalisation of the department. Regional Directors saw the centralist motivations of teachers' unions and parents organisations and some key executives as responsible for this situation. Policy conflicts were identified and the need for more structure in policy development was strongly felt.

As a response to the report, a joint State Board/Education Department Devolution Process Study team was formed. It had as its objectives the mapping and the description of the new Department and the clarification of structures, processes and relationships as a means of improving public participation and access to decision-making. This

information was used in the subsequent analysis of departmental function by the Structures Project Team when it was established in February, 1986.

Self-Governing Schools

The paper published in June 1986, *Taking Schools into the 1990s*, served the same purpose as the *Green Paper* in 1980. It generated considerable discussion and some alarm because it contained many radical proposals. The paper proposed the establishment of new self-governing schools that would operate within a framework of state-wide guidelines and policies for curriculum and resource distribution, and a state-wide system of central employment for teachers, public accountability and support for school councils. Schools would decide curriculum, select teaching staff, decide on numbers of ancillary staff or additional teaching staff, undertake major and minor building works, allocate all funds obtained through a single grant and administer a range of personnel services. The response to the paper was mixed, with a large majority of primary schools opposing the new directions, a majority of technical schools in favour while secondary schools were almost evenly split. Most of the new directions have not been implemented, but the paper was an important land-mark. It is particularly significant because of similarities with the emerging policy directions of the State Opposition parties in the lead up to the next election.

The Cathie Response to Structural Proposals

The leader of the Ministry Structures Team had been seconded from the Public Service Board as a management consultant. He brought with him an approach to management reform that was currently being applied across the whole public service. In essence, this approach called for increased responsibilities to be given to personnel at senior and middle levels, but for considerably strengthened accountability provisions. These accountability features included corporate planning, the specification of outcomes expected and evaluation against these outcomes. For individual officers, accountability meant the development of performance improvement plans and performance pay scales within a Senior Executive Service.

The Government response can be interpreted in the light of the public service reforms and in terms of the specific agendas of particular interest groups in Education. So the Government agreed to a central structure of five branches led by Assistant General Managers, together with eight regional managers, all responsible to a General Manager of the

Schools Division. Later, the central branch and regional leaders became known as General Managers, responsible to a Chief General Manager. Three central curriculum branches were consolidated into a single School Programs Branch. The Policy and Planning Unit was taken into a Planning and Policy Branch and a policy coordination section together with corporate planning functions were added. Facilities and Finance and Administration branches were consolidated into a Resources Management Branch, together with legal services functions. The Personnel and Industrial Relations Branch remained relatively unchanged. A new School Improvement Branch was formed. This new branch subsumed school council services and audit functions within it, as well as the school operations functions of the Executive Director (Schools). The seven metropolitan regions were consolidated into three regions. Twelve regional administrations became eight. Though staff numbers were not given in the Government response, a drastic reduction in the number of central office staff was envisaged. An overall reduction of non-school based staff was also planned as part of a wide ranging plan to reduce real expenditure in Government services.

The most interesting response was the rejection of all recommendations relating to devolution of personnel functions. The Government decided the new State Office (*i.e.* central office) would retain responsibility for all Government school staffing. Any changes to the personnel system would have to occur through the normal industrial relations processes.

The School Improvement Branch had within it a section for School Review and Improvement. One of the major functions of the section was to develop an appropriate evaluation and accountability framework for schools, in consultation with the major interest groups in the Ministry. This was all that remained of the self-governing schools proposal for schools to negotiate school improvement agreement contracts with the Ministry as part of the package of responsibilities that were to be devolved. Even these review functions were soon to be abandoned as another later restructure took effect.

The most significant changes were at regional level. The senior education officer positions created in 1982 were abolished. In their stead were school support centre manager positions. The school support centres created in the Cathie restructure had their roots in the teachers centre movement. So the support centres became upgraded centres with all regional curriculum and other education services for clusters of schools consolidated into the one centre. Any semblance of school inspection functions that had remained as a quality control measure disappeared in these changes.

In commenting upon the changes, the general secretary of the Teachers Federation stated 'we are confirmed centralists.... We fear the Government may have swapped one central bureaucracy with eight mini

bureaucracies and that is something we will oppose' (*The Age*, 9 February 1988). He need not have worried. By the end of 1987, general managers had been appointed on three-year contracts and other senior staff were in place, but the full structure was never implemented. By early in 1988, a new Minister had been appointed, namely Caroline Hogg. Her role was to perform a healing ministry. The post-school sector had been hived off and Cathie, a victim of interest group politics, had become an assistant Minister with responsibility for this sector, as well as Minister for the Arts. The leader of the Ministry Structures Unit was given leave to become Director-General of Education in South Australia and his position, General Manager Planning and Policy, remained unfilled. The need for budget savings also impacted upon non-school staffing, though positions in schools were protected by industrial agreements. As October 1988 arrived, an election was held and Minister Kirner returned to her love - Education - as its new Minister.

The Kirner Restructure

Minister Kirner preferred not to use the term restructure to describe the changes she introduced. She regarded the changes made as fine-tuning the structure of the Ministry. The fine tuning consisted of the appointment of a new Chief Executive, Ann Morrow, who was not a teacher professional, the consolidation of the central branches into two branches, and the creation of seven units directly responsible to the Chief General Manager, Schools Division, as well as to his deputy - a newly created position.

Responding to criticism about the downgrading of the Schools Division in the Cathie restructure, she gave the head, the Chief General Manager, agency status. In a reply to public criticism by the writer (*Herald*, 28 June 1989), the Chief Executive (*Herald*, 4 July 1989) stated that the Schools Division had been upgraded to an associated unit of administration under the Public Service Act. She claimed that this meant the Chief General Manager now had a direct reporting relationship to the Minister and with powers that no longer had to be delegated by the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive further pointed out that to emphasize the fact that the administration of the schooling system is no longer being carried out by a mere division of the Ministry, the division's name had been changed to Office of Schools Administration. It seems anticlimatic to remark that the Chief General Manager had lost his schools budget responsibilities to the Chief Executive as part of this change. In this context it should be noted that about 80 per cent of the budget is actually set through industrial agreements with the teacher unions. Responsibility for these negotiations passed to the Chief Executive.

Given the Minister's background as a parent activist, a change of particular note was the abolition of the Regional Boards of Education. On 2 March 1990, after six years of operation, the Minister announced that the Boards would be phased out. She said that she had been concerned for some time at the duplication of effort through the existence of both regional standing committees and regional boards and the lack of clear focus of some boards. The School Council organisations did not mourn their passing. In fact, the Association of Post-Primary Institutions (April, 1990) claimed some success in lobbying the Minster on the subject at a meeting held with the Minister in January.

Corporateness and Policy Development

In her first days in office, the Minister let the Corporate Management Group (CMG) know that they were out of business. This group, comprising the Chief General Manager and twelve General Managers, had been formed as part of the Cathie restructure. At the time, Minister Cathie stated that the Government accepted the concept of a new form of state-wide administration for the Schools Division, characterised by an enhanced central policy role and the decentralisation of management and operations. Supporting the Cathie concept, Beare (1988) stated that the existence of the CMG was a positive sign in that in a Ministry which deals with schools there is collaboration, collective decision-making, a sharing of information and presumably collegial openness. In terms of the findings of the Deakin University study which preceded the Cathie restructure, the CMG was a response to two of the five major issues identified as problems, namely, policy conflicts at the core of the system structure, and the need for more structure in policy development. The enforced separation of policy development at the centre from operational management in regions had created difficulties. However, the CMG was viewed by the Minister and interest groups as a direct threat to participative decision-making and policy setting in representative boards and Ministerial advisory committees, so Kirner's action was not surprising.

These decisions recall a similar situation which had occurred in 1982. The *PA Report* had recommended the formation of a Corporate Policy Group comprising the Ministers, the Director-General and his Deputy and the Executive Directors, as well as a Corporate Operations Group headed by the Director-General and comprising Branch and Regional Directors. Furthermore, the possibility of adding two persons external to the Department to the Policy Group was raised. In his Ministerial statement (September 1981), the Minister had stated that the need to establish arrangements for unambiguous policy determination, appropriate delegations and effective communication of policy was

fundamental to sound organisational design. With the change of Government in 1982, these recommendations were never implemented. The Director-General at the time, Dr Curry, called regular meetings of the senior officers, but the group was always called the Senior Officers Meeting. This was to avoid any suggestion of policy development at the senior officer level which could be interpreted as competing with Party or representative board policy-making.

Under the current Pullen administration, the situation is similar to that which existed under Kirner. No corporate approach to policy making exists in the present Ministry.

Troublesome Design Issues

When Kirner announced her restructure, she had created seven small units directly responsible to the Chief General Manger and his newly appointed Deputy. These were the Audit and Review, Legal Office, Regional Information Services, School Improvement, Integration, School Councils and Participation, and School Re-organisation Units.

Under Minister Cathie, all of the functions performed by these units had been subsumed under Branch General Managers. This had been a deliberate ploy to bring specific units seen to have direct access to the Minister and Chief General Manager under some measure of control in the interests of better policy coordination. So the units responsible to the Director-General or his deputy during the Fordham years, namely Policy and Planning, Equal Opportunity, Council Services, School Improvement, and Audit and Review, disappeared during the Cathie years.

For audit personnel, the problem has always been that the nature of their work requires them to report findings directly to the Chief Executive. Their independence cannot be compromised by reporting to intermediate managers. Likewise, the legal work undertaken in the Ministry means that for all practical purposes they work for the Chief General Manager. The various alternative arrangements tried did not work and this has been acknowledged in the current structure of the Ministry.

Council Services people have always seen themselves as independent of others in the Ministry. At school level they have been called upon to support council members against the principal, or community members against departmental officers. While managers have been known to refer to these people as the Ministry's 'fifth column', their need for a degree of structural independence has been acknowledged. The group successfully resisted implementation of the Cathie restructure proposals and, with a change of Minister, have retained their status as an independent unit. Minister Kirner modified the unit functions to include a role for implementing participative-decision-making and gave the unit a

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widely representative reference committee. The unit is now headed by a former parent activist.

The Policy and Planning Unit had been designed as a unit to work under the direct supervision of the Director-General to develop corporate policy options, to synthesize research findings and to monitor long-term trends and developments in society which had implications for educational policy making. In the Cathie restructure, this relationship was broken as part of the streamlining of policy development and its relocation. Those functions which still remain in the Ministry are presently located in the School Programs Branch.

Other units had been created because their functions were the high profile concerns of the Minister and Government. The Equal Opportunity Unit was one of these, but under the Cathie restructure these functions were located in the Personnel and Industrial Relations Branch, now the Resource Management Division.

The School Improvement Unit was developed subsequent to the publication of Ministerial Paper 2 in 1982 as a final report of a representative working party set up to examine school reviews. The School Improvement Plan was designed to reflect the general principle of system support for schools, rather than system control. All funds formerly used to conduct school reviews were transferred to the Plan. In its operation the Plan became school submission based, though the Ministerial paper made clear that all schools were expected to engage in the cyclical process of evaluation, planning and implementation. The Plan contained many elements usually found in an innovations program, but it also stressed participative decision-making in the formulation of school plans. School Improvement functions were transferred to the School Improvement Branch under the Cathie restructure. A new emphasis on the development of a framework for school accountability emerged, but Minister Kirner restored the functions of the former School Improvement Plan. School improvement functions are now subsumed into the School Programs Division. The issue of school reviews remains an unresolved problem.

The Pullen Restructure

The most recent restructure is the only one to be driven explicitly by the need to make budget cuts. Though previous restructurings had occurred within the constraint of no additional staffing, Minister Pullen was faced with the need to cut $92.3 m from expenditure across the Ministry. In his News Release of August, 1990, the Minister nominated a reduction of 1150 full-time non-school positions, a reduction of more than 25 per cent, and of 1600 school teaching positions to be achieved by natural attrition.

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The findings of a regional profile study conducted during 1990 were most inopportune. The study had recommended an increase in regional staff to further implement decentralisation. This report was shelved. At the same time a review of the curriculum function had been proceeding and the report was submitted to the Chief General Manager in July 1990. In August, he accepted all recommendations including those relating to the structure for curriculum support, subject to Ministerial approval and budgetary outcomes. The curriculum review led to restructuring the consolidated School Programs Division which now has three branches, namely Curriculum Planning and Development, Student Equity and Access (including most Commonwealth funded programs), and General Program Delivery, later renamed District and Statewide Programs Branch. The Division is to operate on a project basis with flexible staffing. This means staff changes with changing curriculum priorities in the future. A widely representative curriculum advisory committee is to be established to advise on system curriculum needs and priorities for projects.

Budget cuts provided considerable impetus for priority setting and this the Government has done. Staffing is to be allocated for assisting schools to implement the new Victorian Certificate of Education and for District Provision and School Reorganisation. Other priorities are for integration, students at risk, music education, literacy and numeracy and for assessment and reporting to parents programs. Curriculum consultancies for specific subject areas have virtually disappeared. The other major effect of the cuts has been long delays in the implementation of a new system structure as negotiations with teacher unions proceeded. These were important because the outcome determined the scope of the non-school based changes required. The sentiments expressed in the Introduction relate in part to these delays.

One casualty of the curriculum review has been the State Board of Education. In a memo dated 12 November 1990, the Minister announced that the State Board has ceased to be an associated administrative unit of the Ministry. The Board's operations, budget and personnel are to be part of School Programs Division. The chairman of the Board, a former teacher union activist is now the new General Manager, School Programs and chief executive officer of the State Board. The reason given was that the changes stem from a desire to receive soundly based and well supported advice about schools and curriculum and to have that advice implemented effectively. So the independent State Board of Education, the centre piece of the new Labor Government reforms of 1982, was cut down to size.

Conclusion

Amid the many twists and turns in the restructuring of the management of system administration the one enduring benefit derives from the abolition of the schools divisions. This forced new levels of co-operation among different types of schools. After 1982, no new separate high schools or technical schools were built. The recent emphasis on district curriculum audits as a precursor to school amalgamations or campus reorganisations would not have been possible under the old style administration. Though schools are currently in a state of ferment, it is because of curriculum changes and career restructures for teachers rather than system restructuring. Schools have managed to remain somewhat isolated from the administrative turmoil.

The ease of association of successive restructures with new Ministers for Education is more than a matter of a convenient literary device for this chapter. Over the last decade, Ministers have seized the initiative for change. It is a seemingly automatic response of Ministers to respond to perceived organisational problems by restructuring their departments. Somewhere in the welter of reasons given will be a stated desire to remove needless duplication of services - an easy diagnosis in a large department. The assumption is that government institutions may be structured to facilitate certain policy outcomes determined by party policy committees. Accompanying this restructuring is an increasing level of politicisation of the administration. With so much change opportunities are created to appoint to new positions people who are at least conversant with, but more frequently sympathetic to the policies of the governing party. This is an important conclusion to be reached from the documented change in Victoria.

Within the sequence of restructures, three important dimensions of managerial change can be identified. One dimension is related to devolution of authority. Every one of the restructures has had something to say about devolution to schools and its twin, decentralisation. Varying degrees of support can be found for one or the other concept. So while Minister Cathie might have found devolution had stalled, teacher unions were not disposed to support too much devolution. Certainly the secondary teachers union have not supported regionalisation as an expression of devolution or decentralisation, neither do many secondary school principals. During the last decade, the degree of devolution achieved tends to represent the current balance of influence among the many politically active interest groups in Victoria.

Devolution cannot be discussed in isolation from participation in decision-making. The effectiveness of school councils as participative decision-making forums is directly related to the degree of devolution of authority within the system. However, the tension for change under a Labor administration revolves around the encouragement of the interest

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groups, who provide the basis of political support, to participate at the local level while at the same time maintaining maximum discretion to pressure the Minister for state-wide change. Increased devolution means less influence for state-wide interest group associations. The concept of self-governing schools developed under Minister Cathie is a portent of things to come, but the hard nut to crack is the devolution of a range of personnel services to schools. Further, the assumption that increased participation leads to improved student outcomes has yet to be tested.

The second dimension can be identified with policy-making in the system. The theme of ineffective or uncoordinated policy making structures recurs in each organisational change. Linked with this diagnosis are concerns about who should be making policy. Under Fordham and Kirner the role of the professionals in the system was considerably diminished. If administrators were to be involved in making policy then it could only be in forums where they were equal status participants with representatives of designated interest groups. To be responsive in a bureaucracy meant to be partners in the decision-making process. Minister Cathie was concerned with developing an effective policy-making Ministry, hence his emphasis on corporate planning, the creation of a planning and policy branch and the development of a Corporate Management Group. Whether or not the ebb and flow of structures for policy making and coordination is interpreted as a confusion of roles or of the meaning of policy, the restructuring to date demonstrates that the issue is far from settled.

The third dimension of change is related to school and system accountability. Two clear expressions of the issue can be found in the restructuring. First is the disappearance of the school inspector. The initial change was the abolition of the inspector position which was the key to the success of school divisions. While the Department retained the right to inspect teachers and schools, the senior education officer position implemented under Fordham was one which emphasized the curriculum consultancy and school support role (especially school principal support). This was later changed again to the role of manager of coordinated school support services. Teacher inspection as a system function has disappeared. The second expression of this change dimension was the abolition of school reviews, the substitution of reviews with school improvement projects and a consequent and continuing failure to establish an evaluation and accountability framework for schools. This issue in restructuring remains alive, but it could take a change of government for new directions to be established.

Finally, the question 'Will incessant restructuring stop?' should be posed. The answer is a clear 'No'. The next change of government could well bring with it a change of party in power. New priorities will emerge. Of that there is no doubt. Irrespective of which party is in power, it seems clear that devolution of authority to schools will develop much

further. Self-governing schools in the government sector seems to be an inevitable development in a state where approximately one-third of children are educated in private schools, if for no other reason than that an increased ability to compete for enrolments will result. More important though is the need to recognize that the balance of power among various interest groups will favour further devolution. One possible outcome of this development would be increased stability for schools. They would become less susceptible to the swings of political fortune as Ministers change and as governments change. As a response to such an unstable political environment it is interesting to speculate whether or not continuing organisational restructuring will of itself become a reason for supporting further devolution of authority to schools.

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Chapter 12

REVERSING THE POLICY PROCESS IN WA: FROM TOP DOWN TO BOTTOM UP?

Peter Wilson and Don Smart

Introduction

Since 1983 there has been unprecedented change in education in Western Australia (WA). A number of factors, some national or international, others specific to Western Australia, can be identified as influential in bringing about this change. Economic imperatives have been driving much of the change in most government bureaucracies. Similarly, moves toward greater devolution, common to most Australian education systems, have been evident in this state. The specific mechanism for change in Western Australia has been an interventionist ALP Minister for Education, Bob Pearce, and the commissioning and implementation of two radically different reviews of different aspects of the education system.

The first of these reviews was a broad representative committee of inquiry (The Beazley Inquiry) conducted along traditional public inquiry lines and focussed largely on curriculum reform. It had relatively little impact on administrative structures. However, it did have a more generalised impact in that it involved a broad, open consultative process and made stakeholders feel involved in the change process. It certainly led to significant changes in the structure, packaging and teaching of the high school curriculum.

The later and more dramatic report in terms of administrative change was the *Better Schools Report*. This report was essentially a slick public relations version of two secret, internal WA Government Functional Review Committee (FRC) reports into the Education Department. It was to have far reaching and dramatic effects on the administration of education in Western Australia. First, it altered the locus of power away from the traditional concentration at the level of Director-General. The revised structures gave the Minister for Education

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greater power with more streamlined lines of control through the new Ministry of Education. At the other end of the system, schools themselves stood to gain greater decision making power over some aspects of education provision. In essence, these reforms were designed to radically reverse state education policy from a 'top down' to a 'bottom up' process.

It is necessary, when considering the impact of these reports, to examine the political and economic context in which they arose. Both reports were as much a reflection of this context as they were the cause of future change over education. The *Beazley Report* (1984) was the result of a pre-election commitment by the incoming Burke Labor Government. Labor declared commitment to the participation of community and stakeholders in many sectors of Government activity. Other reports and committees initiated at the time reflected this commitment (*Wellbeing of the People* 1983).

The *Better Schools Report* (1987) was very different in nature and reflected changing economic and political circumstances. In contrast to earlier emphasis on participation of stakeholders, this secretive report, largely steered by the minister, concentrated on the maximizing of efficiency and effectiveness of the management of the state's educational resources and institutions. The Minister's clear and radical agenda was to overturn the highly centralized top-down administration of education in WA and to shift a strong measure of decision making power and financial responsibility to the schools. The rationale of the report stated:

> Whereas once it was believed that a good system creates good schools, it is now recognized that good schools create a good system. Accordingly the efficiency and effectiveness of the system can be improved only if schools have sufficient control over the quality of education they provide. (*Better Schools Report*, p.5.)

The report was thus attempting, in some measure, to invert the traditional hierarchy and place schools at the apex. As we shall see, it has had some modest success in moving toward this goal to date.

Context - Prior to 1983

The WA education system had been characterised by dramatic enrolment growth during the 1960s and 1970s but was settling in to a

period of more subdued growth in the early 1980s. Until 1983, the post-war period in Western Australia had been largely dominated by Liberal/Country Party Governments. Most Ministers for Education had been Country Party Members of Parliament. Furthermore, most of these Ministers had been concerned with issues of provision of educational buildings and facilities rather than with overall policy decisions. Ministers had generally felt more comfortable with leaving the educational policy decisions to the 'experts' in the Department - the Director-General and his superintendents. As Smart & Alderson (1980) noted, the Directors-General were extremely powerful and dominant policy-makers in education throughout the first eight decades of this century. However, the power of the Director-General had begun to wane in several ways prior to the 80s. In 1975 the Department had set up Regional Offices with a small amount of decision making power. Four metropolitan and eventually nine country regions were established. The regions had authority over the provision of some advisory and supervisory services to schools, particularly primary schools within the region. Other administrative matters such as minor works, furniture requisition and the transfer of staff within the region were also determined at a regional level. Nevertheless, major staffing, financial, and curriculum decisions were still made centrally whilst schools themselves had little power over their own direction.

In the second half of the 1970s, WA was to experience its first 'activist' Minister for Education in decades. At this time, student numbers had begun to level out and in some sectors to drop. However, the administrative side of the Department continued to grow. Peter Jones, Liberal Party Minister for Education from 1975 - 1979, took the then unusual step of going outside the Department to have the Public Service Board investigate a new structure for the Department. The implementation of this structure in 1979 upgraded the administrative, as distinct from the professional, side of the Department and created a Deputy Director-General level appointment as administrative head. At the time the Minister observed that he:

> ...was conscious that the Department's head office, comprising some 1000 people had grown 'topsy-turvy' during the previous decades (Smart and Alderson, 1980: 39).

In addition to attempting to reform the administration of education by distinguishing between professional and administrative staff, a number of attempts at reorganization saw pendulum swings between an

organisational structure which was divisionally based (primary, secondary and technical) and a functionally based model. This latter model was centred on organisational groupings such as staffing, planning, operations etc. which transcended the divisions. A 1976 review ushered in a functional structure. However, in a 1982 review 'a divisional structure was superimposed on the previous functional structure' (Education Dept. 1985: 5).

Despite the 1979 reorganization, the number of central staff providing support services to schools continued to increase in the following years and numbered 1600 by 1986 (Functional Review Committee, 1986). Such an increase was indicative of the prevailing attitude of governments toward the funding of government agencies at the time. In those relatively easy economic times there had been an expectation that government agencies could expand almost indefinitely in size and staff numbers.

1983 and Beyond

The political context changed significantly in 1983 with the election of a Labor Government. This government, led by Brian Burke, initially used public inquiries as tools to establish a consensus that change was needed in various areas. Education was one such area. Keen to honour his commitment to establish a broad ranging public inquiry into education, the Premier appointed Bob Pearce, a reformist former teacher, as Minister for Education. Later in the life of the Burke Government, however, the nature of inquiries undertaken tended to change from open and participative, where major stakeholders had significant influence, to internal, confidential inquiries driven by economic forces. (Some would argue that the creation of the Royal Commission into WA Inc. in 1991 has seen the wheel turn once more to open inquiry!)

The Two Education Reports

A consideration of these two major inquiries undertaken during the Burke Government provides insight into the types of changes which have taken place over the decade. The first of these reports, the *Beazley Report*, was very participatory in its conduct and wide ranging in its scope. However, an examination of the outcomes of the report reveals that this participatory approach did not translate into eventual practices which were

in accord with broad community or stakeholder concerns. The report was an unwieldy and wide ranging document which seemed to lack a central philosophy and focus. Its size and the wide and very general nature of its recommendations made it difficult to implement. One of the few major changes emanating from it was the move to a Unit Curriculum. Subjects in lower secondary school were split into smaller units of time and students were given greater choice over the areas in which they wished to study.

Surprisingly, there was no term of reference and hence no recommendation in the area of administrative restructuring. Yet there was a widespread belief that the Department had become unwieldy, bureaucratic and unresponsive to teachers and parents. Nevertheless, the area of community participation in school decision making was addressed by the inquiry and modest recommendations for change were made. Furthermore, the possibility for significant change in the future was foreshadowed. Beazley recommended the piloting of community participation in school decision making, but made no firm commitment to change. These signals for change were to be taken up with much greater vigor in the recommendations of the *Better Schools Report*.

Functional Review Committee

The second major report into education over the period, the *Better Schools Report*, was very different in its processes and evolved from different economic and political circumstances. It claimed to be a report designed to streamline the administration of Head Office. However, it also contained strong initiatives towards a decentralized system. Its processes suggest that it was a fusion of two different forces - the push towards devolution (from a small section within the Head Office of the Education Department) combined with the corporate managerial and economic rationalist quest for economy and efficiency (coming from the Government's Functional Review Committee). We will examine each of these forces.

Economic Rationalism, Corporate Managerialism and the FRC

The global press toward economic rationalism and efficient management was one to which all public sector organizations in Western

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Australia were subjected during the 1980s. Encouragement to adopt the methods espoused by this philosophy stemmed from limitations to the funds available to governments and to changes in the perception of the role and scope of government services. There was a belief that services could no longer be provided by simply extending the tax base - that the public sector must become 'leaner and meaner'. The major instrument in carrying out this approach in WA was the Government's powerful Functional Review Committee which was systematically investigating all government agencies. In addition to a general belief that spending should be made more efficient, there were very real financial constraints placed upon state government expenditures, both from Commonwealth grants and from reduced state government revenues. Within months of being elected in 1983, the then Premier Brian Burke delivered a 'State of the State Address':

> ...The Government would be announcing tough cost cutting measures to make up a $274 million shortfall in the state budget.
>
> [Price] Rises were announced in Government provided instrumentalities, water, electricity and gas, hospital charges, public transport charges, marine charges and public housing rents. These charges were accompanied by pay cuts to all public employees who earned more that $30,000, of up to 10% (Hamilton, 1988: 140).

In addition to ad hoc cuts, the Government adopted long term policy approaches which it hoped would avoid such revenue shortfalls in the future. It sought to review all of its functions through what eventually became the FRC. Because of Minister Pearce's conviction that the highly centralized Department of Education was cumbersome, inefficient and ripe for cost cutting economies at its Head Office level, he had no hesitation in offering up his department as one of the targets for the FRC. In doing this he hoped to overturn the established bureaucratic power structure within the organisation.

The FRC Education Review Team and Their Origins

The second influence over the report was from a small group

within the Education Department. This influential group favoured devolution of power and this was transmitted into recommendations and eventual practice. The Functional Review team for the Education Department review comprised only three members. Two were nominated by the Minister for Education and came from the 'new guard' of the Education Department and one from the FRC itself, a body under the control of a new Ministry for Public Sector Management. The Director-General of Education seems to have had little influence over the review process while the Minister had considerable influence, at least over the early stages of the review. In the later stages of the reviews, the FRC itself, and Ministers other than the Minister for Education, seem to have exerted greater influence.

Recommendations of *The Better Schools Report*

Two reports were produced by the FRC into the Education Department and these were eventually distilled into one short glossy publication - the *Better Schools Report*. The major recommendations of *Better Schools* were: the streamlining and flattening of the administrative structures of the Education Department (now to be called the Ministry of Education) by reducing the numbers of senior officers; the creation of three divisions (schools, policy and TAFE); and an organisational structure where a devolution of discretionary power to the school level occurred. The existing regional office structure was to be replaced with a district structure, closer to the schools, and with different and reduced powers. The Ministry was to be reorganized along 'functional lines' and the number of positions in the central office was to be reduced from 1200 to 600.

At a school level, there were also to be significant changes. Some control was to be placed immediately in the hands of principals and school communities at the school site. Other more significant changes were foreshadowed in the report's five year timeline. Schools were required to state their goals and priorities in a school development plan. It was their performance when judged against this plan which was, in the longer term, to provide the main accountability instrument by which the performance of schools would be judged. Schools were to be given a greater say as to how their funds were to be spent. This was to be done through: the provision of a substantial school grant for curriculum development, payment of relief staff, equipment and undertaking professional development on a school basis. Legislation was to be

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introduced to enable the establishment of school based decision making groups, with representation from parents, staff and, where appropriate, students. These bodies were to have a much more critical decision making power than the existing Parents and Citizens groups. School Principals were to be given a much greater executive or administrative role, executing many of the functions at a school level which had previously been done centrally.

In the few years since the publication of the *Better Schools Report* (1987), it can be said to have become the major instrument for change in the Western Australian state school system. This change has occurred in the areas of: school reform, administrative reform, central office changes, devolution, and accountability and efficiency mechanisms.

The initial implementation of the report caused a great deal of conflict and stress within the system. Much of this stress was caused by the early changes to the role and number of positions in the Central Office. The reduction in the number of very senior positions was large. But perhaps more importantly, there was a radical change in the personnel occupying the positions. A virtual 'new guard' was placed in charge of the state system. In 1985, before the reorganisation, there were 23 posts of Director or above within the Department. This number was reduced to 17 within the new structure.

However, the change in the personnel occupying the positions was even more dramatic. Of the 22 officers holding those 23 positions in 1985 (one position was vacant), only five remained in similarly senior positions by 1988 (Education Department of Western Australia 1985, 1986, 1988). Virtually the whole of the senior hierarchy had been 'gutted'. Many of the senior personnel accepted generous retirement packages: some filled more junior positions and others accepted positions in other state government departments. Excluding the TAFE sector, which was left intact for the time being, only two of the twelve Directors or Executive Directors remained in equivalent senior positions after the reorganisation. Many critics of this mini-revolution argue that the Ministry has never recovered from this traumatic upheaval and is now dysfunctional. Perhaps this is what was intended.

The other major change to be effected was the streamlining of administrative responsibility. In the past, it was argued, there had been 'blurred lines of responsibility' between managers and the executive officers, and through them to the Minister in some state government departments. (*Managing Change In the Public Sector* p.5).

During 1987, the (13) regional offices were abolished in line with the recommendations in *Better Schools* and were replaced by a larger

number (30) of less powerful 'District Offices'. The administrative tasks previously accomplished by the regional offices were transferred either to schools or to the central office. Some advisory staff were placed in the new District Offices in order to be closer to the schools which they were to serve. The main task of district offices was an accountability function - to monitor school performance based on the schools' own 'School Development Plan' and set against centrally developed educational standards and policy goals. The traditional positions of Superintendent in charge of subject areas in central office were replaced with a much smaller number of generalist District Superintendents who were to be the instruments through which the approximately thirty schools in each district were to be made accountable to the executive in the Central Office. There was thus a strong administrative link from schools through District Superintendents to the central office of the Ministry.

The siting of advisory staff in District Offices altered the nature of the service offered to secondary schools in particular. Under the previous organisational structure, the Subject Superintendent and the advisory staff linked to these positions in Head Office had been very influential. Secondary teachers had felt a strong orientation toward the subject which they taught rather than to the school in which they taught. New organizstional structures made the school the focal element in the system with principals in positions of line management in charge of teachers and responsible to the District Superintendent for the performance of their schools. The movement of advisory staff to District Offices, however, made it difficult for any one office to cater for all the advisory needs of all the specialist areas. In addition, many of the new advisory teachers in District Offices were titled 'School Development Consultants' whose task was to assist schools in developing processes by which they could make decisions as to the directions they wished to take. These consultants were not employed to advise subject staff on classroom interactions or the content of their subject area. This latter service was sorely missed by many subject teachers and there are frequent claims that Head Office has lost any useful function it might have had.

The *Better Schools Report* signalled the beginning of significant changes to the r ning of schools. There was virtually no curriculum change as a result of the report. Although the model for the new Unit Curriculum stemmed from Beazley, it did complement the devolution notions outlined in the *Better Schools Report*. Thus individual secondary schools adopted their own course offerings and timetabling structures. Although the *Better Schools Report* signalled significant changes in the relationships between different administrative elements in the government

school system, the curriculum control exerted at the upper secondary level by the tertiary entrance requirements remained. Year 12 examinations and syllabii, determined to a large extent by the needs of tertiary institutions, meant that in this area central control continued.

Better Schools Implementation So Far

Many teachers were slow to realize the magnitude and implications of the radical changes proposed by the *Better Schools Report*. Change stemming from the earlier *Beazley Report* had been slow, limited and primarily curriculum based. Thus many teachers were cynical about the preparedness of the government to implement the *Better Schools* recommendations. However, the report has provided the major impetus to change in the decade. It signalled the adoption by the education sector of management techniques. Support for the report came from three different sources. The education reviewers on the FRC were selected by the Minister himself, so he could be expected to be very willing to support any changes recommended. The FRC itself was set up under the auspices of the Premier and the Minister for Public Sector Management. Implementation of these reports had broad support from the Public Service Board, Treasury, Public Sector Management and from the Premier. The radical changes to personnel within the new Ministry resulted in the new senior officers having a vested interest in seeing the changes adopted.

Key Actors

Bob Pearce was the Minister for Education during the turbulent years 1983 - 1988. Prior to the 1983 election, Pearce wrote the state Labor Party's education policy which promised the wide-ranging review of education (to which Beazley was later appointed chair). Pearce became the Minister for Education on the election of the Burke Labor Government in February of 1983 and remained in this position for the duration of the Burke Government until February of 1988. During his term of office, education was to become: 'one of the two hottest spots in the government - its rival being his (Pearce's) other portfolio, planning' (*Daily News*, 24 February 1988). As we have shown, the two major education reports issued during the Pearce years radically changed the face of the administration of state school education.

Under Pearce, the centralised and independent nature of the Department changed: there was the beginning of a large reduction in Central Office staff; the Director-General of Education became the Chief Executive Officer of a new Ministry of Education and a much less influential policy figure; the Minister became a more powerful figure in relation to the head of the department, but his power was in turn circumscribed by the central agencies of government, such as the Treasury, the Ministry for Public Sector Management and the Public Service Commission, and by slightly more powerful schools; the ideology and rhetoric of management became the principles by which the Ministry of Education was run.

Pearce's influence has been both exerted and filtered through report writing processes. Initially a great deal of consensus for change was achieved by the use of the broad based and consultative Beazley Inquiry. The *Beazley Report* enabled Pearce to gain a commitment from stakeholders that change was necessary. It did not, in fact, lead to much structural change and because of the difficulties in implementing the report, curriculum change was slow. The second report, *Better Schools*, was very different. Because the Beazley recommendations left the departmental staff and structure intact, major changes to education were likely to be limited. The consensus which characterized the implementation of the *Beazley Report* was lacking with *Better Schools*. Yet the large changes in administrative staff proposed and rapidly implemented meant that its recommendations had a far greater likelihood of impacting seriously upon the education system.

The mode of change which occurred through the Functional Review process was also much easier for a Minister to control. The process was not influenced by the major stakeholders in education and there was much greater opportunity for increased ministerial control through its confidential writing and reporting procedures. Because the FRC was essentially an instrument of a more powerful 'whole of government approach' Pearce's influence was filtered by the economic rationalist and managerial ideology of this body. Certainly, Pearce's term as Minister was controversial, with other stakeholders vying for power and public attention.

Bureaucratic Influence

One of the main results of the Pearce era was a vast change in the administration of education. The Western Australian educational

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bureaucracy resisted much of the change associated with the Pearce era. In the earliest days of the Labor Government the bureaucracy sought to ensure retention of its influence in the writing and implementing of reports. Thus when Pearce first took office as Minister, and announced the Beazley Inquiry, the Department presented him with what he perceived to be a list of proposed members who would uphold the conservative status quo of the department:

> what they [the head officials of the Department] had done, was gone through and picked out everyone who might not be a threat to the Education Department (Pearce lecture 1988).

Senior Departmental Officers

In contrast to the FRC and the education review team, the Beazley Committee contained heavy representation from senior departmental officers. Five senior officials were on the Committee and a further two were on the powerful secretariat. Nevertheless, the Committee had broad community representation in its huge membership of 29 - something which no previous inquiry into WA education had had. On the other hand, the very size of the membership, enhanced the power of the secretariat, which was the coordinating body of the committee. There is little doubt that the large size of the committee, its broad terms of reference, the short time given for it to complete its task, and its domination by departmental officers all led to a retention of the status quo in the report. The then powerful Director-General, Robert Vickery stated:

> By and large the great majority of the report, something like 200 of the 257 [there were 272] recommendations were simply saying keep doing what you are doing or more resources are needed to do what is being done more quickly. There were about a dozen or so very powerful recommendations about school curriculum structure, that represented major changes (Vickery interview, 1988).

The Role of the Director-General

Bob Vickery was the last of the Directors-General of Education in WA. He was appointed for a seven year term in March of 1982, a year before the Labor Party came to power in the state in 1983, and resigned on 12 September 1986, two and a half years short of completion of his appointed term. At the outset of the Labor Government, like David Mossenson before him (Smart & Alderson, 1980), Vickery felt fully in control of his department with few other influences impinging on his power:

> I was lucky in a sense during the time I was Director General, that I was allowed for all of the time until about the last six months to play it as I wanted it: namely that I thought that the key role of the Director General was in the area of curriculum, in the area of staff development, in the area of professional leadership and not the area of functional efficiency or in the area of business management. I am certain that Chief Executive Officers from this point on have less opportunity to chart the course of their Department in terms of curriculum, staff development and those things than I (Vickery interview, 1988).

When juxtaposed with the dominating influence of the principles of functional efficiency and management in the structuring of educational administration, Vickery's comments suggest that the new Chief Executive Officers are much less powerful figures than the Directors-General of the past - an observation with which few would disagree. Newspaper reports, interview material and the timing of Vickery's resignation suggest that a conflict took place between Pearce and Vickery. Whatever the exact nature and result of this conflict, in the long term, Vickery's resignation can be seen as a symbolic turning point in the loss of power by the Director-General of Education and the beginning of the new management imperative as the modus operandi of the Department. For example, Pearce, in adopting the recommendations of the FRC ensured that Vickery's successor was given the new title of Chief Executive Officer of the newly structured Ministry of Education. Clearly, the age of corporate managerialism had arrived in education.

It is not only the Director General, but the whole Departmental bureaucracy which has become less powerful as a result of the Better Schools process. As has been noted earlier, the initial implementation of

the report involved the deliberate removal of many senior administrators from their positions. These administrators had been viewed by the newcomers to the senior positions and by Pearce as obstacles to change in the Department.

> ... the biggest trauma to the system was the sacking, or the removal of the top movers ... Now my own view was that if that hadn't been done, nothing would have happened. (interview with member of FRC, 1988)

> ... getting rid of a lot of the people was crucial, I mean there was a real resistance group that formed up to it and the battle could have gone on forever. (Pearce, interview, 1989)

The Union

When the Labor Government achieved office in 1983, the State School Teachers Union had considerable influence over the setting of education policy. Pearce claimed that senior representatives from the Union had substantial participation in the setting of policy. He had been a Vice President of the Union before he entered politics.

> The policy axis for quite a period of time over the first two years was the Teachers Union and myself. I had a very close relationship with John Negus [the President of the Union] and Kevin Edwards [General Secretary of the Union] and Anne Marie Heine [Senior Vice President of the Union] and very often in policy terms over that period of time the Union and myself were closer than the Department and myself (Pearce lecture, 1988).

When Negus left the Union in 1985 this collaboration between Pearce and the new leadership of the Union broke down. The Union had substantial representation on the Beazley Committee. By contrast, however, it had no representation and little knowledge of the processes under which the FRC report was being written. It was certainly blithely unaware of the important structural changes which the FRC was about to recommend. Thus the *Better Schools Report*, released during the long summer vacation, came as a complete surprise to the Union. Jeff Bateman (the Union President at the time) claimed that he first became

aware of the report in the morning newspaper.

Naturally, once familiar with its dramatic recommendations, the Teachers' Union sought to influence the implementation of the *Better Schools Report*. Much industrial disruption took place during the period 1985 - 1990. This was largely due to perceptions about adverse changes to working conditions and to the lack of prior consultation and subsequent participation, by teachers, in the change process. The Union claimed the report 'smacked of privatisation and elitism' (*The West Australian*, 28 Jan 1987). Many of its criticisms stemmed from the devolution of responsibility to schools, including possible hiring and firing of staff, and perceived need for teachers to negotiate conditions on a school by school basis. The Union's actions included: balloting students out of over-sized classes; bans on implementation of the report; bans on work out of school hours; strikes linked to campaigns for improved pay; and public protests about changes in conditions. Despite the Union's actions, there were only minor changes to the implementation schedule of the report and few substantive changes to the actions to flow from the report.

Award Restructuring and the Memorandum of Agreement

An added impetus to the changes outlined in the *Better Schools Report* and to efficiency principles in general was the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement between the Union and the Government in April 1990. The signing of this agreement ended the period of industrial disputation of the previous four years. Under the agreement, linked to Industrial Relations Commission's structural efficiency principles, the Union broadly accepted restructuring of the teaching workforce and the direction of change outlined in *Better Schools*, in return for substantial pay increases to many teaching positions. The agreement, to be renegotiated every twelve months (though the period of the current agreement has been extended to eighteen months), enshrined devolution of decision-making power to the school level as the 'key strategy' to 'maximise the quality of education in government schools'. (*Memorandum of Agreement* p.4). Despite allowing many of the recommendations from *Better Schools* to proceed, problems still occurred at the school level as the Union insisted on school based planning taking place within the hours of classroom teaching agreed to by the Government in 1989. (Conditions of Work Agreement 1989). The

Memorandum made no mention of the removal of recommendations related to school based selection of staff from its new implementation timelines. Other changes associated with human resource performance management were agreed to under the document.

Parent Groups

The secretive nature of the FRC inquiry meant that, like the Union, the parents' group (WACSSO) was deliberately frozen out of the process. Again, this contrasts strongly with the *Beazley Report* where there was community involvement in many of the sub-committees. However, the proposals toward devolution in Beazley were very weak. This was partly a concomitant of the decision of the committee (no doubt pushed by its departmental lobby) not to recommend changes to the administrative structure of the Department. It was not possible to shift power away from the centre without examining the structure of the central administration. The proposed devolution in the *Better Schools Report* was revolutionary by comparison with the Beazley proposals, but had no input from parent groups. Most of the current senior administrators argue that the recommendations for devolution would not have occurred had the FRC process been more participative.

> It seems doubtful that a report so uncompromising in its commitment to devolution could have been produced had there been widespread consultation with the education establishment although, on the other hand, the recommendations could have been more clearly articulated and positively represented to teachers had it not been released so pre-emptorily. (Angus, 1990: 8)

TAFE Restructuring in WA

In common with the Schools sector – and perhaps equally ironically - the pressure for TAFE devolution in WA came not from any powerful grassroots movement but rather, from the top. However, by contrast with the schools sector devolution, TAFE restructuring was triggered not by state-level initiatives but by policy shifts and pressure from the Commonwealth. Despite contrary recommendations from many sources over the years (commencing with the Partridge Report in 1975)

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TAFE in WA still remained part - albeit a distinct and separate branch - of the WA Department of Education in the late 1980s. Under the *Better Schools Report* restructuring which created a Ministry of Education, the Office of TAFE became one of the three key components of the new Ministry (alongside the Schools Division and Planning & Resources). However, the Office of TAFE remained essentially organisationally intact and did not undergo the radical restructuring which occurred within the Schools Division as a direct result of the *Better Schools* implementation.

Nevertheless, other forces were about to result in a similar process of devolution within the Office of TAFE and the WA TAFE system. In 1987, under John Dawkins 'new broom' and in the context of national economic recovery and industry restructuring, the Commonwealth began to shift the focus of technical education towards industry training. The priorities for TAFE nationally were being radically reshaped by such policy documents as DEET's *Skills for Australia : Improving Australia's Training System* (1987). As a result, new Commonwealth funding arrangements for TAFE were introduced which forced competitive bidding for training contracts and a new entrepreneurial ethos (Flatt 1991).

These developments coincided with a WA Government-sponsored Tripartite Overseas Mission on Productivity and Training in 1987 which was attended by Mike Cross, head of the Department of Employment and Training. Shortly thereafter, Cross became Acting Executive Director of the new office of TAFE. Given the Commonwealth pressures for TAFE reform, Cross successfully supported the creation of the new State Employment Skills Development Authority (SESDA) and began urging the restructuring of TAFE in WA. Several unsuccessful efforts followed.

Subsequently, however, in May 1989 the Minister responsible for TAFE, Gavan Troy, released a policy paper: *New Directions for TAFE: An Integrated Package of Reforms for TAFE in WA*. The essence of this document - which is now being implemented as part of an award restructuring package with the union - is devolution. Head Office has become a smaller, 'leaner' unit responsible only for policy development, planning, monitoring and resource allocation. All other functions are being devolved to the TAFE college level.

The Source of the Changes

There has been a worldwide trend toward the adoption of management techniques developed in the private sector based on economic rationalist principles. These techniques include: increased

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accountability of government agencies; the adoption of performance appraisal; the streamlining of administrative structures; the introduction of closer links between the delivery of a service to clients and the wishes of those clients, in the case of education to students and their parents, (the persistent talk of vouchers attests to this); and an overall reduction in the size of bureaucracies. It is important to see the use of the FRC reports into education in the context of these worldwide trends and similar reforms within other government agencies. The FRC can be seen as a half way point between the Victorian and NSW approach of private management consultants reports to reform government agencies and the old traditional, in-house departmental inquiry: for example, the Dettman Report (1969). The principles and *modus operandi* of the FRC and the private consultants are very similar. Interestingly, many of the bureaucrats previously employed by the FRC have moved to private enterprise and now provide this 'service' to government on a contractual basis.

The Burke Government's white paper, *Managing Change In the Public Sector* (1986), outlined the basis for change within WA state government agencies and set out guidelines for the operation of the FRC. These principles can be seen clearly in the *Better Schools Report*. The White Paper mentioned the importance of: efficiency and economy; a whole of government approach; the need to increase ministerial control over departments; decentralization of administrative structures within a strong policy direction set by governments; and accountability to the client as well as to the government. Since the White Paper, the transferring of administrators between agencies has become common. The Government created a Senior Executive Service for senior administrators in all agencies. No longer could education be isolated from these moves and run by 'education mandarins'. Thus the Ministry of Education's Chief Executive Officer could as easily come from the Water Authority or the Railways as from Education.

Assessment

There has been and still is considerable trauma associated with the structural changes to the state education system. Numerous staff changes at a senior management level caused much of the initial dissatisfaction with the new administrative arrangements. At the same time the rapid replacement of these staff has resulted in strong commitment, among the new administrators, to the *Better Schools* proposals. To some extent

then, teachers have been isolated from much of the change to which educational administrators have been subject. Much of the change at the school level - additional school based decision making, additional financial decisions made at the school level, greater administrative responsibility placed upon school based administrators, and the loss of central support services – lead to confusion and dissatisfaction from teachers. The Teachers' Union has become the main focus for the articulation of this protest.

Since *Better Schools*, the power balance of the key actors in education policy making has changed. There is greater policy determination at a ministerial level. The senior administrators, particularly the Chief Executive Officer, are no longer seen as figures creating a strong educational direction for the state. Parent groups, however, have been generally supportive of the changes made since the publication of the *Better Schools Report*. In many schools, the creation of school based decision making groups with much wider roles than parents and citizens groups has been positively received.

The Future

There seems no end in sight to the swing toward the manager rather than the educationalist. Considerable numbers of senior bureaucrats in the Ministry of Education are now from other departments of government. Changes in train are: the adoption of job statements; performance appraisal for all sectors of the education workforce; the full implementation of the school development plan and its use as an accountability document; and the use of school decision making groups as the management groups for schools and the passing of enabling legislation for this to occur. Even Principals are increasingly being seen as managers first and educators second. Whilst the *Better Schools Report* is quite old now and the administrative structures it recommended have been changed yet again, the principles of devolution, corporate managerialism and economic rationalism which it espoused remain very much dominant influences in current WA education policymaking. Schools have undoubtedly had their autonomy enhanced but seem ever watchful, convinced that sooner or later the 'centre will strike back'.

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IV Conclusions and Implications

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Chapter 13

RESTRUCTURING, CORPORATISM, COMPETITION: IMPLICATIONS FOR GRADUATE PROGRAMS FOR ADMINISTRATORS

A. Ross Thomas

Introduction

Move over bureaucracy! You've outlined your usefulness as a pejorative for organization: we now have a new buzz word to elicit knee-jerk reaction. It's corporatism - today's dirty word which is, just like its predecessors such as scientific management and bureaucracy, becoming synonymous with only the less desirable aspects of organizational behaviour and starting to trigger a conditioned, hostile response to all that can even remotely be associated with the concept. Corporatism - today's Rorschach test - read any meaning into it you like.

The brief of this paper is to consider implications for graduate (preparation) programs for educational administrators. The implications are, presumably, those that can be attributed to both the restructuring of our Education Departments and to the 'disease' of corporatism. My intention is to depart somewhat from what would be a more standard approach to this consideration. Rather than surveying the rapidly growing literature on the theme of administrator-preparation (and within the past six months *The Journal of Educational Administration*, *The Canadian Administrator* and *Phi Delta Kappan* have all addressed this theme), rather than surveying the beliefs of principals in the field, I have elected instead to present a relatively descriptive summary of a group of principals about to assume office for the first time. At the completion of that description I intend to return briefly to the theme of the corporatism and restructuring, and challenge the implications therein.

In a recent presentation to a NSW Teachers Federation Conference, Yeatman argued in her paper entitled 'Corporate Managerialism: an Overview', as follows:

> Corporate managerialism refers to a radical reshaping of the culture and administrative structures of the public sector

> which, in this country, has been pursued by both state and federal governments from the mid 1980s on. The essence of this reshaping has been to reorient the business of the public sector so that it no longer services a welfare state, but, instead, services a state which defines its primary objective as one of fostering a competitive economy. To put this more simply, what we have seen is the replacement of public policy objectives couched in terms of social goods by public policy objectives couched in terms of economic goods.

The foregoing is a sweeping statement and one which, contrary to the theme of that particular conference - *The Management of Public Education: A Question of Balance* - reflects the same measure of bias as that manifest in the widespread contemporary use of bureaucracy - an 'all or nothing' stance.

Implicit *inter alia* in Yeatman's statement is a measure of hostility towards the concept of competition, a concept which, it will readily be observed, finds frequent mention in both definition and discussion of corporations, corporatism, management and administration. Competition (in the 'peaceful' rather than the 'physical' sense) implies actions, behaviours, procedures such as comparison, analysis, evaluation and choice, all of which in turn are a reflection of underlying values. For reasons such as these, competition - even when applied to schools, for example - is not intrinsically an evil or undesirable practice.

Within the public school sector, the 'rules' of competition have hitherto been clear. Restricted competition was acceptable, provided it was confined to the sporting field or the debating room, for example. Such was deemed adequate for staff and students alike. Students' schools were determined largely by residential address. The selection of schools was, in other words, pre-ordained and hence pains were taken to ensure no gross disadvantage occurred. Thus emerged one of our hitherto centralized systems' undoubted successes - the provision of an assured minimum standard of education in schools. So successful was this seen to be, so much part of our culture did it become, that 'uniformity of standards' became an oft-quoted and frequently boasted characteristic of our public schools. The culture - enforced at times by formal regulation and/or deeply entrenched norms - prevented the advertisement of the specializations and strengths that *inevitably* emerged in many schools.

The selection of school principals was a manifestation of such uniformity. Procedures for appointment were based on the traditions of the public service wherein the sacred cow of seniority was deeply embedded and with it the attributes of queuing and infinite patience. The premium placed on seniority was one which, in the worst traditions of 'bureaucracy', virtually prevented the acceleration of promotion, rewarded

(but without fully understanding) experience, and further obscured the potential advantages of differences. As a consequence, it must be acknowledged, the exploration of the real extent of their autonomy was seldom undertaken by public school principals.

The restructuring of Australian Education Departments has had profound implications for our public school principals. The common themes of decentralization and/or devolution of authority are presenting principals with tasks and responsibilities for which they have not previously been accountable. The challenge to the public school principalship is arguably greater than ever before.

Methodologically several possibilities exist by which one may seek to address the title of this paper. For example, a review of the relevant literature may reveal the differences between former and contemporary principals in terms of the demands made of them. One disadvantage in such an approach is, of course, the imbalance in the volume of literature describing the past and the present. Nothing, for example, is comparable with the detailed report on the role of the principal that Duignan et al. compiled in 1984. Again, one could elicit from principals of years gone by details of their tasks and responsibilities. Here too, of course, exist difficulties; imbalances in detailed recollections are an obvious problem. The procedure adopted in this paper, however, follows a different path - the description of the characteristics of a cohort of primary and secondary school principals assuming office for the first time. Since the data to be cited were all gathered at the one time no temporal or longitudinal comparisons may be made. Changes that may have taken place throughout the year of the study are thus unrecorded. The nature of the data is such, however, as to enable serious questions to be addressed to this group of principals as well as prognostications to be made about the characteristics to be expected in subsequent cohorts of first year principals in NSW.

The principals, all of whom took office in their high schools or large primary schools (enrolment >500) at the start of 1989, were members of a 'transition group' in terms of selection procedures, procedures that were about to dispense with the traditional seniority and 'listing' path and to introduce appointment based on merit or individual accomplishment as perceived by a yet-to-be-formalised panel representing (at least some) local interests. Thus, in most respects, they were the 'last of the Mohicans', a group *against which it will become possible to compare characteristics and behaviours of subsequent cohorts of new principals selected under different terms of reference.*

I now turn to a consideration of a selection of the descriptive data gathered, for example, the sample, age, previous experience, readiness for the principalship, academic qualifications, nature and extent of professional reading, philosophical bases for the principalship, strengths and weaknesses, what additional preparation would have been beneficial,

exemplars for future practice, and personal hopes for one's appointment.

Sample and Age

Of the 19 newly-appointed primary principals, 13 were men, 6 were women, with ages ranging from 37 to 57 years. The average age was 45.9 years. Of the 34 newly appointed secondary principals 33 were men and one was a woman. Ages ranged from 40 to 57 and the average was 48.5 years. A distribution of ages for both primary and secondary principals is presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1 Distribution of Ages Newly-appointed Primary and Secondary Principals (November, 1988)

AGE	Primary (N=19; x=45.9)	Secondary (N=34; x=48.5)
55-59	1	5
50-54	5	8
45-49	3	14
40-44	8	7
35-39	2	0

Previous Administrative Experience

The primary principals' appointments to their first large (Pl) school had been preceded by service in one of three offices - assistant principal (AP), deputy principal (DP), and principal of a smaller primary school (PS). A distribution of these former positions is presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2 Type of Administrative Post held immediately prior to Appointment to Pl School (N = 18)

AP	2
DP	3
PS	13

Primary and secondary principals were asked to indicate the number of executive positions they had held prior to their new appointments. For primary principals positions such as those referred to in Table 2, together with executive teacher (ET) positions were relevant. Secondary principals

referred to the positions of Head Teacher (head of a secondary school department) and Deputy Principal. All had been appointed from the position of Deputy Principal. A summary of the number of previous executive positions held is presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3 Number of Executive Positions held Prior to Appointments of Principalship

No. of Executive Positions Held	Primary (N=19; x=4)	Secondary (N-34; x=3.6)
8		1
7		1
6	2	
5	6	3
4	2	9
3	5	15
2	4	5

Readiness for the Principalship

Appointees were asked to indicate when they first considered themselves 'ready to take up the type of principalship' to which they were to move in 1989. Half (nine) of the primary principals indicated 1989; half of the secondary principals (17) indicated 1987, 1988 or 1989. A distribution of 'readiness' is shown in Table 4.

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TABLE 4 Year when first 'Ready' for Type of Principalship to be Assumed in 1989

Year	Primary (N=19)	Secondary (N=33)
1989	9	6
1988		7
1987	2	4
1986		1
1985		8
1984	1	1
1982		2
1981	1	2
1980	1	
1979	2	2
1977	1	
1976	1	
1968	1	

Academic Qualifications

When asked to indicate their academic qualifications both primary and secondary principals recorded a comprehensive listing of credentials. The 'range' of qualifications extended from Teaching Certificate to Master's degrees. In Tables 5 and 6 primary and secondary principals' qualifications are listed respectively.

TABLE 5 Academic Qualifications of Primary Principals

Qualification	N
M.Curric. Studies	1
B.A.	8
B.Ed	5
Dip.Ed.	2
Dip.School Admin.	2
Dip.Spec.Ed.	1
Dip.Tert.	1
Teaching Cert.*	15

* Five principals listed the Teaching Certificate as their only qualification. Average qualifications per principal 1.8

TABLE 6 Academic Qualifications of Secondary Principals

Qualification	N.	Qualification	N.
M.A.	4	Dip.Ed.	11
M.Ed.	8	Dip.Phys.Ed.	2
M.Ed.Admin.	2	Dip. Music	2
M.Curr.Studies	1	Dip.School Admin.	1
M . S c .	1	Dip. Man.Arts	1
B . A .	21	Teaching Cert.	11
B.Sc.	2	A.S.T.C.	5*
B.Ed.	1		
B.Ec.	2		

* Three principals listed the ASTC as their only qualification. Average qualifications per principal 2.3.

Membership of Professional Associations

As a further indicator of principals' professional interests details of their membership of professional associations and organisations were sought. Primary principals indicated affiliation with 35 professional bodies. All but one principal listed at least one membership. Of the affiliations recorded, ten were with specific subject/curriculum organisations, e.g. Australian Reading Association, Mathematics Teachers' Association, Social Science Council etc. Four principals belonged to the Australian College of Education, five (all formerly principals of smaller primary schools) indicated membership of a local principals' council or association, and five were members of the NSW Institute for Educational Administration or a regional group of such.

Secondary principals indicated membership of 42 professional associations. Of these, 25 were with specific subject curriculum bodies such as History, Social Science, English, Mathematics Teachers Associations, the Industrial Arts Institute, etc. Two principals belonged to the Australian College of Education and six were members of the NSW Institute for Educational Administration. Two indicated membership of the deputy principals' association and two had already joined principals' councils. Six principals did not respond or answered nil to this question.

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The Nature and Extent of Professional Reading

Each principal was asked to indicate 'the professional publications/periodicals/ journals that you read regularly'. Primary principals indicated an average of three sources from which they drew information and guidance (range 1-6). Secondary principals also indicated an average of three periodicals (range 1-5). In Table 7 a summary of the professional reading by primary principals is presented. It is possible that the table is an understatement of the extent of their reading, however, since none of the four members of the Australian College of Education indicated reading the ACE journal, *Unicorn*. Similarly, only three of the five members of the NSW Institute for Educational Administration referred to the materials they automatically receive through this professional body. On the other hand, the vagueness of the response 'Departmental publication' expressed by nine principals may refer, not to periodicals or journals, but to ad hoc or occasional Departmental bulletins and directives.

TABLE 7 Nature and Extent of Primary Principals' Use of Periodical, Professional Literature

Publication	Times Cited	% of Total Citations
Department of Education Publications (*Insight* 11; *Primary Journal* 6; *Leader* 3)	24	40
Teaching/Subject Association Journals	17	28
Practising Administrator	7	12
CCEA/ACEA/NSWIEA/ Journals	3	5
Professional Reading Guide	2	3
Others (*Aust. Jnl of Ed.* 1; *Jnl of Ed.Admin.* 1; *Phi Delta Kappan* 1)	7	12
	60	

For reasons similar to those expressed above in the summary of their primary counterparts' reading sources, it is suspected that the secondary principals have also understated the extent of their professional reading. The most widely-read periodicals were *The Practising Administrator* (16 Citations), *Insight* (14), *Secondary Education* (8) and The *Journal of Educational Administration* (8). A summary of all indicated sources appears in Table 8.

TABLE 8 Nature and Extent of Secondary Principals' Use of Periodical, Professional Literature.

Publication	Times Cited	% of Total Citations
Department of Education Publications *Insight* 14; *Secondary Journal* 9; *Perspectives* 5; *Leader* 3)	35	35
Practising Administrator	16	16
Teaching/Subject Association Journals	9	9
Journal of Educational Administration	8	8
Professional Reading Guide	4	4
CCEA/ACEA/NSWIEA Journals	3	3
Education News	3	3
Phi Delta Kappen	3	3
Unicorn	2	2
Others (*Aust. Jnl of Ed.* 1)	18	18
	101	

Philosophical Bases for the Principalship

In an attempt to identify further characteristics that newly-appointed principals bring to their office, participants were asked to 'describe any particular theory philosophy of education/educational leadership that will influence your leadership'. Responses to the question were presented in several forms. For example, some were content simply to mention the name of a writer, others to mention a 'school' of thought or practice, and some to make a statement outlining their own particular philosophy or belief about education and/or leadership. Responses by primary and secondary principals are summarised in Tables 9 and 10. All primary principals responded to this question; six secondary principals did not respond (although one replied, 'Nil. I do it my way').

With both sets of responses it was possible to categorise such beneath six common headings: names of writers (i.e. theorists) and/or those whom the principals had encountered at conferences; specific concepts of administration; aspects of learning; relationships built on trust; Christianity; and experience and personal statements.

TABLE 9 Responses of primary principals - theory/philosophy of education/educational leadership (N=19 N_1= 33)

Names of writers/presenters (12)
Sergiovanni (5), McGregor (Theory X, Theory Y), Peters and Waterman, Balsom, Adler, Rogers, Mulford, Sharpe.

Concepts of administration (4)
'effective schools literature', management by objectives (2) co-operative planning.

Aspects of learning (6)
'child-centred learning', 'learning is natural, social, and children learn from each other'; 'students want to learn', etc.

Relationships of trust (4)

Christianity (1)

Experience and personal statements (6)
'my experience guides me' 'I am not there to make the right decisions but I am there to ensure that the right decisions are made' '... a balance between traditional and progressive theories'.

TABLE 10 Responses of secondary principals - theory/ philosophy of education/educational leadership (N = 28 N_1 = 45)

Names of writers/presenters (17)
Sergiovanni (5); Hersey and Blanchard (3); Dewey (2); McGregor; Mintzberg; Beardsley; Balsom; Saphier and King; Adler; Brook, Caslyn and Caslyn.

Concepts of administration (3)
'the human relation school'; 'Effective schools research' (2)

Aspects of learning (7)
'teamwork'; 'student participation'; 'various cognitive behaviourists'; etc.

Relationships of truist (10)
caring for others (3); friendships (2); mutual respect; etc.

Christianity (l)

Experience and personal statements (7)
'knowing others through self and self through others'; 'commonsense'; 'the need to develop children's skills to lead them to a full and sufficient life'; etc.

Strengths and Weaknesses

Principals were also asked to indicate their strengths and weaknesses as administrators prior to receiving their most recent appointment. Their responses to this question, summarised in Table 11, are categorised under four headings: Interpersonal skills; Support, care and development of staff; Accomplishment of specific tasks; and Personal characteristics. Primary principals (N=18) provided relatively more information than their secondary counterparts (N=31). In both cases, however, strengths were marginally more numerous than weaknesses. The first three mentioned categories (which are related specifically to the tasks of the principalship) account for the majority of responses given - 64 of the 77 strengths (83.1 per cent) and 40 of the 63 weaknesses (63.5 per cent). Personal characteristics tend to focus more on perceived weaknesses (23) 36.5 per cent) than strengths (13) (16.9 per cent). Primary principals directed 45 strengths and weaknesses responses (67.2 per cent of total) towards categories 1, 2, 3. Secondary principals directed 59 strengths and weaknesses responses (74.7 per cent of total) towards categories 1, 2, 3.

TABLE 11: Summary of Responses Identifying Strengths and Weaknesses	STRENGTHS		WEAKNESSES	
	PRIM.	SEC.	PRIM.	SEC.
Interpersonal skills. human relations, communicative ability	7	15		2
Support. care. development of staff	6	9	1	3
Accomplishment of specific tasks				
leadership/climate & moral building	5	2		
motivating	4	2		
organising	3	4		
knowledge of children	1	1		
financial management	1		1	
time management			5	4
delegation ('perfectionist'; 'lack of confidence in others')	1		5	4
planning and establishing priorities			2	4
handling paperwork			2	4
decision-making				3
providing ideas	1	2		
	16	11	15	19
Personal Characteristics				
hard worker(work 'alcoholic')	1	3	4	
consistency	2	1		
persistence	1			
commitment		2		
determination		1		
sense of humour		1		
perceptiveness	1		1	
assertiveness			2	3
worry			1	3
impatience				2
procrastination			1	1
forgetfulness				1
moodiness				1
demanding				1
frustration			1	
boredom			1	
	5	8	11	12
	34	43	27	36

Additional Preparation

The nature of selection of principals for NSW schools has been such that no specific training or preparation programs of a sustained kind or duration are demanded. Although 'inservicing' during their careers would have addressed at least some of the skills perceived necessary for the principalship, the absence of a planned, systematic program of preparation virtually ensures that all will become principals with at least some 'chinks in the armour'. Accordingly, principals were asked to outline any aspects of the principalship in which they would have appreciated more preparation. A summary of their responses appears in Tables 12 and 13

TABLE 12 Summary of responses indicating where more preparation would have been appreciated by Primary principals (N = 19 N_1 = 26)

Climate Building	5
Financial Management	3
Conflict Resolution	3
Knowledge of Theoretical Bases of Administration	3
Staff Development	2
Curriculum Development	2
Computer Use	2
Meeting Procedures	2
Management by Objectives	2
Delegation	2

TABLE 13 Summary of Responses indicating where more preparation would have been appreciated by Secondary principals. (N = 26 N_1 = 32)

Financial Management	12
Computer Use	3
Offices and Properties Management	2
Curriculum Development	2
Staff Development	2
Role of the Principal	2
Others (Timetabling, Policy Development), Knowledge of Special Programs, Leadership, People Management, Trends in Education, etc.)	9

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Exemplars for Future Practice

In order to gain insights into their perceptions of the office and of the manner in which the role might best be played, principals were asked to indicate five adjectives that (a) best described the principal most admired and (b) best described the principal least admired. Reference to the data on age and executive positions formerly held displayed in Tables 1, 2 and 3, readily suggests that all of the new primary and secondary appointees will have had the opportunity to observe (by working under or with) several principals during their careers. They have thus observed these administrators and their behaviours and make judgements about their effectiveness. Such judgements have become entrapped descriptions, the release of which was to be facilitated by the two questions.

Elsewhere I have described the procedures followed in synthesising adjectival responses (Thomas, 1991). Suffice it here to indicate the characteristics of most admired and least admired former superordinates. Tables 14 and 15 represent the responses of the primary and secondary cohorts respectively.

TABLE 14 Grouping of Adjectives Used by Primary Principals (Number following adjective indicates frequency if more than one)

MOST ADMIRED	LEAST ADMIRED
Caring (10) humane (5) supportive (5) sensitive (3) compassionate (2) emphatic (2) friendly (2) loyal (2) sympathetic, understanding, etc. (41 responses)	Uncaring (3) impersonal (2) Uncommunicative, Unsupportive, unavailable, insensitive etc. (17 responses)

Characteristic represented in adjectives titled SUPPORTIVENESS

efficient (2) organised, ordered,stable,rational, forward-planning etc. (13 responses)	indecisive (3) disorganised inconsistent, unreliable, untidy. forgetful, ditherer, etc. (13 responses)

Characteristic represented in adjectives titled COMPETENCE IN PRACTICE

enthusiastic (2) hardworking (2) (2) charismatic, motivational dynamic, courageous etc. (13 responses)	lazy (4) slack, bored, energetic unenthusiastic, boring (8 responses)

Characteristic represented in adjectives titled VIGOUR IN PRACTICE

intelligent (3) knowledgeable (3) perceptive (2) thinking, informed etc. (11 responses)	ill-informed (3) ignorant, near-sighted (5 responses)

Characteristic represented in adjective titled KNOWLEDGE

	autocratic (4) dogmatic (4) inflexible (4) authoritarian, harsh, defensive, unprofessional (16 responses)

Characteristic represented in adjective titled AUTHORITARIANISM

truthful (3) honest, sincere, fair authentic	deceitful, untrusting, unfair sanctimonious, deceitful (5 responses)

Characteristic represented in adjectives titled HONESTY

	self-centred (5) selfish (2) over-ambitious (8 responses)

Characteristic represented in adjective titled EGOISM

TABLE 15 Groupings of Adjectives used by Secondary Principals (Number following adjective indicates frequency of more than one)

MOST ADMIRED	LEAST ADMIRED
caring (7) supportive (6) approachable (5) concerned (4) humane (4) open (4) listener (4) friendly (3) compassionate (3) helpful (2) sincere (2) warm (2) 58 responses)	aloof(4)abrasive(2)uncaring (2) unfeeling (2) unapproachable (2) unavailable (2) isolated, remote etc, (24 responses)

Characteristic represented in adjectives titled SUPPORTIVENESS

honest (8) fair (8) professional (2) truthful	dishonest (5) vascillating (3) secretive (3) unfair (2) insincere (2) deceitful,deceptive, two-faced etc.
(19 responses)	(22 responses)

Characteristics represented in adjectives titled HONESTY

enthusiastic (3) committed (3) hard-working (3) energetic (2) dynamic (2) provocative (2) conscientious (2) Industrious, motivational, confident, etc.	lazy (7) uninvolved(2) slack neglectful, uncommitted
(26 responses)	(12 responses)

Characteristics represented in adjectives titled VIGOUR IN PRACTICE

scholarly (3) experienced (2) wise, intellectual, astute erudite, capable, well-informed, etc.	incompetent (3) inarticulate (2) anti-intellectual (2) thoughtless, stupid, etc.
(13 responses)	(11 responses)

Characteristics represented in adjectives titled KNOWLEDGE

organised (2) thorough 2) consistent (2) planned, methodical, effective, efficient	indecisive (6) laissez-faire (2) weak, inept, ineffective, hesitant, disorganised
(13 responses)	(10 responses)

Characteristic represented in adjectives titled COMPETENCE IN PRACTICE

authoritarian (3) stubborn (3) bigotted, biased, inflexible,	autocratic (2) dictatorial (2) intolerant, obstinate, agressive, etc.
	(21 responses)

Characteristics represented in adjectives titled AUTHORITARIANISM

decisive (3) strong (2) determined, forthright, emphatic	negative (4) anxious, passive, visionless, short-sighted
(8 responses)	(9 responses)

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Characteristics represented in adjectives titled DECISIVENESS

selfish (3) self-centred (3)
ambitious vain, bombastic, etc.
(11 reponses)

Characteristics represented in adjectives titled EGOISM

patient (3) calm (2) serene,
content unflappable, relaxed
(9 responses)

Characteristics represented in adjectives titled SELF-CONTROL

A summary of responses from the two samples is presented in Table 16.

TABLE 16 Summary of Characteristics Identified by Primary and Secondary Principals

Characteristic	Primary		Secondary	
	No. of Resp. (N = 19;	% Resp. N_1 = 179)	No.of Resp. (N = 34;	% Resp. N_1 = 291)
Supportiveness	58	32.4	87	29.9
Honesty	12	6.7	41	14.1
Vigour in Practice	21	11.7	38	13.1
Knowledge	16	8.9	21	7.2
Competence in Practice	26	14.5	23	7.9
Authoritarianism	16	8.9	21	7.2
Decisiveness			17	5.8
Egoism	8	4.5	11	3.8
Self Control			9	3.1
Other	22	12.4	20	6.9

Personal Hopes

When asked to outline their personal hopes (where 'hopes' could subsume concepts such as goals, aspirations, ambitious intentions) the principals responded with many statements (primary 47; secondary 75) that seemingly spanned a multitude of school and personal expectations. Closer analysis, however, revealed that these expressions could all be classified under six relatively discrete concepts - the achievement of specific tasks; self-development as a professional and satisfaction with such; the improvement of the school (particularly in terms of its 'climate' and staff morale); the achievement of personal (including family) happiness and settlement; building relationships; and the achievement of credibility.

In Table 17 examples of the responses to the question 'what are your personal hopes for the first year of your principalship'? are presented. Responses by secondary principals are italicised and a comparison of both sets of responses is presented in Table 18.

TABLE 17 Examples of Responses to the Question: 'What are your personal hopes for the first year of your principalship?'

1. The Achievement of Specific Tasks e.g. 'set directives'; 'work less hard - delegate to others'; 'implement practices that are an expression of (my own) philosophies'; 'to implement the K-10 language document'; *'to carry out the school plan that has evolved over the past two years'; 'to enhance staff commitment to teaching'; 'to handle stress'.*

2. Self-Development as a Professional and Satisfaction with Such e.g. 'to know I have done a good job'; 'to satisfy myself that I have done the best possible job and found it enjoyable'; 'to be seen as an educational leader rather than a purely administrative one'; *'to **establish** myself as an educational leader'; 'to get on top of the principal's job'.*

3. Improvement of the School, particularly in terms of its Climate and Staff Morale e.g. 'begin to build an excellent school'; 'to develop a cohesive, vital, happy environment for staff, children and parents'; 'to develop a climate of caring where children feel needed, wanted and protected'; *'to promote this high school as a fine educational and caring institution'; 'to create the best environment for pupil learning'; 'to build a climate of trust, respect and support'; 'to establish an improvement in tone'.*

4. The Achievement of Personal and Family Happiness and Settlement e.g. 'family happiness - our kids happy in the new environment'; 'to enjoy every aspect of life in 1989'; 'establish children in new schools - find a job for my wife'; *'to be a happy person'; 'relax and enjoy life'; 'to successfully settle my family'; 'to have a good year'; 'to enrich my family life'.*

5. Building Relationships e.g. 'to establish good interpersonal relationships in and out of the work scene'; 'to build effective relationships'; *'establish wide professional relationships'; 'develop sound personal relationships'; 'get to know the school, the staff, the kids'.*

6. The Achievement of Credibility e.g. 'to establish my personal credibility'; 'to be accepted as myself and for what I can offer'; 'to establish myself as leader'; 'to be seen by staff as competent and committed'; 'to establish my own credibility'; *'gain respect'; 'establish credibility'; 'to be accepted by staff and students".*

TABLE 18 Comparison of Responses from Primary and Secondary Principals to the Question: What are your personal hopes for the first year of your principalship?

Concept	No. of Primary Responses (N = 19 N_1= 47)	% of Total	No. of Secondary Responses (N = 34 N_1 = 75)	% of Total
1. Achievement of Spec. Tasks	11	23.4	14	18.7
2. Self-Development	10	21.3	9	12.0
3. Improvement of School	9	19.2	19	25.3
4. Personal or Family Happiness	8	17.0	9	12.0
5. Building Relationships	5	10.6	7	9.3
6. Achieving Credibility	4	8.5	17	22.7

Conclusions

Having now displayed a sample of the gathered data, I have two issues to summarize:

- the implications for preparation programs
- the effects of corporatism.

With each I deal briefly.

As mentioned at the outset, there are several sources and several ways by which one may identify the implications of our restructured systems for preparation programs. The study to which I have referred provides but some of the information that could be of value - a micro study as part of a potentially macro study undertaking.

The data to which I have referred are relevant only to the beliefs, values, expectations of a cohort of principals selected via a now-discarded procedure and with regard to a perceived principalship based essentially on the pre-restructuring model. Specifically, these data suggest that more preparation would have been appreciated by this cohort of principals in areas such as financial management, climate building, staff development, computer applications and so on. In terms of their acknowledged weaknesses, the data suggest that help is required in the management of time, the ability to delegate, and how to plan.

Data on the beginning principals' descriptions of exemplary administrators and their personal hopes for their first year as principals are indeed challenging. Not only do these challenge future preparation programs but they also challenge (very harshly, I suspect!) the content and presentation of past and current programs.

Thus, the data reported here represent some of the characteristics of a cohort of 'first-time' principals. I resist the urge to report on our findings as we tracked each principal throughout the first year of his/her incumbency. Similarly, I resist the urge to attempt any real evaluation of these characteristics other than to say some disappointed me, some were pleasantly surprising. I also resist the urge to attempt answers to several questions that start with 'should'. For example, should principals:

be older or younger?
have had more or less previous administrative experience?
participate more in the activities of professional associations?

I feel more at ease in asking questions that start with 'will'. For example, will principals in future:

achieve higher personal levels of education?
read more?
have more clearly articulated philosophies of education and educational leadership?
have clearer perceptions of their strengths and weaknesses - and the determination to increase the former and reduce the latter?
have clearer and more insightful visions of the principalship, their schools and the purpose of schooling for children?

I make a forecast (and as Warren Bennis has stated, a forecast falls somewhere between a prediction and a prophecy. It lacks the divine guidance of the latter and the empirical foundation of the former.): the answer to all of these questions will be yes and that as a consequence our schools and our children will be the better for it. *The preceding data provide the yardstick against which this forecast may in future years be tested.*

Attribute to corporatism what you will and in many cases I shall readily march in time to your drumbeat. I shall, for example, share your concern at many of the *advantages* of bureaucracy and centralization which have been discarded, at many of the assumptions about organisational forms that are untested, about the slavish (dare one say puerile) substitution of one language by another (and in this regard I refer you to Peter Kell's 'Renewal Dictionary', in the May 2, 1991, issue of the NSW Teachers' Federation *Education*). But I shall also *commend* where necessary aspects of 'the corporate model' and the assumptions and key elements that drive it.

Competition is one such element; it is this element that will ensure the quality of our future principals and hence, as so much of the literature indicates, the quality of our future schools. Those who proceed to the principalship will be those judged the *best* of applicants. Their excellence will be determined on bases similar to those suggested above - bases to which universities can make substantial contribution. But universities in Australia have offered programs in educational administration also influenced by prevailing cultural patterns. As such, these have been directed at those who are (or who are about to become) principals - those who have arrived by the traditional path of seniority.

Thus, for university teachers there is also the need to accept the 'change of rules' that now applies. Universities must play their part in preparing *potential* principals for a *competitive* culture and for this task they may not be well equipped. Accordingly, more than ever, universities must encourage *excellence* in their students and monitor more frequently and more sensitively the requirements of the principalship. They must also accept that the satisfaction of some of these requirements may best be met by institutions and agencies other than universities.

Perhaps I made clear at the commencement of this paper my concern with the use of buzz words in speaking of organisations. The practice usually provides an easy exit from an argument; the buzz word subsumes untested hypotheses that all too frequently become conventional wisdom. As an organisations theorist from way back and as one who has always urged his students to study other organisations in order better to understand their own, I counsel the use of corporatism in a manner better balanced than that of Yeatman quoted previously. A continued fixation on the word may well blind us to the nature of the actual changes taking place. Ineluctably, day-by-day, the structure and the

administration of Australian public schools grow more and more like those of their independent counterparts. In NSW, for example, the institutionalisation of structures and practices such as school councils, de-zoning for children, increased fiscal autonomy for schools, the variety of and selectiveness in high schools, and a burgeoning array of acknowledgments for individuality and excellence as reflected in internally and externally presented prizes and awards, provide evidence of such.

Not everyone will appreciate his metaphor yet Richard Carlson's classification of schools provides an appropriate way to describe the changes taking place. Our public schools are loosing their *domestic* status (wherein they were succoured, cosy and secure) and are becoming *wild* organisations whose survival depends upon their ability to compete. Competition as a public (and not an economic) good will contribute to excellence in schools and to excellence in leadership. This is the mould in which future principals will be prepared.

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Chapter 14

CONCLUSIONS: WHERE RESTRUCTURING HAS TAKEN US, AND WHERE IT IS LEADING

Grant Harman, Hedley Beare and George F. Berkeley

This final chapter draws together some of the main themes of the book and considers some of the important consequences and implications of restructuring of Australian school management. It stresses the ongoing character of the restructuring movement. It considers possible future directions and especially the move to the self-managed school. It comments on the driving forces behind the restructuring movement and reviews various explanations offered to date. Finally, the chapter reflects on the future of public education and politics in Australian society, especially with respect to the prospects for ongoing destructive political interference in school management.

Ongoing Turbulence

The first key theme to draw attention to is the ongoing character of restructuring. Restructuring is a movement that has had a major impact on public education in Australia over the past decade. But it is also an on going movement, showing no sign of slowing down or ceasing.

After a decade or so of restructuring, not only in Australia but around the globe, it is by no means easy to develop a comprehensive and detailed overview of what has happened and what the consequences and effects have been and will be in the longer term. One reason for this is because, as the various chapters of the book clearly demonstrate, even in one country such as Australia, a great deal of important change has taken place, much of which has been neither adequately documented and reported, nor well understood.

A second reason is that as we write this chapter the restructuring movement continues to move quickly, taking new and often unexpected directions. Even when it appears that the direction ahead is clear, there can be unexpected curves or bumps in the road, such as the recent unexpected new directions taken in New South Wales by the Greiner Government immediately following the May 1991 general elections, or

the various further restructuring efforts of earlier restructuring in Victoria. We live in volatile times as far as school management is concerned, both locally and internationally. This is one of the major themes we would wish to emphasize.

Consider, for example, the following very recent developments in different Australian states:

- In May 1991, Mr Peter Patmore, the Deputy Premier of Tasmania, was forced to resign his portfolio of Minister of Education because of the adverse reaction to the government's severe cuts to education spending which among other things produced voluntary retirement for many of the state's most experienced educators. The CRESAP management review in August 1990 had recommended cutting 563 teacher positions from a service of 5,233, nearly an eleven per cent cut in teacher numbers.

- In April 1991, the Queensland Education Ministry moved to reduce by some 68 positions its Curriculum Branch and consultancies, leaving only around thirty positions. Those left are expected to cover the functions once performed by over one hundred officers.

- From the beginning of the 1991 school year, the South Australian Ministry of Education has had to cut hundreds of teacher positions from its payroll.

- In Victoria, Premier Joan Kirner and Finance Minister Tony Sheehan announced in May 1991 that the Labor government would have to prune $800 million from its 1991 budget.

- At the same time, the Victorian Opposition Leader, Jeff Kennett, indicated that, if elected, his party would remove from office a 'hit list' of some 3,500 people in the public service who had apparently gained their places because they sympathized with the Labor Party. Targetting an especially visible post, that of Chief Executive of the Education Ministry, one of the largest government departments with a huge budget, the Opposition called for applications for 'Director-General of Education' so that the implementation of their education policies can begin immediately they win office. Another restructuring could be waiting in the wings.

- Education featured strongly in the election campaigns in New South Wales where reforms from four quarters are being implemented simultaneously - from the Scott Review *(Schools Renewal*, 1989, and *School-Centred Education*, 1990), from the

Carrick Inquiry (its Report appeared in September 1989), from the Liberal's White Paper on curriculum *Excellence and Equity* (1989), and from the Board of Studies (which has just taken over the entire curriculum arm of the Department of School Education).

- Since the May 1991 New South Wales general elections, the embattled Greiner government, under considerable pressure to cut its public sector budget, has pruned the head office of the Department of School Education, already reduced under the Scott 'Renewal' plan from over 2000 staff to 1100, to a mere 300 positions (Grant 1991). This is despite the fact that senior staff had been in their new positions, for which they had to compete on an open market, for only a few months. Most staff affected had firm three or five year contracts.

These developments are recent and provide clear evidence that the reform movement is not abating. Nor is it likely to do so through the 1990s, for among other things, the Australian changes are remarkably consistent with international movements. 'School restructuring' (including the trend to self-managing schools and a more powerful state presence in policymaking) has proceeded strongly in USA throughout the past decade, reaching a milestone with the current wholesale dismantling and reconstituting of the huge Chicago School System. In Great Britain, the very visible abolition of the Greater London Council and of the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) has been followed recently by the Major government's undoing of the binary system of higher education (polytechnics can now apply to be given the name university), pushing post-compulsory education outside of the LEAs, and the virtual dismantling of the whole structure of local authorities in Britain. In New Zealand a reconstruction of the reconstruction has caused a review of the Education Review Offices, as schools continue to wrestle with the reforms concerning charters, boards of trustees, and 'bulk grants' direct from government to schools. Swedish education too is undergoing a radical restructuring, with extensive devolution to local schools. And even in Japan, one of the most buoyant economies in the world and a country whose success others would like to emulate, has been reviewing since 1984 its education provisions by means of a National Commission set up by the Prime Minister himself.

Other Key Themes

Apart from the theme of the ongoing character of the restructuring movement, a number of other important themes stand out in the book. Here we will draw attention to a small number of these.

First, *restructuring has a number of somewhat different meanings, both internationally and locally, but across the Australian states and territories it has referred primarily to administration/management reorganisation.* In essence, the restructuring movement of the last decade in Australia has been about two major items – in the first place, the reorganisation of central agencies or offices to make them leaner and flatter in structure, and having a sharper focus on the determination of goals, priorities and frameworks for accountability; and second, the transfer of much greater authority and responsibility to schools and school councils/school boards to make decisions, especially about how resources are allocated. In some states and territories other issues have been closely related – increased participation in decision-making by parents and teachers, quality of education and levels of student performance, testing of student performance, and curriculum reform. In the United States, as Wirt explains, the first wave of reform of the 1980s was about quality especially related to student achievement, but the new thrust of the past two or three years has been about parent and student choice. In the US, proponents of reform urge use of 'the market' as a key means to improve educational productivity and at the same time to address political dissatisfactions of parents with public schooling. It is important for Australian educators to consider whether the choice argument will take off in Australia and, if so, what the consequences are likely to be.

Second, *in Australia as elsewhere educators have lost control of the reform agenda and much of its implementation.* Not only is the advice of educators not being highly valued, but their advice often is being ignored and the reform movement is being driven largely by others – Ministers, experts in public sector management, consultants, interest group leaders, and education committees of political parties.

There is compelling evidence in Australia that educators are not trusted. For example, in his book entitled *When the Luck Runs Out* (1985: 22-23), Fred Hilmer, the former Managing Director of McKinseys in Australia, comments that a company usually adopts the policy of promoting from within when it wants to demonstrate that it trusts its employees and considers them not only important but also leaders in their field. 'Conversely', he says,' regularly bringing in outsiders...indicates that the organization does not trust the abilities of its own people.' Consider, then, that of the nine departments or ministries of education in Australia and New Zealand in 1991, *only one* (the New South Wales system) is headed by an educator who has come up through the particular system in the conventional way! Indeed, during the past five years, *six* of the nine positions have been filled by people from elsewhere in the public service or from outside the education profession.

Overseas, the situation is similar. For example, there was a significant absence of leading educators on the Japanese reform commission - and as a consequence, of course, little has happened in

schools because educators do not 'own' the reforms. The very recent public uproar over student reading standards in Britain was fostered even in spite of what the research data really say. We might note as consolation that professionals in health and welfare are not listened to either. As the research evidence clearly shows, the authority of professional expertise generally is being increasingly questioned.

One argument advanced, overseas as well as here, is that because restructuring breaks up the insider networks (and therefore the power cliques), the incessant remodelling is an organisational device to wrest education from 'provider control'. In other words, restructuring is a deliberate device to take education policymaking out of the hands of teachers and education administrators. If one follows this line of argument, restructuring will begin again as soon as the educational organisation shows signs of settling down.

This loss of control is an issue of major concern to professional educators. It is also a matter that should concern interest group leaders in the education sector, who clearly have wrested significant control from senior education administrators but now are under some pressure to share their power gains with other interest groups. In his paper, Phillip Hughes argues that educators must find ways of participating more actively in and helping more constructively with the reform agenda being addressed by governments. He calls for recognition of the legitimate political role of education and of the public and community aspects of education, and for a greater role to be exercised by professional bodies and university departments of education. He also calls for educators to develop greater understanding of the restructuring movement and what motivations are driving it.

Third, *the restructuring movement is essentially conservative from an educational perspective, driven largely by non-educational forces and objectives.* The driving forces are largely economic – the perceived need for education systems to do more to serve directly business, the economy and international competitiveness, and the need for governments to rein in public expenditure in the context of inability to increase taxation and the need to spend more on health, the environment and non-education social services.

In the United States the effective schools movement, which fed the reforms of the 1980s, relied heavily on standardized test scores for its measures of effectiveness. It was itself a kind of counter-revolution to the Coleman (1960) and Jencks (1972) studies of the 1960s and early 1970s, suggesting that a child's home background was the most powerful determinant of how well a child performed at school, and that the inputs of the school had only minimal impact on performance. In other words, the search for *school* effectiveness was really an attempt to reassert the primacy of schools and of the traditional curriculum - which included literacy and numeracy, a core set of learnings, and appropriate 'standards'

(see, for example, Beare *et al.* 1989, pp. 1-22; and Rutter *et al.* 1970. pp. 1-21).

The conservative nature of the restructuring movement educationally is not surprising in view of the economic pressures behind it. Education is such a fundamental factor in regearing a country's economy that national or federal authorities have become powerful actors in setting the policies; and most of those policies at base appear to be instrumentally driven. We do not hear a great deal about individual differences (unless it concerns education of the able and the gifted), or the processes of learning, or about individual fulfilment and actualization. There is, on the other hand, a great deal about standards, about general levels of achievement, and about curriculum content, particularly about 'what every good citizen needs to know'. There is an emphasis on what is learnt, and not much on the learner and his or her well-being (except in terms of employment and 'productivity'). This is not to denigrate the reforms, but rather to suggest their underlying motivation and themes.

Fourth, *the restructuring movement has been considerably influenced by the management practices and personnel from the business sector.* Corporate management approaches have been readily and unquestioningly adopted, old titles of senior posts in education departments or ministries have been replaced with titles from the corporate world, while strategic planning is highly favoured. Winder and Swan, in their paper on New South Wales, argue that the ideology of business appears to be widely accepted by governments, with an assumption that the role of the private sector should be enhanced, that the private sector is more cost-efficient and should provide services wherever possible, that the role of government should be a minimal one, and that where public sector involvement is retained its role should be strictly in policy development, setting of standards, allocation of priorities and funds, and reviews of outcomes measured against objectives. They quite rightly question whether these values should be accepted and whether they will be accepted in the longer term, and specifically whether the New South Wales system's conceptual model has a legitimate and enduring application to an education function that operates in fluid and overtly political environments. This shift in basic assumptions about the role of public and private sectors by governments appears to have attracted comparatively little serious scrutiny from the education community or the wider public.

Fifth, *the emerging new model for the delivery of public education is likely to be through self-managed schools.* The plot for this scenario being worked out in school system after school system across the western world is now becoming clear, although many of the key actors involved with parts of the drama may not yet have guessed the climax. This is the model to which Tasmania and New South Wales appear, at somewhat different rates, to be moving. It also is the model being discussed by the

Opposition in Victoria. In the next section, this new model and some of the likely implications will be discussed in greater detail.

Sixth, *while restructuring has had various obvious adverse effects, especially on morale, career structures and stability within public school systems, the positive effects appear to be limited.* The various Australian case-studies in this volume point to some of the adverse effects – the loss of talent and experience at senior levels in education systems, the changes for career structures in education, the loss of stability and continuity in organisations, and the tremendous disruption caused by recurring waves of major reorganisation. On the other hand, as in the United States, there is little evidence of any decided improvement in student achievement, of more effective learning environments, and of increased teacher and parent happiness.

Of course, it should be admitted that evidence on the various effects of the Australian restructuring efforts is limited, and that interpretation of the relatively limited evidence available depends to a considerable extent on one's values. To one person, the brutal reorganisation of a particular department, with the loss of experienced senior officers, is seen as a major tragedy; to another, it may be viewed as a necessary reform to correct an inefficient and ineffective administrative system. One thing is clear, however, and that is we urgently need serious and rigorous efforts to assess what the effects of the restructuring movement have been, and whether the stated objectives of Ministers and others driving the reforms have been achieved, at least in part.

The Self-Governing School

To understand the movement to remake public school systems, we need to consider the private business model which is being copied (Deal and Kennedy 1982; Toffler 1985; Caldwell and Spinks 1988; Beare 1990). 'Downsizing' is part of the language used in writings about 'corporate management', which is now being adapted to fit reforms in public administration. It assumes at least four characteristics.

- The first is that the pyramidal form of organisation is done away with, and is replaced with a 'network organisation', a system of interconnecting, semi-autonomous operating units. Those units are small, usually consisting of fewer than a hundred members, and the internal arrangements and modes of operating are left to be determined by the unit.

- The second characteristic is that the units are under a contractual arrangement with the parent company to provide a designated service and of a required quality. In short, the units provide a

service for a price. Indeed, it is not necessary for the parent company to own all the subsidiary units. They can be 'spin-off companies', or units to whom a function is 'franchised out'. They are simply paid for doing a job, and the assurance that the parent company is getting value for money is through an accountability mechanism which uses mutually negotiated 'performance indicators'. Thus there are regular reporting-back procedures, an agreed format for giving that feedback, and at the head office a unit which handles these regular audits. In this sense, the audits free the operating units from unnecessary interference in the way they work, for they are judged on outputs, on services delivered.

- The third characteristic is that the head office of the parent company is thereby transformed into a 'strategic core'. It does not control the units in the traditional sense; it simply coordinates them. The strategic core to the company becomes responsible for making the strategic decisions for the whole, for undertaking long-range planning, for coordination and articulation, for raising, determining and parcelling out the company's global budget, for instituting quality controls, for ensuring staff development, and for managing the company's culture.

- Finally, the company is collegially and not hierarchically ordered. It is effectively a 'federation of sub-systems'. In fact, the head office staff do not necessarily outrank the staff in the units; both perform different roles, and it is possible to interchange the parts without interfering with individual career lines or with the company's well-being. The Chief Executive could be a role which is shared around among the managers of the operating units, who might take it in turn to occupy the central CEO role.

It is important to note the almost inexorable drift towards this kind of administrative structure in Australian public school systems. Frankly, it is a structure with a lot to commend it, providing those who are involved with it understand its rationale and provided that appropriate structures at school level are put in place and resource levels are adequate for the tasks required of schools.

Around Australia in school system after system, and often because financial stringency and the states' straitened finances are forcing it, we are witnessing a paring down of the big central bureaucracies, which are divesting themselves of educator staff, who are then reassigned to regions, clusters and schools. Because this kind of divestiture from the centre does not affect education in the direct way which limiting the number of teachers in school would do, it is a politically easier way for governments to conserve finances. What schools lose, of course, are allies at head

office, support in terms of curriculum and professional services, and protection from the political winds. If the present trend continues, there will be few staff to speak of at the centre.

At the same time, schools are being given increased legal and professional responsibilities, in the form of a global budget, wide discretion over funding, the responsibility to select their own staff as well as to fill promotion positions from the principal down, the management and upkeep of its physical plant, and so on. Put simply, Australian *public* schools are becoming self-managing, and are more and more resembling the private schools in their modes of governance and operation. The combined impact of the trends towards a denuding of the head office, towards self-managing schools, towards a shrinking of system-provided education services and back-up, and towards financial stringency, will be a set of what might be called *public* private schools.

In the case of the self-governing schools, the bulk of funds will reside in the hands of individual schools. Already in Britain 93 per cent of the money voted from Whitehall to the local education authorities must be passed on directly to the schools; the local authority can retain only seven per cent. The same trend is clearly evident in Australia and New Zealand. Individual schools will have to go into the marketplace for the specialist services which they need to supplement the work of their own teachers and general staff. It will also become common for schools to form coalitions, like the New South Wales 'clusters', whereby they will share their own exp[illegible] or else 'contract in' services by each contributing to the cost of a specialist consultancy. Already the School Support Centres (in Victoria) and the Education Resource Centres (in NSW) are beginning to take on the role of brokers for a set of schools. The New South Wales intention is that the Education Resource Centres should be owned and managed by school clusters.

Around self-management schools will develop a host of private agencies, professional firms, and private consultants who will fill the gap (for a contracted price) left by the dissolution of the services which were once provided by the system itself. The new service agencies could well in fact end up providing better services because they will have to compete for custom and supply quality, school-specific, thoroughly professional services; the school or schools, after all, will pay directly for the service. The new agencies also will be non-parochial, for it is likely that they will operate across state boundaries and also internationally, and they could well recruit into their enterprises some of the very best teachers and administrators out of schools. A new kind of career prospect thus will open up for able educators. Of course, it also will be within the power of particular schools themselves to develop a consultancy arm, earning for themselves additional revenue by selling the skills of their own staff and the learning materials generated from that school base.

In summary, the restructuring movement has reached the point at

the beginning of the 1990s where it may well now change in quite fundamental respects the way schools operate, the professional career paths for teachers and administrators, the way schools interface with their client-community and with government, and the packaging and servicing of the learning programs available to their students. There are many desirable features in the new format, but it is important to note that, if the present trends are allowed to run their course, the old order - that whole panoply of centralised controls, head office bureaucracies, promotion lists, promotion to headships without managerial training, departmental consultancy services, even regional office - will inevitably pass away.

The role of researchers in this move towards the self-governing school is important to note. Internationally, the movement has been encouraged by a variety of research and conference papers, books and monographs, advocating greater responsibility to individual schools and exploring the administrative and in-service training implications for local site-management. Important publications by Australian authors include the book by Caldwell and Spinks (1988) and the edited volume by Chapman (1990). In the United States, by far the most important recent publication is a major book, *Politics, Markets and America's Schools* (1990), written by John E. Chubb and Terry M. Moe and published by the Brookings Institution, a major Washington 'think-tank'. Chubb and Moe are political scientists, who begin with consideration of the widespread dissatisfaction with America's schools that gave rise during the 1980s to the powerful movements for educational change. By analysing student performance nationally in different kinds of schools from large-scale statistical data sets (particularly High School and Beyond), they conclude that the fundamental causes of poor academic performance are not to be found in the schools, but rather in the institutions of direct democratic control by which American schools have been governed. They thus see the institutional arrangements as the problem, rather than the schools, and advocate a new system of public education, built around parent-student choice and school competition, that would promote school autonomy. Their solution is autonomy – building-level autonomy for principals and teachers, freed from the dead hand of bureaucratic regulation emanating from government and school boards.

It is still too early to predict what the longer term impact of this important volume will be. However, two prominent American educational researchers, Gene V. Glass and Dewayne A. Matthews from Arizona State University, describe *Politics, Markets and America's Schools* as 'one of those rare books of educational research that breaks through the press and public debate of the day' (Glass and Matthews 1991). They point out that it offers the school choice movement the legitimacy that empirical research can offer. Significantly, the argument for school autonomy comes out of sophisticated statistical analysis of

student performance data. The authors reach their conclusions through a comparison of academic performance of students from public and private schools and attribute the better performance of private school students to structural differences between the two types of schools. But they go beyond this simple conclusion which is far from revolutionary and argue that the public schools suffer from excessive levels of bureaucratization and politics. More important, they suggest that excessive bureaucracy is the proximate cause of problems in the schools, and that politics is the ultimate cause of the over-reliance on bureaucracy.

The trend towards the self-managing school poses interesting and important conceptual and practical challenges for Australian policy analysts and researchers. One major challenge is to explore and to specify what particular conditions are necessary in order to make the self-managing school work really well. A number of questions can be posed. For example, what special training and expertise are necessary to enable principals to operate effectively without all the current supports? How should school principals be appointed and what should be the criteria? How should school councils or boards be structured and how should authority be distributed between the council and the principal? Will it be necessary for there to be some government regulation of consultants at least in the early stages – such as registration of individuals and firms meeting prescribed minimum standards? What financial and audit requirements should individual schools be required to meet?

Another challenge is to explore what the possible broader implications are for public schools systems comprised largely of self-governing schools. For example, what is likely to happen to equity considerations and special education needs? What implications are there for career structures for teachers and administrators, and for University graduate programs and in-service courses? What implications are there for school size, and what will happen to small schools in isolated country areas? It should be remembered that, in the late nineteenth century, the highly centralized 'state'-wide bureaucratic system we knew for a hundred years was developed largely in order to ensure equality of educational provision and opportunity, across vast geographic areas. Unless the new systems of public self-managed schools can ensure a large measure of equal provision across states, they will soon come under considerable political pressures, perhaps leading even to a new movement for re-centralization.

The Driving Forces of Restructuring

To date the main driving forces behind restructuring in Australia are not well understood. Of course, some of the basics are clear enough, such as

- Ministers and political parties are taking a major role in initiation and implementation, rather than educational professionals.

- A strong emphasis is on efficiency and accountability, at a time when governments are under pressure to reduce expenditure on traditional services.

- Other economic pressures are evident, especially the need for education to be of more direct assistance to the economy and the labour market.

- There is strong pressure to adopt management practices of the corporate sector, and to use management consultants to design detailed reform strategies and supervise implementation.

- In a number of states (e.g. Western Australia, South Australia, Queensland and New South Wales) major reforms in public sector management have influenced the direction, character and speed of change.

- Academics in university schools of education have contributed comparatively little to restructuring to date.

But, so far we have little in the way of detailed understanding of these forces and motivations. We also have little in the way of well-developed theory to provide more comprehensive explanations of precisely how the various influences have operated, and what the future directions might be.

The paper by Wirt drawing on American writing provides a good starting point for Australian researchers interested in this area. Wirt reviews the more common economic explanations of restructuring reflecting a simple model of institutional interactions. These are along the lines that the new workforce needs of the economy were going unmet by the educational system and thus the political masters, as part of their efforts to promote economic development and international competitiveness, stepped in to alter school structures. Wirt also explains the more subtle economic theory of Mitchell who argues that there has been a basic shift in the economic sub-structure that is now shaking all public services, not simply schooling. The economic sub-structure is changing from that of the 'first' industrial revolution which required schools to provide, above all else, three qualities in students – literacy and numeracy, work and social discipline, and the substitution of organisational for individual identity. But the new and emerging economic order, according to Mitchell, is requiring different qualities, especially higher order thinking skills, and initiative and creativity.

Wirt also discusses political explanations of restructuring,

concentrating especially on dissatisfaction theory. Such an explanation relates only to democratic societies, where there are effective channels for expression of political views, where persons elected to public office are concerned with their political survival, and where media of communication can circulate bad news about public services quickly and extensively. Once dissatisfaction about public schooling is widely shared, all that is needed is some triggering event to spark off political action. Another possible political explanation mentioned by Wirt is that the public schools provide an arena for power struggles between different political groups, to decide on dominant symbols, to secure resources, to employ facilitative structures, and to express historical influences.

Australian scholars could well provide important contributions to better understanding of the restructuring movement generally by attempting to develop theories to explain the particular Australian restructuring movement. Such theories will need to address the various economic factors and in particular the fit between the perceived and actual needs of employers and what the school systems supply. Possibly in depth enquiry will show that the economic sub-structure here is changing somewhat along the lines suggested by Mitchell. The theories also will need to address public dissatisfaction with schools, and especially dissatisfaction with public schools in a time when a gradual student enrolment drift to independent schools continues But such theories also will need to take account of particular Australian factors such as changes in the roles of Ministers and permanent heads, new currents in public sector management, and changing relations between major interest groups and government. In his paper on Victoria, Creed draws attention to the important role of key interest groups in the Victorian restructuring efforts and that under Labor devolution took on special meaning; it was essentially devolution to dominant interest groups, demanding a larger voice in educational decision-making. Also, theories will need to explain how and to what extent Australian attitudes to the role of government have played a major influence. Australians characteristically look to governments to solve societal problems and they do not appear to be disturbed if governments adopt relatively drastic and brutal measures to solve such problems.

The Future of Public Schooling and Politics

Finally, it is important to draw attention to important dilemmas Australia faces with respect to the longer-term future of its public schools. Of particular concern is the relationship between the public schools and politics, and the future prospects for recurring political interference by Ministers and governments.

For a long period, there was a high degree of stability in state

education departments, which were essentially run by professional educators. Directors-General such as Sir Harold Wyndham in New South Wales served for long periods and were high profile public figures in the community. Their views on education were highly regarded, not only by fellow educators but by the community, politicians and the media. Public education was certainly a responsibility of governments, but it was substantially removed from more direct politics – especially partisan politics, ministerial politics, and interest group politics. At that time there appears to have been a high degree of public confidence in the schools.

Over the past couple of decades, public education has become drawn much more closely into the political arena. Ministers and key interest groups have decidedly more power, but senior professional educators have less. Ministers act more like the Directors-General of the past and a number of education departments have been subject to recurring waves of restructuring. Such restructuring has achieved a number of desirable reforms, but it has had a devastating effect on morale, and has made longer-term planning impossible. With each new case of ministerial intervention, the same explanation is given: the public schools are not performing as they should, and so direct ministerial reform is necessary to make the organisation more efficient and accountable. As the process goes on, public confidence in the public schools appears to decline even further.

As already noted, currently it appears that we are moving to organisational arrangements which will further down-scale bureaucracy and will deliver responsibility and resources to largely self-managed schools. As already suggested, such an arrangement has many possible advantages, but there are also potential problems that need to be addressed, such as equity concerns and variations between schools relating to the characteristics of local school communities. But other major questions also remain:

- Will such arrangements stop the recurring waves of restructuring?
- What is to stop Ministers wanting to interfere directly in self-managed schools, such as to change the composition of school boards, or the rules for the appointment of principals or to provide new guidelines about how schools should be run and what should be taught?
- Will there be new centralizing pressures at work, perhaps based on arguments about equity between schools or the need to provide for particular disadvantaged groups?

These and related questions raise difficult questions of strategy and

of social and political philosophy. Over the past two decades in the United States and other countries, many students of the politics of education supported the public schools being brought more directly into the main-stream of politics. In the United States in the 1960s and early 1970s, there was a strong stream of scholarly writing arguing that school governance was too isolated from real politics and that the quality of school governance would be enhanced by more active and broad based politics at work. In a recent paper at a symposium on the Chubb and Moe book, *Politics, Markets and America's Schools*, Michael Kirst of Standford University commented on his recollections of this period:

> When I entered the study of the politics of education we were told in school by the political scientists that the big problem of educational politics was that there wasn't enough democracy. The system was isolated from politics. Superintendents and the school boards were elected at large with very few competitive candidates who didn't represent particular areas of the city. Roscoe Martin wrote a book in the 1960s saying that the system was essentially undemocratic and we needed to have a large injection of democracy in the system. Larry Iannaccone enshrined the favorite thesis of the 1960s by calling education politics a 'closed system'. Further more, it was not only a system closed from broader political forces, but one closed to different kinds of political influences and political pluralism (Kirst 1991, p.4).

In Australia these kinds of arguments were developed less fully and forcefully, but a widely accepted view at the time was that public school governance was a political matter whether educators liked it or not, that greater community (especially parent) and teacher participation in school governance was desirable, and that our education systems were far too centralized and 'bureaucratic' in a bad sense.

With publication of the recent Chubb and Moe volume, we now have a decidedly new argument about politics and the public schools being advanced in the United States. Chubb and Moe say that the results of education are difficult to measure and that the best judgements are made by students and parents, not administrators and bureaucrats. However, because the public schools are governed, funded and directed through the political process, the interests of parents and students not only receive no more weight than do the interests of any other group but, because of the way the political process works, organised groups have far more power than parents and students. As a result, through the political process, organised groups press for and largely achieve regulations, guidelines and monitoring procedures, leading to highly bureaucratic modes of

organisation and management. But, according to Chubb and Moe, rigid hierarchical bureaucracies do not promote or allow for effective use of professional personnel, particular teachers. Thus, the answer they say is to use market mechanisms rather than political processes to decide on key questions about what is taught and how. According to Chubb and Moe, throughout

> American society, democratic control and markets are the two major institutions by which social decisions get made and social resources get allocated, and they rather consistently distinguish the public and private sectors. Governments rely on democratic control almost regardless of what they are attempting to accomplish, while in the private sector virtually all activities of a productive or commercial nature (as well as other sorts of activities) are heavily structured by markets (Chubb and Moe 1990 p.27).

Debate on the issue of politics or markets in the United States is still proceeding. Michael Kirst admits that he's not convinced either way, but believes that the democratic process still has the capacity to change public school governance if the political will is there. Chester Finn Jr., on the other hand, sees school governance as a gridlocked system incapable of reforming itself in significant ways. He calls for different orientation in thinking:

> I ... want to suggest that you contemplate the difference between a producer orientation and a consumer orientation as a way of thinking about the politics of education. The traditional politics of education have been producer oriented, rooted in the institutions that deliver education, the employees of those institutions, managers of those institutions and the immediate policymakers of those institutions. We've evolved over the years into a kind of brokered politics of accommodation and amelioration among the producing groups. What has been lost has been a clear consumer orientation to the people who receive the consumer products or, as it may be, are victimized by the products of those institutions and producers (Finn 1991 p.8).

In Australia, there is still little debate along these lines, but it is important that quite fundamental issues about future links between public schools and politics are addressed. This needs to be done in the context of the move towards self-managed public schools and the ongoing political interference in many education departments and ministries, with recurring

waves of restructuring. What we need appears to be new site-based arrangements for school management that ensure schools provide appropriate quality education for all students, protect student rights, cope with different student needs, and provide educational professionals with appropriate autonomy to do their jobs well with a minimum of restrictions. We need mechanisms that will keep bureaucratic controls to a minimum, avoid constant restructuring and reorganisations, and give parents and students a strong voice, rather than dominant producer interest groups. Perhaps we may need to use market mechanisms but there may be other alternatives. However, the approach needs to be consumer rather than producer in orientation. Hopefully, in turn, such innovations would produce schools that enjoy high public esteem and confidence, and meet the legitimate needs of employers and the economy.

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Restructuring School Management

This volume provides the first in depth analysis of the dramatic restructuring of public school management that has done on in Australia over the past decade. The book

- sets the Australian restructuring movement in its international context
- provides case-studies for the six states and two territories of the main restructuring and administrative reorganisation
- explains the key characteristics of and driving forces behind restructuring and
- [illegible]

A key conclusion is that the emerging model of the future for the delivery of public education is likely to be the self managed public school.

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