IT'S TIME FOR A CHANGE

This issue completes my thirteenth year as editor of Vestes, and I am handing over the reins to Mr. J. E. Anwyl, Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Melbourne. May I take this opportunity to thank all those who have so generously contributed to the pages of Vestes, and the less visible referees who sometimes do more work than the authors. Every contribution submitted has been read by the editor and at least one other person, some by three or four. Their comments have been of immense value to Vestes and, I hope, also to the authors.

Finally may I thank our readers; they are the real justification for publishing Vestes at all. FAUSA is now unique among national university staff associations because it publishes a magazine devoted to articles of an academic nature, and not to salary reviews, censure of university administrations and other mundane matters. This is an act of faith which, I believe, justifies the expense to the membership of the staff associations. I would be surprised if the new editor will not some time during his term of office need to make a case for the continued publication of Vestes, but I hope you will support him as you have supported me.

Henry J. Cowan.

PARTICIPATION BY ACADEMICS IN UNIVERSITY GOVERNMENT — A CASE STUDY AT THE DEPARTMENT LEVEL IN THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

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Introduction
In recent years the University of Melbourne has witnessed the introduction of five significant reforms in the area of university government, while two further reforms are currently under consideration.

The Departments Statute
In 1973 the University Council passed the necessary legislation formally recognising the existence of departments as the primary academic unit. The position of head of department disappeared under the new statute (S2.25) which provides for the appointment by Council of a chairman of department on the advice of the Vice-Chancellor and the dean of the faculty after receipt of a nomination by the Vice-Chancellor from the full-time academic staff of the department (usually the tenured staff). Provision also exists, if necessary, for Council to appoint, on the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor and dean of the faculty and after consultation with the members of the full-time academic staff of the department, a member of that staff to be chairman until a nomination is available. Nominating procedures and the composition and procedures of the department committee and department meeting are matters for agreement between members of a department and the relevant faculty. The division of powers between the chairman and the department committee is to be decided upon in a similar fashion, subject to the chairman's final responsibility to Council for the execution of his duties. A chairman's appointment is to be for a period not exceeding three years in any one instance.

Thus, at one stroke, there was opened up to the academic staff in the general run of academic departments in the University of Melbourne the opportunity to elect their own chairman, usually from amongst the tenured academic staff in the department of the rank of senior lecturer and above, and to choose whether or not the department committee was (i) to determine departmental policy and advise on its execution or (ii) to act as an advisory committee on both the formulation and execution of departmental policy.

The phrase "elect their own chairman", used above, should be further amplified. Under the statute all chairmen are appointed by Council. The enactment of the statute opened up for most academic staff the option of holding an election in the department to decide the departmental nomination to be sent forward to the Vice-Chancellor who then, together with the dean of the faculty concerned, would advise Council on the appointment of a chairman. Chairmen appointed as the result of an election to determine the departmental nomination in this paper are described as "elected" chairmen and their departments as "electing" departments.[1] Chairmen appointed in the absence of an election to determine a departmental nomination are described as "appointed" chairmen and their departments as "non-electing" departments.

The Schools Statute
In 1975 the Departments Statute was amended to make possible the establishment of schools to link in a formal way, and hopefully to bring closer together, the academic staff of departments in related disciplines within a faculty. Within the Faculty of Science the following schools have been established:

* School of Chemistry comprised of the three departments of Inorganic Chemistry, Organic Chemistry and Physical Chemistry;
* School of Earth Sciences comprised of the departments of Geology and Meteorology;
* School of Mathematical Science comprised of the departments of Computer Science, Mathematics and Statistics; and
* School of Physics.

The Deans of Faculties Statute — eligibility for dean
Prior to 1973 The Deans of Faculties Statute (S3.4) provided for the dean to be elected by faculty from amongst the professors of the faculty.
Since 1973 the statute has been amended to permit the dean of eight (out of the University's twelve) faculties to be elected by faculty from its academic staff of the status of Senior Lecturer and above. Engineering Faculty may elect its dean from its Readers and Professors. Currently there are four non-professorial deans while one of the professorial deans was a reader when he was first elected to the position of dean.

Faculty Budgeting
In 1976 Council introduced a system of formula budgeting which allocates the University budget to 22 budget divisions (including faculties). The responsibility for determining the allocation of faculty budgets to departments (formerly a central administration responsibility) now devolves back onto faculties.

The Deans of Faculties Statute — power of deans
Currently moves are afoot to change the Deans Statute to regularize and strengthen the executive role of the deans.

The Melbourne University Assembly
In May 1971 Melbourne University had its worst experience of violence as the outcome of student dissent during the sixties and early seventies. The resulting enquiry recommended the establishment of a university assembly to constitute a forum for ongoing discussion and evaluation in relation to university affairs. It first met in 1974 with 114 elected members (44 sectional, mainly faculty etc. representatives and 70 general representatives) elected on the common roll principle from the university community which encompasses all academic and support staff, all students and graduates of the university.

The Professorial Board
Council is currently considering courses of action arising out of proposals for the reform of the present 160 member Professorial Board. Current proceedings were initiated by the Board establishing a "Committee to review the role and functions of the Professorial Board" in mid 1975. Since then faculties, departments, the Assembly, the Melbourne University Staff Association and other interested parties have spent considerable time in developing and debating proposals for the needed reform of the existing Board and its committee structure.

While this paper henceforth (necessarily) will focus on the background, nature and significance of changes at the department level, it will be appreciated that in the real-life campus situation it is not possible to consider changes at that level in isolation from other pressures for and manifestations of reform in the university.

The Departmental Statute

Background
The documents and publications of the Federation of Australian University Staff Associations indicate the Federation's interest from its inception in 1952 in problems associated with university government and procedures. The Federation's interest in turn reflected the widespread interest of its member associations in these issues.[2]

In the early 1960's the Federation played a significant part in influencing the structure of government adopted by Macquarie University at the time of its establishment.[3] The Federation went on to mount and subsequently to publish the proceedings of a seminar on university government held in Canberra in 1965.[4]

Following considerable dissatisfaction amongst academic staff at the University of Melbourne over matters arising out of departmental government, the executive of Melbourne University Staff Association (MUSA) decided in September 1969 "to set up a sub-committee to undertake a radical examination of the departmental structure of the University and the power given to department heads."[5] The outcome was a report in 1970 which won acceptance by the MUSA Executive and, later, impressive support by the membership when considered at a general meeting in March 1971 which had been called specially for that purpose.

Early in 1971 the Professorial Board, through its Policy Committee, again became involved with the question of departmental reform when it set up a small sub-committee to investigate the difficulties and possibilities of enacting a Departmental Statute. As the result of its initial considerations, the sub-committee was restructured in March 1971 and its terms of reference broadened to include an exploration of the whole concept of departments and their administration.[6]

In the same month a member of Council gave notice of motion "that Council appoint a Committee to consider the future structure and administration of the Academic Departments of the University . . . and to report back . . . on any measures it considers would be likely to improve the efficient running and general harmony of the University and that that in its deliberations the Committee should consult with the Professorial Board, the Staff Association and any other Bodies it sees fit."[7]

In view of initiatives already undertaken by the Professorial Board in this field the Council deferred action till August 1971 (later December 1971) pending production of the report of the Board's sub-committee.

Its report (dated 4 November 1971) proposed a Departmental Statute essentially in the present form. In making its recommendations the sub-committee stated: "It realises that it is proposing sweeping changes in traditional forms but it believes that much of the change does no more than recognise good practice in many departments."[8]

In the following months good use was made by MUSA Executive of the Professorial Board's widespread dissemination of documents and its for-

mal request for "searching and widespread discussion on the questions raised by the report" in all departments and faculties. There was a further display of overwhelming support by members for the proposed reforms at a MUSA general meeting in March 1972. These factors encouraged members of the Professorial Board (and its Policy Committee) to view favourably their subcommittee's radical proposals. Board approval was eventually secured and the Departments Statute was finally passed by Council on 11 June 1973.

At the time the Statute (S2.25) comprised four simple clauses (since amended to five clauses). Clause 3 provided for all the important questions about the structure of departments to "be determined from time to time by resolution of Council after consultation with the Professorial Board and the faculty or board of studies concerned." In the accompanying Preamble to Resolutions Under Statute 2.25.3 (as it has since been developed), Council has gone on to clarify, inter alia, its understanding of (i) the chairman's responsibilities in relation to the execution of his duties and (ii) the way in which procedures, by which the chairman may be assisted in the discharge of his responsibilities by a department committee and department meetings, are to be determined.

Following the enactment of the statute there was a further campaign by MUSA using a newsletter containing a draft model resolution for departments and a general meeting of members in an attempt to quicken academic staff interest in the framing of departmental and faculty resolutions. The campaign was assisted by the (widely publicised) early adoption by the Arts Faculty on 25 July 1973 of a uniform resolution granting the department committees in each of its 17 departments power to determine departmental academic policy.

In the following months departments and faculties met to frame up their resolutions under Statute 2.25.3. The Professorial Board on 13 November 1973 "agreed that departmental resolutions that seem to be in order should not be delayed for consideration of areas where there are problems, and that as much material as possible should be brought to the next meeting of the Board. Difficulties would be referred to the Policy Committee and perhaps to the Board. If it were necessary for the chairman of department to be appointed for 1974, before the departmental resolution has been approved by Council, the Vice-Chancellor would forward a recommendation to Council provided he was satisfied as to the manner in which it was made; any such appointment would be for not longer than 1974."[9]

In this climate, the first elections for (nominations for) departmental chairmen for 1974 took place

and on 17 December 1973 Council appointed the first elected departmental chairmen under the new statute (5 Professors and 4 non-professorial chairmen).

Professor A E Alexander, in delivering the A D Ross Lecture in 1965 on "University Organization and Government: A Century Out-of-Date?", stated:—

> Having, I hope, established that many valid criticisms can be levelled at the existing system . . . what should we put in its stead?
>
> . . .Firstly, a more democratic system of government, in which all permanent academic staff have, through elected representatives on *all* bodies concerned with policy making, a much more direct voice in university affairs; secondly, a change in the organisation of the teaching units with the scrapping of the present Department and Faculty system; thirdly, a more decentralized administration with far more responsibility being delegated to individual academic staff.
>
> To set up a new university with a novel democratic organization (novel as far as Australia is concerned) might appear difficult — how much more difficult would it be to bring about any major reform in *existing* universities? History would teach us that reform from within is certainly difficult, and anyone who has sought even modest changes in an Australian university will know just how frustrating and time-consuming this can be . . .
>
> Professor Rowan, writing some *five* years ago on the decline of the Australian universities, commented: 'In view of the experience of the last decade it does seem that the only body likely to stop the rot is the academics. Their present masters, with one eye nervously cocked at the State Premiers and the other permanently engaged in seeing no evil, seem unaware of the rate of university decline. The academics remain the best hope. If Mr Rowe and Sir Mark Oliphant are right, they may not constitute much of a hope. But, to steal a well-known expression from Mr. Butler, they are the best hope we have.'[10]

The impossible had happened — an existing university had brought about major reform from within — and the academics, with skilful, politically mature leadership had given the lead. Student unrest occurring against a continuing background of staff disquiet about poor administration and polarised relationships in certain departments lent fresh urgency to the arguments that the day of the 'God-professor' was gone, that an institution such as Melbourne University could no longer afford to, nor should it continue to, deny its non-professorial academics a legitimate voice in the conduct of their academic affairs. Nor should it continue to refuse to release some of its best professorial talent from being submerged in university government and administration. All parties were ready for a departmental statute.

> The sight of Melbourne University (then 120 years old) drawing skirts up from the ankles and flirting with trendy democracy is diverting

said Ebenezer in the Melbourne *Age*.[11] And somewhat cynically (and ill-advisedly as it has turned out) he went on to add:

> Two years after it has all ceased to matter, and at a time when greater authoritarianism rather than more liberalism is on show in America and Britain, Melbourne skips blithely into the 1930's.

This paper will reveal some of the developments over nearly four years of operating under the Departments Statute which reveal the lack of perception in his comment.

Statute 2.25 — The Departments and the Schools
The statute in its present form has been amended to provide for the existence of schools (which also can have their elected chairmen, school committees, school meetings etc) in addition to departments.

Sufficient reference has already been made to describe the main features of the statute and to explain how it is implemented through resolutions of Council.

The Extent of the Departments Statute's Application 1973-77
Once Council had finally enacted the Departments Statute departments and faculties generally moved quickly to make the legislation effective through the preparation of the necessary resolutions. The atmosphere was one of implementation first and clarification of consequential issues later, eg. what rights would an elected non-professorial chairman have regarding attendance at meetings of the Professorial Board? What arrangements would be made regarding office space and secretarial support for an elected non-professorial chairman? etc.

In making the transition from appointed heads of departments to chairmen elected under S2.25 Melbourne University had a distinct advantage in that the terms "department" and "head of depart-

ment" had not previously been defined and therefore contracts could not be written legally in those terms. Where necessary, in respect of contracts indicating specific areas of responsibility, negotiations were entered into regarding modifications deemed necessary in the light of the statute. All such negotiations have been successfully completed except in one instance which is currently being finalised.

The present position is:[12]

		No
(i)	academic departments electing their chairman under S2.25	61
(ii)	faculties not divided into departments.Under S2.25.4 such a faculty "shall be considered to be a department and the Dean [elected by faculty under S3.4] shall be the chairman."	3
	Elected chairmen	64
(iii)	academic departments — election arrangements yet to be finalised (including one recently created department)	2
		66
(iv)	clinical departments where existing hospital agreements require the chairman to be a professor holding appropriate status within the teaching hospital.	14
(v)	other (specialist) academic bodies and/or research institutes — chairman or director appointed under other relevant statutes eg S2.22 Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research	6
	Appointed chairmen	20
		86

Two electing departments currently permit the chairman to be nominated from full-time tenured Lecturer staff and above (all other departments limit nominations to Senior Lecturer and above). Sixty-three departments limit the electorate to full-time tenured Lecturer staff and above.

Elected chairmen currently are of the following status:[12]

Status	Eligible population in electing depts.	Elected chairmen No.	%
Professor	81	28	44
Reader	124	17	26
Senior Lecturer	289	19	30
Lecturer	19	—	0
	513	64	100

The number of elected chairmen by faculty groupings are as follows:[12,13]

Status	Humanities	Technologies	Sciences	Total
Professor	9	3	16	28
Non-professorial	19	7	10	36
No. of electing departments	28	10	26	64

If the above figures for faculty groupings (for comparison purposes) are adjusted to normalise to the university average the proportion of the eligible population who are Professors, the following conclusions can be drawn regarding the relative likelihoods of an eligible Professor compared with an eligible non-professorial staff member being elected chairman.

(a)   Humanities — an eligible Professor is 2.3 times more likely to be elected chairman.
(b)   Technologies — an eligible Professor is 4.6 times more likely to be elected chairman.
(c)   Sciences — an eligible Professor is 6.4 times more likely to be elected chairman.

That is (i) the technological faculties are twice as likely to elect a Professor chairman as are the humanities faculties and (ii) the science faculties are three times more likely to elect a Professor chairman than are the humanities faculties.

The number of department committees etc in electing departments with the power to (i) determine or (ii) advise on the formulation of academic policy is as follows:[14]

Faculty grouping	(i) Determine policy		(ii) Advise on policy		Total	
	No	% of Total	No	% of Total	No	%
Humanities	26	93	2	7	28	100
Technologies	2	20	8	80	10	100
Sciences	7	27	19	73	26	100
	35	55	29	45	64	100

The above statistics relating to the likelihood of election of non-professorial chairmen and the granting to departmental committees (or withholding) of power to determine departmental policy probably reflect the more conservative social, political and professional attitudes of academics whose training and experience to date have been in the areas of the sciences (including the medical sciences) or technology rather than in dealing with the more liberal ideas and practices encountered through the study of philosophy, history, politics etc.

At present there are two elected chairwomen — both in the Arts faculty.

Case Study — Departmental Administration Under the Statute 1973 to Date

Context of the Survey
The University of Melbourne is a complex institution comprising twelve faculties and several boards of studies in which staff teach and research in a wide range of disciplines, several specialist academic and research centres or institutes (eg. the Centre for the Study of Higher Education and the Centre for Environmental Studies) in addition to a number of associated institutions. It employs 1437 full time academic and research staff (including 100 Professors) and 1921 technical, administrative and general staff. Student enrolments currently are 13,695 undergraduate and 2,101 post graduate students.[15].

The genius of the Departments Statute is that the varied circumstances, staff reactions and requirements encountered in approximately 80 academic departments can all be accommodated

through the combination of a simple basic statute and specific Council (and faculty) resolutions which spell out the fine print of the arrangements. Its operation encompasses both large and small departments, departments which in the past have been well run and have achieved a sense of unity and others which have been less fortunate in their administration and have suffered from internal frictions, departments with varying traditions of interest in and varying degrees of commitment to the application of the ideas of democracy.

Nature of the Survey
A composite questionnaire/interview format containing some 68 questions and headings for discussion was circulated to 20 senior academics who were drawn from the twelve faculties and one board of studies.

The views to be reported on in this paper were gleaned from questionnaires (where completed) and, more importantly, from 16 face-to-face interviews of approximately one hour's duration and from one phone conversation with an academic who was leaving next day for overseas. These responses, which covered eleven faculties and one board of studies, were supplemented with information supplied in earlier discussions with three other senior academics.

All told the views of some 20 senior academics (9 Professors, 6 Readers and 5 Senior Lecturers) from as many departments were considered in detail in developing Part II of this paper. While up to 5 academics may have been drawn from a single faculty there has not been any opportunity to cross check the views expressed with those of other academics in the same department.

Seventeen of the academics who supplied information had been elected chairman of department and had served to date for an average term of two years; 13 are still in office. (Majority opinion favoured a three year term in the interests of efficiency in administration and economy of effort.) All had been effectively volunteers for the job. A surprising half of responding chairmen had been elected under departmental ground rules which required all eligible academics to allow their names to go forward for election unless not feasible on account of health or study leave etc arrangements. One academic interviewed was currently serving as chairman of a clinical department without election. The other two academics, though senior, had no personal experience as chairman of department.

The paper is offered as a multiple case study involving a quasi-representative sample, the field of interest being the operation of the Departments Statute at the University of Melbourne, 1973 to date.

Stated objective (within one department)
(i) improvement in the standard of administrations;
(ii) improvement in relations between academic staff;
(iii) increased participation in departmental policy formation and execution
 — by academic staff
 — by non-academic staff
 — by students
(iv) permit Professor(s) to concentrate on giving academic leadership.

All except two of those responding expressed outright support for the new system of elected chairmen (i.e. substantially no change from the attitude they held at the time of the Statute's introduction). Two chairmen however, because of perceived weaknesses such as it "acts against change in a steady-state university" and it "needs to be made to work better," expressed toleration rather than outright support.

There was a general consensus that the new system of elected chairmen is an improvement over the former system of appointed heads of department and that it is functioning adequately throughout the university as a whole. "An enormous advantage" was the way one well-informed academic described it, though he then went on to add that "there are some areas where it hasn't worked."

The chairmen hazarded the view that their departmental colleagues generally speaking favour the new arrangements, some enthusiastically so. However, in a minority of departments the staff or elements of the staff continue to be apathetic towards the Statute.

Performance Against Objectives
The various factors which motivated the several parties who co-operated in securing the introduction of a Departments Statute in the University of Melbourne have already been referred to in the section outlining the historical background to its introduction. Doubtless the priority ranking which individuals would have assigned to the various objectives would have varied depending on their experiences and responsibilities during the era of appointed heads of department, their status, political and philosophical views and associations etc.

Responding chairmen were asked questions in relation to the degree of achievement within their departments under the Statute as against four specific objectives. These objectives and the chairmen's replies are given below in summary form.

Degree of achievement
Some improvement
Significant improvement

Substantial improvement
Minimal improvement
Minimal improvement
Answer varied from "nil"
to "substantial improvement"

The Career-Prospects of the Non-professorial Chairman
A question was asked about the likely effects on the career prospects of a non-professorial chairman of a period of service as chairman of department.

Three of the men interviewed had been appointed to chairs subsequent to their taking up the position of chairman of department. One Senior Lecturer had been promoted to Reader during his term of office as chairman. Such a record suggests that some departments at least are choosing their chairman from amongst their best people and that, tackled in the right way (i.e. as an episode rather than a continuing activity), a term in office as chairman can be regarded as contributing materially to an individual's development and rounding out and, realistically, can be a plus factor in favour of his advancement, notwithstanding a contrary concern which was expressed in one or two instances.

Another aspect of the problem was brought out by one senior lecturer chairman who countered the question as to the likely effect on his promotion prospects of his term as chairman by denying he had any prospects to be damaged!

The Chairman and Research
A typical view would be that it is "damn' hard work" being chairman and that a 3 year stint is the optimum and the maximum time that a person could afford to be away from active personal research. Despite the pressures in office, chairmen with a deep commitment to research for the most part maintained some output or found a satisfying new outlet as a catalyst in encouraging group research within their department. Chairmen for the most part maintained their desire to escape from the administrative burden in due course to return to research work again.

The Chairman's Management Style
One of the outstanding conclusions from the series of interviews was the discovery of the depth of enthusiasm and commitment, often at considerable personal cost, with which a number of the chairmen interviewed had undertaken their tasks. Given the talents that such people have, the outcome has been the emergence of a quite distinctive and effective management style, based on a hard-won philosophy as to how things ought to be done as between professionals in an academic environment. Doubtless one factor which enabled these chairmen to maintain their zest was the fact that they had taken on only a limited term in office. (Contrast this with the appointed Professor's task of trying to maintain momentum year in, year out with no prospect of relief while health and life last!) A consequence for their department and university has indeed been, as one chairman put it, "good, cheap administration!"

The management style, while varying in important particulars to reflect personality and goal differences, has a number of important common characteristics:—

(a) a conscious decision by the chairman to sacrifice his personal short term interests for the interests of his colleagues and the department;
(b) a willingness to invest very considerable amounts of time in consulting, talking with, counselling, stimulating and encouraging fellow members of staff;
(c) a wholehearted and realistic acceptance of the responsibility for running the department irrespective of whether the wording in the relevant Resolution was for the department committee etc. to "determine" or "advise on" the formulation of departmental policy. This leads on to desirable practices such as:—
(i) the preparation of well thought-through agendas for department committee meetings;
(ii) firm chairing of meetings to eliminate discussion of trivia and to reach a conclusion;

(iii) development of effective procedures to facilitate this end eg. submissions were required from those with ideas on an issue and circulated prior to the meeting. At the meeting authors had no right of speaking (they could only answer questions) resulting in considerable savings in discussion time and the emergence of a new pattern in meetings;
(iv) clear ground rules laid down for notice of meeting, quorum, voting rights etc.;
(v) meetings held regularly — but unnecessary meetings cancelled;
(vi) adequate time spent considering important longer term issues;
(vii) clear indication to meetings of the consequences of alternative choices open to the department to encourage responsible decision-making;
(viii) preparedness to clash with colleagues on work-related issues;
(ix) a mature attitude to crises. "They occur every week", "the staff member's crisis is your event";
(x) not being afraid to make a decision i.e. to exercise executive power and bear the consequences. ("Your colleagues will let you know if they don't agree!");
(xi) a non-professorial chairman not being inhibited from competing for a chair appointment or promotion if such action seemed appropriate.

Each of these points answers a possible criticism which could be made in relation to the performance of inexperienced, elected (non-professorial) chairmen — and a number of such criticisms were indeed made! There is one obvious solution open to departments where such criticisms are substantiated!

Notwithstanding their very considerable differences in age, background, personality and interest, nearly half of the chairmen interviewed had developed an effective management style along the lines indicated.

One professorial chairman expressed the fear that the Departments Statute places a premium on the preservation of the status quo in a steady-state university situation. It remains to be seen whether the management style described above together with the heightened sense of responsibility in the individual academic which accompanies it, are adequate to deal with the intractable problem of change under no-growth conditions.

Regarding wider aspects of the chairman's task, some chairmen considered involvement in university committees was a necessary broadening experience for every departmental chairman. Others

were content to operate effectively at the department and faculty levels, in some instances including involvement with the wider community as a integral part of those activities.

Academic Leadership and the Professor's Role
Possibly the most important issue to emerge clearly, following the introduction of the Departments Statute, has been the question regarding academic leadership and the role of the Professor. What is meant by academic leadership? What is the role of the professor? What is the role of the chairman? And finally, what is the role of the ordinary academic?

The earlier emergence of multi-chair departments and the appointment of non-professorial academics as head of department in those departments in which no chair had been established had already drawn some attention to the issue. However with 53 Professors in 64 electing departments not currently departmental chairmen,[16] the issue is now being seriously debated.

This discussion can perhaps best be approached by considering firstly what needs to be done in the typical academic department.

Each academic has his own quite specific teaching responsibilities and research interests which have to be met and developed. The academic may also wish to respond to community demands on him as a person to contribute in various ways arising out of his expertise. More widely, there are group needs to be met in the department in connection with shared teaching commitments and research interests and, again, the possibility of group responsibilities in the wider community. More widely still, there are possible department and intra- and inter-institutional ramifications to be considered in connection with the department's teaching, research and wider community activities. The carrying out of activities such as these inevitably generates a requirement for organisation and administration — at the personal, group and department and wider entity levels.

Each academic has the capacity to perform in some or all of these areas (teaching, research, community activities and administration) and levels of interest (personal, group, department and wider entity). Some academics will have the capacity to perform at significantly higher levels than others (the professorial stream in actuality or potential, compared with the non-professorial stream).

Some academics have achieved (or have the capacity to achieve) balanced development in all four areas, at the personal, group and/or department etc levels of interest.

The particular areas of the academic task and levels of interest being developed/practised by an academic at any point in time are influenced by many factors — abilities and interests, personality traits, value scales, previous experiences, personal needs, perceived group, department and community needs and the academic's responses to those needs, complementarity of talents and interests with those of colleagues etc.

Academic leadership, then, could be described as the effective taking of responsibility in any of the four areas, at any of the three levels of interest (personal, group etc).

The inclusion of superior administrative performance within the meaning of the term academic leadership is defended on the grounds of its importance as a factor in influencing staff morale and hence academic output. If effective administrative leadership produces an improved academic result, such administrative leadership must be regarded as an aspect of academic leadership.

Some academics will seek to restrict themselves to personal teaching and research (plus related administration if it is inescapable!). Others will in addition engage in community-related activities on their own behalf. Yet others will take responsibility for personal and group activities within and/or beyond their department in teaching, research, community interests and administration. A few may seek to encompass all areas at each of the levels of interest.

The **chairman's role** would seem to include a concentration on group and department administration plus also, perhaps, group and department representation in community interests, at the same time retaining such personal teaching and research activities as may be possible. Alternatively he may defer his personal research interests and concentrate on stimulating his colleagues and helping them to develop personal, group and department initiatives in teaching and research.

The distinctiveness of the **Professor's role** would seem to lie not in his involvement with administration at the group and department levels (whether appointed or elected thereto) but rather in the original, vigorous and effective way in which he performs (gives leadership) (at whatever levels of interest) in teaching, research and the community interests with which he chooses to become involved.

The **non-professorial academic's role** would seem to involve performing in such areas (teaching, research and community interests) and at such levels of interest (personal, group etc.) as he elects/is required to do, consistent with his experience, interests, and abilities.

The views of responding chairmen varied considerably on these issues. Two chairmen held it was not possible to conceive of a Professor's role apart from his possession of executive authority. This view led on to the fear that Professors who were not able to continue as chairman of department would tend to become lazy.

A much more commonly expressed view was that retirement (even under protest) from the position of head of department had freed the Professor to make a really effective (on occasions a markedly improved) contribution through his personal efforts and/or through encouraging and assisting others in the department. Similar appreciative comments were made about the quality of the contribution of incoming Professors who, not having been elected chairman, were able to concentrate on their academic pursuits.

There were several reports of improvements in the performance of non-professorial (non-chairman) staff. In one large department which had had problems in the past the chairman devoted much of his time in seeking to draw out his colleagues, in interpreting personalities in the department one to the other, in interpreting departmental issues to the personalities etc. The resultant growth in the staff's sense of responsibility, in its creativity and willingness to participate in departmental affairs was reported to be quite outstanding. Another chairman reported "a major development has been a greater identification by staff with the whole decision-making process since staff now see that their vote counts!" In the "freer atmosphere in which they now work" they have "a much more flexible attitude and an acceptance of the need for change".

Reference has already been made to the existence of a sub-set of chairmen who were considered to be most effective in the performance of their duties.

It was evident from the comments of several of these chairmen that their departments had been operating as highly effective academic units for some time. Two other chairmen in the sub-group indicated that serious problems in their departments were now starting to be overcome. The Departments Statute has undoubtedly been a factor in contributing to such improvements in staff morale.

Training for Chairman
Concern has been expressed about a possible loss of efficiency (and continuity) in administration each two or three years with the advent of a new chairman. A general view, while confirming there was a cost, regarded it as "a small offsetting price" to pay for the undoubted benefits from having (i) a person in office only for a limited term and (ii) an increasing pool of experienced people working in the university. Another comment in similar vein was "Is speed everything? Better a slower, correct result than the alternative!"

Opinion on balance favoured the suggestions of (i) voluntary (some preferred compulsory) attendance at an induction course for incoming chairmen to teach them the ropes; (ii) published guidelines for chairmen; and (iii) the chairman-elect to understudy his predecessor for three months prior to taking office. However few wished to see a department close out its options by bestowing on the deputy-chairman an automatic right of succession.

While one or two chairmen had misgivings about the availability of a suitable successor in the immediate future due to temporary difficulties (such as forthcoming study leave arrangements etc) few, if any, had any real concern about the quality of the next wave of chairmen.

Rewards of Office
Views in this area, in response to the proposals raised, may be summarised as follows:—

Proposal	Reaction
(i) loading to continue to be paid to chairman;	Generally favoured
(ii) professorial salary to be paid to non-professorial chairman;	Generally not favoured
(iii) research assistant(s) to be provided;	Opinion divided. Queries were raised about capacity to use effectively. Ok if graduate assistant etc.
(iv) lightened teaching load;	Overwhelming majority support
(v) administrative assistant;	Supported — if can be paid for!
(vi) accelerated study leave for retiring chairman;	Marginally supported
(vii) rehabilitation leave for retiring chairman.	Marginally supported.

Other Issues

Many other issues, some of which are listed below, could be raised for comment.

(i) Has the Departments Statute, with the appearance of inexperienced chairmen including chairmen of non-professorial status, caused a transfer of power to the Central Administration?

Comment: A non-issue. The chairman's main preoccupation is at the department and faculty level. As the Statute continues to operate the emergence of a cohort of experienced chairmen (some of whom will have had wide experience on university committees and in representing their departments before the community) will be an added safeguard against any such transfer of power.

(ii) Should all chairmen be encouraged to serve on university committees to broaden their experience during their term of office?

Comment: A restructuring of the Professorial Board committees could help to open up this sort of experience to a talented and responsible group of academics.

(iii) Are there special problems for the non-professorial chairman in relation to the procedures governing promotions from senior lecturer to reader?

(iv) Does the existence of the Departments Statute detract from the university's capacity to attract and hold professorial talent from outside Australia?

(v) Is it a matter for concern whether the department committee, under the relevant Resolution, determines or advises on departmental policy formulation?

(vi) What are the special problems under the Statute of single department faculties?

(vii) Is the question of junior staff and student participation in departmental government still a problem?

(viii) Should special provision be made for meetings of academic staff outside the department meetings so that essential academic matters can be debated in detail, but without eroding the importance of the departmental meeting?

(ix) Is the department meeting (forum) worth retaining as a safety valve?

Underlying Philosophy and Conclusions

Philosophy Underlying Participation

The philosophy regarding participation which underlies this paper can be summed up in three statements:—

(i) Democracy dies in the heart of the democrat before it is crushed in the hand of the dictator.[17]

(ii) "Nobody can deny me the right to be responsible".[18]

(iii) "It is in laying down our lives for great and unselfish aims that our own talents develop to the fullest and we are stretched towards the ultimate limits of our capacity."[19]

These basic ideas are developed further in the context of the university for the academic and for academic staff associations and federations in the paper *"The Roles in University Government of the Academic and of Academic Staff Associations".*[20]

Conclusions

The achievement of quite radical reform at the level of the department in the University of Melbourne resulted from the coming together of several unrelated circumstances and the presence in the professoriate and in the staff and academic staff association of a number of personalities who provided a high order of mature political and professional leadership. In the final event the reform took nearly four years to achieve.

For several reasons it seems appropriate to initiate the process of reform in a tertiary institution at the level of the department. The readier acceptance by academics in the humanities of the principles of participation in university government, may also point to those areas in other institutions from which early support may be forthcoming.

In less than four years the benefits achieved have been very considerable. The release of some members of the professoriate from "chores" and from the aura that surrounded the professoriate ("a cause of resentment in the past") has led to what one chairman in a large faculty described as "a notable release of energy" amongst the professoriate, evidencing itself in a significant increase in their academic contributions.

References have already been made earlier in this paper to the impressive performances (not only in administration) of a number of the elected chairmen and to the improved atmosphere in some departments as non-professorial staff have responded to their opportunity under the Statute to vote in the selection of chairman and in departmental decision-making.

The energy releases spoken of may have occurred more readily in multi-chaired departments with a tradition of essentially democratic government behind them. Yet even in departments which have been dogged persistently by problems, there are signs of progress towards their resolution in the changed atmosphere created (at least in part) by the Statute.

Obviously there have been costs. Yet as one Professor observed; "These costs are transient compared with the potential benefits. The whole structure is evolving, enabling academics to be free in the best sense ie. each person has the opportunity to contribute."

One has the sense of deep tides flowing in the University of Melbourne, of the whole institution — individuals, chairmen, professors, departments and faculties — being in a learning situation. Each departmental situation is probably unique. Some departments are in an advanced state of development; in others the individuals involved are feeling their way forward in first steps towards reconciliation and growth. Developments to date, not least the high standards and energy evidenced in administration by the best of the departmental chairmen (amongst whom non-professorial elected chairmen are generously represented), presage well for the renewal of the intellectual and emotional life of the academic staff, with consequences for themselves and their disciplines, the institution, its students and the community, which must be significant.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. In every instance to date, to the best of my knowledge, the nomination has been confirmed by appointment in due course.

2. **George, D.W.**: *Report to the Federation of Australian University Staff Associations on Academic Staff Structure and University Government in Australian Universities,* August 1972, p. 3.

3. Ibid p. 4.

4. The Federation of Australian University Staff Associations: *University Government.* Proceedings of a Seminar held in Canberra, June 1965, ed R. Atkins.

5. Minutes of MUSA Executive Meeting No 24, 5 September 1969, para 6.

6. Policy Committee of the Professorial Board of the University of Melbourne: *Report of the Sub-Committee on Departmental Structure and Administration,* 4 November 1971, para 1.

7. Ibid para 3.

8. Ibid para 8.

9. Minutes of Professorial Board of University of Melbourne Meeting No 9, 13 November 1973, para 5.

10. **Alexander, A.E.**: "University Organization and Government: A Century Out-of-Date?" *Australian Journal of Science,* 1965, 27(12), pp. 337-342.

11. The Age (1973), Ebenezer by P. Smark, "An academic dalliance in democracy".

12. Derived from (i) Schedule of Chairmen of Departments etc. as at 11 July 1977, produced by Staff Officer, University of Melbourne; (ii) University of Melbourne Standing Resolutions of Council Chapter Six (updated); (iii) The University of Melbourne Calendar 1977 Part 1.

13. Faculty groupings are
     Humanities — Arts, Economics and Commerce, Education, Law, Music, Social Studies (Board).
     Technologies — Architecture etc, Engineering.
     Sciences — Agriculture and Forestry, Dental Science, Medicine, Science, Veterinary Science.

14. University of Melbourne Standing Resolutions of Council Chapter Six (updated).

15. University of Melbourne: *Statistics 1977* (as at 30 April 1977).

16. See page 7.

17. Untraced at date of typing.

18. Statement by G. O'Neil, trade union leader and former chairman of Falls Road Branch of the Northern Ireland Labour Party, Belfast. Taken from the sound track of the documentary film "Belfast Report", 1973.

19. **Wilhelmsen, J.J.**: *Man and Structures,* London, Grosvenor, 1977, p. 18.

20. This paper was originally written for Melbourne University Staff Association by the author in 1975 and, after minor amendments by the executive committee of the day, was tabled at the FAUSA Annual General Meeting in 1975 as a background paper relating to a number of agenda items. It was re-presented to the FAUSA Annual General Meeting in 1976 by FAUSA Executive as a background paper relevant to the Federation's ongoing consideration of the University government issue at that meeting.