

PRESENTATION
OF
ALBERT SHANKER, PRESIDENT,
THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS,
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MR. SHANKER: I think what you are doing is rather interesting. It hasn't been done before and it is not being done elsewhere. I can't think of anything any more important to focus on than the question of turning teaching into a profession.

I would like to start by saying that throughout most of my career as a teacher and as a teacher unionist, I must say that most of the time when the word "professional" was used I got kind of sick to my stomach. My first encounter with the word I can remember very clearly. I started teaching in 1952. I sort of came into teaching the way others did. I had not expected to be a teacher. I was trying to finish a Ph.D. at Columbia University and ran out of patience and money and decided that I would go teach for a year, and there was a need for regular substitute teachers and I began at an elementary school which during that period of time was experiencing a tremendous influx of Puerto Ricans who were coming over by the plane load, and I had had two or three education courses which I took only because they were given at the right time and I needed a few credits during the GI bill days, so I found myself in a classroom experiencing not only great difficulty but the experience

was a great shock because it was nothing like the classroom that I remembered when I was a student, and I was waiting for help to come.

I can't remember now whether it was two weeks or three or four weeks into the semester, but the door did finally open and outside the door was the assistant principal, and I said to myself, "Well, thank God, now I am going to get some help, I can ask some questions," and the assistant principal just stood with the door open and his arm was extended like that and his finger pointing.

After what seemed to me like a ten-minute pause but probably was more like a twenty-second pause, he just said, "Mr. Shanker, you've got some papers on the floor over there, that is very unprofessional," and then the door closed and he left.

A few weeks later I attended my first faculty conference and at the conference an organization sheet was handed out, it was a sheet with every teacher's name and room number and there was also a duty schedule. This was elementary school. I was the second male member of the faculty and there was listed "snow patrol" and the two males were listed for snow patrol, which meant that whenever it

snowed we had to give up our lunch period, walk around the school and tell the kids to stop throwing snowballs at each other.

So the other male teacher raised his hand at the faculty conference and asked the principal a question: "Now that there are two of us" -- meaning males in the school -- "do we both have to go on snow patrol every time it snows? Couldn't we rotate?" And the principal immediately attacked him for being unprofessional and his unprofessionalism consisted in demanding that the duty schedule be revised after it had already been mimeographed and distributed; and, secondly, this came closer to a notion of real professionalism, the second was that his unwillingness to roam around the school each time it snowed indicated a lack of concern with the health and well-being of the students because a student might throw a snowball at another and hit the other in the eye and that could result in the blinding of a student and the teachers had to be concerned with that.

So the notion of professionalism struck not just me but I'm sure most of the teachers in that school and that school system was a notion of keeping your mouth shut, don't rock the boat, obey orders -- it was really obey

orders.

A few years later, there was a fascinating case just a few miles north of New York City, in Mount Kisco, New York, where an outstanding teacher by the name of James Whorley -- somebody ought to collect some of these classic cases, but Whorley had been there for a good number of years and had an excellent record. A new principal came and the principal required of the teachers that they submit plan books in detail one full year in advance to show their professionalism.

Whorley refused, he was the only teacher there who did refuse, and he was dismissed and his dismissal was upheld by both the State Tenure Commission and the Commissioner of Education and the courts, and it was clear there who was competent and who was incompetent, and it was clear who was professional and who was not professional. It was also clear that insubordination, which was the important thing, and that nothing else mattered.

So the notion of professionalism here in all these examples are Orwellian. You will remember that in George Orwell's "1984," they exercised control in society by preventing people from thinking in political terms, and the

way they did that is from a very early age equating one political concept with its very opposite -- it was that famous billboard downtown of "War is peace, freedom is slavery" -- and if you get people to constantly equate one of those words with the other, they would be incapable of thinking politically.

Over the years we have done something similar with the word "professional" as it is used with school boards and administrators when they address teachers. So I hope in your discussion of these issues that there is an awareness of the use of this term, that on the one hand we are looking at other professions and what might be done with teaching to make it more like them, but on the other hand there is the everyday experience and the everyday vocabulary of education.

Obviously, a professional is not a person who just obeys orders; quite the opposite, a professional is an expert who, by virtue of his expertise, is relatively independent of supervision. Although he is not a totally free spirit, he is expected to act on the basis of professional knowledge and not just on the basis of constant innovation and any sense of total freedom.

Now, I think that the concept of developing a

teaching profession -- and it is not yet a profession because anybody who did today what James Whorley did back in the late 1950's would probably suffer the same fate. If the principal or superintendent tells you to do something, you had better do it, and there might be a few articles written about how that principal or superintendent is not telling the teacher to do the right thing, but ultimately the authority relationship would be upheld by most state departments of education and by most of the courts in the country.

So the question of professionalizing I believe is extremely important because I do not believe that we are going to attract good people or keep good people unless we do something about the nature of the job.

Competitive salaries are important, working conditions in terms of being able to do the job, both in terms of problems of discipline or in terms of either the structure or enough time to be able to mark papers -- all of these things are important, but something else is very important, too, and that is the desire not just on the part of teachers or prospective teachers, but this is a basic change in our entire work force, and that is a desire to have a substantial amount of discretion in the way one does his

or her job.

If I had asked my parents some years ago why do you work, they would have looked at me as though I were crazy. They knew why they worked. They worked because they needed the money to feed themselves and their kids and to pay the rent. But if you sent a pollster out today and asked most Americans who work for a living why do you work, their first answer is not to make a living. Two out of every three answer "in order to get satisfaction and to get self-fulfillment." They answer in terms of -- their response is totally different than the narrow economic one.

I have been a member of an AFL-CIO Committee on the Future of Work, designed to analyze why it is that the labor movement has not been organizing as successfully in recent years as in the past, and one of the things that we find in polls of workers throughout the country is that employees want a good deal of discretion in doing their jobs, they don't want a lot of rules imposed on them, and they believe that the introduction of a union in the work place would create an adversary relationship in which both the union and the employer would set up a set of rules which would limit their ability to work creatively. Most of them

say unions are a nice thing for the guy down the block who has got a terrible boss, he needs a union, but at my place they let me do the job the way I want to do it and I get a good deal of satisfaction out of it.

Well, if that is true of two out of every three people in the work force in general, it certainly is likely to be true of -- it is generally more true of more educated people. It goes with more education. It goes with jobs that are not boring, routine, dirty, low-paying jobs which still remain jobs with very little discretion.

So one of the very important things that intelligent people are looking for as they graduate from college is what kind of work is there in this sense and hear the notion of professionalism that those who become teachers will indeed be treated as experts, and the only way in which they will be treated as experts is if they are, and allow a substantial amount of discretion.

In this respect, I must say that the wave of reform legislation that we have had recently, which I have generally supported, and I think that without legislation that you had here in California and Texas and enacted in Florida and other states, without that there would not have

been that uplift in education that was needed. But somehow we have to find a kind of a fast one-two, that is, that can only be justified because unfortunately school boards and school management didn't do it themselves. They should have done it themselves or at least the good parts of it. They didn't and they left a vacuum and there was nobody else who would do it, and so legislatures stepped in and did it.

But while providing a certain amount of uplift, it is also ultimate in the long run extremely destructive because it does send a message to the very people we want to bring into teaching that the people in government think that you are a bunch of idiots and you can't be trusted and there is no other profession in the country -- legislatures do not spend their time telling engineers or architects or actuaries or doctors or lawyers or anybody else by passing pieces of legislation that are that specific and that prescriptive, and it is quite a bad message indeed to be assigning people, and necessary in the short run, but I think the second wave of reform now has to be a message that comes from the same political powers that says, well, we did this because you weren't doing it yourselves but you need a process where teachers and administrators and local

education agencies show that they have alternate ways of maintaining excellence, but ways that don't exactly conform to the legislation that was passed, that they are free to do so. I think if we don't do that, we are going to be in a tremendous amount of trouble here.

I would like to touch on just a few points on the issue of teacher professionalism and the teaching career. I recently gave a speech at the National Press Club which received wide attention and I would like to spend a few minutes on the concept of a national professional examination.

I think what states have done now -- and I think all but six states do have some examination now -- is a step in the right direction but is not a very big step. Most of the examinations that are being given are not very good. A lot of them are not only not very good, but a lot of them constitute a type of hoax because, while many places have an examination, there is basically no cutoff point so the public is being given an impression that there is a set of standards but if you look at -- the cutoff point is essentially set either to allow school management to employ anybody they want to anyway or it is set at a point that will provide enough bodies and has nothing to do with any professional

group or management group standing for a few minutes and taking a look and asking themselves the question, what kind of people do we want and how do you find out whether, to the extent that you can find out through an examination, what is that standard.

I don't know of any place that is doing that, or if they do it, if they do have a standard and by putting that in place, that doesn't produce enough teachers for the classroom, and you know what happens next. You get the emergency certificate, the permanent substitute certificate, and until we can rid ourselves of this caner -- I mean there are no substitute surgeons, there are no emergency lawyers or dentists.

We will never attract a substantial number of people with any dignity or self respect in an occasion where the tickets are just given out whenever there is a need to take care of what is basically the custodial function of having kids sit there. If we can't lick that problem, we are not going to deal with anything else either.

Any profession that is that easy to get into is just as easy to get out. The world is not filled with ex-surgeons or ex-actuaries or ex-engineers. Yet, if I were

president of the American Federation of Ex-Teachers, I would be president of a much larger organization than I am president of now, as the world is filled with ex-teachers.

We believe that a teaching examination cannot be left to local education authorities or to the states because the pressure to modify or lower standards are too great. There ought to be a national exam that ultimately ought to be in the hands of the profession the same way as bar or medical examinations or actuary examinations are in the hands of those professionals.

We ought to get started soon with a top-notch national group that would raise the question of what is it that we can test. Not everything can be tested, but what is it that we can test, at what levels and what ought to be there.

As a rough view in advance of such discussion and such thinking, I would say that we should avoid all the \$20 cheap types of examinations that are easy to administer and don't tell you very much, that you really ought to have perhaps a full day of subject matter, with quite a few essays, as well as machine scoreable types of questions and answers, that there ought to be a full day dealing with

professional knowledge, that too not in short answer type but the application of general principles to particular problems, exercise of judgment, and the ability to persuade, the ability to organize thoughts, not just a quick fill-in or the quick multiple choice.

And I would say that the third part of an examination ought to be an internship which really ought to count in terms of whether a person does finally get a ticket to practice or not, and that the internship ought to be anywhere from a one- to three-year period which would give the new teacher ample opportunity to try different methods of teaching, different styles, to observe what others do, to be involved in a good deal of planning, and to get a tremendous amount of help, one of the great shortcomings of our field. This is the only one where you have as much responsibility the first day that you work as you do thirty years later, the last day.

Some people thrown into the turbulent waters do manage to figure out how to swim, but more people drown, but many others just develop defensive styles of being able to cope, keep the kids quiet enough so that if somebody walks by it doesn't look as if everybody is in a terribly

chaotic or anarchic state. And many teachers would honestly admit that what they have are ways of defending themselves and they might not care to defend what they are doing as the best in teaching, but if you throw somebody in with full responsibility at the very beginning, I don't know that you can expect an awful lot more than that.

The model that exists in Toledo, Ohio I think is an excellent one. It is not the only one, but it does mean that the beginning teachers have the help of peers, outstanding peers for a couple of years, probably more assistance than any other teachers, beginning teachers get anywhere in the United States.

These peers are selected for a three-year term of office and then there are others who take their place. I think that process does a number of things. I think that the peer assistance program is a good hallmark of professionalism. I also think it does something to the outstanding teachers who are helping the new ones. I think ultimately you get a group of teachers throughout the school as you go through this process who are much more involved in the improvement of instruction than if it is done by one or two or three or four administrators.

It is, however, an expensive program, which is why I don't have great faith, even though it is an excellent program, as I deal with the question that there have always been lots of outstanding ideas around but if they cost money they are just not picked up or they don't last very long.

Nobody has ever really defended the idea that you take a kid out of college and give him full responsibility the first day. I don't know anybody who has defended that. I don't know of anybody who has said that practice teaching does what it is supposed to. I mean it is good, it is certainly the best that there is right now, given that there is no alternative program, but nobody defends that as a substitute for a period of time, the same kind of period that almost any other professional would have to be able to cope with the practical problems of schools and kids and classrooms.

So I think if you had a difficult examination, I think the examination itself would attract better people. I don't think people want to go into a field that has a reputation of being a field for people who are not smart. Johnny talks to his professor, the professor says what are you going to be, Johnny, Johnny says I am thinking of being

a teacher, and the professor says, you, Johnny, but you're so smart. It is a very common experience.

If you could only get in, if you had pretty tough hurdles -- nobody says that about any field that is difficult to get into, so it may seem strange to say that -- you kind of make it more difficult to get into a field at a time when we are talking about a shortage, but the fact is that more difficult fields do attract better people and making it easy to get into and cheap to get into it attracts the very people that we do not want. I think the examination is extremely important.

I would like to say a few words about career ladders. I think it is a nice idea, but I haven't bumped into one yet that I could really believe in. There really isn't an awful lot of work to do in a school except the teaching of children. I mean you can make a lot of other work but, remember, it is very expensive. We just talked about the fact that school systems won't even provide enough money to provide an internship for a year for new people, and everybody recognizes that as being very important, and the only reason is money.

I could understand them not providing an

internship back in the fifties or early sixties when the average professional life expectancy was three years. It would have been kind of crazy to take the three years that a person spends and then leaves and make that a training period, so that all you ever had was a bunch of apprentices who are leaving, but today people are staying in quite long and it would certainly be worth the money but it is expensive because it means that the new teacher cannot have a full-time program for the first one or two or three years, and it means that some other teachers have to be relieved of some or all of their assignments, but clearly that could be, taking some of the outstanding teachers who could help the in-coming teachers and have them devote part of their time to peer assistance and perhaps peer review and peer evaluation, that could be a step in a career ladder, but it would be pretty expensive.

Again, that would not involve a huge number of people. I can't think of very many other functions. In principle, I like the idea but I think that maybe we are only thinking about career ladders because -- you know, there are a lot of professions where there are no career ladders. When the person becomes a dentist, they probably

are going to be a dentist and that is what they train to become and that is what they are. I don't know of career ladders. Maybe some people specialize in uppers and lowers or left or right or something.

(Laughter)

Most doctors don't have career ladders. They have various career opportunities if they want to be involved more in research or the type of practice, but basically there is -- I think one of the reasons we are talking about career ladders is that we have got an occupation which is a very poorly paid occupation and nobody can find enough money, to give enough money to two million people so we are trying to tell the two million people to come in in the hope that some of you will achieve much more. I think it is a kind of bait that we are trying to put in there because we can't raise the whole thing to the level where we think it ought to be.

Nobody that I know of -- I mean I hope that Charlotte Mecklenberg's plan works out. It is well thought out. They have spent a good deal of time getting everybody on board. That remains to be seen, but that obviously -- that plan, the critical part is having somebody like Phil

Schlechte there for that period of time, having one of the outstanding superintendents of the country and having some pretty good leadership in the teacher organizations there, and that is a combination of factors that you will find maybe in one or two other school districts out of the 16,000 in the country. So even if it flies, it is not going to be something that I would suggest you put into law the next year or even put out there as a general prescription. It will be exceptional because of the exceptional events and the exceptional people involved.

There is something, however, about career lines and career opportunities that has not come into literature at all, and that is rather strange because a good deal of the reform literature talks about career ladders and merit pay and incentives and everything else, they are essentially trying to look at what it is that -- they have gone into the business world to see how much of that could be imported into teaching.

That is not a bad way of looking at things, but the interesting thing is that the most common experience of career line in the private sector is one that is really turned off in education and that is the common thing that you

find all over is that somebody starts with Company X and does a pretty good job and develops a reputation and then Company Y will offer them a salary increase and will raid this company, and there are companies constantly raiding each other for talent and there is a whole market out there. There are head hunters that go looking for people and the school systems do exactly the opposite.

If you have had fifteen years of experience in one place and you try to find a school district that will even offer you -- forget about a raise, try to find one that will offer you more than one year's credit for every two years of service to a maximum of six years or something like that.

The crazy thing is that, with a shortage let's say of math and science teachers, I don't think there is a school district in the country that, in accordance with its own by-laws, could even offer its own maximum salary to a mathematician to take them away from a company, even if his maximum salary were competitive, and if the person had in the combination of school experience and work experience, had let's say fifteen years or the twenty years.

So what we have is, instead of a market with

a competition range, we have again -- and there is only one justification for it, it is not that school boards wouldn't like to raid other districts and get good people, it is just money. The better school districts rely on the fact that teachers will be willing to make sacrifices to come to their districts and will be willing to work for \$2,000 or even \$3,000 less to move over, or that the husband or the wife has moved and that the other member of the family who is a teacher has no choice but to take a job in that community.

But if you did have -- if school boards operated the way private companies did and you had a competitive situation, you could have some very successful career lines on the part of teachers where they could move -- outstanding teachers could sit there and they could interview their principals and superintendents and school boards and say, "Hey, is this the kind of a school where I would be able to do this sort of thing, and I would really like to do this kind of a project, I would like to do this with a newspaper or I create the following types of things with science and I want the following type of money and I want the ability to be able to do the kind of thing" -- the teacher would be much more in the same seat that a good engineer or

a mathematician or a physicist or a good accountant or book-keeper or business manager moving from one company to another. There would be a real set of individual negotiations in a sense and there would be a good deal of mobility in the field.

I think you would do a lot more with a career ladder concept if you eliminated the current restrictions on hiring practices than trying to create a series of artificial rankings within a school system until you find them. When you find them and if they are real, I will be glad to applaud them. I am not against them. It is just that I think with people having looked for career ladders now for I don't know how many years -- they have been around at least as long as I have been around and I'm sure a lot longer, and I just assume that if somebody has been trying to invent something or create it or discover it for that period of time and they haven't found it yet, there is probably a good reason for it. A lot of good minds have been working on this.

I would suggest that perhaps the notion of a career line of moving from place to place is much more an adequate and sensible thing to do. It will involve some money.

Now, there is a career ladder concept that I

want to spend a few minutes on because I think that part of -- I think one of the things that is unsaid in the career ladder concept is that, given the demographics of how many people are graduating high school and how many are going to college and how many are going to get out of college and what the needs will be for talented, educated people in the next ten or twenty years, there is likely to be a shortage in many fields.

We have got to start with the notion that we are unlikely, even if we pay market salaries -- and by market I mean move them up to starting salaries of \$18,000, \$19,000, \$20,000 -- that we are really unlikely to have two million people of the caliber that we want in American public education, at least over the next twenty years because, after all, if we raised our salaries so will all the fellows who are running these private businesses. They are not about to turn over the people that they need to us. This is not a standing target, it is a moving target and you are dealing with a limited resource, and teaching is not likely to get the people it needs on this basis.

Now, if we think about it, there are two million teachers in the country. If every one of them got

a thousand dollar salary increase, that is \$2 billion. A thousand dollars doesn't do anything for you. If you want to have an impact, you probably need a 50 percent increase, and you probably would have to take the averages, which are now about \$22,000, and take them to \$33,000 and even that wouldn't be great compared to what people get out there, but that would at least be something that is noticeable.

Well, that is something like with fringe benefits and extra social security and taxes and other things. You are talking about \$30 billion, and that is real money. What was Chapter 1 at its height, about \$3.5 million? We are not likely to see this.

Well, if you were in any other field and if you decided that you had to run a business with two million people and you are going to have to increase what you've got by about \$30 billion -- not to do anything miraculous but just somehow to get into a ball park -- I don't know about you, but I know what I would do if I were faced with that. I would start looking at a different way of organizing the whole thing, because it can't be done this way.

I know what I will be feeling like as the union leader ten or fifteen years from now if I am still

around if I keep just going out there from state to state trying to get an increase in salaries and working conditions. Each of these things that we are talking about -- the internship program -- cost substantial amounts of money. I fear that we are really on a treadmill and that we are just going to work hard as all hell and occasionally there will be a breakthrough like your increase in education here over two years, but how many years is that going to be kept up? And if you get a couple of good years down the road, are there going to be a couple of bad ones when the economy takes a downturn and you don't even keep up with the cost of living, and after ten or twenty years you take a look and you have worked hard as anything and if you are lucky you stood still. I could turn around to my constituents and say look at all you didn't lose that they tried to take away from you.

Well, I don't think we have to be there. I think there needs to be a restructuring, and if there isn't a restructuring I think essentially standards will fall because we are not going to keep pace and all of these reform inputs will be followed by another set a decade from now and decades from now because we have kind of set

ourselves, if we maintain the same structure we will be setting an impossible task for ourselves.

Now, I don't know whether what I am about to suggest as a structure -- I know it is not the only one, but I just throw it out in very general terms to indicate that there really needs to be thinking along these lines or otherwise we are not going to be talking about not only not professionalizing teaching but we won't be talking about in any realistic way getting the numbers of people of the right quality that we need and keeping them.

Suppose that, instead of two million teachers in this country, we didn't have two million ten years from now? Suppose we had 500,000 teachers and these teachers are very high-caliber people, they can pass my exam and yours and they are terrific in the classroom and they are really great at what Ted Sizer describes very beautifully as the coaching and critical thinking process, they are very good at creating materials and evaluating materials but they don't spend all their time in the classroom. There are just 500,000 of them.

That one component is the outstanding teacher. Maybe these people get \$70,000 or \$75,000 a year. The second

component would be a very widespread use of technology. There are two books that came out in this report series that really looked at what kids were doing and what teachers were doing that John Goodlad and Ted Sizer did. The others were more political documents. They were important in moving things along, but the two that really looked at what was happening were those two and they both report teachers spending about 80 to 85 percent of their time lecturing and the youngsters were falling asleep.

Well, twenty years ago I don't know what the other choices were. You either lectured and the kids fell asleep or you had the kids read a book and they would probably fall asleep with that, too, or they weren't able to read it, or you rent a movie which meant getting a catalog and ordering something through the mail and getting something that needed to be spliced and having these big machines wheeled all over the place, and not very user friendly.

Well, is there anybody today who doubts that not the whole day but a substantial part of the day could be used with whatever you were doing with the kids, whether it is how the Eskimos live in Alaska or whether it is some historic event or whether it is some scientific experiment

or whether it is something about how volcanos work, that there either now is or is about to be a video cassette that will do better than any silver-tongued charismatic teacher, forgetting about the ones that put everybody to sleep, and that it is there, it is right in front of us.

I just talk about that. We know there are audio cassettes, there are video cassettes. We will be able to do more and more with the computers, but I think that anybody today who ignores the existence of technology which is already there and which is inexpensive and which is available and which enables us to get across certain things better and cheaper and, the interesting thing is, individualize a lot of -- the whole class doesn't have to view the video cassette at the same time, you can have different sequences. A kid who is not in school one day can make this up or can see it in some other way. It actually allows for a great deal more flexibility than what you have got right now and it potentially frees the real teachers to do important things like coach and develop critical thinking and ask questions and help children to develop persuasive arguments or to write poetry or to do all the things that machines don't do and that for the most part teachers don't do now

either, because they are doing what John Goodslad describes them as doing.

Now, the third component of this school system -- there might be two other components, but let's just talk about a third component--would be made up of a large number, maybe a million and a half if we need two million adults in schools, people who graduated in some subject matter feel that they do not intend to be teachers for the rest of their lives but who will teach for five years because they are in the top 15 percent of their graduating classes. They have got to pass a tough examination as well, they want their college loans wiped out and they want to be paid to go to law school, business school or some other professional school, and being a teacher for five years is a mark of distinction.

American industry will understand that if a certain number of people who know mathematics don't spend five years in a classroom, that they won't have any mathematicians in the future, et cetera, that they have got to make some seed investment in education. That is like having served with distinction in the armed forces or in the Peace Corps, that it is a form of social or national service or state service, a form of public service, a form of service

to the business community and to children. You can package it any way you want, but it is competitive. People fight to get it. It does mean that you won't start life with a whole bunch of debts and it does mean that your other professional education will be paid for, and it means that you have competed against others who were able to get this because there will be people turned away.

That is a revolving group of people. They are not expected to stay forever. However, since the full-time professional teachers who are there are being paid \$70,000 or \$80,000, you can get your pick of these people who really love teaching and who are really good at it, the chances are that they wouldn't mind staying rather than going to law school or going to some other field.

Now, maybe you will still have one other category there and that is a substantial number of para-professionals. I haven't looked at that that closely, but if you had a model of this sort, the way you then deliver, obviously I am not thinking of the usual self-contained classroom. You have got to take this ball and unravel it further and further because the availability of this technology makes it possible, especially at the secondary

level, to give many alternative choices of high quality individual students. There is no reason why I favor kids reading outstanding books. They don't all have to read the same ones. But this sort of structure could enable a substantial amount of choice on the part of students.

There is a school in New York which I think could show the way on some of this. John Dewey High School is organized on the basis of seven-week semesters, 20-minute modules in terms of the day, but it is basically the -- the school is structured in such a way that all the mathematics classrooms are around a lounge which is a math resource room which has everything, computers, calculators, audio cassettes, video cassettes, models. And the other thing, it has teachers on time off sitting there to talk to students about mathematics, and the same thing is true of English and the same thing is true of history, and the school encourages students to take some of their courses through independent study.

Now, doing independent study for a full-year course will be a bit much for most high school kids, but doing independent study for a seven-week course means that a student in English has a choice of one play by Shakespeare

or one book by Dickens or 25 poems by so-and-so, that the students accept things that are generally of equal cultural value and equal difficulty. They pull out the envelope, it gives them their assignments, it gives them some projects, and they get to sit in these lounges and handle the materials and use them and they get to sit next to individual teachers, different teachers every 45 minutes or 50 minutes, and they can sit with those teachers and say I'm working on Julius Caesar, and talk to them, either ask them for specific help or general things.

There is a tremendous amount of individual choice on the part of students, but there is something in that school that you don't find in a lot of high schools and that is the fact that the kids and teachers have that individual interaction and the kids are respected in terms of making choices. The kids buy in and the students don't view teachers as monitors in the hall or in the classroom who are telling them to shut up but as individuals with whom they have had conversations, and the atmosphere of the school is very, very different.

Now, that last set of remarks leads me to one other and that is the fact that most of our discussions of

school reform across the country and most of the legislation that has been adopted really comes out of an old-fashioned industrial model. Probably this wave of school reform, with its various types of accountability, emphasis -- all of these evaluation schemes and everything are really counter to -- what other profession has people looking over them constantly with check sheets and score sheets and evaluation sheets and everything else?

This is the most anti-professional development that I have seen, so at the same time that we are talking about professionalism and attracting people who can think for themselves and who can inspire, at the same time we are putting in a bunch of things which are the height of a factory system or a factory-type of model, the very model that we are now saying doesn't work and that we ought to look at the quality of work life programs and Hewlett-Packard and Japanese management.

It doesn't mean that you don't have evaluation or stimulation or all sorts of other things, so that you abandon standards. On the contrary. I was in Texas a few weeks ago and I think it was the Dallas school system that, along with this wave of reform, they have so many requirements

for inspecting what teachers do in the classroom that the administrators don't have the time to do it and they now hire kids to go in with video cameras and they pop into a classroom and they film an entire period of work and then there is a whole group of reviewers downtown who watch these films, and if the teacher is no good they clip a few sections to show that the teacher is incompetent and then the teacher is brought on trial with these little sections or snippets of -- I mean this is Orwellian! Professional? Nonsense. Garbage. It is very mechanical.

(B) Now, what we ought to be looking at -- and again, the school reform literature doesn't really address itself to that -- if you look at the kind of management practices that are discussed in modern management, if you look at some of these, the best strategy is to pass on whatever mistakes are occurring at his level, or somebody else or nobody will ever be able to find out where the thing went wrong.

If the assumption is that there is something wrong with the system and not with the individual and that the individual who happens to be occupying the station at the time reports so that the manager can make the appropriate

changes in the system, then you've got a constantly internally improving system and you have a different notion of quality control.

Well, it seems to me that that concept needs to be applied to schools and that if we did apply it to schools we would start raising questions which have not been raised in the reform literature up to now -- for instance, should schools be organized on an annual basis, is a year too long a period of time for a student to think ahead in terms of really getting work done, is a year too long a period of time for a teacher -- if I have got a whole year, I don't have to be that well organized in what I do each week of that year, I can always make up things later; if I have got a whole year and arrange things in all sorts of fancy ways, I'm really not watching it, just when things go wrong.

Suppose you had semesters that were four weeks long, and suppose you made it your business to see whether you accomplished -- you had a purpose for each of those four weeks. We got this big problem of what do you do with kids who haven't met the standards at the end of the year, a terrible problem. On the one hand, if you let

everybody move along you are going to get a lot of kids saying, "Well, if everybody moves along anyway, I'm going to not work as hard." That does have an effect, but there is also very little evidence that the hard-core kid who is left behind to do the same with the younger peer group next year, where that does him any good at all. The evidence is pretty much the other way.

Well, if you had ten separate months that were semesters, you would be less reluctant to have a student repeat, he would be repeating with his own age group. It might even be possible for him to do something after school. But the fascinating thing about all the school improvements that, really, there has been no discussion of changing the structure of the entire delivery, whether it be in terms of how many people should be teachers and what is the use of technology, the whole business of the importance of time frames, and I don't think we are going to get anywhere in this field unless we have a radical review of what we are doing and we are not having a radical review at all. Most of the reform discussion is a kind of backward movement to things that have been done earlier and abandoned and we are just doing it with a slight bit of different packaging

today. It really is the cult of efficiency over again in slightly modern garb, and I don't think it is going to wear any better this time than it did before.

Now, as long as we are thinking of radical restructuring, I think we have got to raise a lot of questions. What about school boards? It is a great American institution. I don't want to say anything against anybody who is on a school board. I mean that. I think it is for the most part a thankless job. It is a great American institution, but is there any chief executive officer in this country who could manage his corporation if he had to meet with his board of directors twice a month?

(Applause)

Do we have a state of management paralysis where school superintendents have to spend a good part of their lives satisfying school boards? School boards are doing it because they get elected and they have pressures from their constituents. Is there too much of a conflict between the political needs, proper democratic political needs of school boards at one end and what one does to manage and operation?

How do you get people who are professionals

who are going to live in that sort of a system, a system in which the chief executive officer is locked in a room most of the time trying to get information and to justify things to an elected school board and get orders down to the principal to do things in certain ways which will not create political problems.

The demands of boards of directors in industry by and large are very minimal and management and labor can concentrate on the job to be done. That is not true here, and unless we rethink that, we can have all the good ideas -- you can come up with all the good ideas you want, but I think that the entire structure has to be looked at from A to Z or we are going to end up with pretty much the same thing that we started with, except there will be a lot of disappointment because we are raising a lot of hopes.

Maybe I will stop here.

QUESTION: I would like to lead off with just one question. When you were talking about the competition between school districts and industry you are quite right; at the present time there are all kinds of impediments. When you come into a school district you are automatically cut back in terms of the

number of years but, of course, you do have a situation in public education that we have been fighting, and that is we have tried to bring about some type of equality of educational opportunity. We have all kinds of districts in California.

We have such an enormous range of types of communities and school districts, and what happens in that competitive process? Are you going to find a sifting out of the better teachers in those districts who somehow or other have more resources than others? What is going to happen to the inner-city schools?

MR. SHANKER: Well, what is happening now is you've got this court case and you comply with it. You have really made a lot of progress. I think you have equalized money to a large extent, compared to what you had in the first place, but you still have teachers preferring the districts where they can get more satisfaction from teaching. You certainly don't have an equal distribution of teachers. You certainly do not have -- you certainly have students in different places and the major part of the education process has been mutual stimulation of the whole learning environment, which is very different.

But I also think that -- this is just a very

tough one because I also think that the more you have this equality, for instance, in terms of expenditures, that the more you -- I think the more pressure there is for vouchers and tuition tax credits, if you don't give people some real choices in the public sector, they are going to demand their choices in the private sector.

Ideally, I think what was done during that period of finance reform was the right thing, but I think that -- I don't think in a free society, in a society where you can't compel parents to send their children to school and to stay there, you can't prevent them from moving from one state to another and you can prevent them from moving the kids out of public schools to private schools. I just don't think it can be done that way. I think you have got to create voluntary incentives, instead of doing the things that we tried to do in the fifties and sixties and early seventies in various ways.

QUESTION: Mr. Shanker, on the subject of school management, you started off by suggesting that perhaps that was one of the real problems that we were having today, also the need perhaps for some radical restructuring.

Many of us from the private sector I think

were somewhat shocked when we discovered that an average principal may have 50 or 60 teachers that they supervise and in private industry we would consider this to be absurd for evaluation purposes or for participative management. Do you have any comments on perhaps how there might be a more effective management structure to get around some of these problems?

MR. SHANKER: Well, again, it depends upon the model that you are talking about. You know, if you hire a bunch of people at \$15,000 or \$16,000 or some place \$12,000 or \$13,000, you had better keep looking and watching them because you certainly can't trust people who are willing to work for that amount of money, something must be wrong with them.

Basically, most good law firms and most good companies out there don't do what the school board does in the first place, which is to go out and hire the cheapest people they can get. If you hire a bunch of people who you think are very good, you have some that you take a close look at at the beginning and get rid of those people where your judgment was wrong or where they managed to fool you, and for the most part you end up with a bunch of people

who have bought in and you trust their judgment and then you develop a system of internal communication and ways in which you shape each other up, and it isn't that formal sort of thing where you have got a bunch of -- the model that they are talking about in these schools is the reason that you have got to worry about, is if you have got a lot of people who maybe got in who shouldn't have, and if you view them as being unwilling and unhappy and lazy, then, sure, you've got to build in all the inspectors and all the carrots and all the sticks and everything else. I think such a system is just going to fail.

We have already, if you look at what has happened over the years, I don't know whether you have the figures on what percentage of all elementary and secondary school monies in this country go to teachers' salaries, but I guess about a decade ago it was about 48 percent, and it is down to about 39 percent now nationally. So you have got a pretty heavy superstructure there, and not all of it is principals and assistant princals. Some of it is guidance counselors, bilingual coordinators and public relations people and finance people and grant writers and government report writers and lawyers and all sorts of other people.

But I would say that any industry where the major job was being taken care of by the teachers and the kids, where the trend is a reduction in 10 percent of a huge -- billions of dollars in terms of what is spent on the front lines and the rest of it is in the so-called support field.

You know, President Reagan likes to write about how scores went down with the beginning of federal aid to education. You know, somebody could rewrite the book and just show that the scores have been going down as we took more and more money out of the classroom and put it into all sorts of management and semi-management, and I don't know if that would be any more accurate. But we could really run, if you could really start from scratch with all that money, you could do an awful lot in reaching kids. You could get a different caliber of people in terms of all that money, you could have a different ratio, you could bring in the best technology, you could do an awful lot with what is there.

I just don't see running it on that model. If you have got to watch the people -- look, I run a union, it is a pretty big organization and I've got not only people in a big building in Washington but they are all over the

country. If I had to build in an inspection device to watch all people who work for me, I would be finished. But I don't ask the question that the average supervisor asks at the end of -- first of all, I don't go out and hire the cheapest; and, secondly, I don't after a probationary period ask the question, is this person incompetent and then, if the person is borderline incompetent, keep them. You need a different threshold question as to who is retained.

I just think the whole management philosophy is wrong.

QUESTION: I really find your suggestion for radical review quite interesting because really what you are talking about is in a sense the survival of an industry. And perhaps it is not a good analogy, but maybe if we look at the automobile industry in this country and what had been happening several years ago and what is happening now, we are looking at an industry that was extremely people-intensive and the end product it was turning out was not a good competitive end product.

What we have done is to introduce technology so that with fewer people working, we are not only turning out a better product but the people who are involved in

turning out that product are happier and getting the satisfaction that you mentioned while they are working.

What I would like to know -- I guess John Dewey is probably an example of some of the radical changes that you suggested, but are there any broader applications anywhere in the country where districts have taken some of the suggestions that you have made and implemented them?

MR. SHANKER: Not that I know. There may be -- you know, you've got a Toledo plan which is working very well there, and you've got this one school, we can probably find two or three others, but basically things are pretty much the same all over.

QUESTION: How did John Dewey get started?

MR. SHANKER: Well, the decision made in the sixties was that it was I guess the 100th anniversary of his birth and the school system decided to honor John Dewey and John Dewey was also Charter Member No. 1 of our union, so our union was involved. He was very active in the local and the union board of education committee consulted with the educational people and came up with what has turned out to be a really fine school. I hate to say it, but it came out of a committee.

QUESTION: (inaudible)

MR. SHANKER: Well, I have been making these remarks and suggestions to leaders in my own organization now at four separate national meetings. I must say that they are not enthusiastically embraced. They are not opposed, either, and I think that they are acceptable. They are not embraced because, well, people are accustomed to what they are doing and it is very hard to break out of this.

I do use, as Mr. Goodman did, the automobile analogy. I view that analogy even deeper than just the productive process. I think the people in the auto and steel industries could see the handwriting on the wall ten or fifteen years ago. The Japanese came over here to look at what we were doing. Our people went over there every year, at least once a year, and they saw exactly what was happening and they just hoped against hoped that all of the inevitable signs that were pointing in that direction wouldn't happen, that we wouldn't go for small cars and we wouldn't go for cars with funny names, so that the Congress would ultimately rescue us, and it just didn't happen until, of course, it may already be too late. I don't know whether we will have a steel industry in this country ten years from now, and we are

not sure if we will really have an automobile industry, and it is going to be much more painful and much more rapid now than it need have been.

Now, I think we are in the same position in education, that is, I don't think we will have public education ten years from now without a substantially huge private sector, publicly funded through vouchers and tax credits unless there is dramatic and radical change in public education. We have an educated public, they are unhappy, all the signs are there, and unless we -- you know, it is not a question of do people like this.

The people in the auto industry don't like what is happening to them right now. An auto workers union that had 1.5 million members and that had workers being paid \$25 an hour or something like that, the elite, the working aristocrats of the world, and an industry which had no competition anywhere in the world, and now they are all busy trying to figure out how to develop educational funds to reeducate and retrain their employees for other industries basically, some of them for their own, with robots coming in, new designs, new quality control procedures -- I hope we will have an industry, but it won't have 1.5 million people, it might have 200,000 people.

I don't think we have any more choices than the automobile industry does. If we don't do this, some company is going to build a school something like the one I am talking about right across the street from one that exists right now, and it is going to look good and it is going to have outstanding teachers in it, it is going to pay them well and it is going to have technology and it is going to be a nice place for kids, and it might even cost less than what we have got now. It won't cost any more, and legislators are going to be very hard-pressed to answer parents why they can't move their kids from this one to that one across the street if they are doing it better, cheaper.

I think if school board people and administrators and teachers, if we are just not told, hey, this is a nice way of doing things, would you like to change things, but are given a picture of what the politics of this is, which if you don't change -- there is one thing I'm sure, schools are not going to be ten years from now what they are today. That choice is not there, just as it wasn't there for the auto industry, and people are just living in a fool's paradise if they believe that all they have to do is oppose a radical restructuring of the schools and things are going to stay the

same. They are not.

Now that I find people may not love it and they don't applaud it, but they understand it and when they think it through they accept it. QUESTION: You think one way to implement it is to implement some other models a la the Dewey School, so that it can be seen in operation?

MR. SHANKER: Exactly. We need a number of models of things that are critical. Let me throw out one other thing which is to me an obvious experience that we have in public education. Nobody talked about it in any of these reports, a terrible crime. Most of these reports dwelt on high schools. Why? Because high schools can be seen in a sense as the end of a long process, and so whatever mistakes occurred in earlier parts accumulate there, and that is where they are seen the most, not that the high schools are responsible for all of them. They add their own problems.

The almost universal experience of people involved in the schools is that if a kid can't read, write, and count by the time he is in the fourth grade, that is it, the chances of turning that kid around later on is very small, very small. Well, what does that imply? What has been done about this?

Well, it is not surprising, if you have been

in school for kindergarten, first, second, and third grade, you have been there for four years and now you are in the fourth grade, and most of the kids around you can read, write, and count, you've got to say to yourself, "I'm dumb, other people think I'm dumb, I now have to read 'Run, Jane, Run,' and it wasn't fun in the first grade and it certainly isn't fun in the fourth grade," so you then say to yourself, "This whole thing is no damn good, I'm really angry that I'm being forced to compete in a sport where I know damn well that I can't make it," and you either lash out and make a lot of noise or you go to sleep in back of the room and kind of have an unwritten agreement and you say to the teachers, "You leave me alone and I'll leave you alone."

We know it. We can spot them in the fourth grade, and we know who the problems are going to be. What do we do? Well, for four years we have been putting them through the same classes with the same program with everybody else, knowing that for forty years it has not worked.

Now, do you ever know any company that kept turning out lemons when they can spot the lemons at an early stage of production and they keep putting them through exactly the same process?

Now, I can't tell you what the answer is, but I can tell you that not to do something different when you know exactly what you are doing is wrong is criminal. I've got a few ideas, I don't know if they will work. At one point in earlier life I was a Boy Scout leader. I was only a Boy Scout leader because I was this tall in the middle of World War II and they drafted all the people of right age, so after running out of people of the right age they moved to size and I had a lot of kids who didn't learn how to read, write, or count in school that wanted to be Tenderfoot or Second Class or First Class Scouts learning how to read a compass, learning how to make a simple map, learn how to read the handbook, learn to read things in a totally different atmosphere that was recreational and that was camping and that wasn't -- I mean one gut feeling that I have is that if the classroom or the teacher and a blackboard and chalk is a place where I have failed for four years, you had better change the context for that kid so that he has some renewed hope in himself or herself to be willing to try, because basically if a kid doesn't try there is nothing that can be done externally that is going to compel the kid to learn.

I would set up a few models dealing with this

problem of the kids who went to fourth grade without knowing how to read, write, or -- that is an area where you need experimentation. We don't know what the answer is, but we know what we are doing is wrong. You need a few of these model high schools. You need a place where you can try out outstanding people, technology, other outstanding people who are moving in and out. You need to essentially take what are some of the -- you need to try a place that has different semester organization, with different blocks and different jobs that develops a concept of mastery of things over a shorter period of time with a different type of progression.

We need to move from the concept that, yes, you build in a rich early childhood education program, but from a conceptual point of view, if school is sort of the bridge that takes a child from the family, where the child is treated as an individual, into a cold outside world where you are not treated very much like an individual, there needs to be a progression of experiences for children which get them to do independent study and develop the various character traits that are necessary, instead of maintaining the same block structure in high school that you have in the elementary schools. You need to experiment with that.

QUESTION: I have a question here. How does it impact the teachers?

(inaudible)

MR. SHANKER: Very simple, replace them with outstanding ones who are lined up. No, seriously, the problem or most of the problem is in the recruitment process. If you take a look at the way teachers were recruited over the last twenty or thirty years, I think the surprising thing is the number of people who are really very good -- maybe it is not surprising.

There is a natural weeding out process that takes place in education, and the most effective management process of weeding out people who are not competent does not take place because of the presence of principals or assistant principals. It takes place because of the presence of children. The kids get rid of the people who really can't cut it, which is why a good part of the world out there -- I suppose you are talking about people who are now teaching.

Well, what is the **secret**? What we ought to do is develop some new -- I think you do what any good outside firm would do if you found yourself having a large proportion of people who are not able to do the job, that you can

tolerate or that you want, I think that you would set up some sort of an institution for training and retraining to give people who are in that position an opportunity to shape up. And the second thing that you would do is you would -- if that didn't shape them up, you would get rid of them, but you can only do that if you have people lined up who are better.

QUESTION: (inaudible)

MR. SHANKER: Well, I don't happen to agree with that and I will give you an experiment that you can conduct right away. Fortunately, there is one major state in this country that has no tenure, any teacher can be dismissed with something like 30 days notice. It is the State of Texas.

Now, you ought to be able to prove that the State of Texas has a smaller number of competent teachers than the State of California, because they don't have the tenure constraints. I don't think you will find that at all. I think what you will find is -- you have heard it over and over again -- a large number of people that are acted against who are teachers, almost every one of those very fine teachers who wrote those new left books in the 1960's, Kosal, Coles, and all the others, they were all teachers who were fired, and they were not fired because they were incompetent teachers.

They were fired because they were creative and they got into arguments with management.

I have taught in quite a number of schools. I have taught in schools and every one of those schools had people who should not have been teaching. In none of those cases were any of those people ever brought up on charges. The people who were brought up on charges were the people who got into fights with the principal which made the principal's life less secure and less happy.

Now, you have got some very serious management problems, but I also don't think the tenure prevents you from getting rid of people who are not competent. I don't know of any state where the word of the superintendent or the principal is not taken by a panel or by a court of law if the principal says, "Look, I've showed some constructive discipline, I have examined the person and I've documented this and after all I've done the person has not shaped up." If you have got a system where management has done that and the law is so strong on the side of the teacher that courts or the panels are always ruling on the side of the teacher, then change the system. That is not what tenure is supposed to be.

Now, I happen to believe that -- I will offer

a suggestion to you as to how -- I think the way the tenure provision works right now is not very good for anybody -- I will offer something for your consideration, which is not an official policy but which is not opposed to it either, but something you might think about as a way of changing what you have, which might make it somewhat better. I think it would make it better.

I think there are two reasons that you get rid of teachers. One is some sort of infraction of job rules, the teacher is okay, but every once in a while he hits a kid, the teacher is all right but fishing season, forget it on Mondays and Fridays, always gone -- whatever. Now, those things ought to be handled just the way they are handled now, that is, the person has committed some improper act and it is your job to get the evidence and to get the witnesses and have some objective system of did he do it or didn't he do it.

The problem we are dealing with here is not that. The problem we are dealing with is how do you win a case on the question of incompetence. He hasn't done any of these wrong things, but is incompetent. And the problem now is that what you do is you get two lawyers, the union gets a lawyer and the superintendent gets a lawyer and they both go

to some judge to listen to arguments about whether what some teacher is doing in a classroom that none of those lawyers or the judge has ever seen, whether that teacher is incompetent. That is a ridiculous way of handling a professional issue.

I would be in favor of saying that the superintendent or the principal brings charges against a teacher and then that you have a jury of three peers outstanding, selected on some basis, serving perhaps not even in their own districts, who would -- you see, if a person hit a kid last week, that happened last week and if you watch him, he won't do it again, you've got to get the evidence. If a person is incompetent, he is going to be incompetent tomorrow and next week. You know, incompetence is not something that happens when nobody is looking.

Send in three outstanding people and let them watch for a while and let them make the decision on the spot -- you know, not on the spot in three seconds, but after -- I think the question of getting rid of somebody because of incompetence ought to be made on the basis of professional judgment and ought not to be generally made on the basis of a legalistic and adversarial proceeding where all you can tell us is who had the best lawyer or -- not even who had the

best lawyer, but whose lawyer reminded the judge of some close friend or enemy or what.

You know, the answer to this is not to get rid of any form of security. Let's not kid ourselves. Most professions in this country -- teachers have less security than almost any other profession. I watched the doctors who were brought up on charges before the New York State Board of Regents, with various tools and implements left inside after the operation, and the result is not dismissal from the field, the result is the first time a letter in the file, a second time a letter in the file, a third time a fine of \$250, the fourth time suspension for one month -- you've got people in other professions who have done horrible, horrible -- any teacher who does a thing like that once, they are finished.

So let's not create a marvel that all these other professions really have this tough shape up policy. I wish they did, but they don't and I don't think that we ought to frighten people, good people who are going to come into the field with the notion that every couple of years their livelihood will be in jeopardy. You have give people reasonable security, but I don't think you ought to be unreasonable.

I for one would be willing to sit and discuss,

not getting rid of security. I think what I am offering gives teachers more security because under the current system you could have an outstanding teacher who is railroaded by a very smart school administration because the judges will never see the teacher. Under my system, that would never happen because ultimately the judges will actually see the performance of the individual and not merely be listening to arguments.

So I offer you a system with more security but also much greater accuracy.

QUESTION: Mr. Shanker, this commission will come out with a report and that report we don't intend to be shelved and forgotten. It is intended to be an action road-map for all who are involved in public education in the State of California. From all of your stimulating thoughts, could you offer us, say, one or two recommendations for action?

MR. SHANKER: One, impose a criminal penalty on -- first of all, set standards by including a tough examination; and, secondly, give criminal penalties for anyone who employs a person to teach who doesn't meet the standards that you set. Send superintendents, principals and school board members to jail if they hire a person who is not certified in accordance with whatever standards you set, the

same as you would send somebody to jail for practicing medicine without a license.

Some of these people who practice medicine without a license are damn good at it, if you look at them, but the fact is that society has a right to protect itself. That is the first thing I would do. If you don't do that, you are not going to get anybody, you are not going to keep anybody, it is going to be a cheap profession, forget about the whole thing.

The second thing I would do is I would essentially develop ways of empowering people, and here this is complicated. Somebody needs to ask themselves -- well, Gary Sikes can do that, he can put together a list of everything that is known. It is substantial, but it is not that long though yet. It is getting better.

Seriously, what you ought to do is you ought to give teachers, not every teacher, but you ought to give those teachers who know about textbooks and what makes a good one or a bad one, you ought to get those teachers who understand the use of materials in the development of a curriculum program, you ought to give them the power to make decisions through professional committees very much like bar association

committees or others, and you ought to empower them to do that.

You need some very good understanding of just what is the knowledge base and you can't do it on the basis of someone's subjective judgments of who's good and who isn't good. You really need to develop professionalism on the basis of professionalism really is, the person who knows something, who is an expert, who is a crackerjack, and because they are they make decisions and they have the power to make decisions and they are not supervised or evaluated by somebody who doesn't know what that person is doing, and that is at the heart of professionalism and that is at the heart of what kills outstanding teachers who feel that they are being -- you know that the largest percentage of administrators and supervisors in this country are ex-coaches and they are -- I am not speaking against coaching, but there is no reason why somebody who is an unsuccessful football or basketball coach has to be kicked upstairs all of a sudden and becomes a great supervisor of a math teacher. It runs counter to professionalism, but that is what you've got. Now, these are some of things you need to change.

QUESTION: I understand that some minorities are having a bit of trouble with testing that is being done

in some states, so what I am wondering is under a national teacher exam, what impact do you think that is going to have on the cultural diversities of people who are entering the profession? Do you think it is going to limit it or **so be it?**

MR. SHANKER: I think in the short run it is going to limit it, and not ~~so be it~~, so let's reach out to minority kids and let's do everything that has to be done that is extra and special for the kid who is going to elementary school and high school and produce more minority youngsters who can cut it and will cut it and who will be doctors, lawyers, teachers, dentists and everything else.

The cruelest thing we can do is to say that because this is a problem we won't have any standards in teaching for anybody, or another cruel one is to say that there will be two separate standards, one will be for minorities and the other will be for others. One of the worst things that we can do is to provide for minority kids, teachers who can't cut it, whether they are white teachers or black or Hispanic.

I think that Bernie Gifford ~~in~~ his recent articles has said it very, very well. I think one of the problems we have now is that minority group youngsters who

really do well in college, there is a lot of competition in this world for them and many of them don't want to come into teaching or don't want to stay in teaching because the rewards are so poor, and I think that is going to continue to be true in terms of competition, and therefore unless we substantially widen the base, we will have problems.

Aside from all the historic reasons for making up for past injustices, there is just a national interest in doing something that is extra special. I know the President of the United States doesn't think so at the present time, but, you know, that the cohort that is going through high school and college is about 20 percent more than those that were coming through during the baby boom, and about one-third of this cohort is black and Hispanic, which essentially means that if we don't do things very differently, not only are we going to have a greater welfare and other burdens, but also just from the point of view of meeting the needs that we have in terms of talent, that if we don't do a job with minorities that is a hell of a lot better than we have done in the past, we get shortages exacerbated in every field, not just teaching.

Yes, I think in the short run, but there are some good signs on this. If you look at Florida, you know,

Florida instituted, I guess it is three or four years ago now, examinations for both students and for teachers. The first round was disaster in terms of the impact on minorities, and the interesting thing is that, with each that has gone by, a higher percentage of minorities have passed the examination until now they are getting pretty close to each other.

So I am not saying that I certainly do not believe that minorities can completely lift themselves up by their own bootstraps. They can't, but the Florida example sort of says that if you put these standards and expectations out there and if you throw in some special help, they can get results -- we really don't have to give up on minorities and set a specially low standard unless you are a racist and believe that minorities are inferior and the only way that you will get them in numbers is to lower the standards.

But if you take the opposite assumption, that there are external factors that are responsible for this, then it just places the burden on us to do something about those factors.

QUESTION: Well, this is just an observation regarding what Mr. Shanker is saying. I hope that we will, good as his specifics are, I hope as we address our

specifics, that we will be aware of the underlying model, paradigm, call it what you will, that underlies I think everything he has said. I am saying that while he is here to be sure. He has said that we must raise our standards for admission, we must give an image to the people who mean business in this area, it is true that most professions have emerged out of a political context rather than any thing else, but beyond your saying all of that, it seems to me you just simply change the paradigm in which we look at the whole business of what we are about.

If we do that, if we give that top exam and indicate that we mean business, and I think we should, and then go on passing endless rules and regulations and establish accountability procedures and play around with the notion that we are going to identify pied-piper some of the teachers and give them merit reparations or something, we aren't going to win. We may be worse off than we were before.

I think that is the message that I am hearing, Al, and I think that is what we have got to keep in mind, and forgetting that paradigm shift, that model shift in our head which has been so difficult for business and industry--this is what we have got to do and that is going to be very tough and it doesn't mean a whole lot of specific linear, unrelated recommendations. It is a package that has got to have

in the freedom to engage in experiments, and when it comes to getting rid of incompetent people, get the movement going and you have got incompetent people show up.

I will just refer to one district at the moment that is moving, going some place. The principal very clearly is moving. The other one, the teachers call him a good floor walker, he is not going anywhere. You only have to be there to know that principal shouldn't be in office, but we gather all the paper and all the stuff and then don't do anything.

So I hope we keep that model, that paradigm shift in mind and not get a whole series of specifics, a gamut of the kind that is going on in the first round.

MR. SHANKER: I agree completely with that.

QUESTION: The next-to-the-last question.

QUESTION: That's too bad. I would like to be last. Mr. Shanker, like Hugh, I find your testimony very provocative. I have a specific question, but I would like to point out that one of the statements that you made that there were more teachers than you represent; that if you were representing also the teachers who don't teach, you would be representing a population much greater than the current employed teachers. All the professions are that way as well.

I can speak for the field of engineering. Since 1955, I can't tell you the exact number of engineers who have graduated, but only 40 per cent of them are practicing engineers. Some of them have become managers, entrepreneurs, company presidents and so forth and part of the managing structure.

One of the things that you did comment on and that I find a little disturbing, and maybe I misunderstood what your testimony inferred, was the open school approach. I visualize that approach. That less structured classroom approach is what we tried in the late sixties and early seventies. If that is what you are inferring, I have trouble understanding how re-instating that approach really is going to be a beneficial practice.

MR. SHANKER: You have got me absolutely wrong on that. This is not play time. This is not a school where the kids determine what is the curriculum and no kid has to learn anything unless he wants to; quite the opposite.

I am very traditional in what I think about as a curriculum. I think that we have a culture and I think that we know more about what kids need than they know at any

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time that they are through school, and if we can make it interesting, fine. Some of it is painful and some of it is more interesting and some of it is less interesting, but I am not at all interested in -- I am not from the sixties. I wasn't even from the sixties in the sixties. I was one of the few who wasn't then. When reform came, I had no problem with it, as people had just come to where we were over this period of time for a very long time.

No, I am not talking about what books students read or what skills we want them to get, and I want to go beyond the specific reading and everything else and talk about, you know, what we have been finding in recent years, that we are not doing so badly on the basics but we are not getting people who can write, we are not getting people who can solve problems or who can think, and we have got to try to realize what it is that we are trying to get.

No, what I am talking about is not doing away with structure and letting kids determine what the curriculum and what the structure is. I am talking about developing a new structure which is a better structure because it will, one, give us a decent -- no industry as far as I know is made up completely of outstanding, brilliant people, but every

industry that is going to make it needs a share of those creative people and we have got to restructure so that we can get our share of outstanding people in this field or otherwise we are going to go down. So that is one of the objectives.

Secondly, we now do have technology which in many ways is superior in some of the things that have to be done, not the most important but some of the things that have to be done superior to the traditional method of delivery.

Now, as far as students having choice, it is not a choice of doing or not doing, it is not a choice of not learning English or mathematics or science. It could be a choice of whether the book in the next seven weeks is Dickens or Julius Caesar, or I can give you twelve others but they are going to be of equal cultural value and they are going to be of equal difficulty and they are going to provide the student basically with the same set of experiences.

end "B"

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