


TEACHER EDUCATION:  
A NEW VISION FOR THE NEXT CENTURY

Albert Shanker  
President  
American Federation of Teachers

Thank you. I do not know if I am going to go into the next century, but I do want to propose a new picture, and I think it will fit neatly into what most of the previous speakers have said. It is important to place all these discussions on teacher education--what kind of teachers we want, and what kind of students we want--in a context. There are times when one just sits around and talks about these things because it is our job to talk and think about them and make them better, but there is a certain urgency in this--our interests are not purely professional or academic at this point. The urgency is pretty clear. Many of us would like to go back to just before the reform reports came out. There are quite a few teachers and others in education who want this to go away, who are thinking of the good old days when they left us alone. That is just really a lot of nonsense.

The most depressing period in recent education, aside from the destruction of standards in the 1960s (while many professional people stood by and let it happen or even cheered it on), was the late 1970s and early 1980s when our political power was declining in terms of a



substantial shift in the percentage of people who had kids in the public schools--a very rapid decline--and the shift in public attitudes toward education. As we watched the Gallup polls, they indicated what percentage of the public would be willing to support tuition tax credits. While all that was going on, the nation had a series of other very important agendas

and at a time when the economy was stagnant, re-industrialization, the rebuilding of infrastructure, and the rebuilding of our military capabilities.

^ / ^  
^ / ^ / ^

Taking all those things together, it was a period when anybody in education should have been feeling that the end perhaps was near. Now we have a chance. I think it is just one chance. All of the reports essentially represented an awareness by the business and political community that just as a few years before they realized that we had to rebuild our factories, bridges, and roads, or our military, now they came upon that ~~fourth~~ <sup>further</sup> aspect that had been neglected--the human infrastructure, focusing on education. That support and interest on the part of the business and political community makes up in many ways for the fact that we no longer have the same percentage of adults with children in public schools.

education reform

^ / ^  
① / ^ / ^

^ / ^

^

However, the <sup>bad</sup> signs are still all there. A tremendous amount of dissatisfaction resulting from the reports and various <sup>the</sup> <sup>reform</sup> <sup>ave</sup> movements has created a temporary feeling that things are going to get better. But if things do not change and get better, we cannot go back to things as they were before.

^  
^ / ^ / ^

We now have a society with people who are quite well educated. They are not the people I grew up with in a working-class neighborhood in New York City, who automatically accepted teachers and the authority of government and the authority of schools. People are going to look for other options and choices and they are going to take them.

We in public education are very much like the auto and steel industries were maybe ten, twelve, fourteen years ago. The Japanese did not hide what they were about to do. They were coming over, they were setting official visits and unofficial visits; the United Auto Workers and steel-worker leaders were taking them through the plants. Then they kept showing us what they were about to do over there. At one point our management-labor people got together and said, "Hey, we better do something about them, they are coming after us, and they are doing a great job!"

When they figured out all the things that would have to be done to American industry in order to make it competitive (which might mean there would be no dividends for a number of years and all the money would have to be re-invested, and when finished, the industry might employ only 300,000 people rather than a million and a half), each side said, "How do we sell this to our constituents?" The answer was, they could not. Then they hoped it would go away, or that people would not buy these small cars with funny names. Eventually, they had faith that they could go to the Congress, labor and management together, and have some sort of import restrictions. At any rate, here we are, and the American auto and steel industries are facing their one last chance. That is, they are now putting

all their money into one retooling that is supposed to produce great automobiles. If it works, we will have an automobile industry in this country. If it does not, we will have no automobile industry.

in public education

I think we have a few years lead time. But if we look at all the signs of dissatisfaction and unhappiness among educated, middle-class parents, we must make some big changes--not little ones--just as the auto industry did. So, that is the context.

My normal job as the leader of a union is to do the traditional type of collective bargaining. I did not just decide to do this one morning because I got bored with what I was doing or because I decided to take chances with my membership and talk about things that might not be easy to swallow. I thought that in order to fulfill my function as a person who is elected to represent their interests, I had better give them some inkling of what was coming in the future unless major changes were made. That is what I have been trying to do.

Using that as a background, let me say that a reform movement does do certain things quite well--it is very good to say that we are not going to waste time with "Mickey Mouse" courses, that there is a curriculum, and that the public is paying for something and is going to get it. <sup>But</sup> <sub>At</sub> the same time that it shakes things up, it is also in the long run rather destructive. It is kind of interesting that at the very time that Peters and Waterman are making millions of dollars by essentially saying that you cannot manage things bureaucratically by rules and regulations from a central point, ~~that~~ education is being reformed in the very way they warn

against. So we are burdening the reform movement with a good deal of over-regulation.

Let me give an illustration. One of the stories in the Excellence books by Peters and Waterman is about a plant that is about to go out of business. I think it was a Ford small-truck factory in either Tennessee or Kentucky. The plant was about to close down. A new management "type" went around the plant and did the unusual thing of talking to all the workers. One example will suffice: He went up to a fellow who worked in a pit whose job was to tighten nuts and bolts as the assembly line passed over him. The trucks would come, and he would grab his tool, take hold of the nut and bolt, pull the trigger, and tighten it.

The manager asked him, "Do you ever miss?" The worker admitted that every once in a while he did not tighten the nut and bolt. "How often does it happen?" "Every five <sup>or</sup> six minutes." "Why?" "Well, it is very hard to stand here and hold the tool up. Anybody standing here would get a crick in ~~their~~ <sup>his</sup> neck. Before you know it, the truck is gone. I feel very bad about it. I know it is going to rattle, and I also know that if the guys who tighten the other bolts miss the same one, the whole back is going to fly off. Occasionally that will happen." "What can we do about it?" "I have two ideas. One, put a little button under my foot, and whenever I feel the crick, I just press the button, and stop the assembly line. As soon as my head goes up, I will tighten it. I won't miss any if you do that. The other idea is to arrange it so that I could tighten it by looking down rather than up. It is easier to look down rather than up."

9/7  
9/7

That is what management did all through the plant. They essentially listened to the employees and restructured the plant. It is one of the best systems now. You will find several examples like that in Excellence. There are assembly lines with thousands of people where management, in a radical action, gave each of a thousand workers the right to stop the entire assembly line. Now, that is gutsy. Just imagine what the bureaucratic mind would say: "The damn thing will always be stopped." You have a thousand people pressing these buttons. If they stop the whole line, there will be no productivity, right? WRONG. The new system loses no productivity. In fact, just the sense of empowerment, just the fact that a worker knows he or she can stop it means he or she does not get a crick as often.

Grievances are fewer; employees are happier. Productivity is the same, but the number of rejected products goes down to practically zero. Think of all the years when management dealt with these workers by rewarding the good guy with merit pay and punishing the bad guy. The next guy is going to have a crick, too; it is just that the good guy has cricks every seven minutes and the bad guy has them every three minutes. But everybody is going to have them. The new notion is to give a lot of power to the people right on the front line, to allow them to do some thinking and inspecting, and to give them incentives to report accurately to management. Management's job is essentially not to supervise people, but to get information and to re-do the system in accordance with the information that comes up from the people on the line. That is very counter to the style of reform in education right now.

Now there is something else that goes along with that. How do we set the teachers of tomorrow? How do we set the kinds of people that we are talking about--the people who are innovative and who do not just spoonfeed the kids, the people who are less bureaucratic, the people who are bright, and so forth?

*To answer that question,*

~~Now~~ I am going to put on a slightly different hat. For two-and-a-half years I sat on an AFL-CIO committee called the Committee on the Future of Work. It really was not a committee on the future of work; it was a committee on the future of the AFL-CIO. Why aren't workers joining the AFL-CIO? Why did we lose two million members over the last two-and-a-half years? Part of the reason is export jobs, part is labor laws that are not very good for labor, part is the new National Labor Relations Board. But, as we found in our two years of study, part of it is also that there is a new American worker. The whole notion of organizing people has been based on the idea that workers did not like their bosses or their jobs. Indeed, if I had asked my mother or father why they worked for a living, they would have shouted back at me, "Do you want to eat? Do you want a roof over your head?" There is only one reason they worked. It was dirty, hard work, and they would not have done it for one additional second if they had not been compelled to in order to assure the basic necessities. Throughout most of our history, that is the deal that workers made: We will do the dirty work; we want to do as little of it as possible; we want as much of a share of the benefits as we can obtain, and that is it.

Today, when the pollsters put microphones in front of workers and ask them why they work (I am not saying they would be willing to work if they were not paid <sup>↑</sup> that is not the first thing that comes to their minds. They have settled that; they are going to feed their families.) The first answer given is, "I like my job. They leave me alone. They let me do it my way. They let me exercise judgment. I get a lot of satisfaction. They let me do it my way, so that I can use my abilities and skills. Because I do it my way, I do it better and get satisfaction and recognition."

~  
2/10  
>

They then <sup>^</sup>ask, "What about a union?" The reply is, "The union is a terrific thing for the guy down the block, with a dirty, dead-end job and a lousy boss. I don't want one because unions bring rules. Rules mean that I don't have the same flexibility that I now have. The union has a contract with rules; management is going to have rules, too, and the whole thing is going to be very, very different." The pollster then asks, "What do you think of the boss?" The answer: "Pretty nice guy. Matter of fact, I think we are all in this together. If we make this business go, we are all going to do well. On the other hand, if we don't, we are all going to go down together." This is a totally different attitude.

^  
^

This is not true of all American workers. There are still some people with dead-end jobs, but about seventy percent of American workers have this new attitude about work. It is also a new type of expectation about how they are to be treated on the job.

<sup>finding</sup>  
This has a very important ~~impact~~ <sup>bearing</sup> on how we set the teacher of  
<sup>^</sup>

2/2/7



tomorrow. If seventy percent of the people out there--some of whom work in blue-collar jobs, or jobs that require less education than teaching requires--now aspire to a job in which they have a tremendous amount of decision-making power, discretion, and a certain amount of autonomy, then continuing to maintain teaching as a job in which ~~they~~<sup>people</sup> are fairly heavily supervised, must meet a lot of requirements for inspections and reports, and are subject to a lot of rules and regulations, essentially will drive out the seventy percent of the work force who are looking for a different type of job. We will almost be looking for a minority of people, those who want to make the traditional trade-off, who view this as a dirty, onerous thing, and whose attitude is "We will take the rules and the regulations, but do not bother us. That is not our job; that is the principal's and management's job."

e/Λ

We may end up with an industry that has the last traditional set of labor-management relations. In our society, as industry abandons those same relationships, something beyond collective bargaining is required, that is, a new type of management understanding, and something more on the part of unions. Either unions are going to become less and less significant to their members, and their members less and less loyal as they perceive unions as failing to address their job-related needs and aspirations, or unions will have to go beyond traditional collective bargaining into some of these other issues. That is not just for teachers. All of the AFL-CIO unions are now having discussions regarding the evolution of less adversarial relationships: Can unions show interest in the quality of the product? Can we loosen up on rules and regulations affecting the employees whom we represent, who we never knew existed

before? (We thought that all they wanted was a buck, but they really want more from their work.) Are there ways of accommodating a collective-bargaining relationship to this?

One more aspect of this that I have seen no one address is that we cannot accomplish the basic things that almost everybody is talking about without a radical restructuring of how the schools operate. Let me just talk about three simple things. One has to do with a modest increase in salaries. If we were to take teacher salaries on a national basis, last year's average was \$22,000. Suppose that figure were increased fifty percent to \$33,000. With pension and tax costs, that is a \$30 billion cost just in itself. A \$33,000 average salary does not immediately say to all college graduates, "This is living." So, we have not done very much, but it costs a lot of money.

Next, we listen to Ted Sizer and the few others who said, "If you really want to get kids to be able to think, then they have to be able to put their thoughts down on paper, they have to be able to organize them and write them down, and you have to have the time to read their papers. It takes three or four minutes to read each paper; then you need three or four minutes with each kid, to ask them a few questions, coach them, and get them to re-do it, because basically that is the only way they are going to do it." I agree with that. We have to do something to change this business that secondary school teachers see 150-180 kids a day. Even if we made a modest move in that direction, reducing the pupil-teacher ratio by twenty percent, it would not do much, considering the time it takes to mark the papers and see the kids. But it does something. It is

a significant move.

Then we do one more thing, and we are finished with our reform proposal. The first is salary, and the second is pupil-teacher ratio. The third is giving each teacher a period a day for some sort of peer involvement, professional development, all things that Susan Rosenholtz, Judy Lanier, and others talked about. Just those three items, which do not make for an ideal school or ideal life, will cost \$100 billion. Are we going to get a \$100 billion? That sum represents about \$50,000 per teacher. It is a lot of money. We are not getting it. What are we going to do?

I know what is going to happen. I can go out there, and tell my members, "Let's fight for higher salaries, better student-teacher ratios, and time for professional development." If I live for another forty years, I will be at another teacher convention, and we will be right where we are today, basically. We will improve by three or four percent one year; another year will be a bad economic year, we will go down one or two. We will go up and down. The current period is a good one; we are going to go up, but we will not make any basic changes unless we are able to restructure <sup>schools</sup> radically. We cannot do these three things unless we can find \$100 billion. We are not going to do it state by state. The federal government is not going to give it to us. Unless we can find a way by and large of doing it within the monies that now exist, it is not going to happen. If we wait for the public to give us \$50 or \$100 billion, it will not happen. All of this is going to be talk.

Either I go out and tell my members lies, something I no longer believe in, just a ritual, or I stand in front of them and say, "I cannot lie to you, there are not going to be any real changes in the next thirty years. Be happy with what you have. Think of the poor starving children in Ethiopia. You are eating and healthy." I cannot do that either. Besides, things will not stand still. The public does not like what we are doing that much either. So, we have got to move.

This leads me to a question of structure. What we have been doing for the most part in reform in education is to talk about how to get better teachers. I think there would be a lot of agreement here, if we spent some time on it. You notice that in the auto factory, if they had kept working for years on getting better auto workers, but kept the same tools, positions, and assembly line, they would not have ended up with any improvement. That is because basically the difference between getting a better auto worker and a poor one had to do with how often they got the cricks in their necks. If you take a look at the increase in human longevity and ask yourself how much of it is due to better training by doctors as against having uncontaminated food and water, a knowledge of nutrition and exercise, and all sorts of preventive and public health measures, I think you will find that as much as eighty percent of the improvement in longevity is not due to improvement in the individual quality of doctors. I am certainly not talking against thinking about how to get quality teachers. But I think structure is very important. If we have time later, we can talk about other aspects of structure.

If we are going to accomplish something along the lines of those three

items that I talked about, and a different model, I would like to throw out some ideas, including something similar to what Frank Newman,

✓  
L

9

no #

[President, Education Commission of the States] suggested just a few minutes ago. If we viewed careers and jobs in our society as kind of an archeological set of layers where people on the top have the greatest prestige and money, then very rarely in the archeological history of careers does any group take a large jump up or down.

5

It is especially true <sup>in teaching,</sup> where we have as many people as we do. Consider two million <sup>teachers.</sup> ~~people.~~ First, there is the money problem. Second, there is the demographic problem. That is, with fewer kids graduating from high school and going into college, even if we were to double <sup>teachers</sup> salaries, what makes us think the IBMs of this world are going to sit back and let us take the people they need? This is a moving target. If we improve salaries and conditions, then those people who are needed by other industries are going to react and move us. All right, maybe we can have some marginal improvements, but there is not going to be any spectacular movement, because we do not have a huge number of unemployed, brilliant people out there. They are not there.

^  
9/1  
^

So we are talking about getting two million brilliant people and keeping them. We talk about those three conditions. We are kidding ourselves. What about doing it differently? What about organizing schools so that twenty-five percent of the people who work in schools as professionals will be career teachers, master teachers, any sort of name you want? But they are people who will earn not ~~fifteen~~ <sup>fifteen</sup> percent more, but twice what teachers earn currently. We are not now talking about the same

9/1

self-contained classroom, we are now talking about these people as playing a different role in the school. They are the prominent career work force. In addition to doing a great deal of the coaching that Sizer talks about, they have peer relationships--they do some experimentation. They have a role in the local college or university; they also have a role in the selection of the teachers, and their training and so forth. They do a lot of things that school management now does, as well as some of the things that teachers do.

In conclusion, part one is that the full teachers in the school will be twenty-five percent of the total. Instead of two million, we have five hundred thousand. I am not wedded to that particular percentage, but it cannot be huge, a majority, or seventy-five percent.

Secondly, take the notion that Frank Newman gave us in terms of ROTC, take what Gordon <sup>Ambach</sup> is doing in New York in terms of investing maybe \$4000 a year in a scholarship for a kid who is going to be come a teacher. (Or better still, why wait four years? A kid who promises in high school that he or she is going to become a teacher may not keep the promise. If you force him or her to teach, what kind of teacher are we going to have? Aren't you better off getting a kid who is now ready to teach, or about ready to graduate? If we pay for a masters or one year of training, we can get that person almost immediately. We can get a pretty high payoff from our programs.)

Ambach  
^  
C

But essentially a small proportion of the work force, perhaps twenty-five percent, will be permanent and fully professional, and

seventy-five percent will be a less professional and transient work force. (I do not like these terms, but if this goes into practice we will find words that everybody likes.) They may be there for five years, maybe under some sort of ROTC ideology. At any rate, the notion is that the IBMs of the future will say that anybody who has spent five years in teaching has done a noble thing, because if they take all the scientists and mathematicians, where does the next generation come from? It is self-interest on their part that teaching for several years be viewed like serving in the armed forces and receiving an honorable discharge, fighting for your country, or Peace Corps service. It is a noble thing to do.

The savings on the use of such people is very great. Even if the salary is better than most places have now, there are no pension costs. There are all sorts of other long-term costs that are not there. This idea came from an effort to improve law and order in our society by setting an adequate number of policemen. Policemen after five years get married, have a few kids, do not want to take any risks, and get burned out. They arrested a few people and found that the courts throw the cases out, so why should they stick their necks out? High school graduates are not very good as policemen these days. With constitutional issues and the like, a college education is really needed. There are reforms like this about to happen in a number of other professions.

The third aspect entails a much greater use of technology, especially video discs and videotapes. The underutilization of these capabilities, by the way, is shocking. Only a few years ago there were not many other ways of presenting information except to have people do what I am doing

now, and what most teachers do, according to Boyer, Goodlad, andSizer. But when it comes to imparting information, I think it would be very difficult to show that we are doing the rational things right now. For most topics, such as, how eskimos live in Alaska, the discussions at the constitutional convention, and a whole bunch of other things, there now exist effective presentations in simple formats. The teacher ought to be doing whatSizer talks about--that is, challenge, provoke, and stimulate, and not simply impart information. Use of these technologies as a third element in a structure of a school would also free up some time. ~~And~~ we can select from this transient work force the best and the brightest because of the salaries, power, and prestige that are being offered.

to become permanent professionals

9/2/3  
10 9

How are these people picked? About two weeks ago, I proposed a process which the newspapers picked up as merit pay, and anybody who wants to make trouble for me should call it that. It is intended to reward people who are superior and to provide recognition, so if people have to call it that, it is all right, but it is not the usual thing. It would be a process of identifying people who are now practicing, will practice in the future, have a set of skills and abilities that are unusual, and are the best and the brightest. It would involve setting up a series of certification boards, very much like the boards that certify specialists in medicine or boards that certify actuaries or people in other fields.

People would apply to the field of teaching and would go through a series of steps to become nationally board-certified. I do not envision this as merely taking some more courses or coming in and taking a pencil and paper test. Yes, the person should be damn good in his or her



subject. I do not mind having part of it as a pencil and paper test, and I do not mind saying that a person might have had to achieve at a certain level in terms of courses. But if I had to create an analogy, I would say it is a lot less like getting a Ph.D. and a lot more like becoming an Eagle Scout in the Boy Scouts. That is, to become an Eagle Scout, a boy starts before he is a Tenderfoot and he has to accomplish a lot of things. He has to tie knots, memorize things, pass civics, and know about his government. He has to start fires, plan things with a group of other scouts, and do certain group things and certain individual things. He has to know how to swim and how to lifesave. He has to go to a lot of people to do these things. He can do some original things: make his own maps, make some of his own recipes. By the time a boy goes through that process he has done pencil-and-paper things, he has done some things with other people so he gets some notion of his relationship to other kids and to adults within that setting.

The process of becoming a board-certified teacher would be not just a pencil-and-paper process or a matter of taking courses, but would also be something the teacher has done with students. It might have something to do with observation; it might be something in terms of what the teacher is doing with the school community and other teachers. It might be a portfolio that is the creation of certain models that get kids to understand things right away. It could be conducting some research at the classroom or the school level in terms of trying several different ways and showing that some things ought to be thrown out.

At any rate, the system of board certification would not be done by

the American Federation of Teachers or the National Education Association. It would involve the appropriate subject matter groups, like the American Mathematics Association, the Math Teachers Association, the appropriate English groups, etc. There are groups that exist now, and if they were brought together with groups already doing certification in other professions--which is what we hope to do this fall--they can get some ideas as to how to get started. Local teachers' unions could then bargain for extra money for these people. There is no competition if we are equals and you ask me for help. I do not have to say, "If I give you help, maybe I will not be the merit-pay teacher." If I move from one state to another, I am still a board-certified teacher, although the local contract may have different differentials in different places for board-certified people. What I am saying is that twenty-five percent of the professionals who end up running the institution are all going to be board-certified teachers.

Good school districts, by the way, would advertise that they had seventy-five percent board-certified teachers and twenty-five percent on their way to becoming board-certified. Poor school districts would say they did not care, and those in between would advertise different proportions and numbers.

I would like to mention some of the things I have been talking to teachers about, our own members especially, as to how to bring teaching from where it is now, which is sort of a craft union--a narrowly organized, rule-oriented, traditional factory model--to a more professional model. I would like to touch on a few points. First, there

is no profession where there is no entry examination. There just isn't any, no matter how much we are going to argue the merits of the examination. I am not going to say that an examination gives all the answers <sup>to professionalism,</sup> but the fact is we live in a society where lawyers go to law schools that by and large have better reputations than the schools that future teachers attend. There is a bar exam, which is basically a national examination. There are medical exams, and exams for actuaries, real estate agents, and almost everyone else. The examination does not tell us who is going to be a good teacher; it does tell us who is illiterate. Unfortunately that is a very important piece of information for those of us in education. We are not at a point where we can ignore that.

Just think of Florida, where they set up teacher examinations, and something like thirty-five percent of prospective elementary school teachers failed a sixth-grade arithmetic test. Take a look at the current Arkansas exam, where the passing grade was seventy percent, and ask if you would want the people who scored between seventy and seventy-five to be teaching. *P* I think we have a very serious credibility problem. After people pass the examination, we still must have other methods of finding out if they are the people we want. The exam I propose is not the cheap, twenty-dollar kind that you can take in a few minutes with multiple choice. I think if we are going to end up with kids who can think and write, we ought to require prospective teachers to be able to organize their thoughts, to be able to persuade, to be able to reason, and to be able to do these in both their subject matter and the professional base of knowledge.

Second, there is no profession unless we begin really to increase the amount of peer interaction. Susan Rosenholtz (Associate Professor, University of Illinois), both in her presentation yesterday and in her writings, gives us a very dismal, but accurate, picture of the life of teachers. By the way, it is not going to be easy--we do not have two million teachers out there who are eager to have peer relationships. On the contrary, I will tell you a very sad story that happened in New York City. I met with two chancellors. We agreed on some of these ideas and agreed to go ahead and try them. We picked several high schools where the principal and the union leader in the school are both good guys and willing to change. We found seventeen high schools in New York City out of 130 where we agreed that was true. We brought together the principals and building representatives in the union. We said to them, "How many of you really like what is going on in your schools right now?" Very few hands go up. "How many of you have a lot of ideas for change?" All the hands go up. "How many of you think the Board of Education is too bureaucratic and there are too many rules standing in the way?" All the hands go up. "How many of you sometimes think the union rules get in the way?" Hands go up.

We told these people, "If you want to do this, you can. You have a whole year, so back to your faculty. Have discussions about how you would like to change the school. Forget about the union contract, forget about the Board of Education's by-laws. You can have all <sup>the</sup> help you want. We are going to bring in all the help you want. We are going to bring in Ted Sizer to talk to you. We are going <sup>to</sup> bring in Ernie Bower and John

the  
^  
  
to  
^

Goodlad. You can have all the free books and literature you want. We do not want to see each school do the same thing. Each school is on its own. We are going to bring you all together once in a while."

We started this process at <sup>Y</sup>Arden<sup>6</sup> House, a very beautiful setting. We went through meeting one, meeting two, meeting three, and meeting four. Guess what they said at meeting four? All the teachers looked at me and said, "Come on, Al, cut it out. What do you really want us to do?" The principals are saying the same thing to the superintendent. They cannot believe that anyone is going to allow them to sit and plan to make changes. Also, part of the problem is that they do not know what to change. What happened after four or five sessions was, the union people in the school had the same old grievances, saying "Why did you rule against us on that?" The principals replied, "We had to get rid of those incompetent teachers." That is what happened. It was very, very tough to encourage constructive change.

4/9

4/9

What is happening in Toledo, <sup>Ohio</sup> where outstanding teachers have the responsibility of selecting and training new staff, and indeed deciding who sets tenure, is encouraging. The integrity of this system was shown when one teacher, whose wife was on the executive board of the union, did not set tenure. Awarding of tenure had nothing to do with power relationships. These people were out to see that the system worked.

^

Board-certified teachers <sup>could perform that role; they</sup> would have very important functions, including the evaluation of materials and selection of textbooks, video discs, and videotapes. Some of them would also be involved in the

^

internship program of new teachers. These board-certified teachers, who are training teachers, selecting textbooks, and organizing curriculum, should also have status in the local college or university and they ought to be doing in pre-service what they are doing on the job. That is, there ought to be a relationship between the teacher, the university, and the school that is similar to the <sup>relationships of a</sup> doctor who works in a hospital, is a professor of medicine, and also has a private practice, or the lawyer in <sup>similar positions</sup>. There ought not to be the almost total separation that there is today. There is a career ladder; a differentiation of staff; and a relationship between the board-certified elementary and secondary school teacher, teacher training, and the university.

Third are some issues that come up very frequently: tenure, incompetence, and teacher quality. I have some proposals for these areas. I do not want to wait for a lot of legislation. As a matter of fact, I do not think many of these things should be done through legislation. I propose to our members that they try a new system to remove someone who is incompetent. I think the current adversarial system is a perfectly good system for getting rid of someone who hits kids every once in a while, or goes fishing every Friday and Monday. These things involve very clear evidence and the same sort of witnesses that you need in a murder trial or an armed robbery. Did you see him go fishing? Was he absent every so and so? Who saw him hit a kid? The different parties have their own witnesses and lawyers. We have decided in our country that is a fair way to do it.

What I think is idiotic is to bring the question of teacher competence

to a bunch of lawyers to argue about. That is ridiculous. All this proves is who has the best lawyer. A lawyer might prove something about the nature of the system, that is who ultimately makes the decision. You see, hitting a kid is something that happened last week. Once a guy is blamed, he is going to stop. You have to have the evidence. But if someone was incompetent last week, he or she is probably going to be incompetent this week and next week, because it is an ongoing thing. The question of whether a principal is right or wrong when he says Teacher X is incompetent and ought to be removed should be evaluated by a group of professionals.

I have urged our local <sup>s</sup> <sub>^</sub> to set up committees like the one in Toledo. When Teacher X is accused of being incompetent, we will select three outstanding jurors, that is, people who do not even know the teachers or the principals, but three outstanding (and <sup>^</sup> in the future, board-certified) teachers. We will say to the teacher and the principal, "We have three outstanding people who want to go in and see who is right and who is wrong."

Suppose the principal says, "I am glad somebody is going to come in. I am sure any reasonable person who looks at this teacher will agree with me." Suppose the teacher says, "Me, too. He is crazy. I am a terrific teacher." Now if they both agree that they are going to abide by the action, fine. However, what if principal says, "No, I do not want anybody looking at this teacher. Let's take it to court." In that case, the panel appears before the tenure committee and says, "The teacher was perfectly willing to be looked at, but the principal would not let the

team in." Now, that is not proof that the principal is guilty; it is just like taking the Fifth Amendment. It indicates that he may have something to hide. Suppose it is the other way around. The principal approves bringing the people in, but the teacher says no. The panel would say that the teacher was unwilling to have anybody look. That would say something about the teacher. Suppose they both say no, then you are back in the old system.

The public will never give teachers as a group the kind of professional power we are talking about in terms of educational decisions, unless teachers are viewed as a group that cares about the problems of the profession, including the issue of incompetence. I am not asserting that teachers do all these things because that will enhance their power. I am asserting something quite different. First, we are not going to attract good people unless the job gives people a sense that what they have to offer makes a difference. Second, what they have to offer has to be based on knowledge. I am not talking about giving power to teachers because they are teachers. At the present most teachers could not use this power, because most teachers do not really know what a good textbook is. Would they know how to train a new teacher, or would they even want to? Do they really know how to evaluate some of these audio-visual materials? These abilities would be identified in the process of national certification. The kinds of things that the national math, English, and history teachers have to sit down and ask is, "How do we test whether a person knows what the decent materials are? How do we know that a person really has the knowledge base?" At present neither the teachers nor the administrators have it. We have not been oriented toward that.



One example of that is in the field of reading. Those of you who have not read A Nation of Readers should read it. While it looks like a very simple report, it is very sophisticated. We have some pretty substantial knowledge in a few fields, the reading field especially, and it is not being used or taught anywhere. It is bad enough when you do not know; then you ought to be researching and looking. But we know a tremendous amount about why kids do not learn to read--and it is not phonics, it is not word recognition, it is something totally different. The power of these <sup>teacher</sup> groups would be like that of the committees of the bar association, <sup>teacher</sup> but within a school. This is obviously consistent with Frank Newman's model.

In conclusion, there is a new type of employee emerging who is not going to work in traditional factories. There are not going to be enough talented people to staff our schools. Even if we make \$100 billion worth of changes, we are not going to get \$100 billion. None of these reforms that are being legislated now are going to be delivered, without substantial changes. The changes are not going to be made because we are thinking of the model we have right now--we are just thinking of getting dollars that we cannot possibly get.

The model I have just talked about is not the only possible one, but if we do not think in terms of some radical alternatives, there is no way of accomplishing the things that everybody is talking about. And if we do not accomplish these reforms, we are in for a hell of a time politically. Remember, we were in lousy shape before reform. A lot of people expect

changes. They believe reforms are going to happen. Four or five years from now, if people take a look, and education walks and talks the same way it did ten years ago, we are going to be in serious trouble. People are going to look for alternatives. The auto industry went through this; so will public education.

FRANKLIN WALTER (Superintendent of Public Instruction, Ohio): I think your points are exceedingly well made in terms of the tasks before us. I would like you to address the concern about the seventy-five percent who are in the profession, who know that only twenty-five percent will become career teachers. What kind of incentive would there be for them, and what kind of reaction do you get from your membership when you state the fact that they are not going to get a fifty percent across-the-board increase in salary? We are not going to reduce classloads, nor will we have the peer interaction you describe.

MR. SHANKER: In terms of the seventy-five percent, this is no radical change. We have it right now. We have a permanent work force and a transient work force. We have had it in teaching for years. If I were the President of the American Federation of Ex-Teachers, I would be the head of a much larger organization. Everybody out there is an ex-teacher. I meet them every day, walking along the street. We have people who stay, and people who go. The only question is that, at present, with the exception of a certain number of very dedicated, talented people who stay no matter what, many qualified people leave. The transient work force are the qualified people who leave. They have a lot of opportunities. A lot of people, who are not so good and have no other

opportunities, are the ones who stay.

I would like to turn that around. I would like to keep the best and the brightest. I also think that we can get a lot of terrific, very bright people, people who want to work with kids for five years, and who will be recognized later on by industry and by the country as public servants. I want to make it hard to get into, like ROTC. I want to give them some rewards. I think we will get a much better group of people. We will get a lot of people who will say, "I want to do this. I do not want to do this for my whole life. I do not want to be locked in with a bunch of kids for my whole life. I have other aspirations. Sure I am willing to do this now. It is going to do some things for me professionally. It will get me some recognition."

Currently, we have a permanent group and a transient group. We must ask ourselves, "Who is staying and who is going?" How do my people take it? I am going to have to get around an awful lot, because the NEA is putting out stuff saying Shanker wants to reduce the work force by X percent. He wants to have temporary people and merit pay. We had a professional conference about ten days ago, about 1,500 teachers from across the country were in Washington, D.C. I made these same remarks there and distributed some of them. When I started doing this about two years ago, even our executive council people said, "Watch it, we are going to get into an awful lot of trouble. If you even talk about these things, management will take advantage of you. If you even open your mouth, some superintendent in another state will say, 'Al Shanker says so-and-so. He says it right at the bargaining table,'" and people just go off the wall.

At this conference we had 1,500 people who were happy, high, and cheering. You know why? Because for the first time in their lives they did not have to keep their mouths shut. They were able to talk about anything that came into their heads. They did not have a feeling that it was anti-union, disloyal, anti-teacher to say a lot of things people have been thinking about. People do not go into teaching to get rich. We know that, but they also do not go into teaching because they were born with a union label somewhere on their bodies. They have a lot of professional interests.

The arithmetic speaks for itself. I will stand before any group of teachers and show how three modest, simple proposals that they will feel do not go far enough, cost \$100 billion. And I want to know where you are going to get the money, and what are the chances? So, either give up on what you are doing, or get out of the profession, and let some people who are willing to live with this come in, or come up with another idea. Do the simple math on it. We cannot do it economically without doing something very different, but there is no way of advancing the simplest things that we want--a little more money, a little more time, a little bit more individual work with your students. We cannot do those things in the current structure. It is economically and demographically impossible. Other industries and other fields are not going to give us two million people of this calibre. They do not exist. You will not get them. You come up with a little more; they are going to take it. If you do not have an answer to that, you are not a union leader. Where are you taking your people? You are just giving them a lot of empty slogans. You are fooling

them.

BILL HONIG (Superintendent of Public Instruction, California): Three questions: First, the management literature does not quite say, "decentralization," pure and simple. It says something a little more subtle--that you can only decentralize if you are working on a common, general goal or vision. If we are going to decentralize (which I absolutely agree we must do if we are going to make it), we also have to put some time and effort into getting some general sense of where we are going that permeates this step. I do not think we should adopt the university model, which is individual professors or entrepreneurs on their own. They come together every once in a while, but they basically make their own decisions. How should we decentralize? That is the first question.

The second question is a technical one. You mentioned board-certified math, science, and history. That is fine for high school. What do you do in elementary school? Elementary is a little more complicated, and I am not sure I would trust the math people alone to come up with what we teach in math and how we certify it. That report you talked about from the University of Illinois was actually an institute which was in place for two, three, or four years. They put a lot of time and effort into looking into what is a good reading program; they did the research. It was not just the reading people, the International Reading Association, that did that. It was much more organized and complicated than that.

The third question has to do with something that you have touched on

and needs a lot more specificity. That is the whole concept that there are short-term union gains from controversy. Most of the local union leaders, site leaders, and district leaders understand that principle and frustrate this type of collaboration. It is not enough just to change the signals; your example shows that we are going to have to train some people in how to organize for team-building. It must come from the unions as much as it must come from a good instructional leader in management. If we brought those two people together and trained them, then we could break down this wall of isolation. Just as we train union organizers, we must train faculty-building organizers. Then we might have a chance of this happening. It is a very tough thing to do, and changes a whole way of looking at things. I think we need the technical help.

MR. SHANKER: I agree with the first one. You can only decentralize if you have what they call a corporate culture or sense of mission. Otherwise it will all fall apart. I am fascinated by the fact that no state or group of educators is engaged anywhere in what I would call pre-emptive reform, except maybe New York state, with its Regents Action Plan. Look at what reform has meant in many of these states: it is really the legislature and governor telling the educators that we have not done our job, and that only by passing a 150-page book of rules will we shape up. I would imagine that after they did it in California, Texas, and a few other places that folks in Massachusetts would say, "We are going to engage in pre-emptive reform. We are going to do things ourselves so that when the legislature comes along we can say, 'You do not have to do it for us. We saw what happened there.'" As I go across the country to those states where they do not yet have reform and ask school

people at every level what they are doing, they say, "We are waiting to be reformed. We are waiting for them to do it to us," which is a very sad comment.

Second, it is hard at the elementary level, but I am sure it can be done. I agree with your statement that it should not be the subject people alone. The people who are working on the Holmes Group, in addition to coming up with a proposal for teacher education, also have a lot of smarts as to the content of the knowledge base. For instance, we know this stuff on cultural literacy. There are these things which you will not necessarily find with the English teachers, but you will find somewhere else. So, one of the things that has to be done in the shaping up of these boards is to pull the knowledge base together. Sometimes it is in an education department, sometimes with a particular team of people, like the University of Illinois with reading. More of those centers are needed.

On the team-building issue, there are things you can do. It is very hard. It is hard for either side to do. There are pressures on management to show the public that it is tough. Look at all the cheers that management gets if it announces it is going after incompetence. Some of the nastiest moves are the ones that get the greatest cheers. They are also the ones that get the teachers to be least cooperative. The same is true on the union side. There are certain unusual things that can be done over a period of time that will help to build teams. One problem in being a union-building representative is that he or she not only takes grievances, but gets called at night with questions about pensions, social

security, and so on. If there are a couple of people in the school who are falling apart, the building representative become<sup>s</sup> their guidance counselor. It is a very onerous job. Some dedicated people will take it for a year or two or three, but there are also a great many schools where no one wants that job, except some person who has a lot of hostility that he wants to work out, and he will volunteer.

S  
^

You get a lot of that. It is unfortunate, but true. On the other hand, when I sit down and say I want to negotiate to give the building representative one period a day when he does not teach, management says, "WHAT? Give the guy who is taking grievances even more time to take grievances. That is going to kill us." Actually, if we could make that a desirable job so that very representative and outstanding people would vie for it, we would end up with different people on the other side.

In Toledo (you only read about one part of the Toledo plan, that is the internship program), there is an intervention program. If an experienced teacher begins to fall apart, that same group of outstanding teachers goes and tries to help the teacher. If the teacher cannot be helped, they help get rid of the teacher. But this is something that helped to pull Toledo together, which had been beset with adversarial relationships and strikes every year--the community voting down the money and the schools closing X number of months. A real classic case that was turned around, very fast. One thing they did was make the union building representative in charge of the school whenever the principal leaves. For this Board of Education gives the building rep an extra \$3,000 per year. All of a sudden, the best and the brightest run for the job. It is

the  
^



interesting that when the union building representative is in charge of the school, he says, "Hey John, you did not get to your class on time. The kids were waiting." He is being paid to take a management point of view during that time.

Now, we do not have an easy time selling that to our members. But this is a structural idea as to how to get away from this business of your side and our side, and create some incentives to get different types of teachers to compete for that job, and to give those people on-the-job education in doing things from a slightly different point of view.

JOHN H. LAWSON (Commissioner, Massachusetts): Could you go back and talk in a little more detail about the issue of teacher decision-making? It seems to me that in our discussion of where we are and where we want to go we very often put that on the back burner, in a less important role than it deserves. Classroom teachers with whom I talk in Massachusetts tell me that it is not money or evaluation, but their inability, or their perceived inability, to make decisions that they most dislike about their job. I think it would be helpful if you would give your views in terms of the importance of classroom decision-making.

MR. SHANKER: Yes, they say that. They do not always mean it. They know what they do not like. They do not like being locked up with the kids. There is all that isolation. They also do not like constantly being subjected to external changes that they did not bring about and that they do not view as rational. Teachers view the constant changes as ways in which the school boards or management establish credibility with the

public by constantly innovating for the sake of public relations, whereas they have to pay the price by changing their plans, changing the way they do things, and changing their relationship with the kids every time. This plea for more decision-making authority is really another way of saying that they do not want others to be constantly telling them to do things that they do not believe will help the kids or help them. It upsets all their ordered relationships.

We saw the problem with teacher decision-making when teacher centers were created under the Carter administration. Most teacher centers turn out to be lousy, because of the concept that all teachers are equal. In Britain and Japan the assumption is that some teachers know more than others do. It is assumed that some are terrific, but they do not want to go to the principal to confess that they never really learned so-and-so, because it might be used against them. They will go down and tell another teacher, another teacher from another district, so they can have a set of collegial relationships and be helped. But the assumption is that that teacher really knows what he or she is doing.

American teachers do not start out with that assumption. They assume everybody is equal. Since we did not select outstanding people on some basis, a lot of these centers just became places with mimeograph and xerox machines where copying is done. This was because there was no assumption that somebody knew something, and that somebody else needed some help, or that everybody had to share in some way. It was sort of a "show and tell" kind of thing.

What we need to establish here is that while doctors and lawyers make decisions, they do not make them on the basis of what they as individuals want to do. If you go to a doctor who says, "I know what you have. Every other doctor would give you this and that would probably take care of it. But I am not that kind of doctor. I am bored with the usual practice. I am going to do something different to you." You would run away. If you reported him, the profession would go after him.

The profession is free; that is, a doctor is free to exercise judgment to do what every other doctor would do in your place, not what you want to do individually because it would make you happy. It is based on professional, group decision-making. That is what a lot of teachers do not understand. They do not understand that if they have the power to do things, they may have less discretion than they now have. Right now, how often can you actually go and watch a teacher in the classroom? There is a lot of teacher decision-making in the classroom. Right now, they do have a lot of people from outside telling them what to do. What they miss is any collective process of arriving at a decision of what is right, what is really good, and what works, with a group of people that they respect. These are not decisions from a political sector that they feel are hitting them for totally different reasons. We do not need every teacher individually deciding what the right textbook is. That is wrong. We are going to get two million different decisions, most of them bad if they are not informed.

The reason we do not stand over the surgeon and watch him cut, the reason most other professions are relatively free of supervision, is due

to the quality of the person brought in, the kind of training that person had, and collegial relationships that enable the person to talk frequently with people who do the same kind of things. They inform each other of things that work and do not work, and the latest things that have come out. That is what is needed. You are hearing the same things I am hearing, but what I am talking about in terms of empowerment is not what that teacher is talking about. That teacher is saying, "Stop pushing me around. Stop telling me every couple of years to use a different set of books. Leave me alone." I am not saying that. I am saying, "Let us develop a process within the profession that finds out what works and what does not; let us devise a process that does not stand over people and supervise them because there is a process that allows you to trust the person to do what the profession has decided should be done. This is a different concept.

FLORETTA MCKENZIE (Superintendent, Washington, D.C.): A number of the ideas that you talked about are process kinds of things. It seems to me that our basic problem is that we are not product- or outcome-oriented. How do we get the teaching force, after setting an increased salary, a lower pupil-teacher ratio, and more time for professional development, to come together and agree on what our outcomes are?

MR. SHANKER: Well, we cannot. There is no profession that agrees on outcomes. We can agree that we want literate people, people who read Dickens and Shakespeare, know mathematics, get jobs, and participate as citizens. But the medical profession does not guarantee that every patient will live. A lawyer does not guarantee that you are going to win

your case. You can expect that the professional will bring to bear a body of knowledge. We in teaching cannot say that we do that. You can say that the professional is going to explain to everybody why a certain course of action is taken and to justify it. We frequently cannot do that. Let us not exaggerate what it is that other professions are able to do. By the way, if we look at medicine, it is only since World War II that there really have been any drugs. Before that, there was practically nothing. Surgery was pretty well developed, but what was available before sulfa? It was a very limited range. Yet, medicine was a respected profession during the 1930s.

Let me give one example. I am going to talk now about the results of using a certain process. I am going to talk about literacy, which I alluded to at the end of my ~~book~~ <sup>talk,</sup> and <sup>about</sup> what is known. It is sitting out there, and if somebody wants to go out and disprove it, go ahead. If you cannot disprove it or do not want to, you ought to adopt it. Otherwise you are being negligent, professionally and morally. Mr. ~~Hirsch~~ <sup>Hirsch</sup> at the University of Virginia, some people at Stanford and Illinois, and others have found that our problem in getting people to read is not phonics or word recognition. We are doing much better in phonics than we used to; we are doing pretty well in word recognition, and as a result, scores are going up in second through fifth grades. But all of a sudden, when kids really have to read something in seventh through tenth grade, we find they cannot read. They cannot put it together.

*g/talk*

*Hirsch*

So, Mr. ~~Hirsch~~ <sup>Hirsch</sup> has found something and made it known. It has been out for a number of years. It is dynamite. I do not know why the educational

^

community has not embraced it or shot it down. He says that reading is not a purely formal skill. It is not just a matter of decoding words or recognizing words, but also a matter of content. If you do not bring to reading a great deal of knowledge, you will not understand what is on the written page. That is because people who write for the average reader (except for "Run, Jane, run," where you do not have to understand anything) assume an awful lot of knowledge. ~~F~~ For instance, a fellow is standing in Harvard Yard and he says to people, "How do I get to Central Square?" Everybody thinks he is from Harvard or Boston and says, "First stop on subway."

The next day the same kid comes in dressed like he is from Missouri. He has an accent. He says, "I am from out of town. How do I get to Central Square?" The same people say, "Turn around, go two blocks, turn to the left and go another two blocks, you are going to see a kiosk. That is the subway. Go downstairs to the subway. Be sure to take the train marked north. Get off at the first stop. Then you are at Central Square." One case is six words, another case is sixty. Why? It's because one assumes that the first guy knows the lay of the land. That is how people write books. They assume that the reader has a great deal of previous knowledge.

What is it that we need to know? I will give you a clue. We can read Abraham Lincoln today. It is not very difficult. We can read Ben Franklin. What we need to know is pretty much the same sort of background knowledge that Thomas Jefferson, Ben Franklin, and Abraham Lincoln had. It is Adam and Eve, Noah's Ark, and Daniel Boone. It is George

Washington, the Sahara, the Himalayas, the names of oceans, the names of myths, and all sorts of things in our common culture that we have to know, because those things keep coming up. And if students have to look up something in every sentence, they are going to be lost.

Are kids setting those words now? The answer is no, they are not. Why aren't they setting them? It is very bad for teachers to get kids to memorize. You can always look it up, right? This whole critical thinking movement dumps on memorization. A student does not need to ~~to~~ know a subject or memorize; all he or she needs to know is how to think. Secondly, insofar as the teacher does take up specific things, they must be things that the kids are really interested in. What are kids interested in? Rock stars and sports stars. So the teacher does not give them all this traditional information. Rock stars and sports stars change very quickly. They are not going to come up in very much general literature. Teachers are not giving kids much of a background if they spend much of the time on rock stars and sports stars.

Third, a very important agenda, but one which tends to push out the traditional agenda, is the need to provide role models for ethnic minorities and women. To the extent that we put a cultural curriculum in, we have moved a lot of traditional topics out. I am not saying that we cannot do some of all these things. We should, obviously. But the fact is it is now possible to put together a list of about four or five thousand words that are essential to know. A kid does not have to know much about Adam and Eve, the apple or the serpent, or the Sahara, but a picture should come to the kid's mind when somebody is writing and trains

to create a description.

Essentially this view says that if the second- through fifth-grade curriculum does not give kids these five thousand words, without which the kids will not be able to read an ordinary magazine or book, even if the kids know phonics and word recognition; they will grow up to be illiterate. They need that content. This, of course, is an oversimplification; there is more to it. Nevertheless, this material has been out for a number of years now. What effect has this had on the teaching of reading and on curriculum in any state? Where is it?

Not to utilize this knowledge is irresponsible. There is a very powerful example. There are a lot of experiments that have been conducted with it. Take a boy who is an eighth-grade reader, but who has never seen any baseball. Give him an article at the eighth-grade level about baseball. He will not understand it. Give him an eighth-grade level article about soccer or cricket. He will understand it, because he grew up in England. That is the kind of thing that has to be at the center of both the curriculum studies and what is taught to teachers, and the board certification process, as to the kind of knowledge that all future professionals must have. We do not have it in all fields yet.

GERALD N. TIROZZI (Commissioner, Connecticut): What is the role of the principal, in terms of your model, and then beyond your model? If we move in the direction of the career teacher, the twenty-five percent you spoke of, that does bring into question the role the principal plays. There may very well be a conflict situation. I would hope not. Second, would we



even need a principal if we were to go in that direction? Most of the literature on instructionally-effective schools speaks to the important role of instructional leaders. What are your views from a teacher's perspective as to the degree to which principals are in fact instructional leaders? I personally believe that most lack that skill. I also believe that most of them are not capable of providing that leadership, even if trained.

MR. SHANKER: The instructional leader of the school is whoever happens to be the instructional leader of the school. I used to work at summer camps, and one year I hired a music counselor. There she was playing the piano, and over here was a kid who was not hired as a music counselor who had his guitar. There were 500 kids around the nature counselor with the guitar, and nobody near the woman with the piano. Who was the musical leader of the camp? Sometimes the instructional leader happens to be in one position, sometimes another. If we have schools that are structured so that the instructional leader does not happen to be the principal, can he or she still carry out the function? Or, do we have to fire that person and put in some one else?

By the way, I read the literature on this. We had a national meeting, with many people, including Gary Sikes from California. One of the things he said was "Research shows that at good schools the principals are the instructional leaders." Everybody just cracked up. Gary said, "I may have to re-think that." The writers of the effective school literature believe it, and some principals believe it, but if forty teachers crack up when they hear it, maybe there is something wrong with it.

There are many different models that one could establish. I happen to believe that one way or another, we are going to need principals. In the model that I am talking about, the line between management and labor is obviously much fuzzier. Much of what happens in a Japanese factory is that there are fewer levels of supervision and fewer supervisors, and the workers on the assembly line are given more time to discuss things with management and each other and to learn methods of statistical sampling, quality control, and things like that. In a sense they are taking management functions and saying, "We will have fewer people who are actually ~~and~~ managers and we will give more time for management and peer relationships at a different level." <sup>4</sup> By the way, there are some very serious legal problems there. Under the <sup>yeshiva</sup> ~~Yeshiva~~ decision, as soon as unionized people begin a process in which they are involved in any traditionally management roles, they lose their collective bargaining rights. In Ohio, Toledo had to be given a special dispensation to do this under the new collective bargaining law. What they were doing came before there was a law, so they were allowed to do it. But under usual labor relations traditions, as soon as teachers assume other responsibilities, they are considered part of management. There is some interesting work to be done in the legal area.

9  
4  
yeshiva  
n

I think the toughest time we are going to have will be with middle management. If you read all the private management materials, the Harvard Business Review, the Wharton School publication, and others, middle management is the toughest group to deal with in any of these quality-of-work-life programs and in any of these change processes. It is

very difficult for those in middle management to understand what they will do if other people do what they are now doing.

When I am in groups of principals who raise that question, I just say that I became president of what was a fairly small union in New York City, and it grew into the largest local union in the world. It now has 76,000 members in one local in New York City. We grew from having three staff members to a budget of over \$34 million. At a certain point I started hiring a second, third, fourth, and fifth person. My friends began to say, "Al, this is great. We can hire all the members of our caucus. We will be in great shape. We can keep you in power. We will go out and campaign. We will be the ones who are handling people's grievances, doing them favors, and answering questions."

Early on, after hiring a few people, I said I would not do this any more. That was the time of school decentralization. I said, "We are going to decentralize the union before the school system decentralizes, for two reasons. One, our structure should ~~be~~ parallel the structures out there. But most of all, there is no way I can really keep tabs on ~~the~~ what is going on in thirty-two districts and a thousand schools. Therefore, we are going to elect all the staff people out there. We are going to pay them, train them, and offer them legal services. We are going to become a service and a training bureau for all these people out there."

My closest associates said, "You are crazy. They could run against you. They could decide to pull their districts out. You will not be able

to fire them. They are elected. They are like congressmen. You will be like the President of the United States trying to deal with the congressmen, who will tell you where to go. What you are doing is destroying the organization; you are pulling it apart."

At any rate, the organization runs pretty well. It has all the problems that you might expect with a structure like that. It is not perfect. But I still have plenty of things to do, and more important things to do. I do not know of any manager in an important and growing organization who does not constantly divest himself or herself of all sorts and levels of activity, and then find that by doing so that there are more important things to do.

I think it would be very good to go to Toledo and ask those principals, "What do you do now that teachers are selecting and training new teachers and have an intervention program? Are you not needed anymore?" The polls shows that the principals accept it and like it, as do the teachers and the community. So they must be doing something right. I am sure that if principals were just sitting in their offices and had absolutely nothing to do, even if they were getting paid, they would not like it. They could not look at themselves in the mirror.

CALVIN M. FRAZIER (Superintendent, Colorado): I think the heart of the continued existence of teachers is really tied to Floretta's [McKenzie, Superintendent of Public Schools, District of Columbia] question. If there is anything by which state superintendents, commissioners, and boards are really being challenged, it is by the quality and the product of the

system. Thus far, it seems unions are continuing to deal with the process, but cannot involve themselves in decisions dealing with the improvement of the quality and options which may in the end adversely affect the membership. So the superintendents and some of the rest of us are finding it increasingly difficult even to work through the unions as a vehicle for the solution of the public concerns. We cannot bypass or minimize involvement with the very group that has to be involved with the implementation of this, which could guide the system to be less effective and ultimately bypass itself in the creation of voucher systems and others. You see, I do not think you answered Floretta's question about quality and outcome, and yet, if there is any issue we are challenged with, that is it.

MR. SHANKER: I thought I answered it by saying that no profession ultimately guarantees something for everybody. There are failures in all the professions. There are things that doctors do not yet know, new diseases that arise, new epidemics. We do not turn around and blame the medical profession. All we can demand of them is that they do everything that they know how to do, and secondly, that they try to find out what they do not know. In those two areas, we are subject to blame. We are not doing everything we know how to do in education. Secondly, we are not engaged in a real search to find the answers in those areas where we do not have enough knowledge.

For instance, we know that ninety-five percent of the kids who reach fourth or fifth grade without knowing how to read, write, and count will not know how to read, write, and count after that. That is, at a certain

Take a look at that kid. Here it is September, the opening of school. When is the payoff? Next June--the final report card is not until next June. How many people will feel that if they miss a few days lessons and do not do their homework in September and October, there are really going to be dire consequences next June? Why do we have annual promotion? It is easy on the paper work. What if we had semester exams three or four weeks? What would it do to teachers if they knew the final exam was three weeks from now? What would it do to students? What would happen if a kid failed? Right now, if a kid fails, you have to leave a

first week with a very stiff, tough, unfriendly person. might actually drop out as a result of that first set of encounters the to you, as he or she tries to establish his or her authority. The kid you can make it. A teacher is being tough, antagonistic, and unfriendly dropping out. You do not think very much of yourself. You do not think yourself on the other side. You are a high school student thinking about behave in this way: tough, hostile, maybe a little bit mean. Now put smile. Be tough." A teacher trains to get in control of a class will a teacher told to do for the first three to five weeks? "Don't crack a talking public relations. Suppose you are a kid in high school. What is high school. To what extent do we really try new things? I am not

We know we have a very big problem with dropouts, with completion of very different things? So those are two areas in which we are deficient. we are doing will not work. But how many places are really trying some environment, and says to himself, "I'm stupid, I'm ashamed." We know what point, the student loses hope, begins to feel the school is a hostile

2

kid back a whole year, or promote him. Both of them are bad. If you fail a three- or four-week course, it is easy to make up. What happens at the end of the year when you have lost a kid? Do you know when you have lost him or her? You do not.

You cannot separate the product from the process. Do you know what we usually do as educators, principals, and teacher-union people? We say to parents, "You know, nobody really knows what works. It is all a matter of opinion. This teacher does it that way, and it is wonderful, and that teacher has a different style." The teacher unions stand up and say we cannot have merit pay because it is all a matter of opinion, and it is all a matter of reward and punishment. What we are doing is telling the outside world, "We do not know what we are doing." Then we wonder why we are in all this trouble.

I think this is responsive to the question of the outcomes. Do we say, "We know the following things; we know that they work, and we are going to get everyone to use them?" We should not be innovative in an area where the right way is known. Second, we should admit what we do not know. We are engaged in an intensive search to find out what we do not know. Third, we are constantly changing the structure. Just as the factory conditions (where the worker stands, and so forth) are adjusted based on reports from workers, we should do something in terms of structure. That includes the size of semesters, the investment in early childhood education, and some sort of second chance at the fourth- or fifth-grade level for kids who have not made it. It includes a whole bunch of things that nobody talks about anymore. The whole theory now is

if we can find ways either to develop better teachers or fire the bad ones; then, suddenly, the output follows. That is not the way.

If we do these things, the question of the final product will take care of itself. The final product in these various plants is not the result of finding a better worker or a better manager, in and of itself. It is developing a better system in which people are encouraged to think and care about what they do, to report about what goes right and what goes wrong, and constantly to notice that the material that came in this week is a little softer, so that something ought to be changed. Even in the factory, things are constantly changing, the materials that come in, and so on. This is the way things happen.

Essentially, it is the development of a system in which more and more people exercise care, judgment, and intelligence at every level. When that happens, we end up with a better product. We shall not have to recall thirty, forty, fifty percent of them, but only a very small number. You get it right the first time. The response to the question, "Are we going to be doing a much better job with the kids?" is only going to be adequately answered in terms of a system in which everyone is doing the thinking and caring, and is involved in improving, AND in which the knowledge base is used and is constantly being improved. If we have that system, our product is going to become constantly better. If we do not, there is no mechanism we can put into place, like evaluating teachers or anything else, that will maintain the quality of education.

STEPHEN KAAGAN (Commissioner of Education, Vermont): I would like to



thank you very much for that. I think it was a great session. I would like to thank you for two things. First, for retracing the fundamental role of teacher empowerment in making any real changes in education, and in an overarching sense, for your realism about the connection between what is happening economically, politically, and educationally and what the teacher comes of the future might look like.