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MR. SHANKER: It gives everybody a chance to get home earlier.

I thought I was going to be speaking on restructuring, but I see you have me moved back to reform. That's all right. I think that I need to spend a few minutes at the outset dealing not with the question of reform in general -- because I can't think of a time in the last 30-40 years when there hasn't been some reform movement in the air -- but with the recent sources of movement within the U.S. educational world for very substantial change. That is based on a series of observations that the United States is doing very poorly in terms of student achievement.

For a long time, American educators -- certainly teachers and their organizations, the school board associations and the whole of the educational establishment -- had a kind of ready answer to this problem. The answer was: "Well, we educate all of our kids, and these other countries just pick a handful of kids and educate them and throw all the other kids away."

I think it's only recently that Americans have come to realize that maybe in the distant past that was true. It was also true at some point in the United States; we didn't keep many in our schools. But it's generally no longer true in most industrialized democracies today. Those businessmen and educators who have visited Germany, for example, cannot say that the Germans educate only the top few who are supposed to go on to colleges and universities. Instead, everyone comes back with a very positive impression of what the Germans do with their middle track of students and a very positive impression of what they do with their bottom track, which, in the United States, tends to be a dumping ground.

To go a little further, the differences in student achievement between our nation and other advanced democracies are very, very substantial. Contrary to most of the publicity in this country, this is not only because of our high dropout rates and at-risk kids. These factors are very important and focusing on them is certainly warranted. With so many families in poverty and after two centuries of slavery and racism and poverty and lack of health care and everything else, it would be rather surprising if you wouldn't see a difference in educational performance between youngsters who survived that and others.

But what about the vast majority of kids who live in relative affluence? How can we account for the fact that the United States is not producing very much of a top track? Because if you look at our NAEP results for 17-year-olds who are still in school, the percentage in the top band is very small. And it's not as if performance at this level is terribly demanding. It means being able to read something that's pretty difficult, to solve two-step arithmetic problems and do some elementary algebra. There's no complicated mathematics in the top band, and top writing means writing a good essay or a good letter. As you go across the subjects tested by NAEP -- reading, writing, mathematics, science, et cetera -- the results have been quite consistent over 20 years, and they show that 3-6 percent of our youngsters are able to reach that top level -- 3-6 percent.

Now, of course, that same set of assessments is not given anywhere else, so it's impossible to say with any assurance how we compare with other countries. But you can look at the Arbitur in Germany or at the assessments that are given as a requirement for admission into colleges and universities in Great Britain, and get a picture. And while you

can't get an exact picture, I think you can say with some confidence that the 28 or so percent who pass the Arbitur in Germany would certainly be in the top 3 percent on the NAEP, and the 16 percent who achieve admission to British colleges and universities would be, too.

Our results are therefore very shocking because in the top band we're not talking for the most part about youngsters who have all sorts of things going against them. We're talking about some of the most advantaged youngsters who ever walked the face of the earth. But on a world standard, they really are not making it.

I'll go back now to education reform with a story. A couple of years ago, Jack Bowsher, a Vice President of IBM who used to run schools around the world for IBM employees to upgrade their skills, was invited to a meeting of the AFT Executive Council. One of our people asked Bowsher what he thought of the education reforms that were being proposed in the United States. His answer was, "If I were running an IBM factory where 30 percent of the computers fell off the assembly line before they ever reached the end, and we didn't know what had happened to them or how to put them back on the line, and if about 90 or 95 percent of the computers that did reach the end of the assembly line didn't work most of the time," he said, "I don't think we'd be trying to run the assembly line an extra hour a day or an extra month a year." (Laughter)

He suggested that he would be thinking about how to run the thing differently and not how to turn out more lemons. And that's the underlying motivation of my use of the term "restructuring."

Now, I suppose that the most sensible thing for people in the United States to say is that, "If other countries are doing so much better than

we are, then what we need to do is to see whether we can emulate their systems." Why go through a long process of experimentation and rethinking? Why not take a look at the major differences between what they do and what we do?

I think that is a useful exercise. But, when we're all finished, I think we'll find that there is no way that we can just turn around and recreate, let's say, the German system or the French system or the British system or Scandinavian or Australian or even Canadian systems in the United States.

There are some things that we could do; there are others that we couldn't. One thing we can do is to pay attention to the fact that almost all those systems have incentives for students that are quite clear. That is, there is a much clearer relationship in other countries between what you do in school and the kind of job you get if you're not going on to college than there is in the United States. Their students know that if they have gotten good grades and reached a certain level, they're much more likely to get a job with a better kind of company. And if they do very poorly -- well, how quickly they get a job, what the compensation is and what sort of career is ahead of them are closely connected to their school records.

In the United States, most of our better companies don't hire anybody until they're 24 or 25, which means that your good students and your poorer students all get the same lousy jobs in the beginning. Later on, the IBMs and the others look around for the workers who were good students. But there is no connection between school and future jobs in the minds of youngsters who are in high school. They can't see the same kind of connection that kids can see elsewhere.

beginnings to the end, how you get some quality product. That generally does involve a good deal of participation and shared decision making. It also involves getting rid of a lot of middle layers of bureaucracy. It involves the much greater use of technology. It involves a different kind of use of incentives. It deals with a whole range of issues.

It essentially takes away the assumption that the way things are being done is right and that all you have to do is somehow tweak it a little bit to make it work a little better. And it raises the question of whether the whole thing couldn't be done a heck of a lot better if you started all over again and rethought the whole process, instead of trying to improve what's there.

Let me go back for a minute to this business of trying to emulate other systems. There are several respects in which we can't, and one of them is pretty crucial. That has to do with the quality of teachers we put in classrooms relative to those in our competitor nations. If every teacher in Germany is someone who passed the Arbitur and entered a college or university, and if, in the United States, only one, two or three percent of our high school students meet those standards, then essentially the only youngsters in the United States who meet that German standard are those who go to Harvard, Princeton, Chicago, Stanford, et cetera. Another way of saying it is that practically all of the university entrants in these other countries meet standards that are met only by those American students who go to our most elite institutions.

What percentage of our teachers are from Harvard, Yale, Chicago or Stanford? Well, rounding it off to the nearest whole number, the answer is zero. (Laughter) Therefore, essentially our classrooms are staffed

The other incentive is the direct relationship between meeting a certain standard in school and the ability to enter college. In the post-World War II period, the United States increasingly disconnected school achievement standards from entry into college. That most likely has something to do with the fact that top scores have declined so substantially over these years. In other words, once upon a time, kids knew that if you didn't achieve at a certain level, by and large you didn't get into college. And that did get people to work hard if they wanted to go to college. It may keep some kids out if they don't meet the standard, but it gets lots of kids to work harder in order to meet it. Now, in the United States, teachers and others tell us we have all these kids who really want to know not what is the best they can do in order to achieve the most, but what is the least they can do to get their diploma. "Is it going to be on the test? Do I need it for graduation?" That is a very different kind of ethic.

Let me say one other thing on the business of restructuring before I get into assessment issues. I read a lot of things on restructuring. Unfortunately, restructuring has come to be identified most completely with one particular kind of reform, and that's school-based management. Maybe I should add to that: faculty empowerment or shared decision making, and so forth.

Now, obviously, we can define the word "restructuring" any way we want and then proceed to deal with what it is that we're talking about. However, I think there are useful ways of defining restructuring and there are ways that are not so useful. The useful way goes like this: Essentially, the word "restructuring" comes out of the business community and involves fundamentally rethinking, from the very

mostly with people who probably would not have gained admission into the colleges and universities of advanced nations elsewhere in the world.

Now, this is becoming more true as we go on because we're bridging a period when people came in to teaching on the basis of different university standards. The more the teachers who came in under old standards retire and we bring in people who came in under new standards, the more we'll face a problem. Also, as we get away from the Depression in the Thirties and its memories, which drove a lot of highly able people into schools, and as we move away from discrimination, military conscription and a whole bunch of other things that brought people in to teaching, the more we'll face a shortage of talent.

Take the case of teaching mathematics. When I meet my friends in Germany, France or Canada and ask them a question like, "What percentage of the elementary school teachers in your country are very uncomfortable with the elementary school arithmetic that they will have to teach their own students?", in every case they look at me and wait for the punch line of the joke. (Laughter)

It's absolutely inconceivable to them that this could be anything other than a joke. They never heard of an elementary school teacher who was uncomfortable with basic math. After all, their teachers all got into college and, if they got into college, they not only know whole numbers, fractions, decimals, et cetera, they know algebra and geometry and trigonometry and some of them know calculus and beyond. But if you take a look at our various state licensing examinations for elementary school teachers, the math questions are mostly at the level of sixth-grade arithmetic. And the percentage of prospective teachers who can't get 65 percent correct on a sixth-grade arithmetic test or who pass by

getting 65 is very high. The fact is that in every one of these other countries, you can put a teacher into a self-contained classroom and know that this teacher has met standards, either in terms of college entry or exit, that only the top three percent of our students meet.

By the way, although the Coleman report found practically no correlations of any kind between school input and student output, they did find a positive relationship between teacher verbal and mathematical ability and student outcomes.

Well, the high standard teachers in these countries have to meet is something that we can't reproduce here. We can't reproduce it in the near future because we are now involved in a chicken-and-egg kind of problem: How do we get the next generation of teachers who know reading and writing and math and science? If a substantial number of our classrooms are going to be filled with people who are not themselves at the highest levels in these subjects, where do we get teachers who are?

You can be pretty sure that if we continue to operate schools on the basis of self-contained classrooms and on the basis largely of teacher talk, then to the extent to which we have teachers who are not able to lecture or do arithmetic, et cetera, so well, we'll have a system that is going to move down. It's certainly not going to take us up to where we need to go.

That's very similar to the problems that exist in industry. What happens if you were always able to hire all the machinists you needed for your business, but now, all of a sudden, there's a shortage of machinists? Well, you can make believe there's no shortage and hire an emergency machinist who doesn't know anything and go out of business pretty soon. Or you can take the machinists you have and use them in a

different way. You can take the smaller number and make them heads of teams and see whether some of the things that machinists do now can be turned over to people who are not quite machinists. Essentially, you would have to find some different way of organizing your business if some types of employees were now in short supply.

Well, that's part of what restructuring is about. At one time, it was possible for the United States to have a qualified teacher in every self-contained classroom. In Germany, it's not only still possible, but you have lots of people who want to be teachers waiting in line for many years believing that they're never going to make it; that they will die before other people retire.

Our problem with teacher quality also means we lose the battle for our students, for instance, in mathematics. The battle is lost in elementary school and junior high school. Kids have by that time been through six, seven, eight, nine years with a fairly large percentage of teachers who themselves are uncomfortable with mathematics. Worse than that, many of these teachers undoubtedly get a bad message across: "Look, we graduated from high school, went to college, got Master's degrees and we don't know any arithmetic, so it's not important."

So in addition to not getting the particular subject across, they're also developing certain attitudes in youngsters, and we see that. What percentage of high school graduates who entered college last year said they wanted to be math majors? Five years ago, it was six percent, and last year, it was slightly under one percent. If we didn't have any resident Orientals, I think it would be closer to zero percent because if you take a look at who's taking math and science, it's not the people who have been here for a long time. Thank God for our new immigrants.

So, we can't have teachers in self-contained classrooms and have the same quality that other countries have. Sixteen to twenty-eight percent of their high school graduates meet a high standard, whereas only one to six percent of ours do. And yet, it will take about 23 percent of our college graduates each year to go into teaching merely to replace those who are leaving.

I'm not saying that new graduates are our only supply of teachers. We get some who re-enter and some who change occupations. But the 23 percent figure suggests the dimensions of how far into the talent pool we have to dig. We don't get many people from the top percentages, at least not for long. And by the time you get that 23 percent, you're down pretty far in terms of the talent pool.

By the way, there were some interesting experiments that involved the teacher quality issue. You'll remember that the states of Arkansas and Texas went through a period where they tested all their current teachers, teachers who had been teaching for three years, five years, ten, twelve, fifteen, et cetera. As a matter of fact, Mark White probably lost the governorship of Texas over that, even though he delivered $2.6 billion in new money for education. The teachers never forgave him for that testing.

The tests in both states generated a tremendous amount of conflict with teachers, a tremendous amount of turmoil. Did anybody here see any headlines about how many teachers were dismissed? Did anybody see any information about what was considered to be a passing mark for a teacher?

You won't see it, either. The state Departments of Education in each case have that information, but there must be some reason why they think

it's better for the public not to know. (Laughter)

I guarantee that, in Texas and Arkansas, even though all teachers took an examination, you won't find anybody who hasn't made it.

Restructuring means rethinking self-contained classrooms. It means rethinking the school staffing issue so that we can leverage the talent we have. Because we can't just emulate other nations' systems because we don't have the standards that will get us the huge amount of talent we need.

Secondly, there's the whole issue of the tremendous amount of bureaucracy in American schools compared to European and Japanese schools. Back in 1962, Martin Mayer wrote a book called The Schools. This was before collective bargaining, before the enforcement of civil-rights legislation, before the education of the handicapped act -- in other words, before all the increases in school bureaucracy brought about because of federal and state mandates or collective bargaining. Martin Mayer pointed out that there were more administrators and supervisors in New York City than in all of France; and more administrators and supervisors in the public schools of the State of New York than in all of Western Europe combined. This was '62. I'm sure that things have gotten worse.

Part of restructuring therefore means moving away from a system where you spend most of your money on administration and supervision. But, you see, there's a reason for all this bureaucracy.

In European countries and in Japan, the teachers have met high standards. Therefore, there's a feeling on the part of the general public that teachers don't have to be watched as much; they are highly-educated people, and they are more trusted. But in the United States,

how do you feel about some teacher who was hired 12 years ago for $11,000 a year? What do you do when you hire people for $11,000? You watch them very carefully. You say, "There must be a reason why he's willing to work for that kind of money." (Laughter) So there is a relationship between our administrative expenses and teacher qualifications and the salaries that we pay.

We should also revisit a recurring, progressive notion -- progressive going back to Socrates -- of what's wrong with traditional schooling: the fact that kids have to learn in the same way and at the same rate. Given that we won't have somebody talented to put in each self-contained classroom and given the fact that traditional schooling doesn't work for us, we should move over to some different system. Rethinking this is part of restructuring.

For me, restructuring is not fundamentally about school-based management. Shared decision making is essentially an intelligent reorganization of schools in order to take into account the staff that you're likely to get. How do you run schools in this country with 40 million kids? You can't have 2.5 million people in self-contained classrooms without having a substantial number of people in those classrooms who are below the standards you need. Therefore, you have to have teams. You have to use a certain amount of technology. You have to count more on peer relationships, on older students helping younger students and students helping each other. You have to think about how to organize the schools in such a way that brings in some mathematicians and local business talent, not for full time but for part of the day. How do you do it in a way that does not intrude, as it now does?

You have a whole bunch of questions that deal with staffing. And, on

the other side, you've got questions that deal with the way in which kids learn because we've always known that most human beings can't learn the way we've been teaching them.

For example, go back to 1940. That's a year about which Bill Bennett would have said we had great schools because the family was intact, we had a testing system that left you back if you didn't learn, and nobody had ever heard of drugs, in and out of school. We not only had lots of terrific teachers, but we had people waiting for 10 years to teach. That is, they were already qualified but were waiting for a job because of the Great Depression. And if a kid went home and complained to his mother and father about schools, he got a beating. So there was a lot of parental support for education. (Laughter)

But what percentage of kids graduated from high school in 1940 in the United States? Twenty percent. Only twenty percent.

So, even without all the problems we have today in terms of family, community, drugs or television, the traditional model of schooling was failing. We have to rethink schooling, to do it in a different way.

In my own thinking, I have looked at other learning situations and tried to ask whether schools might be reorganized on these other models. One that I find fairly powerful is an institution that's existed for quite some time. It's true that it's not a school in our sense of the term, but it's an educational institution: It has a curriculum and adults and kids, and it has certain standards. It has lots of things that schools have.

I'm talking about the Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts. When a kid joins the Scouts, he isn't anything. And then, in order to advance up the ranks, he has to pass a certain number of tests. Within each cluster of

rank, he can take these tests in any order that he wants, but he can't take one that's in the next category.

Then, after a certain point, you get things that are more than tests; they're merit badges. They involve demonstrating a variety of different things, some that require you to study and learn from a book, some that require you to take a test, some that require you to build something -- things that you have to do.

I think one of the interesting questions about a Scout troop is, how do 30-60 kids learn all these things? The kids are all of different ages, and they are at different places in their advancement schedule. How can the scoutmaster stand and lecture to them so the kids will learn?

The answer is, he can't lecture to them because they're all at different places in their advancement schedule. So, essentially you have a learning system that requires every Scout to become a worker, to do his own work to learn, which is the concept Ted Sizer has been advancing recently. But, of course, this concept goes back to Socrates, who said the teacher is only a midwife. Almost every great educator throughout history has had that insight, that you don't get any learning done without the effort and the work of the learner.

So, essentially the scoutmaster's job is to go to each kid and ask, "What are you working on next? What are you working on?" In other words, you have to find out if the kid has committed himself to do something and what it is he's committed himself to do. Then you ask him, "And how are you going to do it?" If the youngster has an idea about how he's going to do it, you let him do it, unless it's some outrageous notion that you're sure won't get him there. And then you

might suggest something.

So your second role is being sort of a coach, in the sense that you link him up with a chapter of a book or with a model or with another kid or with a parent volunteer. Then, finally, you are the assessor and the evaluator because the kid comes to you. But, you are not the only evaluator.

There's one other aspect to the Scouts that is really important, and that is the fact that advancement and recognition -- in other words, success -- is not dependent only on one set of things; namely, success is not dependent only on passing tests and advancing in terms of achievements. You can advance to a position within the Scout troop as a patrol leader. But you can also advance in terms of other talents and skills that you have, for instance, in leadership or teamwork or athletics. There are other positions besides patrol leader. There are at least three or four ways of being recognized and feeling successful that are not directly related to the achievement structure.

Why is that important? Well, four or five years ago, David Cohen and Dick Murnane wrote an interesting piece called "The Merits of Merit Pay" in which they described 30 or 40 districts that had merit pay arrangements for quite a few years, and the teachers accepted it. They asked what made merit pay successful in these places when it didn't work in most places? They found a number of answers.

These were good districts; the teachers wanted to stay there. The people in the community wanted them to have merit pay, which was a sign that they were interested in rewarding excellence. Also, the merit pay wasn't very much, so if somebody didn't get it, they didn't resent it; they weren't missing that much. The question of who got it was turned

over to the teachers, so it wasn't the administration playing favorites because the teachers had to figure out some sort of method.

But there was something else that was very interesting: In every one of these places where merit pay was in effect, the rewards were not only for being a good teacher. In every place, they rewarded other things, as well, such as attending PTA meetings or going to school football games.

Why was that so important? Well, it was important because the teacher who didn't get to be a merit teacher could say, "I'm a good teacher, too. It's just that I don't want to waste my time on all those extracurricular activities." That is, the scheme provided a face saver, so that people were not evaluated only on one single set of standards, which would obviously make some people in the bottom half or bottom third say, "I'm no good, I'm dumb, I'm a lousy teacher; you're making me feel miserable about myself." In other words, it didn't destroy professional self-esteem.

That is important to the student as a worker, as well. There must be an opportunity for kids to be rewarded for what Howard Gardner and Robert Sternberg and others say are talents or aspects of intelligence that are important in the world but haven't been in school. And I'm not talking about trying to create something to make kids feel good just because they're not doing well. I'm talking about talents and aspects of intelligence that are very important in the real world, such as asking good questions, coming up with hypotheses, demonstrating imagination, creativity, street smarts.

In the kind of school that I'm talking about, there would be lead teachers who head teams of two or three other teachers, several

paraprofessionals, some interns, residents and college students who want to become teachers and some volunteers and substantial use of technology. Essentially, the teacher no longer stands there lecturing to the kids but instead behaves in the way the scoutmaster does, saying, "Here are 12 things that we've got to do in the next two months. Which of these are you working on today?" It's then the job of the teacher and the other team members to get the kids to work.

In this context, the question is: Isn't it possible to develop a set of assessments that are closer to merit badges, where what the kids are doing is working on a particular set of performances, where learning and assessment are essentially the same?

This, apparently, is no longer such a radical or novel idea. I was intrigued a few months ago to see a really outstanding report called "America's Choice." It came out of a commission chaired by Ira Magaziner and co-chaired by two former Secretaries of Labor -- Ray Marshall and Bill Brock. The report has good news and bad news.

The good news is that there is no skill shortage in America. If you ask employers if they can't find any people that they need who are high-skilled, the answer is no.

The bad news is there is no skill shortage in America. That is, 90 percent of our businessmen are not seeking to meet the competition by going after or developing people with high skills because they don't think they can get them anyway. What they're doing is lowering wages to be able to compete with other countries rather than developing the kind of industry and the kind of jobs that will maintain the standard of living that we've been accustomed to.

Now, one of the proposals that came out of this report says that

every single school kid in the United States ought to head for what they call a Certificate of Initial Competency, which would essentially be a national certificate to certify the attainment of certain skills that everybody needs today in order to get a good job.

Kids would try to get certified by age 16, but some kids could do it earlier and some would do it later. They recommend that employers be prohibited from hiring any kid who drops out of school without this certificate. Not being able to get a job until you've earned such a certificate would be an incentive for youngsters to meet the standards. And they don't view it as a national exam where a kid sits down and takes a one-shot, standardized or non-standardized test. They view it as the acquisition of a set of merit badges over a period of time. That is, the youngster goes through a series of 10 or 15 performance-based assessments, which over a period of time indicates that the youngster is able to do the things that are supposed to be done.

Well, in my view, there is a very close relationship between this proposal and restructuring. We can't because of a number of the things I mentioned simply emulate other nations' school systems. We don't have a great enough supply of high-quality teachers for a self-contained classroom system. We do not at the present time have incentives for youngsters in terms of college entry or job entry. In other words, there's probably about 10 major differences between our schools and the schools of other industrial democracies around the world. And of these 10 or so major differences, we might be able to take care of two, three or four of them within a five-year period, but there are some that we're not going to be able to take care of soon and some that we will not be able to do at all. Therefore, we either have to be resigned to doing a

poor job or we have to experiment with different ways of structuring schools to try to produce the same or better results than schools in these other countries are producing.

I think one other thing ought to be looked at, and that is the movement of a small number of medical schools around the world toward problem-based education. At Harvard University, McMaster University in Canada, Maastricht University in The Netherlands, the University of Hawaii and Beersheba University, the entire medical education of students consists of being put in teams, facing simulated patients and trying to figure out what's wrong with the patients and why and how to solve it. That's not only how they get clinical training; it's how they learn their basic subjects.

These schools are highly successful. Maastricht is the one to look at because you could say, well, Harvard or McMaster select students who are suited for this type of education. But I understand in Holland you don't apply to an individual medical school; the pool of candidates are placed in medical school through a national lottery. And the students who were randomly assigned to Maastricht do better than the students in traditional medical schools. Here are students in a type of school that is not based on lectures, classes and traditional assessments, but that is essentially based on a series of problem-solving approaches, and they do very, very well.

One last thing: I do not believe that alternative assessments will in the short run or, maybe, ever replace some forms of traditional assessment. That's because there is almost always the question of how to compare students with one another.

Will colleges use this? It doesn't look good. For example, there is

a school up in Maine, Scarborough District, that decided to restructure itself. The people there wrote to about 50 colleges and universities and described how they now teach kids. Almost every college wrote: "I think your school's terrific. But we're sorry. We have no way of being able to figure out whether your kids qualify for our institution or not unless they take the SAT or unless they take a bunch of things that we are familiar with."

We need to have an assessment system in this country that allows us to talk to parents and businessmen and policymakers and citizens about student achievement on the basis of some kind of common set of assessments and understandings. The extent to which alternative assessments get you away from something that's common to something different and innovative can be a problem here. You will always hear the question of, "Well, how can we trust those who are doing the assessing?" Or, to put it bluntly, people will confront teachers and say: "Of course kids are doing well on your assessment. Who's assessing them? Well, you are, and you're the teacher." Especially in the United States, the necessary trust does not exist at this point. There will be and continue to be a demand for some other type of assessment which is not locally controlled and, perhaps, not locally marked.

Well, do we have time for a question or two?

DR. STEVENSON: Any questions from the floor?

MR. SHANKER: Ongoing?

VOICE: Why not?

We were talking about the quality of students and the quality of the students that made the quality of the students. I'm sure you included

it in your thoughts, but we also have the problem about the quality of the professors that teach the students.

Do you want to comment on that a little bit and about how to get that back on track?

MR. SHANKER: That is part of the same overall problem. It's also not only a question of quality, it's a question of several things. First, what is the level of talent that tends to come into schools of education? The second problem is that you have, by and large, a teacher training program that is absolutely divorced from practice. Most of our teachers took their work while they were undergraduates, before they had any responsibility at all for being in a classroom. Therefore, most of them come out and say that their training was a lot of nonsense, and they just dismiss it.

If some of those same courses were actually given while they were teaching half-time and if they had a place to come where they could raise some of the issues that came up in their school or in the classroom -- like student grouping or use of materials or all sorts of other things that come up in a practical context -- it would mean something; whereas, right now it's a lot of meaningless theory, and they resent it very much.

I basically think that colleges of education are not going to be able to do anything until things first happen in elementary and secondary schools. For example, business schools don't invent businesses. Some entrepreneur figures out some new way of packaging, a new way of manufacturing, a new way of doing something, and ends up being very successful. And then all the business professors go out to see what he's done, and they then include that in their course -- to give you

some notion as to what that person has done in the world.

I think the people who are in teacher training have a terrible dilemma. On the one hand, do you train teachers for the work that they will now have to do in classrooms? If you do, they shouldn't be in your education schools at all. We could do a much better job if we made sure that they knew their subject matter and, secondly, went to acting school for a year. (Laughter) That is, to know how to use their voice and move their body.

Do you remember the imposter experiments? There are 20 vacancies in a school; there are 100 teachers there. So, this year, we'll put people into those 20 spots who have never had any teacher training. Then you bring in your professors of education and your teachers and administrators and others and walk through the building and see whether you can tell the difference between the real teachers and those who never had any teacher training at all.

In every experiment like that that's been conducted, nobody was able to tell the difference. It's not because our real teachers are so bad or the ones they put in there are so good. It's that we have a very narrow view of what teaching is, which is to stand in front of a group of people and lecture. With that view, your knowledge of subject matter and your personality and, to some extent, your ability to organize are very important. Now, if teaching were like what I was talking about earlier, and if you had a school that operated in that way, you could certainly tell the difference between a person who really had teacher training and a person who had just come in, because all of those different kinds of ways of getting students to learn and all of the connections a teacher would have to make and everything else would be

something that a person who is not a teacher would be very unlikely to know.

VOICE: I've heard your statistics on European education a number of times, and I've been trying to talk to people in your office about trying to get some sources for the European numbers but I haven't been able to get any. Is it possible that we could get some sources?

It seems to me that Americans have never wanted to compare anything in the United States with anything anywhere else. Now we're starting to be willing to do that. Ten years ago, you said what about the European system? Are they doing better? The answer, almost universally, was: That's different. You can't compare it.

Now people are beginning to be willing to compare it, and I would like to see some strong statistics that we can use really to make that argument, which I think is accurate. Is it possible that we could get some?

MR. SHANKER: The figures on what percentage of secondary school graduates entered college are available from OECD documents. Every one of those places has some kind of examination that is required for entry. So what you have to do is look at the examination and look at what the cutoff is, that is, what the poorest passing paper is or the top failing paper. Take a look at that. They're not hard figures, but you have to look at that. And look at the top band. And I think you'd come to the conclusion that you can't get in without being in that top band.

VOICE: Let me just say that, for instance, the argument you get, the typical American idea of European education as you indicated, is that they take the top. They educate them for the university and they throw the rest away. Okay?

Now, when you say 28 percent passed the Arbitur in Germany, that means, presumably -- that is 28 percent of what? That's the first question. That's certainly not 28 percent of the gymnasium students. That's the kind of question that confuses. You get into all kinds of confusing arguments unless you have the statistics to make it very clear what you're comparing. I'd like to have some better information from your office, or from somebody.

MR. SHANKER: What we have is not a heck of a lot because we run into problems trying to get information. We've been trying to get information as to what determines high school graduation in Canada from their various provincial departments. It's very difficult to get something that you can translate.

We can give you some things that we've put together, but I would say that, basically, this ought to be on the front burner for the U.S. But, as you say, with the exception of Great Britain where they have a scandalously low proportion of kids who are still in school after age 16, in these other countries, not only do they keep them for a long time and do a good job with all the tracks, but if a kid leaves school at age 18 or 19 and still hasn't mastered certain skills, they follow the kid for the rest of his life.

They've got all sorts of other programs and incentives. They don't give up on them. They continue to work with them. We are the country that gives up earlier, that gives kids a single chance. All the things that we've been throwing at them for years and claiming that these other countries do, we mostly do.

We have more tracking. It's not as formal, but we have more tracking in terms of the way we do things in the United States than many of these

other countries do. It's just that they openly admitted they do it at a certain time, and we do it through all sorts of informal devices. We do it through vocational and academic. We do it through neighborhoods. We do it through those who are enrolled in certain academic type courses. And we start it very early.

One more. Somebody back there.

VOICE: Your school model sounds very much like the career ladder model that was popular 10-15 years ago, which, in fact, the unions were very much opposed to.

MR. SHANKER: Yes. I was. (Laughter)

VOICE: I agree with you that it's an effective model. Maybe, because we weren't ready for it at that time, but I'd be interested in having you comment on the role of that model in the teacher preparation process.

MR. SHANKER: Let me first go to the question of why it was opposed 15-20 years ago, and why I think it's got a good chance of acceptance now. Also, didn't we try things like this at progressive schools and in open classrooms and things like that, and that didn't work?

There are basically several things that have happened that make it quite clear why it didn't work then and why it may work now, even if we don't know if it will. First of all, the question of differentiated staffing: During the period of the 1950s and 1960s, everybody thought that there was an endless supply of people with talent. Nobody was even dealing with questions of absolute shortages. That's one thing.

Secondly, in that period, the proposal was that some administrators or supervisors or school board members would select people for a different set of roles. Therefore, it was viewed as political.

Somebody's going to get a favor and somebody's going to get more money because they are kowtowing to the principal. It was viewed as a control mechanism; whereas, now, if you've got a National Board for Professional Teaching Standards or state mechanisms, it is now possible for the profession itself to play a role in terms of sophisticated types of assessments by people within the process. There is the move toward professionalization which takes it out of political hands.

As far as the learning system is concerned, there were major things that made the open classroom and progressive movements fail. They put too much of a burden on an individual teacher or group of teachers; instead of giving one lecture, they had to figure out 15, 20 or 30 different connections for all the kids. It's a lot easier to prepare a lecture than it is to figure out all these different ways. So, the teachers burned out. The materials they created weren't uniformly good because they had to create too many of them too quickly. And the whole thing fell apart.

Now you've got something that you didn't have then: technology. You've got huge numbers of video tapes, audio tapes. You can create instant materials with fax machines, copying machines and computers. There are a whole range of things that are available that were not available in 1965. That's one thing.

Secondly, technology also gives you a method by which the profession can communicate. For example, you could have a National Professional Teacher Data Base so that, let's say, a thousand outstanding social studies teachers could evaluate all the social studies video tapes. You wouldn't have to look at the 65 video tapes that deal with the Declaration of Independence; the thousand teachers would do that. And

if you were a teacher who wanted to recommend one of those to some of your students, you would do what lawyers and doctors and business people do: You would access that and see that, in the opinion of the peer review panel, here are the three out of the sixty outstanding video tapes suitable for eighth grade. And there would be a little comment. Not only that, but you could access most of these materials almost immediately. So these two things make things very, very different.

Now, you started with a question about preparation and training for this new type of work. I think that's doing it backwards. But before I say more, let me make what I think in a way is the most important point. And that is why I think school-based management and shared decision making in and of themselves will do almost nothing; in and of themselves, they are consciousness-raising devices. They get people to talk to each other, which is fine, but you know what happens when they interview people in the school who presumably now have this power and can do anything you want? What do they do? Nothing, or almost nothing.

They have big discussions about tiny items. And they think because they've gone through these terrific fights that they have done something. But, if you're the man from Mars, you will not see any big change.

The reason is that, basically, the relationships in any workplace are delicate. Nobody wants to start a fight with somebody else. Nobody wants to offend his or her neighbor. You've got to work with them.

In several of our contracts, it says that if 60 percent of the teachers or 75 percent vote to suspend a provision of the contract, they can do it. So I go to those districts, and I ask the local union leader whether the teachers in many schools have done so. And they say no.

And I say, "Is it really difficult to get 60 percent of the teachers to agree on something?" And they say, "No, it's easy." But they refuse to shove it down the throats of the 40 percent who disagree with them. As a matter of fact, they won't even do something if 10 percent disagree with them. They don't want to have fights in the workplace. They feel, "I'm in my own, self-contained classroom. Everybody leaves me alone. And if I'm going to be involved in something now which is going to get that teacher down the hall to do things differently inside of her self-contained classroom, and she resents it, next week, a group will come and force me to do something.

In other words, in every war, the bullets fly in both directions. You don't want anybody to shoot at you so you'd better not shoot at them.

How do you change that? How do you get people to be willing to engage in controversy and take chances? Well, there has to be something at stake. If you say, "Look, not only are we going to give you the right to run your school but we will have the following assessments based on educational value added -- five years from now, those schools that managed to add the greatest educational value will get a $30,000 bonus for every staff member, and those that don't do so well but stand still will get their usual cost of living standards, and those that do miserably are bankrupt -- you might be subject to a hostile takeover where the winning schools will send a team over to run your school," -- if those are the rules of the game, you'll have a different kind of discussion in the school.

Now you see why I don't really think that you have to start with preparation and training for this new kind of school. Nobody trained

people to go into restructured companies. The restructured companies didn't restructure because they had a new philosophy or a new training program. They restructured because they were about to go out of business, because the Japanese were making products that were better and, oftentimes, no more expensive and sometimes even cheaper.

Therefore, they were about to disappear. They sat down and realized that they were either going to continue doing things the way they were or start to figure out how to make a better product and do it in ways that were more efficient.

So I think the training comes later. It goes back to the point that was raised before. I think our public schools are in danger. I think in another five or ten years we will have some radical privatization in this country if there's only lots of talk about change and improvement. While we talk about improvement or change, things are either standing still or they're getting worse.

The result is, people will make stupid statements like let's do that because nothing can be worse than this. Well, something always can be worse. And that attitude is a substitute for thinking. But, nevertheless, there are more and more people saying that, thinking that and feeling that.

I believe that instead of waiting for our schools to be dismantled, we ought to create a school system in which there are stakes, and the people within each of those places will then, under that kind of pressure, figure out ways of doing things.

Let's face it: Basically, our public school system is a lot like the Soviet economy. You get no rewards if you do something spectacularly well. As a matter of fact, if you do something very well, you can be

sure that your colleagues are going to say you cheated. And nothing terrible happens to you if you consistently do things that are very bad. In a situation like that, why should anybody offend his neighbor or try to do anything good?

So, we really have sort of the Gorbachev problem in our American schools. I don't think that we're going to get out of this without doing something that's very different and innovative. And I don't think we'll do something different and innovative unless there are stakes; that is, not only because they'd like to because it's a nice thing to do, but because they have to because something's going to happen one way or another if they do or don't.

Then, the colleges and schools can take a look at what the successful places do. What was the combination? Was it individual leadership? Was there a strong person who led the group? Was there a committee? Was there a different and more shared type of leadership?

I think you'll find many different successful models, just as you'll find many companies, law firms, institutions that are run in quite different ways. And there are unsuccessful ones within each model, as well as successful ones. But the whole training component now assumes that we know in advance what ought to go into it. It assumes that we have a fixed model, and we are preparing people to fill fixed roles.

If I were training people for this sort of thing, I would have seminars. I would have people read things that deal with organizational theory, read things on different methods of assessments and measurements and what the pitfalls are and not what's right and what's wrong and what should be passed on. People have to have the intellectual interest and the capacity to deal with the controversial and interesting issues

within the field.

How many people who are in education in the United States read anything about this and can carry on a discussion? I mean, the kinds of discussions that need to take place in schools? Not many. But assuming that they now have power and now have the motivation because they have the incentive, then the first thing that's going to happen is people will say: "Now what do we do? We want some ideas. Well, what should I be reading? What should I be discussing? What are the tradeoffs?"

We need that. Basically, we have a pervasive anti-intellectualism in American education. There are very few people who read and think about even something as simple as Education Week. I can't imagine that in any other country, most people in education wouldn't bother to read a publication like Education Week. But we've got four million adults employed in elementary and secondary education in the United States, and there are 40,000 subscribers to Education Week.

If I were to move to something more intellectual than that, it's worse. Right after E.D. Hirsch's Cultural Literacy came out, I was speaking to gatherings of policymakers, superintendents, principals and teachers -- sometimes with a thousand people in the audience. E.D. Hirsch's Cultural Literacy had been on the best seller list for eight weeks, and everybody was debating about whether or not kids in this country can't read because they don't have the appropriate background knowledge, et cetera.

As I went to each of these meetings, people from the floor would always get up and say something about how they wanted to be thought of as professionals. But if I asked how many of them had heard of Cultural Literacy, out of a thousand, there were maybe eight who had heard of it

-- not who had read it. And if I asked how many could stand up and, within a minute or two, tell us about the central idea, almost nobody could.

I think this would be unthinkable in any other professional field in this country. If somebody wrote a best seller claiming that most of the people in your profession are doing something that is very harmful to your clients, every practitioner either would have read the book or the article or would know what it's about; whereas, in our field, that's just not true.

At the very minimum, we need to have school people discuss and understand a whole broad range of issues. But the real training is unclear. We won't know what they need until a number of them have developed successful models. After we have looked at the models, we'll ask ourselves what kind of training would make it easier for people to work within an organization like that.

But since we don't have an organization like that yet, I don't think we can answer the question of what kind of preparation does a person need to work in an organization that doesn't exist yet.

Thank you.