

***Educational Leadership:
Is It Déjà Vu All Over Again?***

In this new foreword to his 1976 article *The Training Task: Broadening the Base* (see attached), Michael D. Usdan declares himself “stunned” by the glacial pace of reform in educational leadership.

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June 2005**

Educational Leadership: Is It Déjà Vu All Over Again?

I must confess to initial amnesia when IEL President Betty Hale unearthed my 1976 article *The Training Task: Broadening the Base*. I had totally forgotten the piece and had logically assumed that like most of my writings it had floated into deserved oblivion.

When Betty asked me to review this epic for its relevance thirty years after its composition, however, I welcomed the assignment and am pleased to briefly share the following reactions and perspectives at a time when educational policy and leadership issues have a political saliency perhaps unprecedented in our history.

I was stunned upon reading the piece about how little had actually changed in three decades. The same criticisms of educational-administration preparatory programs I and others made so long ago are being rearticulated today. The recent report by Teachers College President Arthur Levine reflects continuing and widespread apprehensions about the current effectiveness of university-based preparatory programs. Whether one agrees or disagrees with Levine's analysis or conclusions, the reality is that – according to numerous critics in both lay and professional circles – contemporary campus-based efforts to prepare school administrators for the challenges that confront them lack relevance and credibility.

Indeed, I would contend that the leadership expectations placed upon today's principals and superintendents are even more demanding than they were when I wrote the chapter for the 1976 IEL publication, *Training Educational Leaders: A Search for Alternatives*. In the latter, as well as in an article I wrote in 1968 for the *Teachers College Record* entitled *The School Administrator: Modern Renaissance Man*, I called for preparatory programs that stressed the escalating political dimensions of educational leadership as the demands of the job moved from the late Stephen Bailey's 4 B's (bonds, budgets, buses and buildings) to the 4 R's of race, resources, relationships, and rule.

I would contend that the current (and too-long deferred) emphasis on instructional leadership further exacerbates the diverse pressures on school leaders. This focus on instructional leadership with the goal of improving student achievement is laudable. Current school administrators will largely be judged on the basis of their success in elevating student test scores, but building management and political skills can hardly be ignored.

This is not the place to argue the pros and cons of this new era of NCLB, school accountability, and the pervasive standards-based reform movement. The point I am making is that the recent transcendent emphasis on instruction further compounds the complexity of the school leader's job because there will be no abatement of the concurrent political and managerial demands of the job. Indeed, the current "new politics of education" era in which business leaders and elected officials at the highest levels exercise great influence in shaping the education agenda will require greater political skills on the part of educators.

Thus, I feel even more strongly today than I did three decades ago that we must find new interdisciplinary and intersector ways of preparing prospective leaders to handle the instructional, managerial, and political components of the job. These multiple demands are ever changing and evermore urgent. They require more than ever the provision of clinically oriented experiences that will more effectively prepare prospective administrators for the realities of the demanding positions they aspire to fill.

A corollary point is that new configurations of leadership positions will be required. This is illustrated, for example, by the recent development of notions of distributive leadership exemplified by the chief executive officer/chief academic officer shared-responsibility-model found in an increasing number of larger districts. In other words, an individual, however talented he or she may be, may be unable to handle these complex responsibilities on a unilateral basis.

In closing, let me reaffirm that the need is even more urgent in the contemporary context to prepare leaders who can, in John Gardner's words, "cross boundaries" and end the dysfunctional institutional isolation of schools from the larger society in an increasingly demographically diverse nation.

While our preparatory institutions may be responding to these new imperatives in some ways, I question whether incremental change will suffice in a world that is changing so exponentially. I am always reminded as I talk to education groups of the wisdom contained in the Club of Rome's postulating three types of people in a future in which change is the only constant:

1. Those who make it happen;
2. Those who let it happen; and
3. Those who wonder what happened?

I must conclude on a somewhat negative note, after rereading my piece of 30 years ago and assessing it in today's context, that unless we change more rapidly, too many of us in education may be fated to be in the position of wondering what happened to us and the education enterprise to which we have devoted our careers.

THE TRAINING TASK:
BROADENING THE BASE

Michael D. Usdan

“Recently, there has been much attention focused upon the quality of educational leadership in the United States. Criticisms frequently have been articulated that a disproportionate number of practicing educational leaders have been in inadequately prepared to cope with the multi-faceted social, economic, and political problems confronting them. School administrators, it is alleged, have been narrowly trained in the managerial facets of their jobs and thus have been ill-equipped to cope with some of the newer dimensions of their responsibilities. Superintendents of schools, many observers of the contemporary American educational scene contend, can no longer expect to succeed if they are expert only in the managerial or technical aspects of their increasingly demanding positions. The Superintendent in a growing number of communities not only must have a modicum of technical proficiency but, even more importantly, must manifest the ability to handle dynamic and often controversial social, economic, and political issues. The contention will be explicated in this paper that the contemporary educational leader must manifest a cluster of somewhat different abilities. He must be skilled as a technician operating school systems that continue to burgeon in size and managerial complexity. He must also exercise leadership as a community statesman on the many pressing social problems which impinge upon the educational process.”

I wrote these words seven years ago in an article entitled “The School Administrator: Modern Renaissance Man” which appeared in the April, 1968 issue of the Teachers College Record (vol. 69, No. 7). When preparing this paper to address issues pertaining to the preparation of educational leaders, I re read this article wondering whether the views of a somewhat callow professor had been altered in seven years by sobering experience as a small city school board member for five years and more recently as the president of a small private institution of higher education.

I found that my earlier views had not changed but, indeed, had become more intense when leavened with front-line experience. I have become more convinced than ever that educational leadership increasingly is dependent upon the transcendent socio-political events of the larger world in which it exists. In other words, educational leadership increasingly is dependent upon factors or forces over which it has little direct control.

Thus, I come to this assignment with mixed perspectives and wearing several hats. As a university-based analyst of educational policymaking I have long been interested in leadership issues. My academic interests as a one-time professor of educational administration have now been tested in the cauldron of practical experience. I will direct my remarks to a general analysis of what I see as the reasons underlying the decreasing influence of educational leaders in an ever-changing society.

I will conclude with some unpopular comments about the anachronistic and inappropriate ways in which contemporary educational leaders are being prepared to meet their complex responsibilities. In these final comments I will have the temerity to suggest some ways in which the federal government might help to generate a badly needed and long overdue revolution in training procedures.

Why, then, do I and many others feel so passionately that existing preparation programs commonly are too narrowly gauged to meet both the pre- and in-service needs of educational leaders? Responses to this basic question are complex and are predicated upon political, social, and economic changes in the society at large as well as upon developments which have impinged so dramatically in recent years upon the schools. Local educational decision-making until recently was made through somewhat stable processes and occurred in a relatively closed political environment that was dominated by a small group of influential administrators, particularly the superintendent, and board members. The consensual and somewhat closed style of educational politics, with professional educators playing major roles, has undergone dramatic transformation. Within a brief period of time, actually a decade or so commencing in the early 1960's, major issues such as race, teacher militancy, community control, student activism, inflation and concomitant concerns about escalating school costs, and demands for accountability have cascaded upon educational leaders. The recent confluence of education and such volatile issues has politicized education in unprecedented ways and irrevocably pulled it deeper into the mainstream of the body politic.

These developments have placed great stress upon educational leaders who no longer are as insulated and isolated from the political process as they once were. The unique separation of school government from general government has been eroded as educational decision-making has been sucked into the vortex of larger societal issues such as race, finance, poverty, and public employee collective negotiations.

The role and influence of educational leaders has also shifted because of growing skepticism about the public schools, particularly in the nation's large cities. By the late 1960's the general public had become more skeptical as education, despite the thrusts of the Great Society, did not succeed dramatically in mitigating poverty and other deeply embedded social problems. There was growing apprehension expressed about public education's role and effectiveness, and these doubts without question eroded confidence and faith in the country's educational leadership.

Overblown rhetoric and expectations that somehow education would be a panacea for all of society's ills created a backlash, and the conflict which swirled around school administrators and school boards on issues such as race, teacher militancy, and finance further undermined public confidence. Traditional, cherished notions about education were questioned as more citizens noted the key distinction to be made between education and formal schooling. The dimensions of education were recast into broader terms as the alternative school movement and other developments symbolized a growing perspective that schools constituted just one component of the educational process.

The schools could no longer monopolize the educational process in a society where there would be more leisure time and the need for life-long learning in an ever-changing technological economy. Many viewed the school as becoming increasingly

obsolete as television and other information sources complemented, if not replaced in large measure, both the family and educational institutions as transmitters of culture. Nationwide studies of education such as the Report of the Panel on Youth of the President's Science Advisory Committee (chaired by James C. Coleman), which called for different modes of education that would permit youth to become adults in all ways not just intellectual ones as students, argued that the transition from youth to adulthood was too long and that young people needed to assume responsibility earlier and not be exclusively relegated to a student's role.ⁱ The National Commission on the Reform of Secondary Education, another prestigious group which was established by the Charles F. Kettering Foundation, also recommended alternative routes to high school completion and for the elimination of the insulation of young people from the world of work and adults.ⁱⁱ

Thus, basic questions were being articulated about the one-time somewhat sacrosanct functional structure and modus operandi of public schools. This questioning no doubt undercut to a considerable extent both the credibility and influence of educational leaders who were increasingly powerless to handle complex issues which were beyond their resources to cope with.

In the past educational leaders generally could concern themselves with issues that impinged rather directly upon the public schools themselves. These problems, difficult as some of them might have been, were more immediately within the ken of school officials. School boards and administrators, in other words, who managed with a modicum of success the four "B's," namely, bonds, budgets, buses, and buildings often could survive and even flourish noncontroversially in positions of educational leadership.

Times have changed, however, and a new welter of problems confronts public education. These problems, as discussed earlier, encompass the society at large and have more intensively sucked the public schools into the controversial vortex of American politics at every governmental level. Stephen K. Bailey of the American Council on Education has relettered in a useful way the aforementioned four "B's." Bailey clusters contemporary educational issues around:

"four R's": race, resources, relationships and rule, or if some prefer the letter "C": color, coffers, coordination, and control, or even "P": prejudice, pocketbooks, partnerships, and power."ⁱⁱⁱ

Bailey's four "R's" provide very useful handles to present some specific illustrations of the difficult and controversial issues that have so recently beleaguered educational leaders. These issues have generated serious reservations about the viability of existing educational institutions because of the limited capacity of school leaders to cope adequately with them.

The saliency of the first "R," "race," as an issue which permeates the body politic is apparent. The nation's seemingly intractable racial travails have been focused largely

upon the schools. Educational officials at the local, state, and federal levels have been wrestling with this most difficult and volatile of all domestic issues. Since passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the national government has been involved deeply in educational issues pertaining to race. Officials of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare have been embroiled in persistent conflict with local school districts over efforts to desegregate their students and staffs. Hundreds of school districts whether de jure segregated in the South or de facto segregated in the North have been under governmental pressure to eliminate racial apartheid. Local school districts, of course, have been profoundly influenced by judicial decisions over which they have little or no control as they wrestle with the volatile, community-driven desegregation issues.

Within the past decade or so throughout the land, local educational officials have been involved in this controversial issue; an issue with ramifications that obviously have extended far beyond the traditional purview of local school systems. More than any other problem, the issue of race has politicized education and broken down the traditional separation of school officials from the mainstream of general government at all levels. Even the most parochial and apolitical educational leaders have come to recognize that the schools unilaterally cannot resolve America's deeply embedded problem of racial separation. Many students of urban problems, for example, believe that racial integration can best be achieved through cooperative multi-agency approaches to the inter-related problems of education, housing, and jobs. Such approaches are predicated upon the assumption that the schools must work much more closely with other agencies within the mainstream of the body politic at all governmental levels.

The second of Bailey's four "R's," "resources," likewise is pulling educators into the general political arena. The politics of school finance is the major issue in scores of states and local communities as educational officials strive to survive within an archaic financial structure. The local property tax, it is now widely acknowledged, can no longer continue to bear the primary burden for supporting elementary and secondary schools. As the costs of supporting education continues to soar because of factors like inflation, demands for higher quality schools, and escalating teacher salaries, the need to broaden the base of fiscal support for education becomes more acute. In other words, the public schools must acquire greater access to revenues produced by sales, income, and corporate taxation.

If local property taxation, in more bucolic times a relatively accurate barometer of wealth, can no longer be the bellwether for financing education, other sources of revenue must be found. Only the state and federal governments have access to the broadly based taxes that will be adequate to fund education in the decades ahead.

These fiscal realities have further dramatized the weaknesses of local educational officials with their limited access to tax resources. Increasingly they will be dependent upon other levels of government and the courts for financial assistance. Much of the mythology pertaining to local control of education is shattered because of this fiscal dependence and the fact that mandated costs constitute by far the greatest

proportion of the school budget, leaving to the discretion of educational leaders only an infinitesimal percentage of the resources to be allocated.

The third “R” cited by Bailey, “relationships,” also is accelerating the politicalization of education. Despite continued widespread beliefs in shibboleths pertaining to local autonomy in education, school districts, as mentioned earlier, are less and less isolated and insulated from a growing number of federal, state, local, and private partners in the educational enterprise. Local school districts are no longer relatively independent islands in establishing educational policy. The base of educational decision-making has expanded tremendously in recent years, and school officials have been compelled either to solidify or to create de novo a wide range of broadened relationships.

Recently enacted federal programs have generated, for example, new dimensions of communication and coordination between local school officials and educators working in state and federal agencies.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, in particular, has, contrary to some popular assumptions, markedly strengthened the role and influence of state education departments. Much of the recent strengthening of state educational agencies is attributable to responsibilities imposed upon them by federal legislation enacted within the past few years. This federal legislation, as well as the growing need for additional state aid has compelled many school districts which once ignored understaffed and ineffectual state agencies to turn to the latter for approval of proposals and for assistance in meeting their burgeoning problems.

In addition to the aforementioned necessity for more vertical coordination with state and federal agencies, local school districts have been forced in recent years to expand contacts horizontally. A variety of new programs require district officials to consult with representatives of local groups and communities on a whole range of programs that formerly were decided unilaterally by educators. Title I of ESEA, for example, mandated that public school officials consult with local community action agencies in the development of programs for the disadvantaged. Tutoring, preschool, and vocational training programs, traditionally administered by professional educators, have been operated by the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), funded agencies or private corporations.

Other examples can be cited of groups impinging into areas that once were the professional educator’s almost exclusive domain. Various titles of ESEA, for example, encouraged school systems to cultivate relationships with nonpublic schools, universities, libraries, museums, and a wide range of social, cultural, and educational institutions.

The paramount result of this broadened participation in public education is that the schools are no longer the closed system once were. This expanded involvement means that the schools are now infinitely more vulnerable to community pressures and

are less able to stand effectively behind the legend of separation of politics and education.

Last but certainly not least in the Bailey four “R’s” is “rule.” What is changing in education’s authority structure that apparently is making conflict endemic to so many school systems? Why are school board members and administrators in hundreds of communities increasingly in constant strife? What has recently happened to have so many basic questions raised about the leadership and basic structure of an educational system that had operated relatively harmoniously until recent years?

As has already been indicated, new and diverse forces are now involved in influencing educational policy. Many outside groups composed of non-professional educators are now seeking and obtaining part of the public school “action.” In addition to these external factors, traditional authority structures within school districts have been undermined. As districts have grown larger and educational issues have become more complex, lay school board members have become increasingly upon their professional staffs for information and recommendations. Rather than being the actual determiners of school policy, boards of education very frequently serve as agencies of legitimating for decisions made by professional staff.

Burgeoning teaching militancy is certainly a major element in much of the contemporary conflict engulfing public education. More aggressive teacher organizations, fueled by organizational rivalry, have expanded collective bargaining or professional negotiations throughout the country in less than a decade. Classroom teacher acquiescence to administrators and school boards is a thing of the past and there can be little doubt that powerful teachers’ groups will play an increasingly important role in determining educational policy.

In little more than a decade teachers have become a most potent political force, and one cannot debate that the breakthrough in 1961 of the United Federation of Teachers in New York City represented a turning point and heralded the dawning of a new era in the history of educational decision-making. Teachers within the past few years have become deeply involved in political campaigns and are beginning to use their political muscle in unprecedented ways. With impressive grassroots strength and the financial resources and staffs provided by large memberships, teacher organizations can be overpowering. If not intimidating, to the traditional administrative and school board leadership in a community or state. With local tax revenues saturated, one can expect that teachers will use their influence to strengthen their collective bargaining rights and to support “right to strike” legislation at both the state and federal levels. It thus is reasonable to assert that the phenomenon of rising teacher power has affected profoundly every facet of educational decision-making and, indeed, has further dramatized the relative powerlessness of many who allegedly exercise educational leadership.

Militant parent groups, particularly in the large urban centers, also are questioning the traditional structure of public education. The movement to decentralize big city school systems, for example, has been a national phenomenon.

Protests by secondary school students also projected dramatically basic questions about the organization of American education. The tactics of students, of course, have generated a marked backlash in which politicians and others have criticized the schools for being too lenient with obstreperous youngsters.

In this age, most of our traditional institutions are being questioned, therefore, it is not surprising that school boards are constantly under critical analysis and are so vulnerable to attack. In this environment of institutional reassessment, it can be predicted with some confidence that education and its leadership at all levels will be increasingly controversial and politicized.

What, then, are the implications of these developments and trends for the U.S. Office of Education as it considers new plans for the preparation of educational leaders with the expiration of the Education Professions Development Act? I would offer the following comments.

Despite some efforts at reform there remains the acute need for an agonizing reappraisal of most current training programs. University-based programs must be supplemented to a far greater extent by internship programs and other field-based experiences which reflect more realistically educational leadership situations in which change increasingly is the only constant. More of the training must be done within the context of actual events in educational settings.

A new priority of leadership capabilities must be stressed with much greater emphasis placed upon developing skills in areas like political brokering, negotiating, and conflict management. More feed-back should be elicited from parents, teachers, board members, and other grass roots sources in the development of training approaches for the leaders who will govern their schools. The inordinate influence of higher education in the preparation process must be balanced with the insights and experiential base of those on the firing line.

Professor Edwin M. Bridges of Stanford University in a recent paper cogently demolished many of the prevailing shibboleths concerning the preparation of educational administrators.^{iv} Bridges raises a series of pertinent points which raise very basic questions about the appropriateness of higher education's domination of the preparation process. He notes the "persistent lack of a positive relationship between formal preparation and administrator effectiveness" and poses a series of basic and troubling questions:

"Both the informal appraisals and the formal evidence suggest a pithy, albeit disconcerting question. 'To what extent, and in what precise ways, do our graduate leadership training programs prepare individuals to deal

with the realities of leadership?’ Does formal preparation help the student contend with the demands for leadership imposed upon him by the exigencies of a “real-live” job as an administrator? Or, contrariwise, do our preparatory programs present points of view and provide experiences which are indeed dysfunctional for those who aspire to be leaders in formal organizations? ^v”

Bridges in his incisive examination of these questions—the paper should be mandatory reading for all concerned with the preparation of education leaders—concludes that formal preparation for leadership may indeed be dysfunctional, and that trained incapacity may well be an unintended consequence of our well-intentioned efforts.

In examining these issues, Bridges analyzes the socio-technical and attitudinal socialization of administrators in the light of what is about the realities of leadership. His analysis is so trenchant that I have taken then liberty of quoting the following extensive portion of his summary section:

“In discussing the attitudinal socialization of leaders, the author contended that the administrator thirsts for knowledge of results; however, he is unlikely to receive any formal feedback from his fellow functionaries. The leader seeks to reduce the uncertainty surrounding his success by judging his performance in terms of his ego-ideal. The leader’s formal preparation through its implicit and explicit treatment of leadership inclines him to adopt a grandiose ego-ideal; this heroic conception has several dysfunctional consequences for its unwary holder.

First, the leader is impaled on the horns of an agonizing dilemma. On the one hand, he earnestly aspires to lead his subordinates to what he considers the promised land; on the other hand, the organizational realities are not conducive to the fulfillment of this leadership fantasy. Second, the omnipotent component of his ego-ideal predisposes the leader to seek situations which apparently offer him the maximum opportunity to act out his leadership fantasies. Since these situations are perilous undertakings, the leader is snared in a Catch-22. He faces ‘craziness’ if he succumbs to his leadership fantasy and a sense of loss if he does not. Third, the excessively ambitious ego-ideal of the leader makes him especially vulnerable to disappointment; however, this same heroic conception deters him from seeking the social-emotional support he needs to deal constructively with his disappointment.

To assess the impact of the leader’s socio-technical socialization, the author examined the degree of fit between the work of the student and the work of the manager along four dimensions—the rhythm and the hierarchical nature of work, the character of work-related communications, and the role of emotions in work. Each of these four dimensions revealed

major disparities between student and managerial work; furthermore, the analysis highlighted numerous dysfunctional consequences.

Both the rhythm of the student's work and the modes of thought to which he is exposed during his training groove him for a slow work pace. However, the tempo of the manager's work is hectic and fragmented. The student's formal preparation, therefore, makes it difficult for him to exercise discretion within the abbreviated time frame of the practitioner. Moreover, he is apt to be overwhelmed by the constant need to shift his mental and emotional gears.

When the hierarchical nature of student and managerial work is analyzed, the difference in positional rank suggests several additional sources of the leader's trained incapacity. The student acquires a passive orientation to the resolution of conflict-resolution; this type of orientation prompts the leader to use conflict-resolution techniques that are dysfunctional for the organization he heads. The subordinate nature of student work also fosters the continuation of lenient personnel assessments and promotes a reluctance to delegate.

Discontinuities in the work-related communications of students and managers supply further grounds on which to question the appropriateness of leadership training. Administrators spend roughly equivalent amounts of time in sending and receiving roles; students, on the other hand, are far more likely to be receivers than senders. The spoken word is the major medium of communication for administrators while the written word is the chief medium of communications for students. Non-verbal communication plays a significant role in the work of the administrator and is relatively unimportant in the work of the student. The direction of communications in administrative work is characteristically two-way whereas the student is more typically involved in one-way communications. These disparities are a principal source of the administrator's communication difficulties.

With respect to the role of emotions in work, the substantive content of the student's formal preparation and the placid emotional environment in which he works undermine his capacity for affective empathy, his ability to cope with anger, and his competence to manage his own inner emotional life. The more extended his training, the more of an emotional cripple he is likely to become."^{vi}

While Bridges admittedly proposed few remedies, his analysis must cause consternation among those of us who are or have been professors of educational administration and merits careful consideration by federal officials and others who might be instrumental in engineering reforms in the preparation of educational leadership. As Bridges disturbingly concludes, "the trained capacity hypothesis stains all our houses."

What, then, are the chances for meaningful reform? Without the prod and stimulus of federal or foundation grants I cannot be sanguine about the future. I am dubious about the likelihood of self-reform in institutions of higher education. If preparatory programs were not extensively reformed in the exciting days of expansionary budgets in the 1960's, what realistically is the likelihood of such change in the decremental budgetary era of the 1970's? Many tenured and established senior faculty at institutions of higher education conscious of declining enrollments and ever-mindful of the singular economic importance of maintaining FTE's logically might be defensive and not particularly amenable to reducing their role in the preparatory process. Such reluctance may well cripple efforts to reform programs by expanding the clinical or field components. Indeed, without the stimulus and incentives offered by external funding sources, reform efforts, I fear, may well grind to a total halt in a shrinking job market.

Thus, it is even more important now than it was a decade or so ago to use federal resources to stimulate the development of new models for the preparation of educational leaders. Although I obviously am rather critical of contemporary training modes which I feel are inordinately dominated by the norms and needs of higher education, universities certainly must continue to play a major role in the preparation of educational leaders. My hope would be that new training models catalyzed by the federal government would have a broadened base of participation in their programmatic design and implementation and include representatives of teachers, administrators, parents and the general citizenry which also has such an important stake in the quality of educational leadership. As discussed earlier, educational decision-making currently takes place within the context of the macro-environment.

I should perhaps clarify what may appear to some to be unduly harsh and even unfair criticism of the universities which currently have the major responsibility for preparing educational leaders. Indeed, as an erstwhile professor knowing too well the vulnerability and occupational vagaries of contemporary college administrators, it behooves me to maintain in my own self-interest the umbilical cord with my professional friends in the field of education administration. I think that there have been a number of notable efforts in recent years to rethink the basic ways through which we prepare educational leaders; the federally funded National Program for Educational Leadership and the City-University projects which have been discussed at this meeting, for example, are two significant attempts to reshape preparatory programs. In many institutions of higher education there have been sincere attempts to do a more effective and realistic job. Too many of these reform efforts have aborted, however, because the dialogue about programmatic improvement has been too narrowly based and, indeed, parochial. Program development has remained in most cases the almost exclusive prerogative of professors and, although input has been solicited to a greater extent from practitioners, major decision-making responsibilities in regard to program have remained vested with the academy. Thus, programs still reflect the norms and values of the university, with scholarship dominant. Since the futures of professors in a declining job market will be dependent upon their publications and research, very understandably

these activities are paramount and thus become the transcendent underlying foci of training programs.

I do not intend to take an anti-intellectual posture, particularly when professors of educational administration have made notable strides in recent years in the generation of valuable new knowledge and insights into educational leadership processes and issues. My point simply is that the environment in higher education, as Ed Bridges so effectively notes, is simply not compatible with the needs of practitioners. The academy is just too removed from the real and ever volatile world of the educational leader to be the major or exclusive determiner of program needs. While research contributions certainly are important, they frequently are too detached from reality or too esoteric to have meaning for beleaguered practitioners.

I thus would urge that training programs be more explicitly geared around the specialized needs of students and not be “catch-all” for both prospective practitioners and researchers. Programs preparing researchers in educational administration should be labeled as such and not purport to meet the needs of practitioners. Programs for practitioners should likewise be labeled explicitly. Practitioners should be equipped to be intelligent consumers of research, but hardly need the training that is requisite for upward mobility as a college professor.

I would argue that too many institutions of higher education have followed an inappropriate model in their preparation programs for educational leaders. Professional schools in law and business, for example, are more relevant models for those responsible for preparing practitioners in educational administration as distinguished from researchers than are graduate schools in the arts and sciences where scholarship and research norms prevail. I would contend that those of us responsible for preparing educational leaders in higher education have been in some ways our own worst enemies. By trying to be all things to all people we frequently have done nothing well. We all too often have remained second-rate researchers or worse according to the criteria of arts and science faculties. Although professors of education have been seduced by graduate faculty research norms, rarely have we earned the respect of our academic colleagues in the arts and sciences as scholars. At the same time the reward system in the academy has caused many professors of education to ignore the acute needs of practitioners.

My conviction is that many professors of educational administration would not only be more effective in working with practitioner students but also would generate greater respect on university campuses if they would be more realistic about their roles and strengths. In other words, too many education professors, who basically are not researchers, purport to be something they are not; namely, scholars in the traditional academic sense.

Many professors could make a less pretentious but more effective contribution if they would reassess their own strengths and weaknesses vis-à-vis their research, service, and teaching responsibilities.

This polemic will end with the simple wish that in the future more programs will be geared explicitly to the specialized needs of students and the society in general rather than being predicated almost exclusively upon the important albeit limited norms of the university. I thus would hope that the federal government in the future might fund more preparatory programs that were alternatives to university-based efforts.

We must also in the future pay much greater attention to defining what we mean by “educational leaders.” This issue merits a full paper unto itself. Suffice it to say here, consonant with earlier themes of this paper, that any definition of educational leadership must now include teacher union leaders, parents, students, political leaders and their staffs, budget officers, and a host of other influential participants in addition to school administrators.

In closing this subjective potpourri of biases on the subject of preparing education leaders, permit me to briefly recapitulate at the risk of repetitiveness some of the major points I have tried to make. Preparatory programs must link education more directly with other public services and stress the interrelatedness of major social, cultural, and institutional forces in the organization of the educational enterprise. Multi-disciplinary approaches and multi-sector experiences should be stressed, with the educational process defined broadly as consisting of much more than just formal schooling.

Training programs in their efforts to prepare cadres of leaders who will generate new definitions of education and new modes of interinstitutional relationships should the need for creation of options to the existing monopoly controlled so largely by people within the teacher training structure in higher education. New relationships are needed which will meaningfully involve parents, community representatives, teachers and others with the now dominant professional education “guild” in the shaping of preparatory programs.

This “guild” domination, of course, is not unique to education. Seymour Sarason of Yale University penetratingly described what he calls the “disease of professionalism” in our society:

“All professions in our society suffer from professional preciousness and imperialism with headquarters in our universities. But I am not blaming our universities. They reflect our larger society. We have all colluded, unwittingly, in producing this age of specialization which has resulted in so many artificial discontinuities in our knowledge and its application. We have met the enemy and it is us.”^{vii}

Whether we will be able to confront this “enemy” at a time when educational organizations are in a declining and not an expanding state may well be one of the very pivotal issues of the next decade.

ⁱ Youth Transition to Adulthood, Report of the Panel on Youth of the President's Science Advisory Committee (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1974).

ⁱⁱ The Reform of Secondary Education: A Report to the Public and the Profession, The National Commission on the Reform of Secondary Education (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1973)

ⁱⁱⁱ Stephen K. Bailey, "New Dimensions in School Board Leadership," Journal of the New York State School Boards Association (September, 1969): 12.

^{iv} Edwin M. Bridges, The Nature of Leadership, Paper prepared for the Conference on "Educational Administration Twenty Years Later: 1954-1974," Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, April 27-30, 1975, 40 p.

^v Ibid., p. 2

^{vi} Ibid., pp. 31-33.

^{vii} Seymour B. Sarason in Foreword to The Urban School Superintendent of the Future by John Merrow, Richard Foster, and Nolan Estes, Southeastern Oklahoma Foundation of Durant, Oklahoma, 1974.