INFORMATION TO USERS

This material was produced from a microfilm copy of the original document. While the most advanced technological means to photograph and reproduce this document have been used, the quality is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original submitted.

The following explanation of techniques is provided to help you understand markings or patterns which may appear on this reproduction.

1. The sign or "target" for pages apparently lacking from the document photographed is "Missing Page(s)". If it was possible to obtain the missing page(s) or section, they are spliced into the film along with adjacent pages. This may have necessitated cutting thru an image and duplicating adjacent pages to insure you complete continuity.

2. When an image on the film is obliterated with a large round black mark, it is an indication that the photographer suspected that the copy may have moved during exposure and thus cause a blurred image. You will find a good image of the page in the adjacent frame.

3. When a map, drawing or chart, etc., was part of the material being photographed the photographer followed a definite method in "sectioning" the material. It is customary to begin photoing at the upper left hand corner of a large sheet and to continue photoing from left to right in equal sections with a small overlap. If necessary, sectioning is continued again — beginning below the first row and continuing on until complete.

4. The majority of users indicate that the textual content is of greatest value, however, a somewhat higher quality reproduction could be made from "photographs" if essential to the understanding of the dissertation. Silver prints of "photographs" may be ordered at additional charge by writing the Order Department, giving the catalog number, title, author and specific pages you wish reproduced.

5. PLEASE NOTE: Some pages may have indistinct print. Filmed as received.

73-30,191

BUNTING, Charles I., 1942-
THE PROCESS OF PROGRAM INITIATION AT THE
FEDERAL LEVEL: PAPERS ON THE NATIONAL
FOUNDATION FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION.

Harvard University, Ed.D., 1973
Education, administration

University Microfilms, A XEROX Company, Ann Arbor, Michigan

THE PROCESS OF PROGRAM INITIATION AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL:

PAPERS ON THE NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

by

CHARLES I. BUNTING

A Final Report Presented to the Faculty of
the Graduate School of Education of Harvard
University in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of
Education.

1973

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

This Project

undertaken by

Charles I. Bunting

The Process of Program Initiation at the

Federal Level: Papers on the National

Foundation for Post-Secondary Education

has been reviewed and approved by a Committee of Examiners
and has been accepted by the Committee on Degrees, Harvard
University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Education.

FOR THE COMMITTEE ON DEGREES

(Chairman)

FOR THE COMMITTEE OF EXAMINERS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

THE PROCESS OF PROGRAM INITIATION AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL:

PAPERS ON THE NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

by

CHARLES I. BUNTING

OVERVIEW

This Final Report includes two analytical papers concerned with a recent
Federal legislative proposal, The National Foundation for Postsecondary
Education, originally submitted by the Nixon Administration to Congress
in March, 1971, and enacted in a modified form in July, 1972. Part One
presents a description and analysis of the key version of this proposal.
Part Two, on the other hand, presents an organizational analysis of a
task force which was created within the U.S. Office of Education to plan
for the implementation of the proposal. Because of their differences in
focus and treatment, the two papers are presented as separable entities
within the Report.

PART ONE. AN ANALYSIS OF A LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL:
THE NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR POSTSECONDARY
EDUCATION.

Problem

The legislative authorization process in Congress determines in
large measure what the Federal "role" in education shall be—for what
purposes, and to whom, Federal funds shall be allotted. As such, the
character of future Federal educational programs are shaped by myriad
individuals, groups, and interests through a political process. With
respect to any particular legislative proposal, the question can be asked,
"Does the resulting product from such a process hold promise for becoming
a useful and effective instrument for achieving desired ends?"

This paper examines the viability and practicality of one legisla-
tive proposal, the National Foundation for Postsecondary Education, as it
emerged from the U.S. Senate in August, 1971.

Approach

To usefully analyze the legislative text, it was necessary to iden-
tify its underlying concepts or assumptions—regardless of their various
origins in the "warp and woof" of the political process. Five such basic
concepts were identified which range from the broad purposes of the pro-
posal to the specifics of its operational design. More specifically, they
include:

> 1) The Problem: The field of postsecondary education is in
>   critical need of support directed toward reform and change;

2) <u>The Target:</u> The broad field of postsecondary education should be the universe for change;

3) <u>The Source:</u> There is a need for <u>Federal</u> support of reform activities in postsecondary education;

4) <u>The Vehicle:</u> A semi-independent "foundation" within the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare is an appropriate mechanism for supporting reform activities;

5) <u>The Strategy:</u> Allocation of <u>project grants</u> should be the primary means to encourage and support needed changes.

These underlying premises are assessed against the realities of education and government which, if the proposal was to eventually emerge as a program from Congress, they would of necessity confront during the implementation stage. And, in view of the changes in the concept of the Foundation which did occur during its short history, it was particularly important to consider the extent to which the proposed operational design was appropriate to achieve the proposed <u>mission.</u>

<div align="center">Results</div>

Considerable evidence and support was found for those concepts embedded in the proposal which pertained to the Foundation's mission and role. Recent literature surveying the "health" of the field of postsecondary education points to deep-rooted needs for reform and change which the Foundation is intended to address. In addition, there is considerable justification for a new Federal presence with respect to these needs for change, in view of both the current limitations of existing Federal programs and the nature of the fiscal support which can be expected from other quarters of society.

On the other hand, the analysis uncovered several potentially severe problems with respect to the proposal's more specific details. The considerable breadth and diversity of the Foundation's "target" universe, the field of underlinepostsecondary education, will be difficult to conceptualize, much less meaningfully support, by the new agency. Originally conceived as a needed alternative to the more conventional bureaucratic model for program administration, the Foundation's autonomy and independence are threatened by a confused and ambiguous set of reporting relationships within the government. And, on closer analysis, the Foundation's primary strategy for achieving reform, the project grant mechanism, appears to be a relatively weak and impotent instrument.

The analysis also implicitly identified certain limitations of the legislative process in shaping the Federal role. At some key points, the legislative text was vague and ambiguous (possibly for very good political reasons), rather than clear and consistent. Of necessity perhaps, the proposal generally leaves considerable discretion to those in the executive branch charged with the implementation responsibility. Consequently, one can (optimistically) hope that some of the weaknesses in the proposal's design can be resolved or, at least, minimized.

PART TWO. A CASE STUDY OF A TEMPORARY
SYSTEM: THE FOUNDATION TASK FORCE, U.S.
OFFICE OF EDUCATION.

Problem

Large-scale bureaucracies, like all other organizations, must be

adaptable to meet changes in its environment, unanticipated events, and short-term demands. This may be particularly crucial for those public agencies, such as the U.S. Office of Education (OE), which seem to be in a state of perpetual flux and motion. One device utilized to meet such demands is the short-term, internal task force, which can be viewed as one type of "temporary system." Indeed, in addition to extolling their virtues as "ad-hoc" mechanisms, some organizational theorists argue that such temporary systems may prove to be the organizational mode of the future.

Very few studies of the actual experience and behavior of temporary systems appear to have been undertaken. This paper presents one such case study, of the Foundation Task Force, a short-term planning unit created to design the future shape and structure of the National Foundation for Postsecondary Education, a proposal simultaneously being considered by the U.S. Congress.

Approach

Confronted with a rather complex task, it was necessary to design an adequate conceptual framework for organizing both a set of hypotheses regarding the behavior of temporary systems and the case study and analysis itself. Such a framework is presented which combines three generalizable properties of a short-term task force--its <u>structure</u> (as a subunit of a larger organization), its internal <u>composition</u> (as a discrete set of individuals), and its <u>life-span</u> (as a short-term, self-destructing mechanism).

The meager literature on temporary systems and the more adequate literature on the behavior of large, permanent organizations is surveyed to uncover theories and observations which may help in understanding the behavior of the Foundation Task Force. Then, the actual case study, interspersed with analytic sections, is presented, again within the framework described above. Finally, some consideration is given to the author's role and potential biases as a "participant-observer," working on a full-time basis in the "parent" organization, OE, and on a part-time basis with the Task Force.

Results

In general, the actual experience of the Foundation Task Force did not correspond to the expectations of those theorists who have advocated the wider use of temporary systems. Rather, it can be concluded that this particular task force behaved in a manner which corresponded more closely to traditional theories of bureaucracy.

With respect to its structural role within OE, the Task Force remained largely a "captive" of its parent organization. OE appears to have created the Task Force primarily to achieve a set of covert ends, and the Task Force itself did not succeed in developing an independent mission. As a result, the Task Force's ostensible, overt mission suffered considerably. And, because these covert agendas were not fulfilled by the end of the Task Force's expected life-span, it was in effect continued in place well beyond this point.

Internally, although it successfully avoided becoming excessively hierarchical and was a rather small group, the Task Force does not appear to have been a particularly "healthy" work environment. There was a wide gap in expectations and communication between the director and staff; due in part to the organization's mixed motives for creating the Task Force, the group's activities were not very productive; the director, perhaps reflecting the organization's priorities, did not appear to attach great importance to the ostensible role of Task Force. Individual members' longer-term objectives also remained unfulfilled.

This case study does not, in the whole, substantiate the rather naive optimism expressed by some observers regarding temporary systems. In retrospect, this temporary system appears to have been quite "useful" from the perspective of the organization's management, helping to achieve certain missions which were not (and possibly could not have been) openly expressed. However, in part due to the confusion and frustration which resulted from this "real" agenda of concerns, the staff's perspectives differed substantially.

The paper concludes with a set of suggestions for managers regarding the use of temporary systems which seek to incorporate the broader perspective suggested by these findings—that, in view of the conflicting needs and agendas which do exist within an organization, temporary systems must be viewed and employed within the context of the dynamics of the total organization.

OVERVIEW

In March, 1971, the Nixon Administration submitted to Congress a higher education legislative bill which included a proposal calling for the establishment of a new agency, the National Foundation for Higher Education. In August of the same year, the Senate passed its version of the bill and incorporated this proposal largely intact (renaming it the National Foundation for Postsecondary Education), thus assuring its continued life at least until Senate-House conference action. And on July 6, 1972, President Nixon signed into law the compromise bill reported out from the conference committee, the Education Amendments of 1972, which included a modified version of the Foundation proposal.

During this period, I was employed by the U.S. Office of Education (OE) as Special Assistant to the Executive Deputy Commissioner, who was concurrently serving as Acting Deputy Commissioner for Higher Education until January, 1972. Consequently, a considerable portion of my duties related to the higher education legislation being considered in Congress. With the permission and support of the Executive Deputy Commissioner, I served as a part-time member of the Foundation Task Force, an in-house group created to plan for the (hoped for) implementation of the Foundation proposal. I was a member from the time of its inception in September, 1971, until July, 1972, when the Education Amendments became law.

As a variation to the traditional A-400 Project, the ad-hoc committee approved a proposal entailing the development of two analytical

papers dealing with the Foundation proposal as it developed during the sixteen-month period which elapsed before the proposal--in a modified form--finally became law in July, 1972. It was agreed that one paper would present an analysis of the legislative proposal itself, as it emerged in the Senate's version of the higher education bill, and that the other would present a case study and analysis of the Foundation Task Force which was created to plan for the implementation of the Senate's version of the Foundation proposal.

This Final Report incorporates these two papers. Although both studies share a common historical base, the presence of the Foundation proposal itself, their specific foci and treatments differ considerably and are, consequently, presented as separable papers.

PART ONE

AN ANALYSIS OF A LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL:

THE NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

I

INTRODUCTION

In March, 1971, President Nixon submitted to Congress, as part of the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 1971, a proposal to establish a new Federal agency, the National Foundation for Higher Education. At this date,[*] the higher education bill is still being considered by the Congress, and the future of this particular proposal--now called the National Foundation for Postsecondary Education[**]--is in serious doubt, for it has failed to attain broad Congressional support thus far.

However, when and if this proposal is enacted into law, it could hold the promise of considerably altering the character of Federal support to the field of postsecondary education. A new grant agency, the Foundation's mission would be to "encourage excellence, innovation, and reform in postsecondary education;" it would also seek to influence the broader scope of Federal policies and programs related to postsecondary education. These missions, if realized, would certainly alter the current Federal posture, for they speak to broad educational policy issues, both in the field and in government.

This paper represents an attempt to critically examine the validity and viability of this legislative proposal. I will be examining a concept

---

[*]April, 1972.

[**]Renamed by the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare in August, 1971.

and plan which has had many authors—like any other piece of legisla-
tion, its shape in the latter stages of the legislative process reflects
a variety of influences and pressures. However, such is the inevitable
process by which new programs and agencies are created in what Woodrow
Wilson once called "a government by the chairmen of the standing com-
mittees of Congress." Even if too many cooks in the legislative kitchen
<u>do</u> often spoil the broth, it is very difficult to send back once it's
served.

Hence, the attempt is to assess, not the <u>political</u> viability of
the proposal, but rather the conceptual and practical viability of a
proposal which has emerged from a political process. In one sense, the
task is to determine the "fit" between the Foundation proposal and the
realities of government and education which, if adopted, it will of
necessity confront and hopefully improve.

The first section provides relevant background material—a brief
history of the conceptual and political development of the Foundation
proposal, and a description of the legislative proposal itself, as it
emerged from the Senate floor and before it was sent to the joint Con-
ference Committee for final changes and revisions.[*]

The major portion of the paper, Section III, presents an analysis
of the proposal. The approach followed was to seek to identify the
major assumptions, or premises, which lie behind the specifics of this
legislative proposal; five such premises were uncovered, ranging from

---

[*]The Higher Education Bill is expected to emerge from the Committee in
mid-May for final House-Senate approval.

the _problem_ which presumably needs to be solved, to the _strategy_ which
is offered to realize the Foundation's mission. Each of these under-
lying premises is stated, then analyzed with respect to its conceptual
and practical validity.

Needless to say, these assumptions are not explicated in the legis-
lative text, and may never have been recognized as such by the normally
"practical" politicians responsible for designing legislation. However,
they control the legislative specifics, and their viability will largely
determine the effectiveness of the Foundation, if it emerges intact from
the legislative process.

II

THE CONCEPT

A. Historical Development

The 1971 legislative version of the Foundation proposal will be the focus for my analysis in this paper. However, this proposal is the product of (at least) five years of development, during which time it has undergone pronounced change and alteration. A brief look at this history will suggest several long standing issues and problems which are still of major concern with respect to the Foundation proposal.

The concept of a foundation to serve exclusively the higher education community was first surfaced in public by the Carnegie Commission for Higher Education in 1968. However, it did have a short but significant history prior to that time. A year earlier, Laura Bornholdt, then a staff member of the Danforth Foundation in St. Louis, shared a proposal she had written with Alan Pifer, President of the Carnegie Foundation. Her idea was to create a new foundation to be concerned exclusively with the needs for reform in higher education. The new agency would be financed by pooling resources contributed from several private foundations, but would be wholly independent from both its benefactors and the government. Both a grant-making and research-based agency, this new entity was to be "high-risk, irreverent, and opinionated."[1]

President Pifer, while interested in the concept of the foundation, apparently did not agree that it needed to be wholly independent from the

government. The Carnegie Commission seems to have shared his view, for the Foundation concept enumerated in their highly influential report, <u>Quality and Equality: New Levels of Federal Responsibility for Higher Education</u>,[2] sought to establish a new agency within the Federal government. Modeled intentionally after the National Science Foundation, such an agency was proposed to provide financial support for critical areas and topics which had hitherto been "neglected" at the Federal level. As examples of such topics, the Carnegie report listed the following: improvement of undergraduate education; services to elementary and secondary education; regional liberal arts centers; new technologies; and urban-related programs.[3] Called the National Foundation for the Development of Higher Education, it was designed to be just that--developmental: successful programs, once tested and proven, would be transferred and "administered on a permanent basis by other agencies of the Federal government, usually the Office of Education."[4]

A subsequent revised version of <u>Quality and Equality</u>, published in 1970, repeated the Commission's call for the establishment of the Foundation and recommended adding a component to improve higher education planning competency at state and regional levels.[5] And in 1971, a third Carnegie report recommended adding to the proposed agency a unit to provide support for predominantly black colleges and universities.[6]

The first Foundation legislative proposal was developed by the Nixon Administration during 1969 and submitted to Congress in early 1970. Technically, it was the product of a higher education "working group,"

composed of several top-level officials who were asked to consider the broad needs for new legislative thrusts in higher education.[7] However, Daniel P. Moynihan, then serving as Counselor to President Nixon, was clearly the chief author and advocate for the proposal; indeed, several other members of the working group, most notably those representing the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (DHEW), were privately opposed to the Foundation proposal.[8]

The first legislative proposal had strong parallels to the concept emerging from the various Carnegie reports. It sought to create an independent agency responsible to a Board of Directors appointed by the President. Its mission was to provide support for "excellence, innovation, and reform." Like the Carnegie version, it identified a host of programmatic thrusts through which the Foundation would realize its broad objectives. Actually, several of these recommended thrusts already existed as programs in the Office of Education--programs for community services, law curriculum, international studies, and fellowships for future teachers. Despite the fact that most of these programs were not accorded particularly high priority by DHEW at that time, it is likely that their incipient transfer was an additional factor in cooling the Department's ardor for the proposal.

This first proposal was largely ignored by the Congress. Few preliminary hearings were conducted, and it never emerged from the authorization committees. Several factors have been suggested to explain its demise: first, that neither the higher education community nor Congress were pleased with the proposed transfer of several programs from the

Office of Education;[9] second, that the interest groups feared that the Foundation proposal represented the Administration's substitute for a more substantial program of direct institutional grants;[10] and, third, that educators were antagonistic toward any proposal endorsed by Richard Nixon.[11] It should be added, however, that the Administration's legislative timetable simply did not coincide with that of the Congress: the key legislators were planning to address much broader questions the next year, 1971, when the legislation authorizing most of the existing Federal higher education programs was due to expire.

The second proposal was submitted in early 1971, as part of a much larger higher education bill. The chief advocates and architects of this proposal were found, not at the White House, but within DHEW.[*] This revised version retained most of the structure and concept of the Foundation as enumerated the prior year, but located it within DHEW. The earlier language defining the broad mission of the Foundation was retained, but this second version was stripped of all the pre-existing programs which were to become subcomponents of the Foundation in the prior proposal. Instead, the second version put considerably greater stress on the "reform and innovation" mission.[**]

The Senate authorizing committee adopted the Foundation proposal but its counterpart in the House did not, and the full legislative bodies

---

[*]See companion paper, "A Case Study of a Temporary System: The Foundation Task Force, U.S. Office of Education," for a more complete treatment of the significance of this policy shift.

[**]See the next section for a full treatment of the proposal.

have separately approved their respective measures. Consequently, the fate of the Foundation proposal now rests with the Senate-House Conference Committee, which is charged with resolving the differences between the two bills.

At least two distinct and significant trends can be noted in the five-year development of the Foundation proposal. First, its organizational identity has shifted from one extreme to another: originally conceived as a private sector agency wholly independent from the government, it eventually became a unit within HEW. Second, the thrust of the Foundation's mission traveled, in effect, full-circle: originally billed as an agency dedicated to reform, it was then altered (by both the Carnegie Commission and the Administration) to encompass a variety of purposes, and finally returned to the single "reform" mission.

With respect to these changes, one might ask whether they are compatible: that is, can the proposed organizational character of the Foundation effectively support its reform mission? Among other issues, this paper seeks to explore this question.

B.   Current Version

Since the House of Representatives dropped the Administration's Foundation proposal from their version of the higher education bill, the following descriptions are based solely on the provisions included in S.659, the Senate bill.[*] With the exception of two changes--the Senate substituted the term "postsecondary" for "higher education" wherever it appeared, and replaced the proposed Advisory Board with a Board of Directors--the Administration's proposal was accepted intact by the full Senate in August, 1971.

Purpose

The most general statement of purpose in the legislative proposal retains the language of the 1970 version:

> It shall be the purpose of the Foundation...to
> encourage excellence, innovation, and reform in
> postsecondary education.

The explication of this broad mission further on the text clearly indicates, however, that the Foundation should be exclusively charting new paths rather than also incorporating old ones, as the 1970 version provided. The Foundation will

> --provide assistance for the design and establishment
> of innovative structures....

> --expand the ways and patterns of acquiring postsecondary
> education...

> --develop policies, programs, and practices responsive
> to social needs...

> -- support the introduction of institutional reforms....

---

[*] See Appendix for the complete legislative text.

In addition to the "innovation and reform" mission, which is designed to guide the Foundation's resource allocations to the field, the legislation prescribes another, somewhat different, purpose:

> "...to provide an organization concerned with the rationalization of public policies toward post-secondary education."

This language was designed to establish the Foundation as the agency in the Federal government particularly concerned with improving the broad contours of Federal policy. No further detail was provided, however, as to how the Foundation would fulfill this interagency role.

Structure

The proposed Foundation would constitute one of three agencies to be organized into a new Division of Education within HEW, the others including the current Office of Education and the proposed National Institute for Education. The chief administrator of this Division would be called a "Commissioner," and would be compensated at Executive Level IV; the three operating chiefs, the Deputy Commissioner for the Office of Education and the Directors of the Foundation and Institute, would be compensated at Level V, the salary level of the current Commissioner of Education.

Unlike the other two units, however, the Foundation's general policies would be the responsibility, according to the legislation, of a fifteen-member Board of Directors. Members of the Board, to be appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, would serve staggered six-year terms; the Chairman of the Board would be selected by the President

among those appointed and confirmed; the Director would serve as an <u>ex-officio</u> member; and at least one member of the Board would be a "student."

The language of the legislative proposal qualifies the autonomy of the Foundation's Board and its Director by adding in each case the phrase, "subject to general regulations of the Commissioner." (The potential impact of this qualifier will be considered in Section III-D).

Personnel

The legislation prescribes no particular pattern for staffing the Foundation,[*] aside from the top five positions--the Director, Deputy Director, and three additional positions pegged at grade 18, the top rung of the Civil Service ladder. It does, however, provide that up to twenty percent of all professionals may be appointed to three-year terms (maximum), independent of Civil Service regulations. That is, these professionals would be compensated at rates to be determined by the Director and Board and would have no job protection rights accorded by the Civil Service Act.

Grant Authority

The legislation authorizes the Foundation

> "to make grants to, and contracts with, institutions
> of higher education (including combinations of such
> institutions) and other public and private educational
> institutions and agencies...."

The provisions for institutional eligibility are obviously quite broad and, given the shift in terminology from "higher" to "postsecondary"

---

[*]The Office of Education budget for Fiscal Year 1973 projects a staff of 135 positions for the Foundation's first year of operation.

education, may well be interpreted to mean that all formal enterprises providing education and training beyond the high school level are eligible for funding (see Section III-B for a discussion of this question).

No specific _types_ of transactions are specifically prohibited, although _contracts_, as opposed to grants, must be utilized in the case of profit-making (or proprietary) organizations ("boiler plate" language inserted in most Federal laws). However, the description of purposes in the legislation suggests that grants for _projects_ (short-term activities sponsored by institutions in the field), as opposed to grants for long-term research or study purposes, are intended.

On the one hand, the Foundation proposal summarized above has much in common with the spate of "categorical" educational programs which emerged from Congress in the 1960's. It, like many others, would provide short-term grant moneys directly to institutions in the field to achieve certain purposes. However, this proposal also incorporates several provisions which represent breaks from the past: it would create a new and somewhat independent agency and governing board, the new agency would enjoy considerable freedom from the conventions of Civil Service, and the new program could serve a potentially wide clientele in carrying out a very broad mandate. The balance of this paper will consider the significance and potential impact of these provisions, both the "old" and the "new."

III

ANALYSIS

To assess the viability of this legislative proposal, I found it necessary to identify those basic concepts, or assumptions, which undergird the text itself. That is, although such assumptions may never have been explicated in the legislative process, it was necessary to uncover those concepts which control the specific provisions of the legislation.

Five controlling concepts are identified and discussed in this section. They are presented in descending order of their general import: hence, the discussion moves from an assessment of the validity of the Foundation's proposed mission to the viability of its proposed operational characteristics.

A. Problem

<u>The field of postsecondary education is in critical need of support directed toward reform and change.</u>

> Why should we have a Foundation for Higher Education and not for other levels of education? What is so sacrosanct about higher education?...Why not a Foundation for Early Child Development...or Elementary and Secondary Education?....[12]

Perhaps the most basic premise underlying the Foundation proposal is that it meets a real need--i.e., that the assumptions, policies and practices which currently describe the field of postsecondary education and its constitutent parts require considerable improvement, change, and renewal. At issue is whether that is indeed the case.

The problem one faces in determining the health of such an entity, aside from its massive size and complexity, is the very problem which the proposed Foundation would face in assessing its own impact on the field: there are very few measures which can be relied upon to give an accurate and complete diagnosis or evaluation.

For example, there may be symptoms which do not necessarily reflect diseases. The massive proportions of campus unrest over the past five years may be persuasive politically, and surely can be pointed to as one factor which has bolstered the Foundation proposal both within the Administration and in Congress. However, since this paper seeks to define the relationship between what is a political proposal and the realities which it seeks to address or represent, the question would remain: To what extent have disruptions been caused by the prevailing conditions of

postsecondary education? To assess the needs for basic reform and change, one must rely upon evidence which is far short of empirical data.

Perspectives on Postsecondary Education

A brief look at a few of the more influential recent studies of education beyond high school would seem to support the premise of the Foundation proposal. Although such critiques may have long existed and needed the public interest which campus disruptions have created to be appreciated, the fact remains that a broad array of observers and scholars agree that change and revision ought to characterize the field's development over the next decade.

One view is that postsecondary education's current and future needs for change have resulted from changes which have already occurred both within institutions and in society. Indeed, the Carnegie Commission, when it first recommended the establishment of a Foundation in 1968, pointed to the twin developments of rapid growth in both enrollment and institutional functions and rising costs during the 1960's as evidence of the need to critically examine and reform the internal structures and programs of institutions.[13]

Harold Hodgkinson has taken a considerably greater in-depth view of the impact of the past in his study, Institutions in Transition.[14] He points to long-term trends which have occurred within institutions (over which those institutions, presumably, had some degree of control), as evidence of the needs for changes both in institutional practices and self-perceptions. He finds that longitudinal data supports the thesis

that institutional diversity is actually decreasing, despite the growth of community colleges and the public sector. He argues that essentially one model, the prestigious research-based university, has been adopted by institutions to aspire to, with respect to faculty hiring, faculty obligations, and institutional planning. Student bodies, concurrently, have become more diverse with respect to socio-economic background, more transient, and stay in school longer. Faculty generally teach less, particularly in universities, and have less "institutional loyalty" than in the past. As a result of several of these trends, he finds that "If there is any single weak area in higher education, it is probably the curriculum of the first two years of undergraduate programs."

Hodgkinson finds these two dominant trends, the increasing diversity of students and homogeneity of institutions, on a crash course. His prescription is to reverse the latter trend:

> ...a great deal of attention needs to be paid to the
> role of the educational "periphery," as contrasted to
> the educational "core"...To recognize other standards
> of excellence is not to downgrade the collegiate notion
> of excellence--indeed, if other kinds of educational
> institutions were providing meaningful alternative no-
> tions of excellence, higher education in the conventional
> sense could concentrate more on its own version of
> quality....15

A second perspective, far less optimistic, focuses on the static nature of postsecondary education, pointing to the forces which resist necessary change. The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare sponsored a study in 1970, the so-called Newman Report,[*][16] which has

---

*Named after Frank Newman, the chairman of a task force which produced the study.

proven to be quite controversial. (It has also been widely promoted by the Administration to support its position on the Foundation proposal). This study identifies a broad list of problems which require remediation, but stresses the need to alter the _assumptions_ and _processes_ for change themselves:

> ...virtually all postwar reforms have been based on the assumption that growth, inner diversification of curriculum, and changes in governance will provide the needed solutions...The system, with its massive inertia, resists fundamental change, rarely eliminates outmoded programs, ignores the differing needs of students...and almost never creates new and different types of institutions.[17]

Beyond a list of suggested specific reforms, the _Report_ calls for self-examination:

> To regain positive public support, higher education must break free from the conventional wisdom and examine itself critically...For a few years, while there is self-doubt in the academic community... new directions can be established.[18]

A third perspective focuses on the anticipated impact of _future_ societal changes on the educational system. It is suggested that, despite past increases in student diversity, the future will bring a radically different clientele to institutions. Pat Cross suggests that higher education has barely begun to serve the disadvantaged;[19] indeed, a recent Carnegie study indicates that the IQ median of college students has actually risen over the past fifty years;[20] several have suggested that the future student will "mature" at an earlier age and require an increased diversity of program.[21] Eric Ashby anticipates that the next

decade will accelerate another student trend which is already taking place: the demands of individuals now considered older than college age for an education.[22] And, it has long been argued that education must find viable ways of harnessing the so-called technology revolution.

It is possible that such critiques and prescriptions for change could be developed with reference to any societal institution at any point in history--such may be the inevitable lag between problems and their recognition, or at least the availability of solutions. However, the fact is that they do not all exist, at least not at the same point in time. In view of the lack of conclusive "hard" data to assess the status of social institutions, we may be forced to rely upon our, and others', informed perceptions. And the current perceptions of the field of postsecondary education--the sizeable gap between current institutional realities and current and future needs--suggest that additional attention and support must be brought to the task of reforming and revising its assumptions and its practices.

B. Target

The broad field of postsecondary education should be the universe for change.

Both title and text of the Foundation proposal shifted its nomenclature in the second version: what had hither to been described as "higher education" now became "postsecondary education." Neither the authorizing legislation nor the accompanying committee reports, however, define what is meant by the term "postsecondary." Of concern here is the significance of this change in terminology: What types of institutions, programs, and participants ought to be served by the Foundation, and what problems does this projected universe create for its potential role and its operations?

Parameters of Postsecondary Education

It can be safety assumed that the postsecondary universe is broader than that encompassed by what has often been understood as "higher education"--i.e., programs offering baccalaureate and advanced graduate degrees. Two-year institutions, including community and junior colleges, which constitute the fastest growing sector of formal post-high school education,[23] are comfortably within this universe.

If postsecondary education includes <u>all</u> formal programs beyond the high school level, however, several other categories of institutions and enterprises might well be candidates for inclusion. It has been estimated that there are approximately 8,000 postsecondary vocational institutes nationally which provide training to as many as two million

individuals and spend more than a half-billion dollars annually.[24] The
nation's 350 correspondence schools (half that number currently accredited)
serve another half-million adults.[25] Adult and continuing education pro-
grams, offered through countless two- and four-year colleges (as well as
trade unions and school systems), might also be included. These insti-
tutions and programs incorporate missions, procedures, and serve cli-
enteles considerably divergent from those found in more traditional
higher education enterprises.

Postsecondary education is likely to undergo expansion in other
senses of that term as well. Degree-granting "colleges" offering
credit through equivalency examinations and a variety of work-related
and independent study programs are now being developed and implemented;
"television colleges," similar to the successful Open University in
Britain are likely to surface in the near future. Indeed, the proposed
Foundation would presumably be encouraging such alternative institutions
which considerably broaden the field.

The realm of postsecondary education might well be viewed as a
kind of expanding universe, to be defined at any given moment more
accurately by a process of inclusion rather than exclusion. Indeed, the
legislative proposal suggests this approach by calling for the "creation
of [new] institutions" and the "expansion of individual opportunities."
Assuming that such a perspective was implicit in the shift in terminol-
ogy, it contrasts rather sharply with the emphasis which Counselor
Moynihan apparently placed on the role of the Foundation in sustaining
the traditional "excellence" of prestigious institutions.[26]

Implications for the Foundation

This potential constituency, really a broad, diverse "non-system" of enterprises, raises several concerns regarding the role and operational character of the proposed Foundation. The large question is as follows: how can the Foundation, whose first-year budget of $100 million will represent less than 1/3 of 1% of the total estimated annual postsecondary expenditures, effectively influence this universe?

With regard to its general role, the Foundation is not intended to provide general fiscal support to this broad clientele, despite the earlier fears of representatives of the higher education community that the Foundation would constitute the Administration's sole commitment to institutional support. Rather, the role can be generally described as a kind of catalyst, whose mission is to invest limited "seed money" into promising innovations and changes, with (hoped for) high returns resulting from the investment.[*] Consequently, the Foundation should not be concerned with one common Federal agency dilemma--i.e., how to provide some support to all constituents and still have an impact.

Nonetheless, the Foundation will be confronted by a tremendous range of different sets of institutions, perspectives, and problems. The manner in which the Foundation operationalizes its catalytic role, with regard to its future structure, procedures, and personnel will be of critical importance in defining the "real-world" clientele to be actually served. Decisions to be made regarding the Foundation's structure--how it is organized to allot grant funds--would appear to be

---

[*] See Section E for a full treatment of this concept.

particularly important. At least three alternatives for this structure have been suggested:[27] the Foundation could organize by <u>client</u> groups (vocational institutes, two and four-year colleges, graduate schools); or, by <u>functions</u>(training, liberal education, research); or, by problem or topical <u>areas</u> (access, credentialing, alternative curricula).

In each case, somewhat different constituencies would, in effect, be <u>created</u> by the Foundation. If put into place, the first structural alternative would in all likelihood encourage competition for scarce funds between the existing institutional interest groups and their political allies; on the other hand, it would probably insure that no particular sector was ignored. The remaining two alternatives would probably tend to alter the existing lines of demarcation among institutional groups, for the sub-categories cut across these sectors of institutions. In addition, they may be more in harmony with the mission of the Foundation, since they would presume to define the postsecondary universe as a single entity--as difficult as that might prove to be.

The selected program structure would be likely to have its effects on several critical operating procedures. For example, it could influence agency decisions regarding the dissemination of program information (who ought to get which proposal announcements) and institutions' decisions as to whether they ought to apply for funds. Similarly, the structure could influence the proposal review process--what sorts of outside panelists are selected, and what criteria for proposal selection ought to be employed. Such procedural "details" are likely to be of paramount importance in determining who eventually gets funded.[28]

A second, clearly related factor in determining the Foundation's actual constituency concerns people--the background and perspectives of the individuals serving on the agency staff and on the Board (if the latter achieves the major policy role intended by the legislation). The legislation, aside from requiring that at least one member of the Board be a "student" and removing one-fifth of the professional slots from the strictures of the Civil Service, prescribes no particular formula for the composition of either the Board or the agency. If the roles are filled by individuals from, or sympathetic to, a particular postsecondary segment, for example research-based universities or four-year private colleges, the Foundation would simply have fewer "internalized" incentives to insure that its efforts are responsive to the needs of the broad community.

It would appear that the legislation has created a very real problem for the Foundation by designating such a broad target universe. If it is indeed true that similar agencies, both private foundations[*] and public "independent" grant agencies[29] appear to develop strong biases toward particular groups in the field, then the problems for the Foundation are compounded. However, given the particularly broad target mandated by the legislation and the limited resources at its disposal, one significant fact seems to emerge: the Foundation's actual constituency will be determined, not by broad policy statements, but rather by the manner in which the agency is actually built and organized.

_____

[*] See next section.

With regard to this provision (and several others which shall be noted as the discussion continues) the Senate bill would, in effect, transfer responsibility for basic policy determination to the Executive Branch. In view of the considerable friction and distrust which arose between the Nixon Administration and the Congress over the entire higher education bill, one wonders whether the Senate might have been assuming that the "autonomous" Foundation/Board structure would protect it sufficiently from the vagaries of bureaucratic discretion.

C. Source

**There is a need for Federal support of reform activities in
postsecondary education.**

Implicit in the legislative proposal itself is the assumption,
presumably shared by its proponents, that substantial financial support
for activities directed toward reform and change in postsecondary edu-
cation ought to be provided by the Federal government. The political
process itself will, of course, determine whether that assumption is
widely held, at least in the halls of Congress.

However, this premise ought to be critically examined, for it is
not self-evident: the Federal government represents but one of several
sources of support for postsecondary education (indeed, it is a junior
partner), and its traditional role in support of educational innovation
in the field is not without its problems and disadvantages. The issue
will be examined with respect to three subsidiary questions.

**Are there adequate resources from other quarters to support reform
activities?**

No survey appears to exist which describes the current sources and
amounts of revenues allotted for the support of innovative thrusts in
postsecondary education. A brief look at two potential candidates for
supporting reform activities on a national scale suggests, however, a
negative response to this question.

The state level has traditionally been the major source of support
for higher education, contributing fully 25% of all higher education
revenues and 40% of all public higher education revenues in 1970.[30]

In some states, municipalities similarly provide major support for local community colleges. A very few states are now contributing some resources to the development of alternative college programs. The most notable example is New York, which has developed two different degree-granting programs, the External Degree Program and the Empire State College; Minnesota and Nebraska have also sponsored innovative developments recently (with some Federal assistance).

However, the prospects for substantial efforts to support innovations at the state level are not promising. One can assume that states will, in the main, continue to contribute the bulk of their support for the "maintenance" of existing programs; indeed, in view of the fact that the state and local share of postsecondary revenues is actually decreasing--by 5% over the past decade[31]--there is even less likelihood that in the future these scarce resources will be allotted for new, additional activities and programs.

Second, of course, it can be safely assumed that states will not be in a position to support innovative activities in the nation's 1,300 private colleges. Finally, even if state support for such activities were to increase, it would be difficult to attain a national perspective on the problems being addressed and their solutions; considerable waste could result if separate states were to duplicate many of the same initial developments.

Within the private sector, non-profit foundations would appear to be a second candidate for supporting the reform mission. In 1970, it is

estimated that foundations provided approximately $350 million of support to higher education--a considerable sum.[32] Indeed, Laura Bornholdt's original Foundation proposal called for just this type of voluntary sector support, through a new entity which would pool the resources of several existing foundations.

However--as Laura Bornholdt undoubtedly discovered--foundations themselves appear to be fiercely independent entities, with little incentive to collaborate in any fashion; indeed, they often act more like competitors.[33] Unfortunately, with perhaps the exception of the Ford Foundation, no single foundation would appear to be in a position to contribute substantial resources to the postsecondary reform mission.

Second, it should be noted that current Foundation resources to postsecondary education are distributed quite unevenly, heavily skewed toward private colleges and universities. In 1970, more than two-thirds of all foundation support was allotted to private schools, despite the fact tthat these institutions now educate no more than one-fourth of all college-going students.[34] Two-year institutions, which are expected to increase their enrollment so dramatically by 1980, received less than 1/3 of 1% of foundation support.[35] Unless these trends were to change drastically--and there is no reason to expect that they would--private foundation support would affect only one segment of postsecondary education.

<u>With respect to existing Federal programs, is there a need for additional</u>
<u>authorization to support reform activities?</u>

In the aggregate, the Federal government provides considerable support to institutions of higher education—Office of Education data suggests that the Federal level provides 19% of all revenues;[36] the Office of Management and Budget estimates that Federal outlays account for fully 25% of the estimated total expenditures of U.S. colleges and universities.[37]

However essential Federal support is to a college or university, it cannot be termed institutional support. 80% of all Federal higher education expenditures are allocated for student and research support; only 8% is considered to be outlays for current operations, most of which is for specific purposes--support of medical and health-related programs, and ROTC activities.[38]

Second, there is no coordination among the many agencies which provide this support. The institution seeking Federal aid must define its needs in terms of a host of different Federally defined purposes. The president of one medium-sized university estimates that at any given moment his staff is in the process of preparing or submitting 200 different proposals to the Federal government.[39]

In effect, the Federal government is in the business of purchasing services from higher education. Its outlays and its structure reflect the needs of the government--not those of the institutions.

The nature of current postsecondary education programs in the Office of Education, which actually provides less than 22% of the total

Federal outlays to higher education, largely reflects these general ob-
servations. Roughly 70% of all Office of Education support is in the
form of student assistance--scholarship grants, work study funds, and
loans; another 15% is allocated for facilities construction, and the
balance for institutional and personnel development--most of which is
provided to the historically predominantly black colleges through the
Developing Institutions Program.[40]

The Office of Education, then, is not currently in a position to
provide significant support for the purposes ascribed to the Foundation.
In addition, in those cases where the Office has supported innovative
projects in postsecondary education, it has done so with extreme diffi-
culty and perhaps with some damage to the integrity of the projects.
Program administrators have been obliged to "bend" the guidelines of
existing legislative authorities for research, training or technology
programs, for example. For their part, applicants have had to stress,
or even alter, some aspects of their total concept to meet legislative
requirements, and to seek other support elsewhere. It is perhaps no
surprise, then, that less than a half-dozen innovative projects in post-
secondary education have received direct support from OE.[*]

Assuming that the mission is desirable, there does appear to be a
need for additional program authorization and appropriations in the
Federal government to support activities in postsecondary education
which will result in positive change and reform.

---

*There may, of course, by many legitimate "innovations" being supported
through OE; however, they were neither submitted nor supported as such.

Nonetheless, is it desirable for the Federal government to play this critical role in the field of postsecondary education?

In view of the major supporting role the Federal government already plays in postsecondary education, it may no longer be meaningful to question the wisdom of such a role--that is, at this stage the relevant questions might be "which," and "what," rather than "whether." Still, the Foundation proposal represents a new departure for the Federal government (conceptually if not fiscally) and it may be useful to reconsider aspects of the broader policy issues.

In the political arena, arguments over the desirability of a new Federal role in education have traditionally revolved around the issue of Federal "control" of education. Twelve years ago, one critic of the expanding Federal role described his fear of Federal control in the following manner:

> In all the proposals for Federal aid heretofore advanced, vigorous disclaimers have been made to emphasize that there is no intention of exerting Federal control over curricula, school management, or other aspects of local responsibility. These assertions have always been open to challenge on the grounds, first, that "he who pays the piper calls the tune," and second, that there would be neglect of Federal responsibility in the failure to exercise supervision over the way Federal grants were used. These grounds lead to the unavoidable conclusion that there will be, and in fact must be, controls by the Federal Government to the extent that it provides funds. Obviously the more money it provides, the more control it will exercise.[40]

This concern was rarely expressed with regard to the Foundation proposal or any of the other extensive measures contained in the higher education bill during its lengthy Congressional hearings. Nor has the

"control" issue been raised very often by the postsecondary community in recent times--with the glaring exception of the prompt reaction on the part of many educators to Congressional attempts to withhold Federal student aid from campus disrupters.

In short, the "control" shibboleth does not appear to be the issue it once was. It is unlikely that the reason for the decline in its prominence is due to the fact that educators have simply retreated in the face of increased Federal intimidation. Rather, the fears may now be perceived as largely unfounded. One university administrator has put it this way:

> I would say the amount of pressures proportionate to the amount of money that comes from the Federal government is insignificant if you measure them against the amount of pressures you would get for lesser amounts of money from private donors, from the state and from foundations.[41]

Homer Babbidge, former university president and Federal official, has put it more colorfully:

> Granted, there is an element of seduction...since Government funds...are not always available for those things that institutions would like most to do. Under some circumstances seduction may be a crime, but it is quite a different crime from rape.[42]

Second, it may be expecting too much for a poverty case to question the motives of a benefactor. Largely in response to the alleged financial crisis in higher education, unprecedented support has developed for direct Federal institutional aid. Indeed, it appears that the desire for institutional aid has been so pronounced that part of the higher

education community's opposition to the first Foundation proposal was due to its fear that it constituted the Administration's <u>substitute</u> for institutional aid.[43]

What remains of the Federal control issue did surface, not with respect to <u>whether</u> the Foundation should exist, but rather to the question of its stance--i.e., how "directive" it ought to be in setting priorities for funding. Even in this case, however, the concern appeared to focus primarily on the question of the Foundation's <u>effectiveness,</u> rather than its potential for <u>interference</u> with an institution's autonomy.

A second consideration with respect to the advisability of the proposal concerns the very breadth of the current Federal role in post-secondary education: What <u>difference</u> would another, relatively small, Federal grant program make?

The legislative proposal speaks of an ancillary role for the Foundation, within the government, advising and influencing the shape of Federal policy:

> ...to provide an organization concerned with the rationalization of public policies toward post-secondary education.

The Foundation could conceivably fulfill part of that role by speaking to questions related to the broader issue of the entire Federal role in education. However, it does not appear possible that the Foundation could exert much <u>direct</u> influence on Federal policy, in view of its hierarchical location within a subdivision of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Its perceptions may be particularly well informed;

however, there would be no assurance that they would be heeded.[*]

What remains, however, is a grant agency with a particularly unique mission within the Federal establishment. Unlike other support programs, its funds should be allocated for purposes in far greater harmony with <u>institutions'</u> priorities, rather than those of the Federal government, given the new agency's broad mandate. The Foundation should be in a position to support a college's plan for self-improvement in entirety, rather than just those aspects which may happen (or are consciously altered) to coincide with the purposes of a particular Federal categorical program.

If the Foundation does come to serve that role--and the remaining sections of this paper explore aspects of the proposal which have a direct bearing on this question--then it would certainly be a significant addition to the current Federal portfolio.

-----

[*] See the next section for a more complete treatment of the implications of the Foundation's governmental location.

D. Vehicle

A semi-independent "foundation" within the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare is an appropriate mechanism for supporting reform activities.

This underlying premise really incorporates two statements, one defining the _character_ of the proposed agency (a "foundation") and the other establishing its governmental _location_ (within DHEW). Since, however, the organizational location of a governmental agency may well affect its character (policies, procedures, autonomy), these two aspects of the Foundation proposal are quite possibly interrelated.

It is interesting to note that the term "foundation" has remained intact since the time five years ago when Laura Bornholdt first surfaced the proposal. In view of the marked changes in the proposal since then, however, it is perhaps worth reexamining the concept of a "foundation"-- with particular reference to the governmental setting.

The Foundation Directory defines a foundation as a

> non-governmental, non-profit organization, with funds and program managed by its own trustees or directors, and established to maintain or aid social, educational, charitable, religious, or other activities serving the common welfare.[44]

The mission ascribed above to "non-governmental" foundations would perhaps apply equally to many governmental agencies, and is not particularly helpful in identifying the distinctive character of such agencies in the private sector.

With respect to its governance, however, one particularly distinctive aspect of a foundation is suggested by a phrase embedded in the

middle of this definition: "with funds and program managed by its own trustees or directors." That is, a foundation is conceived as a highly autonomous organization, free from external control and enjoying both financial independence and freedom with respect to policy-setting. Foundation administrators quickly add to this list their freedom to set personnel policies--whom to hire, fire, and how much to pay them--particularly in comparison with governmental agencies.[45]

These general characteristics would appear to adequately describe non-governmental foundations, with the notable reservation that foundations are no longer as free to support politically oriented activities since Congress revised the Internal Revenue Code to discourage them from so doing.

However, while foundations may be free from most forms of external influence, such pressures may well become _internalized_ over time. We noted earlier the programmatic biases of foundations in the field of higher education toward private colleges and universities. Officials at the Ford Foundation have attested to the extreme internal difficulties they experienced recently in reallocating a significant portion of their higher education budget to a new program to aid black colleges.[46] Ford's traditional constituencies and existing programs were more than adequately represented on both its agency staff and Board.

A second qualification should be made regarding the theory of governance of the private foundation--that is, the notion that its policies and resources are managed by its board of trustees or directors.

Interviews with foundation officials suggest a conclusion which is not really surprising: agency staffs exert considerable influence over both the policy-setting and grant decision-making processes. As a general statement, it appears that boards tend to serve largely in a review capacity, rarely disapproving the advice of staff.[47]

Within the Federal government, independent agencies have existed for some time: currently, 51 such agencies are listed, most of them serving regulatory roles.[48] Within the past twenty years, a small number of independent grant-making "foundations within government" have been created--most notably, the National Science Foundation and the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities.[*]

These governmental foundations do share several characteristics in common with their pprivate counterparts--appointed boards with staggered terms, some latitude in hiring, and, apparently, greater than usual freedom from overt political pressures.[49] It also appears that they tend to develop informal constituencies in the field, another characteristic of private foundations noted earlier.[50]

However, there are also important dissimilarities from private foundations which clearly distinguish the two. First, and perhaps most important, governmental foundations do not enjoy fiscal independence: like other agencies, they must compete for funds annually in the governmental "marketplace," both within the Administration and before appropriations committees in Congress. Recent history suggests that in

---

[*] The latter is actually comprised of two autonomous units, the National Endowments for the Humanities and the Arts.

actuality their levels of support are not fixed: in Fiscal Year 1972, the budget of the Endowments for the Arts and Humanities doubled while that for the National Science Foundation was cut significantly. Second, governmental foundations enjoy significantly less freedom over personnel matters: most professionals and non-professionals are within the Civil Service System, with the accompanying prescribed salary schedules and job protection guarantees.

The proposed National Foundation for Postsecondary Education would share many of the characteristics of these other governmental foundations-- an appointed board which (in theory) has a policy-setting role, a degree of freedom in personnel matters (20% of professional employees outside of Civil Service), and the usual amount of fiscal dependence. One potential difference is that the Foundation is legislated to serve a considerably broader universe than these other two agencies; as was indicated earlier, it remains to be seen whether the Foundation will actually be responsive in practice to this broad constituency.

The Foundation proposal does contain one particularly unique provision: it would be located _within_ another agency, namely DHEW. Whether this provision is significant may be disputed. However, it has certainly been perceived as very critical--we noted earlier the prolonged dispute within the Federal government on this very question.

With respect to the issue of the Foundation's governance, the legislative proposal is actually quite confused--or, at least, ambiguous. The Foundation's Board of Directors is charged with the policy-setting role--

> "establish general policies for, and review the
> conduct of, the Foundation--"

while in the same breath the Commissioner of the proposed Education

Division is given authority over the Foundation's Director--

> "...and shall perform such duties and exercise such
> powers as the Board, subject to the general regula-
> tions of the Commissioner, may prescribe."

This language does little to clarify questions regarding the respective

roles of the different decision-makers: Will the Commissioner simply

be a channel for communications, or will he insert himself in the policy-

setting process? What will be the relationship between the Foundation

and the other agencies within the Division, OE and the NIE?

Different answers to these queries have been suggested. A former

White House aide, favoring (quite naturally) the first legislative pro-

posal which established the Foundation as an independent agency with no

barriers between it and the White House, fears that a Foundation within

DHEW would become "a sort of bureau of higher education innovation"--

implying that it would have virtually no autonomy whatsoever.[51] On the

other hand, the Senate authorizing committee, supporting the proposed

location within DHEW, took quite a different view:

> The authority of the Commissioner of Education to
> promulgate regulations...refers to the routine
> procedures of administration... not to the broad
> policy issues of grant administration--which are
> the concern of the Board.[52]

The rationale for the Foundation's location within DHEW is that it

should inform and be related to the other existing Federal programs

which provide support to postsecondary education:

> It is a location which we believe will retain
> the advantages of independent action and add
> to these the benefits of full coordination
> with other major educational programs.[53]

It remains to be seen to what degree these two noble purposes--independence and coordination--will be in conflict.

However, it does appear that the autonomy desired for the Foundation is not _guaranteed_ by the structure prescribed in the enacting legislation. Its future autonomy will depend on a number of factors which cannot be predicted--in particular, perhaps, the personal styles of the key actors in the process-the Secretary, the Commissioner, the first Foundation director and Board chairman. Consequently, the kinds of initial choices made by the President to fill the latter two roles (certainly with the influential advice of the Secretary and possibly the Commissioner) are likely to have a significant impact on the character of the Foundation.

E. Strategy

**Allocation of project grants should be the primary means
to encourage and support needed changes.**

We have noted that the second legislative proposal eliminated several purposes, or types of support, envisioned for the Foundation in the earlier version. Language which would have authorized the Foundation to support fellowship, research, black college and graduate programs was eliminated; the "innovation and reform" mission was considerably broadened and became the essential raison d'etre for the proposed Foundation.

The mechanisms envisioned to achieve the Foundation's purposes were similarly revised and simplified in the second proposal. This proposal identifies the project grant (and contract, when the recipient is a proprietary institution) as the primary vehicle to be utilized to "encourage and support" needed changes in postsecondary education.

The primary issue to be considered is the validity of the assumption that the project grant approach will be successful in achieving widespread reform. The nature of the project grant and its history of prior use in the Office of Education will be briefly examined, followed by a consideration of its potential applicability to, and the problems it raises for, the proposed Foundation.

The Project Grant[*]

Technically, a project grant can be understood as a short-term

---

[*] No formal description of the project grant currently exists. The following discussion is based on interviews with several OE officials.

(normally 1-3 years) transaction of funds by a funding source to a recipient organization which is obligated to spend these funds pursuant to objectives and plans which are mutually agreed upon by both parties. Although "products" such as progress and evaluative reports are often required by the terms of the agreement, the grant falls short of what is normally understood by a contract--i.e., the purchase of direct services. Rather, the grant can more properly be understood as an investment, or calculated risk, taken by the grantor that the grantee will achieve the stated objectives which, presumably, are of value to the grantor. If the recipient does not achieve the desired results but has pursued them in good faith, he is not required to reimburse the grantor. On the other hand, a project grant can be distinguished from a direct grant which, presumably, a recipient institution or individual may spend as it pleases.

More broadly, however, the project grant can be understood as an approach, or strategy, utilized to further certain broad objectives. The Federal government, for example, presumably has an interest in promoting desirable changes in the policies and practices of institutions and agencies in the field of postsecondary education. It invests resources in the form of project grants to such institutions to help finance what it hopes will be the successful development of innovative practices and programs. If successfully developed, the theory goes, such an innovation ought to be assimilated by the host institution and, in turn, adopted by other institutions in the field. This strategy has

also been commonly referred to as the "seed money" approach: the grantor (Federal government, foundation, or other funding source) invests minimal resources to test and develop an idea, on the assumption that if it proves to be successful it will "multiply" in the target field.

For this strategy to be termed successful, a particular innovation must pass at least three major milestones. First, it must be recognized as being successfully developed; that is, it must receive a positive evaluation. Second, the innovation must be adopted by the host institution, particularly beyond the period of external funding. Third, the innovation must be replicated in the field--that is, adopted by other institutions as well. As we consider the past experience with the project grant approach and its potential for the Foundation, the significance of these criteria--successful evaluation, adoption, and replication--must be kept in mind.

Historically, the project grant approach has been extensively utilized by the Office of Education, particularly in the post-Sputnik period during which the Federal role in elementary and secondary education has expanded so markedly.

In particular, the project grant has become the primary mechanism in what are often termed "categorical" programs--legislated programs designed to improve or enrich certain aspects of the school's curriculum and practices. Currently, for example, the project grant is utilized almost exclusively in programs related to environmental

education, drop out prevention, a host of personnel training objectives, bilingual education and reading programs, to name but a few.

A brief glance at the experience of one such categorical program utilizing the project grant approach in the Office of Education, Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, will suggest several key issues which will have to be addressed by those responsible for designing the Foundation. Indeed, the rhetoric surrounding the initiation of this elementary and secondary school program sounds strikingly similar to that for the Foundation. It was viewed by its drafters as "the cutting edge of educational reform."[54] According to the initial guidelines, the program's priorities were to "(1) encourage the development of innovations, and to (2) demonstrate worthwhile innovations in educational practice through exemplary programs."[55]

The subsequent record of observations and studies of the Title III program indicates, however, that both the legislation and guideline drafters left a few stones unturned. First, no steps were taken to insure that there would be assessment of the degree to which projects in the field achieved their stated aims. The initial guidelines made no mention whatsoever of evaluation and fully 75% of the initially funded projects allocated no funds for this purpose.[56] It is interesting to note that the Experimental Schools Program, initiated four years later, has allocated as much as 30% of its grant funds expressly for evaluative studies.

Second, the record suggests that little effort was made, at least initially, to insure that recipient school systems were actually committed to the "seed money" approach to innovation implicit in this project grant program. One observer noted, in 1967, that "There appeared to be little evidence that innovators planning Title III programs were concerned about funding after Title III moneys ran out."[57]

A 1969 study of a sample of Title III projects found that only 24 projects were still in operation a year after Federal funding was terminated.[58]

No study has been undertaken of the extent to which innovative practices supported by Title III has been replicated beyond the recipient school system.

The Project Grant and the Foundation Proposal

Conceptually--aside from political factors which may have been influential--it is fair to point out that the project grant approach represented but one of the options available to the designers of the Foundation. At least two other options have been suggested for attaining the same objectives of widespread reform and change by detractors of the Foundation proposal.

It could be argued, first, that a more effective long-term strategy to achieve significant reform could be to emphasize applied research into the effects of formal educational policies and practices on the individual's cognitive and affective growth: that until more is known about educational effects, short-range attempts to alter the

processes of education are likely to produce little return on such an
investment of resources. Second, one could argue that a more effective
strategy for the Federal government would be simply to provide additional
direct support to institutions. Institutions would, as a matter of
course, spend such unrestricted funds for the betterment of their
program.

As strict alternatives to the project approach, neither of these
two options appear to stand up well under scrutiny. With regard to the
first alternative, there is little assurance that research will yield
sufficient information upon which educators may base judgments; second,
it is not particularly persuasive to argue that attempts to improve
current practices must be deferred until such information is available.
The second argument would appear to have less validity; it would not
appear likely, particularly in these times of financial hardship among
educational institutions, that direct aid would be allotted by insti-
tutions for experimentation and reform. It should also be pointed out,
of course, that with respect to the anticipated Federal role in post-
secondary education in the near future, the same legislative bill which
includes the Foundation proposal would establish a new agency for con-
ducting educational research and a new program of direct institutional
aid for colleges and universities.

The project grant approach is not devoid of serious problems,
however, both conceptually and at the various stages of implementation.
The alternatives and issues for designing an operational project grant

program have been dealt with rather fully elsewhere.[59] However, one serious conceptual flaw warrants particular attention in this section. It relates to the question of the degree of _control_ which the Federal government has over the project grant strategy.

It was suggested that the approach incorporates three criteria which must be met by a particular project to achieve success: positive evaluation, adoption, and replication. In each case, the question must be asked, to what extent can the Federal government affect the outcome of these three criteria?

Aside from the technological limitations of the "state of the art" in evaluation, the Federal government can clearly take steps to insure that assessment is made of the progress of projects supported through the Foundation. Both at the proposal stage, by insuring that project objectives are defined with appropriate specificity, and at the evaluative stage, by seeing that sufficient resources are available for independent evaluation, the grantor can exert considerable control.

With respect to project adoption, the degree of Federal control and influence would appear to be considerably lessened. It is true that most Federal project grant programs now require that the grant recipient include in its initial proposal plans for "phasing out" Federal support and increasing the institutional commitment, even to the amount by which the Federal share is being reduced. However, the grantor has no influence over the eventual disposition of the institution, following termination of outside funding, to adopt or reject the outcomes of the project.

The third criterion, replication beyond the host institution, presents even more problems. While the Federal grant may place considerable resources into various forms of dissemination, it has no effective means to insure that the fruits of its investment are adopted elsewhere, unless it chooses to provide financial incentives similar to those offered at the stage of project development. In view of the strong tradition of institutional autonomy and independence among higher education institutions, one might seriously doubt the likelihood that the project grant approach will automatically yield significant returns on the Federal investment.

This discussion has suggested that there are severe limitations on the span of control which the Federal government can assert with regard to the project grant approach. Put in other terms, it suggests the very large extent to which the Foundation will be dependent upon other institutions and agencies to insure the success of its own mission. This is, perhaps, as it should be: no one has yet suggested that the Federal government ought to dictate the policies of postsecondary institutions. However, the fact remains that the degree of commitment of institutions in postsecondary education, both individually and collectively, to seriously examine, test, and alter their current practices will largely determine the success of the proposed Foundation.

IV

CONCLUDING NOTE

The Foundation proposal we have examined embodies both considerable change and continuity when compared with that concept first promoted by Laura Bornholdt in 1967. On the one hand, the Foundation's "reform" mission remained largely intact; on the other hand, its organizational character had been considerably altered. Consequently, of particular interest was the question of the adequacy of the "fit" between the Foundation's avowed purpose and its operational characteristics, as described in the legislation.

Our analysis of the legislative text has identified several potential problems related to the Foundation's operational role and structure which may prevent the proposed new agency from realizing its stated goals. The "target group" it is expected to influence is at once so broad, diverse, and fractionalized that the Foundation may have neither the resources nor the perspective needed to do so. The Foundation's presumed need for independence and autonomy are threatened by its location within an existing Federal agency, HEW, and the ambiguity of its reporting relationships within that unit. And finally, a problem which the Foundation may share with many other recent Federal educational initiatives, its primary weapon, the project grant, may not be sufficiently potent to achieve its desired impact in the field.

The prior analysis has also suggested, however, that these potential defects can be corrected or, at the very least, their impact can be minimized. As is the case with most Congressional proposals, the legislative text creating the Foundation is sufficiently broad and, in some places, so ambiguous as to require those charged with the responsibility for implementation to make a number of choices and interpretations. This may be particularly germane to the Foundation proposal, however, in view of its broad, general mandate and its "expanding" universe of potential clients. Consequently, the initial decisions which are made within this area of administrative discretion may well prove to be crucial, setting precedents which would be difficult to reverse at a later point in time.

APPENDIX

"NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

"Sec. 403. (a) (1) The National Foundation for Postsecondary
Education (referred to in this section as the 'Foundation'), shall
consist of a Postsecondary Education Board (referred to in this section
as the 'Board') and a Director. The Foundation shall have only such
authority as may be vested therein by this section or delegated thereto
by the Commissioner and shall be subject to the general regulations of
the Commissioner promulgated for its management.

"(2) It shall be the purpose of the Foundation--

"(A) to encourage excellence, innovation, and reform in post-
secondary education;

"(B) to provide assistance for the design and establishment of
innovative structures for providing postsecondary education and
innovative modes of teaching and learning therein;

"(C) to expand the ways and patterns of acquiring postsecondary
education and to open opportunities for such education to individuals
of all ages and circumstances;

"(D) to strengthen the autonomy, individuality, and sense of
mission of postsecondary educational institutions, and to support
programs which are distinctive or of special value to American
society; and

"(E) to encourage postsecondary educational institutions to
develop policies, programs, and practices responsive to social

needs, and to provide an organization concerned with the rationalization of public policies toward postsecondary education.

"(b) (1) The Board shall consist of fifteen members, at least one of whom shall be a student at the time of his appointment, appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, the Director, and such other ex officio members who are officers of the United States as the President may designate. Eight members (excluding ex officio members) shall constitute a quorum. The Chairman of the Board shall be designated by the President from among its appointed members. Ex officio members shall not have a vote on the Board.

"(2) The term of office of members of the Board (other than ex officio members) shall be six years, except that (A) any member appointed to fill a vacancy shall serve only such portion of a term as shall not have been expired at the time of such appointment, and (B) in the case of initial members, five shall serve for terms of four years and five for terms of two years. Any person, whose term of office is subject to this paragraph, who has been a member of the Board for six consecutive years shall thereafter be ineligible for appointment to the Board during the two-year period following the expiration of such sixth year.

"(3) Subject to general regulations of the Commissioner promulgated for the management of the Foundation, the Board shall--

"(A) establish general policies for; and review the conduct of, the Foundation;

"(B) meet at the call of the Chairman of the Board, except that it shall meet (i) at least four times during each fiscal year; or (ii) whenever one-third of the members request a meeting in writing, in which event one-third of the members (excluding ex officio members) shall constitute a quorum;

"(C) submit an annual report to the President on the activities of the Foundation and the status of postsecondary education in the United States, which (i) shall include such recommendations and comments as the Board may deem appropriate, and (ii) shall be submitted to the Congress not later than March 31 of each year;

"(D) make and submit to the President and the Congress such other reports as it may deem necessary.

The Board shall have the responsibility for the general policies with respect to the powers, duties, and authorities vested in the Foundation under this section. The Director shall make available to the Board such information and assistance as may be necessary to enable the Board to carry out its functions.

"(c) (1) The Director of the Foundation (referred to in this section as the 'Director') shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, and shall serve at the pleasure of the President. The Director shall be compensated at the rate provided for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of title 5, United States Code, and shall perform such duties and exercise such powers as the Board, subject to general regulations of the Commissioner, may prescribe.

"(2) There shall be a Deputy Director of the Foundation (referred
to in this section as the 'Deputy Director') who shall be appointed by
the President and shall serve at the pleasure of the President. The
Deputy Director shall be compensated at the rate provided for grade 18
of the General Schedule set forth in section 5332 of title 5, United
States Code. The Deputy Director shall exercise such powers as the
Director may prescribe and Deputy Director shall serve as Director dur-
ing the absence or disability of the Director or in the event of a
vacancy in the Office of Director. The position created by this para-
graph shall be in addition to the number of positions placed in grade 18
of the General Schedule under section 5108 of title 5, United States
Code.

"(3) There are hereby created three additional positions within
the Foundation which shall be placed in grade 18 of the General Schedule
set forth in section 5332 of title 5, United States Code; and such po-
sitions shall be in addition to the number of positions placed in that
grade under section 5108 of such title.

"(d) The Foundation is authorized to make grants to, and contracts
with, institutions of higher education (including combinations of such
institutions) and other public and private educational institutions
and agencies (except that no grant shall be made to an educational
institution or agency other than a nonprofit institution or agency) to
improve postsecondary educational opportunities by providing assistance
for--

"(1) encouraging the reform, innovation, and improvement of postsecondary education, and providing equal educational opportunity for all;

"(2) the creation of institutions and programs involving new paths to career and professional training, and new combinations of academic and experiential learning;

"(3) the establishment of institutions and programs based on the technology of communications;

"(4) the carrying out in postsecondary educational institutions of changes in internal structure and operations designed to clarify institutional priorities and purposes;

"(5) the design and introduction of cost-effective methods of instruction and operation;

"(6) the introduction of institutional reforms designed to expand individual opportunities for entering and reentering institutions and pursuing programs of study tailored to individual needs;

"(7) the introduction of reforms in graduate education, in the structure of academic professions, and in the recruitment and retention of faculties; and

"(8) the creation of new institutions and programs for examining and awarding credentials to individuals, and the introduction of reforms in current institutional practices related thereto;

"(e) In carrying out this section, the Director shall have the authority--

"(1) to enter into contracts without performance or other bonds, and without regard to section 3709 of the Revised Statutes (41 U.S.C.5);

"(2) to make advance, progress, and other payments without regard to the provisions of section 3648 of the Revised Statutes (31 U.S.C. 529);

"(3) to receive money and other property donated, bequeathed, or devised to the Foundation with or without a condition or restriction, including a condition that the Foundation use other funds for the purposes of the gift; and to use, sell, or otherwise dispose of such property for the purposes of this section;

"(4) to publish or arrange for the publication of information without regard to the provisions of section 501 of title 44, United States Code;

"(5) to accept and utilize the services of voluntary and un-compensated personnel, notwithstanding the provisions of section 3679(b) of the Revised Statutes (31 U.S.C. 665(b)), and to provide transportation and subsistence as authorized by section 5703 of title 5, United States Code, for persons serving without compensation;

"(6) to arrange with and reimburse the heads of other Federal agencies for the performance of any activity which the Foundation is authorized to conduct; and

"(7) to appoint, for terms not to exceed three years, and compensate without regard to the civil service or classification laws

such technical or professional employees of the Foundation as he deems necessary to accomplish its functions, and also to appoint and compensate without regard to such laws not to exceed one-fifth of the number of full-time, regular technical or professional employees of the Foundation.

"(f) There is authorized to be appropriated, without fiscal year limitations, $250,000,000, in the aggregate, for the period beginning July 1, 1972, and ending June 30, 1975, to carry out the functions of the Foundation. Sums so appropriated shall, notwithstanding any other provision of law, unless enacted in express limitation of this subsection, remain available for the purposes of this section until expended."

FOOTNOTES

1. Interview with Joseph P. Cosand on April 1, 1971. Then President of the Community College District, St. Louis, Missouri, Dr. Cosand had an intimate knowledge of the concept's origins, both as a member of the Carnegie Commission and as an associate of Ms. Bornholdt.

2. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968.

3. _Ibid._, pp. 44-45.

4. _Ibid._

5. Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, _Quality and Equality: Revised Recommendations; New Levels of Federal Responsibility for Higher Education_ (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971), pp. 27-29.

6. Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, _From Isolation to Mainstream_ (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971), pp. 57-58.

7. See Chester E. Finn, "The National Foundation for Higher Education; Death of an Idea," _Change_ (March, 1972), 22-31, for a general description of this "working group."

8. Internal memoranda, March-April, 1970.

9. See Clark Kerr, "National Foundation for Higher Education," _Change_ (May-June, 1971), 8.

10. Finn, p. 28.

11. _Ibid._, p. 30.

12. John Brademas, "A National Foundation for Higher Education?," _The Chronicle of Higher Education_, November 1, 1971, p. 8.

13. Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, _Quality and Equality: New Levels of Federal Responsibility for Higher Education_, pp. 3-6.

14. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971.

15. _Ibid._, pp. 280-281.

16. U.S., Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, _Report on Higher Education_ (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1971).

17. _Ibid._, p. x.

18. _Ibid._, p. 62.

19. Patricia K. Cross, Beyond the Open Door: _New Students to Higher Education_ (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1971).

20. Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, _New Students and New Places_ (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971).

21. Samuel B. Gould and Patricia K. Cross, _Explorations in Non-Traditional Study_ (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1972); Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, _Less Time, More Options_ (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1970).

22. Eric Ashby, _Any Person, Any Study: An Essay on Higher Education in the United States_ (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971).

23. Registration in two-year colleges is expected to increase by 84% by 1980, as opposed to a 44% rate for four-year colleges and universities. _Source:_ U.S., Office of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics, _Projections of Educational Statistics to 1980-81_ (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1972).

24. Based on partial returns in survey conducted by the U.S. Office of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics (April, 1972).

25. Estimate provided by National Home Study Council, Washington, D.C., March, 1972.

26. Finn, pp. 26, 28-29.

27. Chuck Bunting, David Justice, and Mike O'Keefe, "A Grants-Management Process for Innovation and Reform in Postsecondary Education" (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Office of Education, 1972), pp. 53-56. (Mimeographed).

28. _Ibid._

29. _Ibid._, pp. 24-25.

30. U.S., Office of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics, _Digest of Educational Statistics, 1970_ (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1971), p. 72.

31. Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, _The More Effective Use of Resources_ (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972), p. 29.

32. Council for Financial Aid to Education, _Voluntary Support of Education_ (New York: CFAE, 1971), p. 5.

33. Author's judgment, based on interviews with staffs of four private foundations, November, 1971 through March, 1972.

34. Council for Financial Aid to Education, p. 68.

35. _Ibid_.

36. U.S., Office of Education, _Digest of Educational Statistics, 1970_, p. 9.

37. U.S., Office of Management and Budget, _Special Analyses, Budget of the United States Government_ (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1971), p. 126.

38. _Ibid_., p. 128.

39. Interview with Dr. Lloyd Elliott, President, George Washington University, Washington, D.C., March 10, 1972.

40. U.S., Office of Management and Budget, pp. 130-131.

41. Homer D. Babbidge, Jr. and Robert M. Rosenzweig, _The Federal Interest in Higher Education_ (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1962), p. 151.

42. _Ibid_., p. 158.

43. Chester E. Finn, pp. 27-28.

44. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), p. vii.

45. Interviews with private foundation staffs, November, 1971, through March, 1972.

46. Interviews with Marshall Robinson and Peter E. de Janosi, staff officers of Ford Foundation, November 24, 1971.

47. Chuck Bunting, David Justice, and Mike O'Keefe, p. 23.

48. U.S., General Services Administration, _United States Organization Manual, 1971/72_ (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1971).

49. Interviews with staff of National Endowment of the Humanities, February 16-17, 1972.

50. Chuck Bunting, David Justice, and Mike O'Keefe, p. 23.

51. Chester E. Finn, p. 23.

52. U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, Report on the Education Amendments of 1971, 92nd Cong., Ist Sess. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1971), p. 86.

53. Elliott L. Richardson, "Statement before the Subcommittee on Education, Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, U.S. Senate, March 4, 1971." (Washington, D.C.: Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1971), p. 4. (Mimeographed).

54. Steven K. Bailey, The Office of Education and the Education Act of 1965 (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1966), p. 8.

55. Ibid., p. 11.

56. Egon G. Guba, "Evaluation and the Process of Change," in Notes and Working Papers Concerning the Administration of Programs Authorized Under Title III, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, ed. by Subcommittee on Education, Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, U.S. Senate (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1967), p. 305.

57. Dan Bushnell, "Computer Technology," in Notes and Working Papers Concerning the Administration of Programs Authorized under Title III, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, p. 367.

58. Anthony Polamen, "A Study of Title III Projects, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, after the Approved Funding Periods" (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Office of Education). (Mimeographed).

59. Chuck Bunting, David Justice, and Mike O'Keefe, pp. 9-46.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ashby, Eric. *Any Person, Any Study: An Essay on Higher Education in the States.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971.

Babbidge, Homer D. and Robert M. Rosenzweig. *The Federal Interest in Higher Education.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1962.

Bailey, Steven K. *The Office of Education and the Education Act of 1965.* Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1966.

Brademas, John. "A National Foundation for Higher Education?" *The Chronicle of Higher Education,* November 1, 1971, p. 8.

Bunting, Chuck, David Justice, and Mike O'Keefe. "A Grants-Management Process for Innovation and Reform in Postsecondary Education." Washington, D.C.: U.S. Office of Education, 1972. Mimeographed.

Carnegie Commission on Higher Education. *From Isolation to Mainstream.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971.

_____. *Less Time, More Options.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1970.

_____. *The More Effective Use of Resources.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972.

_____. *New Students and New Places.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971.

_____. *Quality and Equality: New Levels of Federal Responsibility for Higher Education.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968.

Council for Financial Aid to Education. *Voluntary Support of Education.* New York: CFAE, 1971.

Cross, Patricia K. *Beyond the Open Door: New Students to Higher Education.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1971.

Finn, Chester E. "The National Foundation for Higher Education; Death of an Idea." *Change* (March, 1972), 22-31.

Gould, Samuel B. and Patricia K. Cross. *Explorations in Non-Traditional Study.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1972.

Hodgkinson, Harold. *Institutions in Transition.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972.

Kerr, Clark. "National Foundation for Higher Education." Change (May/June, 1971), 8.

Polamen, Anthony. "A Study of Title III Projects, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, After the Approved Funding Periods." Washington, D.C.: U.S. Office of Education, 1969. Mimeographed.

Richardson, Elliott L. "Statement before the Subcommittee on Education, Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, U.S. Senate, March 4, 1971." Washington, D.C.: Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1971. Mimeographed.

U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Labor and Public Welfare. Report on the Educational Amendments of 1971. 92nd Cong., 1st Sess. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1971.

U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Labor and Public Welfare. Subcommittee on Education. Notes and Working Papers. Concerning the Administration of Programs Authorized Under Title III, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1971.

U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Report on Higher Education. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1971.

U.S. General Services Administration. United States Government Organization Manual, 1971/72. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1971.

U.S. Office of Management and Budget. Special Analyses, Budget of the United States Government. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1971.

U.S. Office of Education. National Center for Educational Statistics. Digest of Educational Statistics, 1970. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1971.

U.S. Office of Education. National Center for Educational Statistics. Projections of Educational Statistics to 1980-81. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1972.

PART TWO

A CASE STUDY OF A TEMPORARY SYSTEM:

THE FOUNDATION TASK FORCE,

U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION

I

INTRODUCTION

> The social structure of organizations of the future
> will have some unique characteristics. The key word
> will be "temporary." There will be adaptive, rapidly
> changing _temporary_ systems. These will be task forces
> organized around problems to be solved by groups of
> relative strangers with diverse professional skills...
> This is the organizational form that will gradually
> replace bureaucracy as we know it...[1]

The millenium depicted above by Warren Bennis, if indeed it is

one, is not yet upon us. However, existing large, bureaucratic organ-

izations frequently utilize "temporary systems" to perform various

tasks and functions, particularly those of a planning nature. Such

forms of "ad-hocracy," to use Alvin Toffler's term,[2] appear to be par-

ticularly prevalent in the unwieldy bureaucratic maze of the Federal

government. From the White House to the lowliest bureau, perhaps the

most common temporary system utilized is the short-term task force.

Although a few organizational theorists have extolled the apparent

virtues of such temporary systems, very few studies of their actual use

appear to exist. However, particularly with respect to what have been

called _internal_ systems[3]—temporary structures created wholly within

existing bureaucracies—studies of their actual behavior ought to be of

significant value to students of organizations. In effect, the organiza-

tion has deliberately avoided using its existing structure and created

an alternative mechanism to accomplish a particular task. Consequently,

in addition to more fully understanding the dynamics of temporary systems, such studies may increase our knowledge of bureaucratic behavior as well.

This paper describes and analyzes the organizational behavior of one temporary system--the Foundation Task Force, a short-term, internal task force created within the U.S. Office of Education (OE) to plan for the (hoped for) implementation of a legislative proposal, a bill calling for the establishment of a National Foundation for Postsecondary Education.[*]

The first section presents a critical background for the subsequent case analysis. First, a framework for studying temporary systems is developed, a framework which reflects the life stages of a temporary system and its major properties. Then, the literature on organizational behavior and theory is surveyed in the context of this framework to uncover findings and hypotheses which may aid in understanding the behavior of the Foundation Task Force.

The subsequent case study and analysis is also presented within the same framework. I probably qualify as a "participant-observer" in this particular case, working full-time in the Office of Education and participating on a part-time basis on the Foundation Task Force. Consequently, a "personal note" is included in the concluding section which considers the potential biases which may have crept into the presentation of this case study.

_____

[*]See accompanying paper, "An Analysis of a Legislative Proposal: The National Foundation for Postsecondary Education," for a full treatment of the proposal text.

II

FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

> We need more studies of <u>temporary systems</u>—groups
> which have a beginning, a destiny, and a finite
> "death." Through a natural history of these
> groups, we may learn more about the development
> of collaboration, of the emergence of linking
> pins, of cliques and cabals, of conflict and
> its resolution.[4]

By studying the "natural history" of one such group, the Founda-
tion Task Force, we hope, indeed, to learn something of the dynamics of
temporary systems—as well as the dynamics of their larger "parent or-
ganizations."

This section of the paper seeks to develop a useful framework for
describing and analyzing the life of the Foundation Task Force. Several
salient characteristics of a task force and its environment are pre-
sented which, in turn, aid in organizing the critical issues which need
to be addressed in the case study.

With respect to these issues, the literature concerned both with
bureaucratic and temporary organizations is then surveyed to uncover
hypotheses and findings which will be tested against the actual history
of the Foundation Task Force. In addition to the formal literature,
however, bureaucracies themselves generate theories and observations of
their own behavior; several such first-person testimonies which have
been elicited will be included where appropriate.

A. General Approach

It has been observed that short-term task forces may actually take a variety of different forms--indeed, in some cases, they may come to be not very "temporary" at all.[5] However, the more general parameters of a task force can be defined with respect to three of its outward properties-- its <u>structure</u>, its <u>composition</u>, and its <u>lifespan</u>. These broad dimensions will suggest a framework within which both the case itself and the pertinent literature can be organized.

Structurally, an internal task force is one component, or subunit, of a larger organization--in this case, its "parent" is the Office of Education (OE). Within the Federal system, of course, the governmental hierarchy extends to the Chief Executive himself. However, as the history of this particular task force will suggest, the relevant organizational "environment" of the Foundation Task Force extends solely to the Secretary of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW), who might be considered "the Sovereign," to use Tullock's somewhat misleading phrase.[6]

In addition to their structural properties, organizations can also be viewed as collections of people. The Foundation Task Force is, in this sense, a small group of individuals who share--at least--a common task. In addition, the Task Force's environment includes other individuals who, while they may not be members of this small group, affect, and are affected by, the Task Force.

Finally, a "temporary" task force may be viewed with respect to its timeframe: it is created for a finite period, to achieve a particular task, after the completion of which it is presumably destined to self-destruct. Because of this short lifespan, such temporary systems are particularly conducive to being studied. And the major stages of their finite lives--_initiation_, _tenure_, and _termination_--afford both convenient and logical "handles" to approach the issue of the Task Force's organizational and individual dynamics.

The three stages correspond to the three major questions regarding the Foundation Task Force which this paper seeks to address: _Why_ it was created and why its members joined; _how_ it and its members behaved; and _what_ effects it had upon the organization and the individual. These questions are discussed in more detail below in the context of the stages of the Task Force's life. It should be remembered, however, that the stages inform and interrelate with each other: i.e., evidence of the actual effects of the Task Force will help in identifying the organization's motives for its initial creation.

Initiation. The creation of a task force represents an organization's conscious decision _not_ to assign a particular task to a component of its existing structure. Instead, it chooses to create a wholly new structural entity. As such, perhaps the critical issue at this stage concerns the organization's _motivation_: _Why_ did it choose to take such a step? What characteristics of the task to be accomplished, the organization's existing structure, and factors in its

environment led the organization's leadership to create the new unit?
A parallel question relates to _individual_ motivations. Personnel must
be recruited for the task force, either from the parent organization or
elsewhere: What factors led individuals to join, or (if relevant) to
assign others to, the Task Force, rather than remaining in their prior
roles?

Tenure. The lifespan of a task force is not likely to be one
stage as much as a series of stages as it alters its mandated course,
changes its composition, and (possibly) matures. However, its "tenure"
represents the _operational_ period of the Task Force. As an alternative
structure within the parent organization, how it _behaves_, both as a unit
and a set of different individuals, is of particular interest: Do the
Task Force and its members behave differently from the rest of the or-
ganization, or do its structure, strategies, and interpersonal relation-
ships reflect existing norms and practices? Are its relationships with
other sub-units characterized by cooperation or competition? Do its
individual members develop new allegiances, or do they continue to
identify with their prior work units?

Termination. A task force is a device presumably established to
achieve a certain outcome or set of outcomes. It is also, as we have
noted, a new structure whose very _presence_ may have effects on the or-
ganization, and the individuals assigned to it. The primary questions
at this stage relate to the _impact_ of the Task Force: Did it achieve
its mandated objective, and how successfully? What _other_ outcomes were

achieved, and how do they relate to the organization's original motives for creating the unit? Did the Task Force in fact self-destruct as planned? How did the Task Force experience affect the plans of both its members and the organization with respect to their future careers?

To summarize, the framework developed in this section combines the three outward properties of temporary systems discussed at the outset. Within the context of each of the stages in the life of a temporary system, both its _external_ role as a subunit of a larger organization and its _internal_ role as a group of individuals must be examined. This framework will be employed in the remainder of the paper.

B. Review of Literature

Several pertinent views of the behavior of organizations and individuals working within them are discussed in this section. To the extent possible, they are presented within the context of the format outlined above: first, theories of organizational and individual motivation; second, propositions concerning the functioning of subunits and small groups; and third, hypotheses concerning the effects of a temporary system on the organization and the individual. Finally, because the nature of a task force's mission may also have an impact on its behavior and that of the larger organization, views of the _planning_ function emerging from the literature are included.

i

Initiation: Organizational Motivation

The presence of a task force will most often signify two changes in the status quo of the parent organization: first, it is generally established to initiate or plan for a new organizational _mission_, and second, it represents a new internal _structure_. As such, there are two somewhat separable questions at this stage: What factors might lead an organization to adopt a new mission, and why might it select this particular structure?

Several writers suggest that the factors inducing an organization to change or broaden its institutional mission will be found in the organization's immediate environment. Bennis argues, for example, that increased competition and substantive changes in the environment are

likely "characteristics" of organizations about to change.[7] March and
Simon similarly suggest that organizations with "unstable boundary con-
ditions" are likely to be expanding their agendas.[8] McLuhan goes so
far as to suggest that

> No new idea ever starts from within a big operation.
> It must assail the organization from outside....[9]

And, with respect to organizations within the Federal government, it is
important to remember that a very powerful aspect of their environment
is the Federal system itself, with an interlocking hierarchy which may
generate new ideas and programs directly affecting any one unit's
mission.

However, the identification of immediate outside influences simply
begs a further question: What underlying, internal factors--what "in-
stitutional imperatives"[10]--motivate an organization to accept and
respond to such pressures? Indeed, even in the Federal system, operating
units appear to have considerable latitude in adopting or rejecting new
ideas generated in higher echelons.[11]

Robert Presthus draws what may be a particularly useful general
distinction between an organization's "manifest" and "latent" goals.[12]
Manifest goals are made explicit and relate to the intended outputs of
the organization--e.g., the specific educational services provided by
the Office of Education. It has been suggested that organizations have
a natural desire for "aggrandizement" of these goals.[13] Bennis refers
similarly to the "goal-seeking" behavior of organizations.[14] One

underlying motivation for acquiring new missions, then, is the inherent

tendency of organizations (and individuals) to expand.

Latent goals, on the other hand, are those which normally remain

implicit and refer to an organization's _internal_ functioning, particu-

larly its own maintenance and survival—as an organism, if you will.

It has often been suggested that, over time, an organization will de-

vote increasing attention to the _maintenance_ of the organization itself.

Etzioni refers to such behavior as "goal-displacement:"

> An organization reverses the priority between its
> goals and means in a way that makes the means a
> goal and the goals a mean. The most common means
> so displaced is the organization itself.[15]

The pursuit of organizational survival becomes a particularly com-

plex matter in a Federal system, within which there is a hierarchy of

units ostensibly serving the same general missions. In fact, as has

been suggested, presumably "subordinate" units are likely to make choices

which are self-serving:

> Since it is difficult to establish subsidiary objec-
> tives that will always be consistent with the general
> objective...the subsidiary organization will sometimes
> make decisions that are consistent with the partial
> objective of his particular organizational component,
> but inconsistent with the broader goal of the
> organization.[16]

A second underlying motivation for acquiring new purposes, then, is the

organization's "latent" instinct for survival: it may, by not adopting

a new mission, lose something of value—status, power, or resources, to

name three such valuable commodities.

One final word on the "instinctive" behavior of organizations is worth adding. Most organizational theorists decry such behavior to be self-serving and undesirable. Herbert Simon offers another, possibly more sophisticated, analysis of the means-end dilemma:

> In the process of decision those alternatives are chosen which are considered to be appropriate means for reaching desired ends. Ends themselves, however, are often merely instrumental to more final objectives...often the connection between an organization's activities and ultimate objectives is obscure...or incompletely formulated.[17]

The question of organizational motivation will be particularly germane to the case in point: Simon's view of a much more long-range means-end continuum may well pertain.

The second issue of organizational motivation related to the selection of a task force as the vehicle to initiate a new mission. Bennis, of course, would consider such a decision to be highly rational, in view of the "inadequacy of the military-bureaucratic model, particularly [in] its response to rapid change."[18] The very nature of change itself, according to Bennis, "will call for the collaboration of specialists in a project form of organization."[19]

March and Simon, on the other hand, point to several less task-related bureaucratic factors which may well influence decisions regarding the type and location of a structure to carry out a new activity. One factor might be the long-term impact of such a decision:

> A major significance, therefore, of the assignment of
> a new activity or of an operational goal to a definite,
> recognized unit is that this creates a group of em-
> ployees concerned with the activity on a full-time
> basis--an important part of initiation for further
> program elaboration.[20]

To put their point in other terms, a new initiative is likely to become

the "captive" of whatever unit to which it is assigned. If such an out-

come is not desired or if the decision regarding a program's eventual

location has not been made, a self-destructing task force outside the

existing structure might well be created by the organization.

March and Simon suggest a second, more pragmatic motivation:

planning activities will be assigned to units and individuals "without

heavy operating responsibilities."[21] A new task force could, in other

words, take up a burden which the operating units could not afford.

March and Simon make a third point which may help us understand

a related issue, the <u>location</u> of a task force, as well as the issue of

its selection:

> At any point in the organization we would expect sensi-
> tivity to innovations to be a function of the relevance
> of the innovation to the needs of the specific unit
> involved. Thus, the top executive levels of an or-
> ganizational unit will be particularly sensitive to
> needs for innovation with respect to the goals for
> that unit--as distinct from...particular sub-goals
> assigned to sub-units.[22]

An organization's leadership, then, might make the effort to create a

task force to plan for a new initiative, if that initiative promised to

significantly alter its existing mission; second, the leadership might

well locate a unit charged with such an initiative very close to "the

top." In a (hierarchically) "tall" organization, it might be added, a task force may be one of the few mechanisms for group activity available which could operate close to the top level, without several intervening layers.

Initiation: Individual Motivation

An individual working in a bureaucratic organization may join a newly formed unit in one of two ways: he may volunteer (and be granted his request) or he may be assigned, either by his immediate supervisor or by the top management of the organization. We might consider, then, the possible motives for personnel selection from the perspective of three concerned parties: those responsible for creating the task force, the individual's supervisor, and the individual himself.

According to the organizational theorists, the bureaucratic manager seeking to find flexible, inventive individuals within his organization to plan for a wholly new and different mission will be hard-pressed to do so. There seems to be considerable agreement that bureaucracies breed, not creativity and flexibility, but compulsive orderliness and rule-oriented behavior. Merton suggests that the bureaucrat is trained for "over-conformity," and that this training may result in an "incapacity" for more creative tasks;[23] Argyris speaks of the bureaucrat's "dependence" and "subordination."[24] With respect to large organizations, Downs has developed a rather pessimistic evolutionary theory: "As the bureau gets larger, the average level of talent therein is likely to decline."[25] With respect to the strategy adopted to select personnel for the

Foundation Task Force, it will be useful to determine to what extent it sought to tap individuals from the existing bureaucratic ranks.

The dynamics of personnel selection may be considerably more complex than this, however, particularly if some degree of <u>choice</u> exists--that is, when individual assignments may be <u>negotiated</u> between top management, subordinate supervisors, and the individuals themselves. Such conditions do normally appear to exist, at least within the Office of Education.

For his part, the supervisor of a sub-unit may be guided by his sense of the importance of the new mission to his own unit. If he is "sensitive" to this mission, to borrow March and Simon's term, he may himself elect to participate, or he may designate a trusted lieutenant to participate in the new activity. However, his assignment of an individual represents a sacrifice of resources to an effort for which he is not directly responsible; we might consider other motivations for doing so.

One possible motive might be to "get rid of" an undesirable employee--the so-called "Outer Mongolia syndrome."[26] Bureaucrats themselves often seem to consider <u>full-time</u> task force assignments to be punishments: "Oh, Charlie was appointed to the task force: What did he do wrong?" Particularly in organizations like the Federal government, in which actual demotion and severance are not feasible, "temporary" and "lateral" assignments may be obscured demotions:

> One of the chief devices by which the organization copes with the potential strains of demotion is to cloak the demotion in a good deal of ambiguity.[27]

From the perspective of the individual employee, if he is "unde-sirable" to his supervisor, he is also likely to be unhappy in his cur-rent situation; hence, one of his possible motives for seeking assignment to a task force would be to find a more satisfactory work situation. Nor would he necessarily have to view such an assignment as a demotion, due to its "ambiguity" and to the fact that it is, presumably, temporary. He may also, of course, be motivated by other factors. He may have a genuine interest in the new activity, or he may be what Downs refers to as a "climber:" motivated primarily by an opportunity he sees for his own advancement within the organization.

Nonetheless, these considerations suggest that it will be neces-sary to look at the dynamics of the recruited individual's prior work situation to determine his, and his superiors', motives for assignment to the Task Force.

ii

Tenure: Introductory Note

In order to understand the organizational behavior of the temporary system to be studied during its operational stage, we must be concerned with both its external and internal aspects: externally, it can be viewed as a sub-unit of a larger organization; internally, it is a dis-crete unit by itself. In the first case, we need to interpret its interactions as a unit both with the leadership and the other sub-units of the organization--both vertically and horizontally. However, we must also understand its internal functioning as a small group: how

it is formally structured, how individual roles are allotted, and what its informal structure might be. With respect to both issues, we will need to understand how and why the Task Force's behavior might change over its lifespan.

Tenure: External Behavior

We will first consider the question of the task force's interactions with the organization's top management--the vertical dimension: What factors shape the leadership-task force relationship, and how it can be assessed. The issue is of significance, not only to determine the relative importance and priority of the task force to the organization. In addition, without close communication, a great deal can be altered in transition and translation:

> Most commonly, the goal of the organization has been
> assumed as given...and the possibility that there
> might be different interpretations of the goal or
> that other goals might impinge...has been ignored.[28]

Several factors which might influence the extent and character of the leadership-task force relationship are suggested in the literature. First, it has been suggested that planning, as a broad category of an organization's activities, normally receives scant attention by its leadership. March and Simon propose a "Gresham's Law of Planning," to the effect that "daily routine drives out planning." Elsewhere, Simon takes the point further, suggesting that top-level attention is not particularly relevant to the conduct of effective planning:

> ...The planning procedure permits expertise of every
> kind to be drawn into the decision without any diffi-
> culties being imposed by the lines of authority in the
> organization...to the extent to which planning pro-
> cedures are used in reaching decisions, the formal or-
> ganization has relevance only in the final stages of
> the whole process.[29]

On the other hand, there may be a countervailing factor if, to

repeat March and Simon's earlier point, the leadership is particularly

"sensitive" to either the planning topic or, possibly, to the planning

strategy undertaken (to what extent it purports to be "final" and

prescriptive).

Nonetheless, the degree of attention paid to the task force by

the leadership may not be an accurate measure of its interest. It might

be added that bureaucrats themselves manifest considerable ambivalence

on this issue. On the one hand, they want their activities to be no-

ticed and given priority; on the other hand, the boss' attention can

mean trouble: "The only time I hear from him is when I've done some-

thing wrong."

Second, one might assume that an organization's commitment toward

a particular activity might be measured by the adequacy of the resources

made available for its pursuit. There is, however, the somewhat in-

tractable problem of resource measurement, particularly within govern-

mental agencies:

> They face input markets where they buy the scarce
> resources they need to produce their outputs. But
> they face no economic markets whatever on their output
> side. Therefore, they have no direct way of evaluat-
> ing their outputs in relation to the costs of their
> inputs....[30]

Perhaps a more helpful, if somewhat more informal, indicator would be the relative facility with which the task force obtains its necessary resources--personnel, office space, funds for travel and other expenses-- from the organization. As a wholly new entity, a task force is com- pletely dependent upon its "parent" for sustenance; evidence of the parent's supportiveness may be quite indicative.

The task force's organizational behavior in its <u>horizontal</u> dimen- sion refers to its relationships with other sub-units within the or- ganization. One factor influencing its lateral relations may be the composition of the group's personnel--the extent to which they are similar to other subgroups; this question will be discussed in more de- tail in the next section.

However, other, perhaps more powerful, "structural" factors will also determine under what conditions, and with what other sub-units, the task force is likely to be in conflict and tension. Anthony Downs has borrowed the concept of "territoriality," developed in studies of animal behavior, to interpret interorganizational conflict:

> This concept is strikingly relevant to the behavior
> of bureaus. The policy space surrounding each of
> the bureaus' specific functional locations can be
> divided into territorial zones...in effect, there
> is an incessant jockeying for position in policy
> space, as each bureau struggles to defend or ex-
> tend the existing borders of its various terri-
> torial zones.[31]

Similarly, March and Simon predict that "the greatest conflict will be between groups sharing common goals, resources, and roles."[32]

If the "policy space" of a task force does overlap with that of other sub-units, it is quite possible that, as an interloper, its presence could cause more conflict than is usually the case. Discussing task forces utilized by the White House during the Johnson Administration, Harold Seidman concludes:

> The task force was invented as a device for under-cutting the power of the agencies and the bureaucracy... the task force operation bred a miasma of suspicion and distrust....[33]

Both of these comments suggest that it will be particularly important to observe the relationships between the Foundation Task Force and other OE units which claim similar or proximate roles, objectives and resources.

Tenure: Internal Behavior

As indicated earlier, a task force can also be viewed as a distinct entity, a small work group. Two aspects of an on-going task force are of particular interest: the structure of the work group and the effects of the task force experience on the individual participant.

A useful distinction is made by most students of organizational behavior between an organization's "formal" and "informal" structure. Etzioni describes the former as "The organizational pattern designed by management," including established lines of authority and communication and rules governing working conditions and behavior.[34] The "informal" structure, on the other hand, normally "refers to interpersonal relations in the organization that affect decisions within it but either are omitted from the formal scheme or are not consistent with that scheme."[35]

Implicit is the assumption that both management and staff have significant effects on the "real" structure of an organization, even in the most rigidly hierarchical bureaucracies.

There may, of course, be factors pertaining to the nature of the task force's mission and strategy which will shape its internal structure. If the task force chooses or is directed to develop a series of fairly independent, unrelated products, a loose, decentralized structure may be appropriate; if, on the other hand, it must develop a unified, highly integrated product, this strategy might suggest a more centralized form of internal organization.

Nonetheless, one might expect that an internal task force, due to its small size, its short lifespan, its presumably discrete mission, and the very fact that it was created as an _alternative_ to the existing organizational structure, would have a formal structure considerably different from that of its "parent" organization. Warren Bennis appears to assume that such would be the case, almost of necessity:

> The groups will be conducted on _organic_ rather than
> mechanistic models; they will evolve in response to
> the problem rather than programmed role expectations.
> The function of the "executive" thus becomes co-
> ordinator...People will be differentiated not ver-
> tically according to rank and role but flexibly
> according to skill and professional training.[36]

An internal task force, however, is still functioning within, indeed remains a creature of, the larger organization and there may be countervailing pressures to more closely reflect the existing codes of behavior and organization. March and Simon suggest that the process by which participants are recruited may be influential:

> The pressures from informal work groups are more
> likely to be consistent with the demands of manage-
> ment if the sociometry of the organization is sys-
> tematically manipulated than if assignments are
> determined more or less randomly.[37]

Of particular influence, they go on to suggest, are the attitudes of
those members with the greatest seniority in the group.[38]

If, however, the task force does attain a more flexible, "organic-
adaptive" structure, to use Bennis' term,[39] the question of its informal
structure becomes particularly significant. In the absence of a formal-
ized hierarchy, does an informal hierarchy develop? With presumably
more freedom to do so, what informal "cliques and cabals" develop within
the group, and do they correspond to the formal work divisions? The
case study will consider the relevance of three criteria for establishing
informal cliques and hierarchies which have been suggested in the litera-
ture: an individual's seniority (either in the parent organization or
the task force),[40] his full or part-time status,[41] and his expertise
and background.[42]

Second, if a short-term task force does develop structural and
behavioral characteristics which are different from those of its parent
organization, the question of its impact on the individual's behavior
also becomes more significant. As noted earlier, organizational litera-
ture abounds with negative conclusions regarding the effects of bureau-
cratic experience on the individual's capabilities and perceptions: he
apparently becomes rule-oriented, inflexible, submissive, and alienated
from his work.

Bennis would, of course, argue that a problem-centered temporary system is a healthier environment for the individual, producing "flexibility [and] generally higher morale and loyalty."[43] Argyris, who has advocated the concept of "job enlargement," might share this view if a more flexible structure does succeed in broadening individual roles.

Other writers, however, take quite another view of a temporary system's effects upon its members. Slater suggests that, because such a group is removed from the permanent structure, the experience may produce "alienation, anomie, and meaninglessness" in the individual.[44] March and Simon suggest that an individual's sense of loyalty and commitment to a "task group" will be particularly weak under certain conditions--if, for example, there is considerable interpersonal competition within the group, or if the task force experience is perceived as "training" for another, "higher career" (perhaps by those individuals depicted by Downs as "climbers").[45]

As we seek to assess the impact of the Foundation Task Force on the individual's behavior, the perceptions of those members with considerable prior experience in OE will be of particular value, for they are in a position to compare its behavior with that of other sub-units in the organization.

iii

Termination: Organizational and Individual Outcomes

The case study will, of necessity, be limited to a consideration of the Task Force's more immediate aftermath. We are concerned with three

"sets" of outcomes resulting from the Task Force experience: first, the apparent success of the Task Force's "manifest" mission (its mandated outcomes) and evidence which may exist regarding its more "latent" missions; second, the organizational consequences of what might be termed "secondary" effects resulting from the very existence of the Task Force; and third, the impact of the Task Force experience on individual participants' subsequent career options and preferences.

With respect to its overt mission, it cannot necessarily be assumed that the products of a planning task force will be adopted or, if adopted, correctly implemented. We noted earlier the theory that decision-makers tend to ignore planners while their plans are "in process;" some observers have gone further, suggesting an inherent chasm between planners and executors:

> A major consequence of this distinction between program elaboration and program execution is that decisions made during the former process are rarely reexamined during the latter.[46]

To support this thesis, it has been suggested that both the personalities[47] and the decision processes[48] of planners and executors are considerably divergent.

Second, there may be an inherent inertia in organizations which is likely to bias the organization's decision or to modify the results of the planning process:

> Individuals and organizations give preferred treatment to alernatives that represent continuation of present programs over those that represent change.[49]

These comments suggest that the use to which an organization eventually puts the products of a planning unit ought to be carefully scrutinized.

As discussed earlier, the organization may also have created the task force to achieve (or the task force itself may have subsequently developed) unexpressed--and possibly unconscious--"latent" goals. Both the apparent results of the Task Force's activities and the perceptions of its members should prove of value in determining whether such goals in fact existed and their relative importance, as contrasted with the Task Force's explicit mission.

Second, it is possible--indeed, likely--that the very presence of the Task Force had subsequent, secondary effects on the organization and its constituent parts. One indication of such effects might be gained by observing the ultimate fate of the Task Force itself: Did it self-destruct as planned, or did it or a reasonable facsimile continue to exist beyond the expected termination date? The Task Force's subsequent effects on the other sub-units whose "territoriality" was threatened or shared by its presence should also be determined: Were they eventually given responsibility for implementing the products of the planning? Were they receptive to the planning outcomes?

The task force's impact on the subsequent fate of its members may also be closely related to the issue of initial motivation. If the organization values a departing task force member highly, it is likely to find a more permanent work assignment for him. If, on the other hand, a member was originally assigned (or volunteered) because he was

a "misfit" or an "undesirable," and remains unwanted at the point of termination, then the organization (and the individual) is faced with the same problem it was previously able to temporarily postpone. Finally, if, indeed, some individuals joined (or were assigned to) the Task Force for "training" purposes, or to seek advancement, their fates should give some indication of the success of their strategy.

There is also the question of whether and how the Task Force experience has changed the members' own preferences and plans. Their own preferences as they leave the Task Force, whether to continue to be involved with the topic or the members of the group--or, indeed, whether to continue to work in a task force setting--may give some indication of their own personal assessments of the success of the Task Force.

iv

Concluding Note

Temporary systems do not, on the whole, receive much attention in organizational literature; it was necessary to borrow a great deal of pertinent material from more general treatises on organizational behavior. It may, however, be useful to conclude this section with one fairly extended description, uncovered in the course of my search, of how--in theory--a temporary system and its parent might behave.

How an Urgent Task Leads to a "Break-out"

At this point, the bureau or one of its parts is suddenly instructed by its sovereign to undertake an urgent task. The task is complex, calls for novel research or operations, requires many resources, and

must be accomplished as fast as possible. Examples are building the Polaris and Atlas missile systems. Based upon their experience with the bureau, top-level officials realize that it is incapable of carrying out this task. Its cumbersome machinery cannot produce results fast enough, and its anti-novelty bias may block the necessary innovation.

Therefore, a new organization is set up for this task outside the normal operations of the bureau. It is much smaller than the bureau as a whole, though it may contain many members. These members have somewhat broader capabilities and are more competent than the bureau's average members, since they have been specially picked for this task. They are also exempt from normal rotation "for the duration," so turnover is low. The new organization is not integrated with the bureau's hierarchy, but reports directly to its top-level officials. Moreover, it contains enough specialists and has enough resources so that it is not dependent upon the bureau's regular chain of command for major services. It is exempt from almost all existing controls, regulations, and procedures, and is free to invent its own. Finally, it has high priority access to resources, so its allocation requests need not compete directly with all other possible users of resources within the regular bureau.

Such a special organization clearly enjoys privileges that could not be extended to the entire bureau. It would be impossible for the whole bureau to have smarter than average members, small size, and top priority access to resources. Hence the characteristics of this type of special organization cannot be considered a blueprint for reforming the entire bureau.

However, these special privileges allow the separate organization to tackle its specific task with unusual ability, imagination, decisiveness, speed, and low costs of coordination and control. Moreover, its members develop extraordinarily high morale and zeal because of their unusual freedom, the obvious significance of their task, and their ability to develop close working relationships because of the bureau's small size and the absence of constant rotation. As a result, the organization's productivity

is extremely high, and its "break-out" from the regular
bureaucracy usually quite effective in accomplishing the
job--at least initially.[50]

Like Bennis, Anthony Downs subscribes to a rather optimistic view
of the organizational health and productivity of temporary systems, as
compared with the more "balanced" views which were interpolated from
the writings of several other theorists. It is now possible to turn to
the "real world" experience of the Foundation Task Force to determine
if, at least with respect to this particular temporary system, such
optimism is warranted.

III

CASE STUDY AND ANALYSIS

National Foundation Task Force
U.S. Office of Education
9/6/71 – 6/30/72

A. Introduction

The case study is divided into sections which correspond to the three stages of the lifespan of the Foundation Task Force. For purposes of convenience, the analysis is also presented within this format. And because it was so critical to the behavior of the Task Force, the concurrent history of the Foundation proposal in Congress is briefly documented at each stage.

A Word on Evidence

Four types of documentation form the information base for this case study.

> Internal records: Minutes of all regular Task Force meetings, as well as for many sessions held with outside groups, were recorded; in addition, the working papers and final reports of the Task Force were, of course, available.

> Internal memoranda: During the year, numerous memos were exchanged with other units in OE and HEW; these were collected and available for inspection.

> Interviews: All full-time and most part-time members of the Task Force were extensively interviewed, as were selected individuals whose decisions were affected by, or had an effect upon, the Task Force.

> First-person testimony: As a part-time member of
> the Task Force during its entire life, I was both a
> witness, attending many meetings, and a participant,
> co-authoring one of the Task Force reports. Both in
> these roles and in my formal position as Special Assis-
> tant to the Executive Deputy U.S. Commissioner,[*] it
> is quite possible that personal biases may have inter-
> fered with the "objectivity" of this case study. Such
> potential biases are considered in the concluding sec-
> tion; however, it should also be noted that I sought
> to rely extensively on the other sources for docu-
> mentation and evidence listed above.

Historical Background and Organizational Setting

The prior history of the National Foundation legislative proposal

has been documented elsewhere,[**] and needs not be treated extensively in

this paper. However, a few aspects of its history have particular

relevance to this case study in organizational behavior. In fact, it

appears that two related organizational issues--where the Foundation

would eventually be located within the Federal government and what exist-

ing unit, in part as a consequence, would be responsible for the planning

and development process leading to its installation--were of critical

importance since the concept was first proposed.

The White House staff, and most notably Daniel P. Moynihan, were

the primary architects of the first legislative proposal calling for the

establishment of a National Foundation for Higher Education, submitted

to Congress in early 1970. Those HEW officials involved in the legisla-

tive planning at this stage were, in fact, privately opposed to this

---

[*]Will be referred to as Executive Deputy in case study.

[**]See accompanying paper, "An Analysis of a Legislative Proposal: The
National Foundation for Postsecondary Education."

proposal. One of the Department's chief reservations--if not its major objection--to the initial proposal was that it would have placed the new Foundation outside HEW as an independent agency.[51] This initial proposal languished in the education subcommittees, all but ignored by Congress.

During the balance of calendar year 1970, massive personnel changes were made within the domestic sector of the government, changes which appear to have had major significance for the future of the Foundation proposal. Counselor Moynihan returned to the campus to resume his teaching duties; his departure now appears to have signalled a "reduced profile" for the White House as an advocate for new educational thrusts. Elliott Richardson replaced Robert Finch as Secretary of HEW, bringing a strong background in Federal experience to that office; Lewis Butler, Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), who played a major policy role under Finch, was to depart a few months later. Finally, Sid Marland replaced James Allen as U.S. Commissioner of Education and, in retrospect, appears to have obtained a clearer mandate to be the Nixon Administration's chief education officer.

These key personnel changes appear to have had the effect of shifting the locus for educational policy-making away from the White House and into the operating agencies. The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 1971, which included a reconstituted Foundation, was largely developed and subsequently promoted by HEW and OE people; the ASPE staff appears to have been particularly active in resurrecting the dormant Foundation

proposal, although OE officials and the staff of the Assistant Secretary for Legislation (ASL) were also involved in its development. Not surprisingly, the Foundation was recast as a semi-independent agency located within HEW and reporting to the Secretary. Its primary mission was to "encourage and support...excellence, innovation, and reform in higher education through the expenditure of project grant funds. Although within the administrative purview of HEW, the Foundation was intended to be quite autonomous, with an Advisory Council (later recast as a Board of Directors by the Senate) responsible for determining policy directions and priorities.

The House of Representatives was not to report out its version of the higher education bill until the latter days of 1971; during the spring and summer months, however, it became apparent that the Foundation proposal was not that strongly supported within the key education unit, the Special Sub-committee on Education. The Senate, on the other hand, endorsed the general outlines of the Foundation in August, 1971, making two pertinent changes in the proposal: it was retitled as the "National Foundation for Postsecondary Education" (emphasis added), and the proposed new agency became a part of a new Division of Education within HEW. OE, the proposed research agency, The National Institute for Education (NIE), and the Foundation would all be responsible to the Division's chief officer, called a "Commissioner of Education," who in turn would report to the HEW Secretary. Although the language of the Senate bill was quite ambiguous on this point, it appeared to most

observers that the upgraded "Commissioner" would also remain as the top line manager of the Office of Education. These modifications were subsequently endorsed by the Administration.

This legislative history essentially set the organizational parameters within which planning for the Foundation would be undertaken. First, HEW was clearly established as the future location for the Foundation; in part for this reason, the higher levels (White House, Office of Management and Budget) did not play significant roles in the subsequent planning process. Second, however, the legislation failed to clearly resolve the future role of the Commissioner of Education--and hence, the Office of Education--with respect to the Foundation, thus encouraging (perhaps insuring) considerable interagency confusion and conflict over the issue of "control," particularly between the respective staffs of the Commissioner of Education and the Secretary of HEW.[*] We will discover that the unresolved question of the ultimate location of the Foundation within HEW was to influence every stage of the planning process.

---

[*]See Appendix for organizational charts of HEW and OE; the key units for the purposes of this paper are starred.

B. Initiation: 9/6/71-10/15-71

Although the Foundation Task Force did not begin to take shape until September, 1971, the decision to establish the unit was made two months earlier. Because the circumstances surrounding that decision are so critical to our understanding of the organization's motivations, this "prelude period" is included in this section.

Setting the Stage

Prior to the establishment of the Task Force, those few planning activities related to the Foundation proposal in motion resulted from the initiative of the ASPE staff. ASPE's interest in the Foundation was derived in part from the fact that two of its staff were members of the so-called Newman Committee, a group which was then in the process of developing a report--to become quite controversial when released-- calling for a series of widespread reforms in higher education.[52]

Conceived in the late spring of 1971, a second ASPE planning venture actually precipitated the creation of the Foundation Task Force. The notion was to hire several journalists who would investigate and develop a series of "articles" on promising innovations in the field-- activities similar to those potentially supportable by the Foundation. Just before this activity was to be initiated, the Senate's ultimate version of the higher education bill was reported out of committee, including, of course, the provision that the Foundation would report to the Commissioner of Education. In part because of this turn of events, and in part to obtain financial support from OE for the

"reporters' project," ASPE sent a memorandum to the OE Commissioner
and his Executive Deputy, who also served at that point as Acting
Deputy Commissioner for Higher Education (DCHE), outlining this proposed
project and seeking their involvement.

The ASPE memorandum outlining the proposed "reporters' project"
had the effect of bringing the "control" issue to a head: it sought to
"involve" OE in a planning activity which was unilaterally conceived and
which would be managed in the HEW planning shop. The Commissioner's
response was to arrange a meeting, involving his Executive Deputy,
representatives from ASPE and ASL, and himself.

The discussion quickly shifted from the specific proposal to the
broader issue of needed planning for the Foundation. It was agreed by
all that, particularly because the proposal would in all likelihood be
included in the final Senate bill, a much more systematic planning
effort was required to flesh out the Foundation specifics. The OE
officials made it clear that they expected OE to be the "lead" agency
for such a planning effort. The ASPE and ASL representatives agreed,
but insisted that the planning effort not be located in the Bureau of
Higher Education (BHE), OE's operational unit for higher education pro-
grams, arguing that such a decision would do severe political damage
since the Foundation was conceived as a necessary and desirable
alternative to the existing bureaucratic structure.

The Commissioner expressed full agreement with this provision and
suggested that the planning effort be directly responsible to the Office

of the Commissioner of which his Executive Deputy was a part. There was little discussion of the precise nature of the planning mission, but it was agreed that a short-term planning task force, modeled to some extent on an NIE planning unit which had then been in operation for four months, might be an appropriate vehicle. The meeting terminated with the understanding that the individual selected to direct the task force would be acceptable to all the parties present.

Within two weeks, OE and HEW had identified an acceptable individual to serve as Task Force Director, Mr. A, then Senior Program Examiner in the Education Unit at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Highly respected in both agencies, the thirty-five year old budget officer, after six years at OMB, had recently informed both HEW and OE officials that he was ready for a change, looking particularly to work in conjunction with one or more of the existing educational "reform" thrusts--the NIE, the Foundation, or OE's proposed "renewal" strategy at the elementary and secondary level. Mr. A had been in particularly close contact with OE's Deputy Commissioner for Development,[*] who was developing the renewal strategy and was also deeply involved with the on-going NIE planning efforts.

The details of Mr. A's assignment in OE were hammered out by mid-July, with the understanding that he would not begin his new duties until the second week in September. He would actually fill an existing

---

[*] Soon to be retitled Deputy Commissioner for Renewal; will be referred to as DCR.

personnel "slot" in the Office of Program Planning and Evaluation
(OPPE), but would be responsible for three roles: first, he would serve
as Director of the Foundation Task Force and would report in this capac-
ity to the Executive Deputy; second, he would assist the DCR in develop-
ing the renewal strategy as a Special Assistant to him; third, he would
act as a "liaison" with the NIE planning unit. Mr. A understood that
the former role would be his chief and primary responsibility, and ex-
pected to devote relatively little time to the latter two activities.

Virtually no further work was initiated until Mr. A reported to
begin his new assignments on September 6, 1971. Ironically, the re-
porters' project was implemented over the summer under the leadership
of the ASPE staff; the narratives were subsequently shared in draft
form with the Foundation Task Force, but to this date[*] nothing further
has been done with them.

Gearing Up

After his arrival, Mr. A devoted the balance of the month of
September, and the first part of October, primarily to start-up tasks:
recruiting personnel, holding frequent meetings to discuss the broad
assignment, and accomplishing various "housekeeping" chores. Although
there would prove to be several personnel, strategic, and organizational
changes over the months ahead, the basic dimensions of the Task Force
mission, character, and structure were shaped in this early period.

_____

[*]August 4, 1972

The more significant decisions and precedents established in the first month are discussed below.

Delineation of Mission

On July 26, shortly before he was to leave OMB for a month-long vacation, Mr. A sent to the Executive Deputy a memorandum outlining his preliminary thoughts on the planning task. In this memo, he described what he thought to be the primary mission of the Task Force:

> The desired product of the NFHE planning enterprise is a document for the incoming Director and Board which will have reasoned, concise discussions of all the major issues they face on assuming responsibility for the Foundation. The purpose is not to provide a series of definitive responses to those issues but a description of each issue that is intellectually of the highest order and that offers an array of options to choose from....[53]

Mr. A held to this view when he returned in September to assume the leadership role as Director. He argued for a non-prescriptive, option-oriented approach to the planning task: rather than attempt to develop the "best" structure, procedures, and program priorities for the Foundation, the Task Force should identify the major issues which must be addressed and explore the alternative decision paths which could be taken with respect to each issue.

The new Director posed two basic arguments in support of this position. First, he argued that it was consistent with the philosophy and legislative history underlying the Foundation proposal, which intended that the new agency be "responsive" to the needs of the higher education community: "The big decisions should be left to the Director

and Board who are supposed to represent the best interests of the field."[54] Second, and just as important, he felt that it was fallacious to think that an <u>ad-hoc</u> group <u>could</u> do what he called "a realistic job of planning"--that they would fail to consider all of the pertinent constraints, and that "the new administrators would probably change it all anyway." The only condition which would have persuaded him to advocate a more directive, prescriptive approach would have been the involvement of the future Director of the Foundation in the planning process--a condition which would not apply during the life of the Task Force.

Little disagreement with this general approach surfaced during the initial meetings of the Task Force, and it might be assumed that it met with unanimous approval. Much later, however, Mr. A speculated that if his views had been fully considered and understood, particularly by the "management and planning shops" in OE, they might not have achieved such quick approval, due to their abiding enthusiasm for "PERT charts, specificity, and so forth." In addition, the non-prescriptive approach was quite divergent from that pursued by the NIE Planning Unit, whose very presence had influenced the initial decision to establish a "similar" task force for the Foundation proposal.

As a temporary unit established outside OE's existing management control system, however, no formal review was necessitated, nor did the Executive Deputy disapprove of the suggested approach. Mr. A's philosophy was to strongly influence virtually every other aspect of the Task Force's character and history.

Selection of Personnel

Mr. A's first, and probably most important, start-up task was to recruit "professional" personnel for the Task Force. There were, of course, many individuals representing organizational units within OE and HEW involved in the initial orientation meetings, but most of them would play limited roles during the year: attending meetings, reviewing drafts, and offering "free" advice and criticism. The key resource of any such short-term enterprise, however, consists of what might be termed the "producers"--those whose primary responsibility would be, in this case, the mission and the agenda of the Foundation Task Force it-self. Consequently, the characteristics of those selected, and the process by which they are recruited, are issues of crucial importance.

Mr. A could begin by assuming the part-time involvement of two HEW staff members, both of whom had attended the July meeting with the Commis-sioner: these included Mr. B, representing ASPE and a member of the New-man Committee, and Mr. C, representing ASL, who had shared responsibility for drafting the legislative proposal. They were to continue to play in-fluential roles, advising and counseling the Director, often outside the Task Force structure; in addition, they aided him in identifying and recruiting Task Force personnel.

The second "given" with respect to personnel recruitment resulted from a "gentleman's agreement" reached between Mr. A and the Executive Deputy. An unspecified number of professionals would be "detailed" from two of the five major organizational units in OE, the Deputyship for Higher Education, then administered by the Executive Deputy, and the

Deputyship for Renewal, administered by Mr. A's part-time supervisor, the DCR. In OE, an individual on "detail" is temporarily assigned to work elsewhere but his salary continues to be drawn from the account of the originating unit.

Mr. A later indicated that he was looking primarily for "creative" people, "informed" about existing practices and problems in the field. These two attributes, he felt, were those most required to carry out the planning approach he advocated. Further, on the basis of his long experience with OE staff, he tended to assume that these qualities were not to be found in great quantity on OE's permanent staff rolls. He indicated that he was looking for people "outside the mainstream."

Second, he felt that he didn't have the time to conduct a systematic search for people: "To some extent, I was at the mercy of who was available." He added, however, that he felt that those who "made" themselves available would also be those most interested in the Foundation topic. In the event that he could not find sufficient available, creative, and informed people within OE, Mr. A planned to hire short-term consultants.

In effect, the Director chose a process of somewhat "natural selection" to recruit the core staff--he would seek to find interested, motivated people, or they would seek to find him. However, because no formal notice was disseminated widely, the process depended largely on "word of mouth" communication, thus restricting the pool of candidates to those aware of the new Task Force. Consequently, A, B, and C had

substantial roles in recruiting personnel, as will be apparent.

Mr. A estimates that roughly one-half of those interviewed were selected; pertinent information regarding each individual recruited for the Task Force--his background, expressed interest, and manner of selection is included below. The recruits are listed in order of their selection within each category.

Full-time members

Mr. D. Age: 32; Highest degree: MA; Status: OE Fellow (one-year internship). On leave from state college where he was Assistant Vice-President. Came to OE desiring involvement with Foundation topic; had initially contacted, and was referred by, Mr. B.

Mr. E. Age: 42, Highest degree: Ph. D.; Status: OE mid-professional, 8 years. Was referred by Executive Deputy to Mr. A. Five months earlier, had been "reorganized" out of position as chief of higher education research unit; had few responsibilities left, was demoralized, looking for a change.

Mr. F. Age: 28, Highest degree: MA; Status: Washington Intern in Education (one year internship). Arrangements to work for another agency fell through; was referred to Mr. A by a former associate, the director of WIE program.

Mr. G. Age: 44; Highest degree: MA; Status: OE mid-professional, 6 years. Higher education program he had managed was reorganized over his strong objections; was both dissatisfied and "out of favor," looking for a change. Had known Mr. A previously, was offered and immediately accepted "detail" to Task Force.

Part-time members

Mrs. H. Age: 29; Highest degree: MAT; Status: new mid-professional in OE, had been in OEO for two years. Sought transfer to HEW on condition she could work with NIE or Foundation; had consulted Mr. B, who recommended her to Mr. A. Took position in DCR, worked half-time in Task Force.

Mr. I. Age: 29; Highest degree: MAT; Status: new mid-professional in OE, three months. Motivated by interest in Foundation proposal and desire to base required academic paper on it. Requested assignment of Mr. A; worked one-fifth on Task Force. (Author).

Mr. J. Age: 32; Highest degree: MA; Status OE temporary employee, one year. Originally hired by Mr. E to assist in research bureau, had denounced and been "ostracized" by superiors after reorganization; referred by Mr. E to Mr. A; worked half-time on Task Force.

Consultants

Mr. K. Age: 37; Highest degree: BA; Status: Consultant, 10/71-2/72. On leave as Assistant Dean of prestigious private college, sought part-time position in HEW; referred by Secretary's assistant to Mr. A.

Mr. L. Age: 32; Highest degree: MA; Status: Consultant, 10/71-2/72. Former college teacher, sought permanent position in HEW; referred by Mr. B on basis of prior teaching experience.

There would be significant exits from and new entries to the core staff over the months ahead; however, the character, or "mix" of the mutual group would not be significantly altered.

The average Task Force member was both younger and better-educated than the average OE professional. He was thirty-four, compared with an OE average of forty-four; all but one had a Masters' degree or more, compared with the OE average of one year beyond the Bachelors' degree.[*]

On the whole, the group did, indeed, turn out to be "out of the mainstream," at least with respect to their employment status. Of the "starting nine," only four were permanent employees, and but two for any significant period of time; three were short-term interns or temporary employees, and two were outside consultants.

---

[*] Estimates from OE Personnel Office; verifiable data not available.

On the other hand, interest in and commitment to the Foundation proposal appears to have been the primary motivation for only three of the original staff; four appear to have been strongly motivated by a desire for a job change, given an unsatisfactory job situation; the other two, however, were also looking for a "home," with little prior awareness of the Foundation proposal.

Regardless of their primary motivation, six of the nine can be said to have initiated the first contact themselves; the other three, on the other hand, were "sought." For seven of the nine, either Mr. A or Mr. B proved to be their prime contact.

In view of the fairly passive, casual nature of the Task Force recruitment process, Mr. A was later asked about the impact the character of those eventually selected may have had on the planning approach he concurrently was advocating: that is, to what extent did the "tail wag the dog?" He indicated that there may have been, somewhat accidentally, a happy marriage of process and mission: that his preferred approach called for young, fairly recent, atypical bureaucrats (who might be "creative") and that the non-systematic search which he felt obliged to undertake was effective in uncovering such individuals. Again, however, the majority of the initial staff do not appear to have been primarily motivated by a prior interest in the Foundation proposal itself.

Finally, Mr. A has indicated that, at least at the outset, he had no difficulty obtaining approval from the supervisors of those five permanent and temporary employees on "detail" from DCR and DCHE. That is, they appeared to be "available" in the opinion of their supervisors as well.

Acquisition of Other Resources

Paralleling the agreement on detailing professional personnel, DCR and DCHE agreed to contribute secretarial staff and funds for other expenses—consultants, travel, conferences, and supplies—to the Task Force. However, neither procedures for obtaining this promised support, nor the actual amounts required, were specified at the outset, with the result that considerable time, both in the start-up period and afterward, was spent "haggling" with these units over such items.

The process by which secretarial services were initially obtained for the Task Force is one such case in point. Other than Mr. A's personal secretary, on the rolls of DCR, the Task Force had no support staff for several weeks. Mr. A sought to obtain a full-time secretary for the Task Force on "detail" for the entire year from DCHE; however, this foray was strongly resisted by DCHE, on the grounds that there was no one to spare, and that such a decision would unfairly penalize whatever subunit within DCHE was "tapped." After a note was written by the Executive Deputy to the personnel officer in DCHE to "straighten this mess out," a compromise was hammered out: each of the three subunits in DCHE would detail one secretary for each of the following three months. No consideration was given to the Task Force needs beyond this point, although it was not entirely clear at that time how long the Task Force would be in place.

The provision of office space for the Task Force staff was another "housekeeping" problem which took considerable time and energy to resolve.

Originally housed in a vacant single room adjacent to Mr. A's office, it soon became evident that more space was needed. Mr. A pursued the topic with both DCHE and OE's central "space" office for three weeks before another temporary, but larger, space was located two floors below.

We will note later that this piecemeal approach to obtaining needed resources was to continue throughout the year. Mr. A defended his actions by indicating that he did not know at the outset what his needs would be and consequently preferred to address such problems as they arose; in addition, he had strong doubts that prior arrangements would prevent later frictions from developing.

<u>Analysis</u>

The overt, "manifest" mission of the organization--in this case, OE, with the apparent support of HEW--in establishing the Foundation Task Force was to plan for the implementation of a new legislative proposal.

However, considerable evidence points to the presence of at least one, and possibly two, related "latent" goals as well which might have a part of the organization's motivation. First, OE appears to have been motivated by a desire to expand its span of "control," at least over the <u>planning</u> for the Foundation: the Task Force was created in response to another unit's initiative, despite the fact that OE was not clearly designated with the eventual responsibility for administering

the new program. Indeed, it can be hypothesized that the ultimate motivation was to attain administrative "control" over the new agency itself. Second, one might speculate that another implicit, less evident, goal was to improve the political viability of the Foundation proposal in Congress. A planning task force signifies some degree of commitment to an idea; the decision to locate the Task Force outside of BHE was made, in part, on political grounds.

The presence of these motives can only be hypothesized at this stage. The actual history of the Task Force and its eventual "products" may provide additional insights into their actuality, and also suggest the relative importance of each potential motive. Two aspects of the original design of the Task Force, however, suggest that its overt mission may not have been of paramount importance. First, the Director was detailed on a part-time basis, although he did expect at the outset to devote the bulk of his time to the Task Force. Second, the Director's "non-directive" approach to planning could be taken to signify his lack of commitment to the task (although other interpretations are also possible): if, indeed, "the big decisions should be left to [others]"* how important is the job of planning he had agreed to undertake?

The organizational location of the Task Force suggests, in addition to a political motive, the "sensitivity" of OE's leadership to its assigned topic. Indeed, by locating it at the top of the organization, March and Simon's thesis may be borne out: If OE were to attain ultimate

---

*Quoted from Mr. A's July 26 memorandum.

responsibility for the new agency, "the goals of that unit" would be significantly altered.

A variety of motives for the assignment of personnel to the Task Force are suggested. First, the Director appears to have shared the theorists' view that the average bureaucrat is unfit for a creative task: he sought, and successfully obtained, a core staff of "irregulars"--largely by not devoting much effort to the recruitment process.

On the other hand, it does not appear that Mr. A succeeded in finding, or "being found" by, those with a prior deep commitment to Foundation concept--if, indeed, they existed. Almost half of the group appear to have joined for somewhat negative reasons--to avoid doing something else. The thesis shared by Etzioni and Goldner that such assignments may be obscured demotions (by supervisors) may pertain, at least in the cases of E, G, and J. Because none of their supervisors sought to prevent their details to the Task Force--in a time of pronounced personnel constraints--there is the strong suggestion that their interests were being met as well.

The question of the Task Force's intraorganizational relations with other units will be treated more fully in the next section; however, this latter point suggests that the recruitment process conducted by Mr. A did have the side-effect of avoiding interunit conflict, since the individuals sought were, on the whole, not "valued" by the affected units. On the other hand, Mr. A's rather similar, unsystematic approach to obtaining other resources appears to have led initially to a degree of interunit anxiety and conflict.

Finally, the early difficulties experienced by the Task Force in obtaining adequate support services raises, again, the question of OE's commitment to its mission: as an independent entity, such a temporary system is wholly dependent upon the will of the permanent organization to provide its sustenance.

C. Tenure: 10/15/71-5/22/72

This portion of the study documents the history of the Foundation Task Force from the second to the ninth month of its ten-month lifespan. Its history is of primary concern, however, as it sheds light on the organizational character and behavior of this temporary system and its parent organization. Consequently, after a brief look at the major "public" events of both the legislative proposal and the Task Force in this period, the "mid-life" of the Task Force is presented and analyzed in the context of several organizational perspectives introduced earlier.

Progress of the Legislative Proposal

In his July 26 memorandum, Mr. A recognized that the Task Force's future schedule, as well, of course, as its ultimate usefulness, would be intimately related to the progress of the legislative proposal:

> We should assume for planning purposes that the
> Director will be appointed on December 15, 1971.
> Depending on Congressional action, this date may
> change drastically, but it will give us a target
> date toward which to organize our efforts.[55]

He could not have predicted then, however, that the higher education bill would not be reported out from Congress until June 22, 1972, nor that the fate of the entire bill would hang in the balance at every stage of its tortuous history until July 6, when President Nixon "reluctantly" signed the bill into law.

Ultimately (and ironically) Presidential and Congressional disposition on the "bussing" issue determined the fate of what was, in the main,

a higher education bill. However, the status of the Foundation proposal, one of the many sub-issues within the unwieldly bill, was also quite uncertain until the final hours of the House-Senate Conference which terminated on May 22, the last stage at which substantive changes could be made in the bill's provisions.

The Foundation proposal does not appear to have been a priority item at any stage of the history of the bill. Although the Senate included it in its version, its cause was not strongly "championed" by any individual Senator. The House, on the other hand, appeared to be actively hostile toward the Foundation. Its version of the bill, finally passed on June 8, made no mention whatsoever of the Foundation; two of the most influential House members on educational issues, Edith Greene and John Brademas, were publicly opposed to the proposal, albeit for radically different reasons. Because the proposal was included in but one of the two Congressional bills, its outcome would be resolved in the Senate-House Conference; however, because the House representatives traditionally have a greater influence in conferences on educational legislation, the outlook for the Foundation did not appear to be promising.

These developments on the legislative front had two rather pronounced effects on the Task Force. First, the long series of Congressional delays eventually shifted the deadline for the completion of its work from December, 1971, to June 30, 1972.

Second, and more important to the organizational behavior of the Task Force, the tenuous and uncertain status of the Foundation proposal appear to have had two effects, both of which will be considered more fully later on. It did nothing to enhance the importance of the Task Force's formal mission of planning for the Foundation, since it did not seem likely that the Foundation itself would survive. On the other hand, at least to some Task Force members, those activities which held some promise for strengthening (indirectly) the Foundation's chances in Congress took an increased priority.

Major Directions of Task Force Activity

Most of the Task Force activities can be viewed, on one level, as consistent with the mission originally proposed by Mr. A: i.e., to develop a set of "issues and options" papers for the incoming Foundation Director and Board.

By the end of October, the Task Force had agreed upon a set of topical assignments designed to carry out this mission. All of the primary staff, either individually or in small groups, committed themselves to developing reports dealing with topics such as the following:

- Options for grants management procedures

- Developments in Adult and Continuing Education

- Prospects for Minority Education

- Perspectives of Private Foundations

As deadlines were slipped and as the Task Force personnel changed over the next seven months, these topics were to be modified occasionally; however, their general scope, including both substantive and structural issues, was not to be altered significantly.

From the outset, Mr. A, and most Task Force members, placed a high priority on communicating with and obtaining inputs from the field as these topics were pursued. Over the year, a considerable portion of the Task Force's time and resources were to be committed to activities directed toward obtaining such inputs:

--A series of information packets were developed and disseminated, each accompanied by a letter requesting advice and feedback from the higher education community, from private foundation and governmental officials. Approximately 350 were sent in a wide mailing; 280 replies were received. Another 650 copies were dispersed in various ways over the year.

--in the early spring, a series of ten workshops, held in each of HEW's regional offices, were conducted to consider future issues and policies for the Foundation. Approximately 300 people from the postsecondary education community attended these sessions.

--individual members responsible for particular topics traveled extensively to observe on-going programs and to discuss the future shape or role of the Foundation with practitioners and scholars.

--as many as fifty presentations were made at conventions, with other existing committees and task forces, and with the Washington-based associations.

--in March, two modest subcontracts were let to research organizations to more fully develop particular issues not treated extensively by the Task Force itself.

--over the year, the full-time Task Force members were available to respond in person, by telephone, and letter, to countless individuals requesting information or promulgating their own views.

As has been suggested, all of these activities may be viewed as being in concert with, and pursuant to, the formal mission of the Task Force. However, most of them could also be seen from another perspective:

they had the potential for enhancing the status of the legislative proposal in Congress. By disseminating information widely and seeking inputs, even by broadcasting the existence of the Task Force itself, considerable interest in the Foundation could have been generated which, in turn, may have increased Congressional support for the proposal. As individual roles and perspectives are discussed shortly, the extent to which this indirect "lobbying" role was viewed as a Task Force mission will be examined.

External Dimension: The Task Force and OE's Leadership

On the whole, the Task Force operated quite autonomously in relation to the leadership of both OE and HEW. The Executive Deputy, technically Mr. A's supervisor in his role as Task Force Director, attended no meetings beyond the first month, nor did he request general progress reports on the group's activities at any point during the year. Nor did the Commissioner or the top officials in HEW seek to be advised on the Task Force role and progress.

Significantly, on those few occasions when Mr. A did interact with the leadership, it was with respect to legislative issues, not planning issues. He was requested, for example, to develop a paper on ways in which the Foundation and the proposed NIE might be merged--a confidential plan which the Administration was prepared to suggest to the Hill if it appeared that the Foundation proposal was otherwise doomed to oblivion. On another occasion, Mr. A sought the advice of the Executive Deputy when one Task Force member appeared to be taking independent action to

"lobby" for the Foundation proposal. Occasionally, Mr. A requested the participation of the Executive Deputy, Commissioner, or the Secretary in an upcoming meeting or conference attended by particularly influential individuals or groups.

Analysis

The literature on organizations postulated two theories which may explain, separately or together, the obvious lack of close communication between the Task Force and top management during the operational stage. First, it may have resulted from the fact that the leadership was not "sensitive" to the Task Force's mission, as March and Simon used that term. Second, it may have simply reflected Simon's notion that planning, as an activity, is generally ignored by top management while in process. It is also true, of course, that Mr. A did not seek much interaction with his superiors in the bureaucracy; he later indicated that, indeed, he did not feel that "regular reporting" was consistent with the Task Force's mission.

External Dimension: The Task Force and OE's Sub-Units

Task Force interactions with other sub-units in OE were considerably more numerous and prolonged than with OE's leadership. First, several units were represented at most of the Task Force's regular meetings, which were normally held once per week. Second, the Task Force depended upon two of the five OE Deputyships for its operating resources, thus necessitating intermittent contact depending upon the Task Force's

needs. Third, individual Task Force members pursuing assignments on occasion interacted with other units to obtain data, program information, or other forms of assistance.

Technically, representatives of several OE and HEW units were formal members of the Task Force, including OE's central planning office (OPPE), both DCHE and BHE, its chief operating unit, OE's "advocacy office" (OSC), as well as ASPE and ASL from HEW. However, this involvement generally entailed little more than attendance at regularly scheduled Task Force meetings. No substantive tasks were requested (or volunteered) from these individuals and units; none, with the exception of BHE, had detailed any full-time staff to the Task Force.

Reactions from these other units to the Task Force meetings were, however, quite pronounced. Three of the more regular attendees expressed both frustration and amazement at the character of the meetings. First, they felt that little, if anything, was being accomplished at these sessions, that they tended to be "bull-sessions." Second, they were astonished at the "negative attitude," as one called it, of the Task Force toward OE and the Nixon Administration. As one OPPE representative complained, "These guys don't think anything we're doing is any good!"

At one point, the different perspectives of the Task Force and two other units, OPPE and BHE, exploded into emotional and apparently ideological conflict. At one of its meetings, the Task Force reviewed a recent OE report, "OE's Future Role in Higher Education Research,"

written largely by the OPPE staff. Several of the "core" Task Force members, but in particular E and G (both long-term, recently displaced OE professionals) sharply criticized the report as being "establishment," "old hat," and "a waste of good paper." The OPPE representatives reacted just as vehemently to this criticism, defending the value of their report. The dispute lasted two hours until the meeting was terminated at its scheduled hour.

Needed support resources for the Task Force continued to be obtained in a slow, "ad-hoc" fashion from the other OE units. The three-month rotation of detailed secretaries was completed by late March, 1972, but it was evident by then that support staff was needed until the end of June. Mr. A was "reluctant" to request further "details" from DCHE, after the prolonged hassle required to obtain the first rotation. For a few weeks, the DCHE central office staff attempted to provide typing services to the Task Force; however, this strategy was abandoned when it became clear that the Task Force work had to "come second" to the DCHE chores. Mr. A finally decided to purchase secretarial services from outside OE (technically illegal) with the balance of a small research contract which Mr. E had obtained from his old research unit for Task Force purposes.

<u>Analysis</u>

Interactions between the Task Force and other OE sub-units appear to have been limited primarily to formal occasions--regular Task Force meetings and requests for support resources. A certain degree of

competition and hostility developed between the Task Force and OPPE and BHE, the two units whose "policy territory" overlapped most extensively with that of the Task Force. In addition, their interactions suggest that the Task Force did, as a group, develop a distinct outside image and perhaps some degree of self-identity--perhaps significant, in view of the original intent for the Task Force not to be a regular part of the bureaucracy. Relations continued to be strained with DCHE, one of the units ostensibly committed to materially support the Task Force, despite Mr. A's efforts to the contrary and his (correct) assertion that their demands "were really not that great."

Internal Dimension: Director-Staff Relationship

One aspect of the Task Force's on-going structure, the dynamics of the relationship between Mr. A and the "core" staff, is explored here. The two succeeding sections describe in more detail the respective roles of the Director and the staff during the life of the Task Force.

The formal structure of the Task Force was never explicitly presented to, or discussed by, the Task Force itself. However, a simple organizational pattern emerged in the early weeks of the Task Force which was to remain unaltered and--at least "in public"--unchallenged for the balance of its life: all staff members were to report directly to, and be supervised directly by, Mr. A.

Although this formal structure was not explicitly addressed by the group, virtually all of its members seem to have contributed to

its establishment and continuation. Mr. A initially encouraged the pattern by setting what might be called "expectations of equality": all members would be equally responsible, whether working individually or in small groups, for developing the "ultimate" product of the Task Force, its final report to the first Foundation Director. Subsequently, he was to implicitly reenforce this pattern by addressing virtually all memos, regardless of the topic, to all members of the Task Force, and by allowing each member to "speak his piece" at meetings. One representative of another OE unit was to ask, "Why does he let them all talk, even when what they have to say is irrelevant?"

The staff, for its part, helped create this structure of "one chief, many Indians" as well. They insisted, early in the year, that to properly function the Task Force had to hold frequent "business" meetings. Mr. A complied with this pressure, although he expressed some doubt at the time that so many meetings were necessary. One effect of this policy was to insure (at least the illusion, if not the fact) that all members were kept equally informed and participated equally in the group's decisions.

Mr. A considered changing this formal structure several times during the year, particularly at those points when he was heavily involved in other activities (see next section) by adding a deputy who would share supervisory responsibilities. However, he later indicated that he found compelling reasons for _not_ doing so: first, he felt that no single individual had emerged from the group who, in his judgment, was

qualified for the role; second, he doubted that the rest of the group "would stand for it." In early April, he did informally ask Mr. F to "make sure" that individuals met their report deadlines; however, this ad-hoc strategy proved to be unsuccessful and, according to Mr. F, Mr. A was unwilling to formalize this role. No other "informal" deputy was to emerge from within the group--although, as will be noted later, some evidence that an informal hierarchy existed within the "core" staff can be found.

The staff's early demands for frequent formal meetings raises the related question of the character of their interactions with the Director. Interviews with individual members, conducted late in the life of the Task Force, indicate that the staff-director relationship was considerably more complex than the structural form itself may suggest.

On the whole, staff members felt the need for considerably more "directive" leadership than (they felt) was provided by Mr. A. A common complaint expressed was that the group "drifted," that it lacked a clear-cut mission which could only have been provided by Mr. A. One more experienced staffer, Mr. G, felt that it was particularly "unfair" for Mr. A not to supervise several younger members' work more closely. Mr. F, while he did not wish to be more closely scrutinized, wanted more information; he often felt "like a blind man looking for the end of a tunnel," and assumed that Mr. A had a great deal of "inside information" on Congressional and Administration strategies which he was not sharing. Mrs. H felt that the status of the Foundation proposal called for particularly attentive leadership: "a group whose life is hanging, waiting

for Congress, needs to be nurtured." All interviewed staff members felt that report deadlines were casually ignored but would not have been if Mr. A had kept a tighter rein on the group.

Mr. A, on the other hand, was surprised by the staff's needs—indeed, implicit demands—for more supervision and increased contact. He had thought that he had selected a staff of self-generating, free spirits, several of whom had by their own accounts been "repressed in the bureaucratic structure." He thought that he had given them what they wanted: loose supervision and delegated authority. He was to complain later, however, that they "were drawn lemming-like" to him for advice and direction on all issues, big and small.

Mr. A's only explanation was that he had uncovered "the paradox of romantic reformers": that their "rhetoric called for independence and freedom, but they really wanted a big daddy." If he had it to do over again, he would, indeed, supervise more closely and also select "a better mix of 'analysts' and 'romantics'."

Analysis

On a superficial level, Bennis' prediction that a non-hierarchical, loose, problem-centered form of organization would emerge from a task-oriented temporary system is indicated. The Task Force itself was a "flat" organization, and individuals were clustered around the report topics being pursued.

However, a more in-depth analysis also suggests that this structure, at least in this Task Force, was not wholly satisfactory. It

appears to have resulted in part <u>not</u> from the "nature of the formal task," but rather from the felt needs of the staff for <u>close</u> supervision, due in part, perhaps, to the tenuous status of the Foundation proposal in Congress. Yet staff needs were not wholly met, individual responsibilities were not kept, and the Director felt pushed into an authoritarian stance. Considerable insecurity and anxiety resulted on both sides, somewhat paralleling Slater's thesis. And, as is the case in more hierarchical bureaucratic structures, issues and problems, rather than being handled through delegation, appear to have risen to the top in most cases.

Finally, the radically different perceptions of staff and director regarding their proper or desirable relationship remained, like the issue of the formal structure, largely under the surface: only rarely were the mutual frustrations shared between the staff and its director. The Task Force appears to have retained, then, another characteristic supposedly common in more bureaucratic organizations: a distinct lack of candor.

Internal Dimension: The Director

Although Mr. A requested, and received, three distinct areas of responsibility at the outset of the year, he fully expected that the Task Force would constitute his primary role in OE. And, from September to early December, he estimates that he devoted "about 90%" of his time to Task Force activities. However, by his own calculation, this figure was to shrink to 20% over the next four months; Mr. A's initial priorities came to be radically altered.

In early January, then serving as a part-time "Special Assistant" to the DCR, Mr. A agreed to become the Acting Associate Deputy Commissioner for Renewal--this is, the "number two" role in this OE unit. As such, he acquired a new set of internal administrative chores which occupied considerably more of his time than had previously been the case.

However, in his new role he also became embroiled in what was perhaps the most controversial activity of the year in OE: the so-called "renewal" strategy, which sought to combine a set of single-purpose "categorical" programs into one administrative mechanism which, in turn, would promote comprehensive planning and "streamlined" application procedures in the field. This plan, like the Foundation, was in jeopardy in Congress, and ultimately the Congress was to insert a provision in the higher education bill which "killed" renewal. However, Mr. A was to devote the bulk of his energies to the renewal activity, both its development within OE and its tribulations in Congress, over the spring months.

Mr. A feels that he had some degree of choice over his fate. That is, although he found it virtually impossible to reject the offer to become the Associate DCR, nor did he want to, it was his own decision to allot the bulk of his time to this particular role. It was a choice, he felt, between allotting his time to a long-term planning task, whose deadline was still months away, and which was dependent upon a legislative proposal of dubious promise, and a host of immediate tasks and

crises arising from a very "real" issue. After the higher education
bill was reported out from the Conference Committee and the "prohibi-
tion" against the renewal plan was certain, Mr. A was to again devote
more time--although not 90% of it--to the Task Force.

However, during the mid-life of the Task Force, Mr. A felt that
he had, in effect, no choice: he ignored the Foundation "because it
was a planning activity." In addition, he felt that the "non-directive"
planning approach he advocated required less close supervision. Al-
though he was to insist that the "renewal" tasks were simply more
"immediate," and not more "important," than the Task Force activity,
this distinction may have been lost on some of the staff. One later
complained, "not only were we a low priority to OE, but also to our
own director."

Analysis

Although the chief officer of a planning activity, Mr. A does not
appear to have had a strong commitment to it. At the outset, he re-
quested and received two other sets of responsibilities as well; he
also advocated a planning approach which may have implicity stressed the
limitations of planning as an effective tool for decision-making. Then,
when confronted with a choice between allotting his time to his planning
or operational duties, he clearly chose the latter. For Mr. A, "daily
routines" did, indeed, "drive out planning," in accord with "Gresham's
Law of Planning."

Internal Dimension: The Staff

During the year, the Task Force lost two of the initial "core"

group and acquired four new members.

Arrivals

Mrs. M and Miss N. Age: Mid-twenties; Status: OE "early" pro-
fessionals. Both were referred by Mr. E, their colleague in re-
search bureau; Mr. E felt that they were "unhappy" in their
present positions. Part-time, December to April.

Mr. O and Miss P. Age: Early twenties; Status: OE Management
interns (two-year internship). Sought six-month "rotation" with
Task Force, insisted on coming as a "team." Full-time, December
to June.

Departures

Mr. G. Took position in mid-western college in April, "on leave"
from OE for one year. Felt "needed a change" from bureaucracy
after recent negative experiences in BHE. Found Task Force
preferable to BHE, but still "needed to get away from OE."

Mr. J. All OE temporary employees discharged for budget reasons,
December 31. Mr. J stayed on volunteer basis until late February
when, after engaging in independent "lobbying" activities, he
was ordered to leave OE.

Individual Roles

At the outset, all staff members had one agenda in common: all

had assignments to complete papers which would constitute portions of

the final report of the Task Force. However, three members never sub-

mitted papers; in addition, several of those who did complete their re-

ports listed other activities as their "major contributions" to the

Task Force mission. As a matter of fact, during the course of the year,

there was considerable variation among the activities, as well as their

perceptions of these activities, within the staff.

There were particularly marked differences between different members' activities and attitudes with respect to interaction with the post-secondary education field. Mr. A had initially placed a high priority on involving "the field" in the process of developing the Task Force reports. However, the Task Force was to learn that the distinction between "involving" and "informing" the field--the latter possibly constituting an indirect form of lobbying--was very difficult to define in practice.

Mr. A, for his part, stoutly denied that "political lobbying" was a tacit mission of the activities of the Task Force. Several staff members, however, disagreed. E and G, long-time civil servants, perhaps overly sensitive to possible violations of the Hatch Act, expressed their discomfort over other members' various interactions with the field.

Three staff members new to the government (and, as non-permanent employees, technically not covered by the Hatch Act) showed considerably less sensitivity on this matter. One of these, Mr. D, and OE Fellow and technically on leave as a college official, had provided considerable information and what he called "technical assistance" to a professional association which subsequently strongly endorsed the Foundation. Later, he was to interpret Mr. A's acquiescence as tacit approval of his actions: "He used me as a non-Federal employee to make contacts." It was later discovered that Mr. J, before and after his release from OE, had been contacting state governors and other officials to seek their support for the Foundation.

Again, the evidence suggests that, at least for some members of
the Task Force, the group developed an unstated mission to obtain sup-
port, generally quite indirectly, for the Foundation proposal. It
appears that this mission held greater priority for some than the group's
overt, formal mission.

"Cliques and Cabals"

Unlike the normal practice of its parent organization, all Task
Force members, with the exception of the Director himself, were "un-
titled and unranked;" that is, as we have seen, no formal hierarchy
existed within the staff. Consequently, with greater than usual free-
dom to do so, it may be particularly instructive to consider how the
group informally arranged itself both vertically (hierarchically) and
horizontally (laterally).

Although there was not unanimous agreement on this point, an in-
formal hierarchy of sorts appears to have developed. It was loosely ar-
ranged on the basis of two forms of seniority: length of service in
OE, and length of time on the Task Force. Mr. F, for example, described
the informal message he received from Mr. D when the Task Force was mov-
ing into its larger quarters: "Mr. G and I have selected those two
offices, so now it's your choice (Mr. E, who had more seniority in OE,
had retained working space in his old bureau). The two members with the
longest tenure in OE, E and G, denied that they were the informal leaders
of the group; however, they both acknowledged that they played a "special
role," due to their familiarity with the ways of HEW. Mrs. H, on the

other hand, herself a part-time member, felt that while those individuals working with the Task Force on a full-time basis had no more "status" than others, their availability allowed them to play more significant roles. All three members with considerable governmental experience, E, G, and H, however, saw less of a hierarchy--formal or informal-- within the Task Force than they had observed in other governmental units.

With respect to its informal lateral dimension, at least two factors seem to have encouraged the development of smaller "cliques" within the Task Force. First, the formal structure (i.e., all staff members are "equal") prevented hierarchical barriers from developing between individuals. Second, the staff was given considerable freedom to group and rearrange themselves around the various work topics.

Different staff members largely identified the same groupings, along with a couple of "floaters": D, F, and H; E, J, and N; O and P. G, I, and M, the only other non-consultant staff members, were considered to be "floaters;" it should be noted that the latter two were working on a very part-time basis and were not "housed" near the Task Force.

Interviewed staffers, however, were at a loss to explain the groupings which they had identified, other than to say that they had "similar outlooks" and "similar personalities." At the very least, there do appear to be other similarities in background and experience: O and P came as a "team" to the Task Force; E, J, and N were all veterans

of the same OE unit and shared the same recent unhappy experiences there; D, F, and N were all new to OE and roughly of the same age.

Analysis

As with the Director (and, perhaps, OE), more immediate challenges obtained greater priority for some members than the planning mission—in this case, improving the status of the legislative proposal. It would appear that without the presence of one of the Task Force's characteristics—significant numbers of governmental "irregulars"—this covert mission would have received much less attention. Thus, Mr. A's preference for atypical bureaucrats did have an impact on the Task Force mission, although not that which he had apparently intended.

The group's informal arrangements held few surprises: a mild hierarchy of sorts appears to have existed, based on seniority; individuals with similar experiences banded together. It is unclear how different this structure would have been, had other factors been different—if, for example, the group was responsible for developing a more "integrated" end product, or if it had been working under tighter deadlines and more pressure. Nonetheless, it is possible to conclude that the flexibility and freedom within this temporary system did appear to reenforce the development of informal groupings.

D. Termination: 5/22/72-6/30/72

Of necessity, this case study cannot consider the question of the long-range impact of the Task Force. However, in view of the evidence which suggests that it may have been created, in part, to achieve--or at least had the effect of achieving--several shorter-term objectives, some indication of its effects can be attained. After a brief look at the final chapter in the Foundation's legislative history, the impact of the Task Force will be described and assessed with respect to both its organizational and individual dimensions.

Outcome of the Legislative Proposal

In their separate deliberations, one-half of the Congress, so to speak, had endorsed the Foundation proposal. When the higher education bill was reported out from the Senate-House Conference on May 22, roughly fifty percent of the original proposal had been adopted for the consideration of the full Congress. Although it represented a drastic compromise with the original concept, this action yielded more than many observers had expected.

The Conference Committee essentially retained the purposes of the original proposal: it created a new Federal initiative to provide pro-ject grant support for activities directed toward reform and change in postsecondary education. However, it eliminated the proposed structure and drastically reduced the proposed authorization levels: a new "pro-gram" was created to achieve these purposes, authorized at ten, fifty, and seventy-five million dollars for the first three years.

Organizationally, the legislation assigns administrative re-
sponsibility for the "modified Foundation" to the HEW Secretary. Such
a designation is often, however, pro forma; the legislation does not
restrict the Secretary from delegating the program to another office
within the Department. The Senate's proposed Board of Directors was
replaced by an Advisory Council of more limited authority, now to be
appointed by the Secretary.

The ultimate location for the new program was not, then, resolved
by the legislation itself; indeed, it created new possibilities. The
Conference Committee adopted the Senate's proposed Education Division,
but significantly changed its administrative design. The Education
Division, composed of OE, NIE, and (if the Secretary so chooses) the
"modified" Foundation, will be headed by an Assistant Secretary for
Education (ASE). The legislation specifically prohibits the individual
serving as ASE from being concurrently the Commissioner of Education,
and vice versa; the latter designation will be retained for the
administrative chief of the Office of Education.* In effect, the
legislation provides the Secretary with three choices for assigning the
new program; he may retain it in his office, which is unlikely, or
assign it either to the Assistant Secretary or to the Commissioner of
Education.

---

*This outcome probably reflected two political considerations: The
 Commissioner's unpopularity on "the Hill" with respect to the "renewal"
 episode, and John Brademas' insistence that the NIE be administratively
 independent from the Office of Education.

Impact of the Task Force: Organizational

Examination of the first two "stages" in the lifespan of the
Task Force elicited three "missions," or goals, pursued by the group
and/or the parent organization. Each of these missions will be
reexamined in light of the developments of the final days of the Task
Force and the immediate aftermath.

**Overt Mission: To produce a planning report presenting the major
policy and program options for the Foundation.**

By June 15, the Task Force had completed most of the individual
reports, having been reviewed and altered somewhat in draft form by the
group and Mr. A. A draft version of the final report, including cover
and summary memoranda, was prepared over the next two-week period.
Further action was deferred until the ultimate disposition of the
higher education bill was clarified; however, the group's "game plan"
was to submit the report to the Commissioner and the Secretary shortly
after the bill was (hopefully) signed by the President.

At this writing, however, in early August, the report has yet to
be sent forward from Mr. A's office. One cause of the prolonged delay
were a series of developments initiated outside the Task Force, which
occurred during this period and will be discussed shortly. Second,
within the group, there was some disagreement over the format which the
final report should follow: whether the papers should be presented
together as a coherent whole, or whether they should be treated as
separate "idea papers;" and, second, whether they still had major rele-
vance, given the fact that the Foundation gave way to a mere "program."

Task Force members did not conceal their reservations over the general quality of the papers. Mr. A, for one, was quite critical of their worth: he felt that "perhaps 10 to 15 percent" reflected solid, creative thinking and ideas; the rest, he felt, was "largely second-rate." Mr. D, while he did think that a detailed cover memo would prove to be useful, felt the Task Force should "file the rest." Mr. E termed the papers "sloppy."

Some Task Force members also concluded, reluctantly, that the report was not that highly valued by the group itself. Mr. E, for example, had proposed in early April that a modest sum, which he had obtained, ought to be spent to give the report a final editing and to print it in an attractive, "professional" booklet. His proposal, he felt, was never rejected outright, but was "ignored" by Mr. A and the rest of the group; he concluded that this reaction "symbolized the group's interest in their work." As the weeks passed and the report was not formally submitted, Mr. F expressed a conclusion which may have been shared more widely: "it makes you feel like a year's work didn't accomplish anything."

Covert Mission: To strengthen the political viability of the Foundation proposal in Congress.

The fact that, as the year progressed, the Task Force devoted considerable time and energy to the process of "involving and informing" the field of postsecondary education has been documented. By the end of the life of the Task Force, several of its members were to conclude that this process had, indeed, been successful, and not only to improve the relevance of their reports.

Several members concluded that the "public information" role was **more** important than the group's planning role. When asked to list their major contributions to the Task Force, D, G, J, and L placed their initiatives and contacts with the field higher than their substantive contributions to the final report. Mr. E stated boldly that the "public dissemination" role was the "major" priority of the group--somewhat to his chagrin. Mr. D listed "initiated national debate on the role of the Foundation" as the major impact of the Task Force and added, referring to several activities in the field which the group had been in touch with, "without the Task Force we would have had no bill at all." Mrs. H felt that the Task Force had "saved the Foundation from oblivion" and that this "hidden purpose" was more successful than "any others."

Mr. A did not share the staff's conviction. He felt that the political impact of the Task Force activities could not be measured, but doubted that it was that great. He thought that the major impact of the Task Force's "outreach" role would be recognized only when the new program became a reality: he hoped that the Task Force had "sensitized the community" to the potential and the possibilities for the "modified" Foundation's role in the field. If so, he later added, such an outcome may have constituted "better planning than any of the formal documents."

Covert Mission: To achieve organizational (OE) "control" over the design and (possibly) the future of the Foundation.

The establishment of the Task Force in the summer of 1971 insured

OE's bureaucratic hold over the topic of the Foundation until the early summer of 1972. However, as was suggested earlier, this decision did not resolve the more ultimate issue: the future location of the Foundation--or, as a result of the legislative action, the future location of the new "program." At this point, this issue has yet to be resolved; however, it would appear that the existence of the Task Force has had the effect, thus far, of achieving this "latent" goal. To document this point, the curious history of planning for the "modified Foundation" during the months of June and July must be considered.

On May 31, just a week after the higher education bill was re-ported out of the Conference Committee, the Commissioner, at the in-sistence of the Deputy Commissioner for Higher Education (hired in January), issued a memorandum designating a series of task forces to begin planning for the implementation of the new bill. Included was a group* to plan for the implementation of the "modified Foundation" and chaired by the chief planning officer in DCHE. The only member of Task Force I (Mr. A's group) listed in the memorandum was Mr. I. According to the Chairman, DCHE established a new group because the outcome of the Conference Committee called for "a whole new ball-game;" he preferred not to include more members from Mr. A's group because he wanted to take a "fresh look" at the problem.

Over the next two weeks, however, Task Force II was to in-creasingly resemble its still-living cousin, Task Force I. Mr. I

---

*Will be referred to as Task Force II.

declined the invitation to join the new group but persuaded the Chairman to designate (at minimum) two members of Task Force I, D and F, to join the new group. And on July 14, the circle was completed: the Chairman asked Mr. A to replace him as leader of the new group because "he had too many other things going." Mr. A agreed and brought with him Mr. E and Mrs. H in the process.

At this same point in time (mid-June)--and partly in response to OE's initiative--the HEW staff proposed a totally separate implementation mechanism for the new bill, called the "project manager system." In addition, a recommended list of project managers to oversee various provisions of the bill had been drawn up for the Secretary; Mr. B, of the ASPE staff, was recommended as the project manager for the "modified Foundation."

The Commissioner and his staff, quite predictably, reacted vigorously to this HEW initiative. The Commissioner's posture was strengthened at this time by the generally acknowledged fact that his name would be submitted to the White House by the Secretary to become the new Assistant Secretary for Education. An agreement was reached whereby the Commissioner and the Secretary would be jointly responsible for the project manager system, and that individuals tapped for particular project manager assignments would be approved by both of them. On July 3, a memorandum from the Secretary was issued designating Mr. A as project manager for the "modified Foundation." Thus, Task Force III was born, bearing much resemblance to Task Forces I and II.

Analysis

In view of the turbulent history of planning for the implementation of the higher education bill over the past two months, one hesitates before drawing conclusions regarding even the immediate organizational impact of the Task Force over its lifespan.

It is clear, however, that the Task Force did not finish its business as planned: it did not issue a report, and it did not self-destruct at its appointed hour. Even though the Task Force, still largely intact, may undergo yet another series of gyrations before it finally terminates or dissipates, several explanations of these non-outcomes appear to be available at this point.

Two possible explanations for the fact that the final report has not yet "cleared" the Task Force can be disposed of with dispatch. Technically, of course, no Director has yet been appointed who could receive the report; however, his superiors are available, and the Task Force had long since abandoned the hope that this individual would be appointed in a prompt and timely fashion. Second, it could be (and was) argued that the report, written for the "Foundation," had little relevance to the "new program;" however, virtually all of the options discussed in the papers were just as pertinent to the task of designing a more modest vehicle.

A more likely explanation arises from the evidence that the planning mission itself was not, and perhaps had never been, a priority concern to OE, Mr. A., and several other members of the Task Force.

Confronted in June with a set of uneven, half-hearted reports—the logical outcome of this climate of "unexpectations"—it did not seem that important to pass them along elsewhere, particularly in view of the fact that the parent organization was making no demands for them. For many staff members, the major business of the Task Force was somewhat successfully completed when the Conference Committee reported out the "modified Foundation."

Yet the Task Force did not undergo its expected demise, either at that point or on June 30, suggesting that its "major business," from OE's point of view, was not yet finished. A power struggle of sorts developed between OE and HEW over the issue of "control" of the implementation of the new bill, and the Task Force, as it had a year earlier, provided OE with the justification it needed to assert its continued control over planning for the provision creating the "modified Foundation."

These remarks suggest that the "control mission" was of top priority to the parent organization, certainly in the latter stages of the Task Force's life and probably at the time of its inception as well. As such, the history and results of this "temporary system" do not correspond too closely to the expectations of Warren Bennis and Anthony Downs. In retrospect, they appeared to view "temporary systems" as entities somehow removed from, or unaffected by, the existing system of covert, or "latent" missions and objectives pursued by organizations. However, we have seen that the covert agendas of the Office of Education, specifically to protect and expand its policy role in Federal educational affairs, were of major significance in determining the behavior of the

Foundation Task Force and were more fully achieved than its overt mission. Indeed, this "temporary system," as it continued to serve the organization's purposes, turned out not to be so "temporary" at all.

Impact of the Task Force: Individual

The views of individual Task Force members on the successes and failures of the Task Force enterprise have been included in the prior text where appropriate. This section will document the members' subsequent work plans and, when available, their assessment of the influence which the Task Force experience had on their plans. The analysis will relate these outcomes to the members' initial motives and expectations.

Status of Task Force members, 7/15/72

> **Mr. A.** Designated as project manager for "new program" implementation, detailed full-time from DCR. Expects and desires to continue with topic until Director is appointed; holds little hope that he would be designated as Director, due to "lack of credentials."

> **Mr. B.** Continues as full-time staff member in ASPE; a member of Task Force III under Mr. A's direction. Hopes to stay integrally involved with new program as it is implemented.

> **Mr. C.** Continues as full-time staff member in ASL. The legislative action having been completed, no longer involved with topic.

> **Mr. D.** Unable to obtain satisfactory permanent position in OE; Mr. A plans to hire as full-time consultant for Task Force III. Would like to work on the new program staff, but has also submitted application to NIE.

> **Mr. E.** Desired to continue with Task Force III, but was denied; his "job slot" was previously transferred to another unit in OE and he was subsequently transferred as well.

Mr. F. Unable to obtain satisfactory permanent position in OE;
Mr. A plans to hire as full-time consultant for Task Force III.
Undecided on future plans.

Mr. G. (See page 130)

Mrs. H. Retains position in DCR, but detailed full-time to Task
Force III. Would like to continue on this basis for the present,
but unclear on preferences for future role.

Mr. I. Returned to full-time duties working for Executive Deputy.
Would like to participate on part-time basis with Task Force III.

Mr. J. (See page 130)

Mr. K. Completed work as consultant in February; subsequently
returned to campus position.

Mr. L. Terminated work as consultant in February, when obtained
permanent position in another HEW agency. Indicated primary
objective was to find permanent slot, preferred to leave Task
Force at that point.

Ms. M and N. Returned to full-time duties in research unit in
June; subsequently transferred to NIE.

Mr. O and Miss P. Continued in internship program; Mr. O took
assignment in another OE unit, Miss P remained with Task Force III.

Analysis

Solely in terms of numbers, the three "different" Task Forces

maintained a degree of continuity. Of the sixteen individuals who were

members of the "core" staff at various points during the year, only six

are found as members of Task Force III in mid-July. However, five of

these six were on the Task Force as early as October, 1971.

It may be more significant, however, to consider individuals'

outcomes in comparison with what appear to have been their initial mo-

tivations as they joined the Task Force. The "starting nine," it will

be recalled, were those staff members (excluding A, B, and C) who constituted the nucleus of the original group (D-L); only three members of this group are found in Task Force III.

Four of the original nine staffers had left work situations (three in OE) which were mutually unpleasant and joined the Task Force "looking for a change," although one of this group--Mrs. H.--obtained a new position concurrently with joining the Task Force. For the other three, the Task Force signalled the end of their careers--at least for a time--in OE: G and J left the government, and E was transferred (against his wishes) to NIE. For them, the Task Force proved to be, not a "temporary" resting place within the organization, but rather an exit from the organization.

Three others of the "starting nine," on the other hand, were motivated in part by a desire to "get into" the organization. For two as short-term interns, and one as a consultant, the Task Force was their first introduction to the Federal government; all three expressed strong interest in obtaining more permanent positions after the termination of the Task Force. However, the Task Force experience does not seem to have aided their quest significantly: Mr. L did obtain a position, but it was wholly unrelated to the Task Force experience and outside OE. D and F, however, although they initiated numerous interviews in June and July, received no offers; in mid-July their status was basically unchanged, employed as short-term consultants.

The other two members of the original group, I and K, returned to their prior duties on a full-time basis. However, neither appears

to have been originally motivated by a desire either to change from their old work situations.

If, as March and Simon suggested, "task groups" are often utilized by organizations to "train" and "select" individuals, then OE appears to have found no worthy candidates within the Task Force. Indeed, only two of the initial group of four <u>permanent</u> employees were still to be found in the OE ranks in mid-July; it would be more accurate to say that the Task Force served as a mechanism to <u>select out</u> individuals.

However, it is unlikely that any such "plot" existed, at least on a conscious level. Rather, this "temporary system," largely ignored by the parent organization during its life, appears to have had the effect of isolating its members some distance away from the permanent, on-going organization. Again, the organization seems to have been very interested in the <u>form</u> of the Task Force--the fact that it existed--but not particularly concerned with its <u>substance</u>--either its presumed task or its assembled people.

E. Aftermath – A Brief Look[*]

This case study focused on the period of time from September, 1971, to July, 1972, during which the original Foundation Task Force was in place within the Office of Education, although the several gyrations which the Task Force underwent during the ensuing two months were also noted and discussed. It may be of interest, however, to briefly sketch in the subsequent history of the "modified Foundation" from August to the present (January, 1973) and to reflect upon its implications for our understanding of the original Foundation Task Force.

The leadership of the Task Force changed once again during the summer of 1972. Mr. A left the Office of Education in late September to become the chief of management for the new educational research agency, the National Institute for Education. Mr. B, whom the Secretary had earlier nominated to be "Project Manager" for the topic, was now tapped by the new Assistant Secretary for Education (ASE) for the assignment of directing the Task Force's efforts. In this capacity, it was agreed that he would report to the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Education, formerly OE's Executive Deputy.

Under Mr. B's leadership, the Task Force began preparing the various documents which would pave the way for fully implementing the new legislation—the development of regulations and guidelines and several decision memoranda. In late November, a crucial Task Force

---

[*]This section was written in January, 1973, five months later than the rest of the case study.

memorandum was submitted by the ASE to the Department which outlined
several major recommendations:

> a) the program should be entitled, "Fund for the Improvement of
> Postsecondary Education;"

> b) the program should be located outside the Office of Education
> but within the Education Division and should report directly to
> the ASE;

> c) a "strong" Advisory Board should be created to exercise a
> significant policy and review role over the new program.

These recommendations were approved by the Secretary in early December.

During this same period, two other developments occurred of
critical importance to the new "Fund." In an otherwise stringent
period for education budgets, the Administration requested and received
from Congress an appropriation for the new program which equalled the
maximum authorized by the legislation--$10 million for Fiscal Year
1973. In addition, a Director for the new program was recruited from
the field of higher education by the ASE and his Deputy and has now
been informally approved for appointment by the Administration.

Currently, the Task Force is continuing to work on the implemen-
tation process, still under Mr. B's leadership but with considerable
inputs from the Director-designate. Specific plans for the organization
of the program components and staff are being developed, the preliminary
guidelines are being refined, and a recommended slate of Board members
has been submitted to the Department for their review. It is expected

that the program will be fully operational this Spring and that its funds will all be allotted to support proposals from the field before the end of the Fiscal Year.

Although this brief sketch does not allow for a similar in-depth analysis of the Task Force during this period, it is worth noting the extent to which these general outcomes do satisfy what appeared to be OE's broad objectives for both the legislation and the original Foundation Task Force. Although the Congress had rejected the concept of a separate agency, the new program will be installed as a discrete organizational entity within the Education Division. While the Congress rejected the proposed Board of Directors, a relatively strong advisory committee has been created. Thus, although the Administration did not succeed in convincing "the Hill" to approve the full-blown Foundation, it has managed, by means of the broad administrative discretion which Congress _did_ provide along with the new program, to approximate the original concept in several significant respects.

Second, it would appear that the "control" mission was also largely achieved. Administrative responsibility for the new program has been redelegated by the Secretary to the ASE, who now replaces the OE Commissioner as the top "line" manager for educational programs in the Federal government. In addition, as a distinct organizational entity within the Education Division, the "Fund" has the potential for becoming something more than just a "bureau for higher education innovations," as had been feared by some observers.

Over the longer range, then, it is possible to conclude that what appeared to be OE's primary motivation in creating the Foundation Task Force, to covertly attain "control" over the new mission and program, was achieved. And, although the original Foundation Task Force cannot take direct responsibility, it did establish certain precedents which at the very least bear a strong resemblance to these outcomes and may well have had an influence upon them: it, too, had been located at the "top" of the organization, independent from the existing bureaucracy; and its Director (as was also the case with Mr. B) had also been recruited from outside OE.

These observations largely support the conclusions reached earlier regarding fate and the role of the Foundation Task Force. Because the "real" (as opposed to the apparent) mission of this temporary system had not been achieved by June, 1972, when it formally terminated, its basic structure was extended over time until the organization had, indeed, wrested control of the new enterprise. In so doing, however, it appears that some aspects of the form and character of the temporary system set precedents which will continue to influence the new, permanent structure which now replaces it within the organization.

IV

CONCLUDING NOTES

A. A Personal View

My perspective on the Foundation Task Force may have been variously shaped and affected by a rather complex set of personal roles. During the life of the Task Force itself, of course, I was a part-time member of the group; I was concurrently working in my full-time capacity as Special Assistant to the Executive Deputy; and, finally, I have played the part of investigator/researcher, conducting extensive interviews with Task Force members in the course of developing this paper. It may be helpful, then, to describe these roles in more detail and to include my own assessment of the manner in which they may have influenced the perspectives and conclusions found in this case study.

Compared with most of the other "core" members of the staff, I had a limited investment in the progress of the Task Force, in perhaps two different ways. First, the heavy time demands of my full-time position as Special Assistant to the Executive Deputy restricted my participation primarily to attendance at Task Force functions and the development and completion of a specific report dealing with the grants management process of the Foundation.

Second, I had fewer "emotional stakes," if you will, with respect to the progress of the Task Force and, perhaps, with respect to the importance of my role within it. Unlike many of the other members, I was

not seeking to remedy an undesirable situation by joining the Task Force. On the contrary, I would think it more likely that my effectiveness as a Task Force member suffered from the fact that my full-time position as Special Assistant was clearly of higher priority in a personal sense. (My own case would appear to support March and Simon's thesis that part-time members will develop less loyalty and commitment to enterprises like the Task Force activity than full-time members).

My own situation was certainly unique among the group in that I was concurrently working full-time as a Special Assistant to the supervisor of Mr. A in his part-time role as Director of the Task Force. The convergence of these two roles had some impact on my duties: I occasionally served as a conduit between Mr. A and the Executive Deputy, transmitting information and requests in both directions; just as frequently, however, they communicated directly. In addition, I occasionally served as an expediter of Task Force problems, largely in the same manner as I would with respect to other activities and programs under the charge of the Executive Deputy--with the possible differences that I was more intimately acquainted with the Task Force's needs and perhaps had more of a personal investment in seeking their resolution. These were, however, only occasional roles, largely due to the inclination of the Office of the Commissioner not to closely supervise the Task Force and, perhaps, Mr. A's apparent preference not to seek much guidance and direction from above.

Finally, to acquire the necessary data to develop this case study, I was forced into the role of investigator. In so far as was possible,

I sought to "objectify" the crucial set of interviews which I conducted with the Task Force members. A fairly comprehensive set of questions were developed which provided the framework for all of the interview sessions. I took pains not to interject my own views into the ensuing conversations, as well as to convey as clearly as possible my purpose for conducting the interviews. Individuals could not, of course, fully ignore the fact that I was concurrently a Task Force member and working in the Executive Deputy's office. However, I think that by the time these interviews were conducted, in the late Spring of 1972, sufficient mutual trust had developed to prevent my formal roles from drastically interfering with the interview process.

The question of one's own biases is rather difficult to assess. However, I think I can--only in retrospect--trace certain changes in my perception of the Task Force experience which did occur, largely as the result of writing this paper. In the course of interviewing the staff and the director, I discovered that I had not previously been fully aware of the gap in perceptions and communication which existed between them. In particular, I had not fully realized the extent of the staff's feelings of frustration and confusion, occasionally with respect to their director's role and more often with respect to the precise nature of their collective mission.

The conclusion I draw from this observation is that if my perspective was biased during the life of the Task Force it was skewed in support of "management"--that is, Mr. A. To put it another way, I suspect

that I tended to be primarily sympathetic to Mr. A's perceptions and complaints, as opposed to those of the staff, during this period. This bias can be attributed to at least two related factors. First, my primary allegiance was to my full-time position as a part--if but a minor part--of the organization's leadership; this primary association may have led me to identify more closely with Mr. A's role as leader of the group. Second, my limited involvement as a Task Force member may have prevented me from sharing the considerable frustrations and confusion which the others obviously experienced at times during the year. Taken together, these two points also give a further indication of the extent to which I was clearly an _atypical_ Task Force member.

The set of interviews conducted with the staff and director, however, clearly had the effect of offsetting, or countering, this management-oriented bias. As the interviews proceeded and the gap of perceptions between the director and the staff became evident, I was obliged to pay more attention than I had previously to the staff's perspectives and, in effect, was obliged to develop a more complex understanding of the internal dynamics of the Task Force. To give one example, I had previously concurred with Mr. A's primary conclusion regarding the papers written by the staff--that their generally poor quality was due to what might be termed individual factors (e.g., interest, motivation, competency). However, the interviews with staff members, who either implicitly or explicitly placed part of the responsibility on the director's shoulders, forced me to consider the ways in which Mr. A (and others) subtly

denied the importance and significance of the Task Force's avowed mission in life.

It is probably true that the new information and data which I gleaned from these interviews were partly responsible for my increased appreciation of the staff's concerns and, hopefully, for my increased awareness of the actual complexities of the internal dynamics of the Task Force. Yet of equal significance, I think, was the very role which, of necessity, I had to play to conduct the interviews and subsequently to formulate the case study. While "pure" objectivity is probably nonexistent and was most certainly unattainable in this context, the extent to which the investigative role forced me to remove the various "sets of glasses" which accompanied my formal work roles was of critical importance.

B. The Role of Temporary Systems in Bureaucratic Organizations:

Some Considerations for Managers

> Bureaucracy is administration which almost completely
> avoids public discussion of its techniques, although
> there may occur public discussion of its policies.[56]

     To conclude this case study, several issues generated by the ex-

perience of the Foundation Task Force pertaining to the establishment

and maintenance of temporary systems within large organizations are dis-

cussed below. While they are presented as suggestions to a hypothetical

audience of organizational managers, I do so with some trepidation in

view of the dangers inherent in generalizing from such a small pool of

evidence. However, I have sought to limit the discussion to concepts

and conclusions which can be derived from this particular case. In this

regard, suggestions for further studies of temporary systems are included

at the end of this section.

The Temporary System as a Management "Tool"

     The Foundation Task Force proved to be a unit which was quite

"sensitive" (or responsive) to the priorities and concerns of the leader-

ship of its parent organization. The group was formally charged with a

mission which does not, in fact, appear to have been of great importance

to the leadership; the outcomes of the Task Force's activities and the

perceptions of its members suggest that this mission was not given a

high priority by the group either. What appears to have been the leader-

ship's "real" agendas--to achieve organizational control of the new

program and to enhance its political status—were at times pursued rather vigorously by the group, despite the fact that these goals were not made explicit and were, at times, even denied by the Task Force's director. To put this point in other terms, the Foundation Task Force remained largely a "captive" of the parent organization over its lifetime, retaining a role and identity which on the whole reflected those either consciously or unconsciously intended for the group by the leadership.

Assuming that the experience of the Foundation Task Force is generalizable to other internal temporary systems (an assumption which of necessity is made throughout this section), these observations suggest that the manager may, with some justification, view such units as potential extensions of his own role and "span of control." One might speculate that other factors, such as the style and motives of a unit's director, could often intervene to shift and modify the desired course; however, it should not be surprising that compared with their more permanent counterparts, temporary systems, created and staffed largely at the discretion of the manager, should generally be more responsive to his concerns.

This perspective on the role of temporary systems has obvious appeal to the manager who is continually searching for the best match between a given task and an organizational vehicle to carry it forward. At the same time, however, the manager should be aware of certain problems and constraints which also accompany the use of temporary systems, several of which are discussed in the succeeding pages.

The Impact of "Hidden Agendas" on the Temporary System

The case study uncovered considerable evidence that OE's primary motives for creating the Foundation Task Force (and its successors) were quite different from those which were made explicit, both "in public" and with the staff of the Task Force. We have already noted the extent to which the actual behavior of the Task Force was, somewhat ironically, responsive to the organization's real priorities. This "gap" between statement and intent, however, also appears to have had several negative effects, especially with regard to the Task Force staff. Considerable anxiety, confusion, and frustration seems to have resulted from the fact that the group's assumptions regarding its role and mission were at times contradicted by the actions and attitudes of its director, OE's leadership, and, eventually, some of its own members. In addition, the low opinions which representatives of other OE units expressed regarding the Task Force, due to its lack of "productivity," may have resulted in part from this gap between stated purposes and actual priorities.

In part because of their high potential for being utilized as "sensitive" organizational vehicles by the manager, temporary systems may often be employed to pursue covert missions. However, this case suggests that unless the stated purposes of such units are pursued with equal vigor, a degree of organizational "health" may well be lost in the process, since actions and attitudes will not correspond to the expectations of the "uninitiated," both within such units and in the encompassing organization.

Installation of the Temporary Unit

The acquisition of basic support services from OE proved to be a major problem to the Foundation Task Force over its entire life. It is fair to say that the group never did enjoy adequate secretarial support; minimal clerical help was obtained only after the expenditure of considerable time and energy in the process of negotiating with those permanent units ostensibly committed to providing that support. In the last few months, due in part to these difficulties, the Task Force sought secretarial help from outside OE altogether. Similarly, the Task Force spent half of the year within a wholly inadequate physical space before larger quarters were finally obtained--quarters which were tolerable only because five members retained working space in their "old" units. In each case, the Task Force's pursuit of resources may have been further frustrated by the fact that the reluctant donor was the permanent higher education program unit whose "policy territory" may have been (in their view) usurped by the new unit.

Because it is removed from the normal support system, a temporary unit is wholly dependent upon the parent organization for needed resources and services. This case suggests that unless it is properly wired into this system at the outset, the unit is not likely to fare well in the competition for scarce resources. First, its needs may be resisted since they were not likely to have been anticipated when support plans were developed. Second, if the affected units are hostile to its very existence, the new unit's difficulties may be further compounded.

Individual Motivations and the Temporary System

A large number of the Foundation Task Force staff appear to have been attracted to the new unit by a desire for personal change. Several had recently experienced severe disappointments within their permanent "slots" in OE and were seeking more desirable alternatives. Others, including the director, were transferring to OE from other governmental agencies in search of a different type of work setting and role. Still another group was composed of individuals wholly new to the Federal level desiring to obtain (or at least to consider opportunities for) employment in OE. To put it another way, from the perspective of many members, the Foundation Task Force experience represented a transition stage in their work careers.

The relatively unsystematic and passive character of Mr. A's approach to recruitment for the Task Force may have tended to heighten this phenomenon, since the potential recruits themselves (as opposed to their supervisors or the top managers) had the opportunity to play more significant roles in the process than might usually be the case. However, the general point might well be applicable to most temporary systems: because the transfer of personnel from a permanent unit, even for a relatively short period of time, represents a potential loss to that unit and a marked change in the individual's own status, it is likely that personal motives for change will be present for many individuals who are assigned to temporary units (and/or for their supervisors as well).

If this statement does have validity, it suggests that the manager should not necessarily assume that the preferable course of action (for either the organization or the individual) would be to reassign the staff to their prior slots and locations when the temporary unit is disbanded. Rather, he might take steps to insure that the organization and the affected individuals consider other placement options which may exist at that point in time.

Supervision of the Temporary Unit Staff

It was quite evident that the perceived needs of the director and staff of the Foundation Task Force were in conflict. A large number of the staff felt that Mr. A did not provide them with adequate guidance and direction. Mr. A, on the other hand, was surprised and perhaps frustrated by the degree of attention which he felt obliged to provide to the staff's concerns. The staff sought, somewhat understandably in view of the lateral structure of the Task Force, a degree of individualized supervision, while Mr. A chose to devote increasing portions of his time to his other obligations during the mid-life of the Task Force.

There may well have been several unique factors which led the Task Force staff to need considerable guidance from its director, such as the presence of a number of relatively inexperienced personnel and the doubtful status of the Foundation proposed in Congress. However, it is also possible to conclude that the experience of the Foundation Task Force was not particularly unique, since some degree of anxiety and insecurity can be expected to be present within temporary units

due to the very impermanence of their organizational status. In addition, one might expect that the structure and composition of many temporary units will similarly deviate from those of the encompassing organizations.

If, then, it is possible to generalize from this case, it would appear that temporary unit staffs may well require an extra degree of attention from their chiefs, owing to the distinctive nature of such units. As he selects the individual to direct a temporary unit, the manager might assess his ability and his availability to meet these special requirements of the assignment.

Suggestions for Further Research

Because this analysis was limited to one particular case, it was extremely difficult to apply its conclusions to other, similar internal temporary systems, and probably impossible to generalize its conclusions to other _types_ of temporary systems. However, it would be valuable to compare the behavior of the Foundation Task Force with that of other groups, particularly those whose characteristics are somewhat different: i.e., those composed solely of high-level managers or composed solely of part-time staffers attached to other units, or, alternatively, external groups assembled by an organization to advise and recommend. Such comparisons may provide additional insights into several questions arising from this case: How often do temporary systems manage to truly achieve their overt, public missions? Must internal systems necessarily be "captives" of the parent organization, or can they develop greater self-identity and independence? Can they peacefully coexist with other
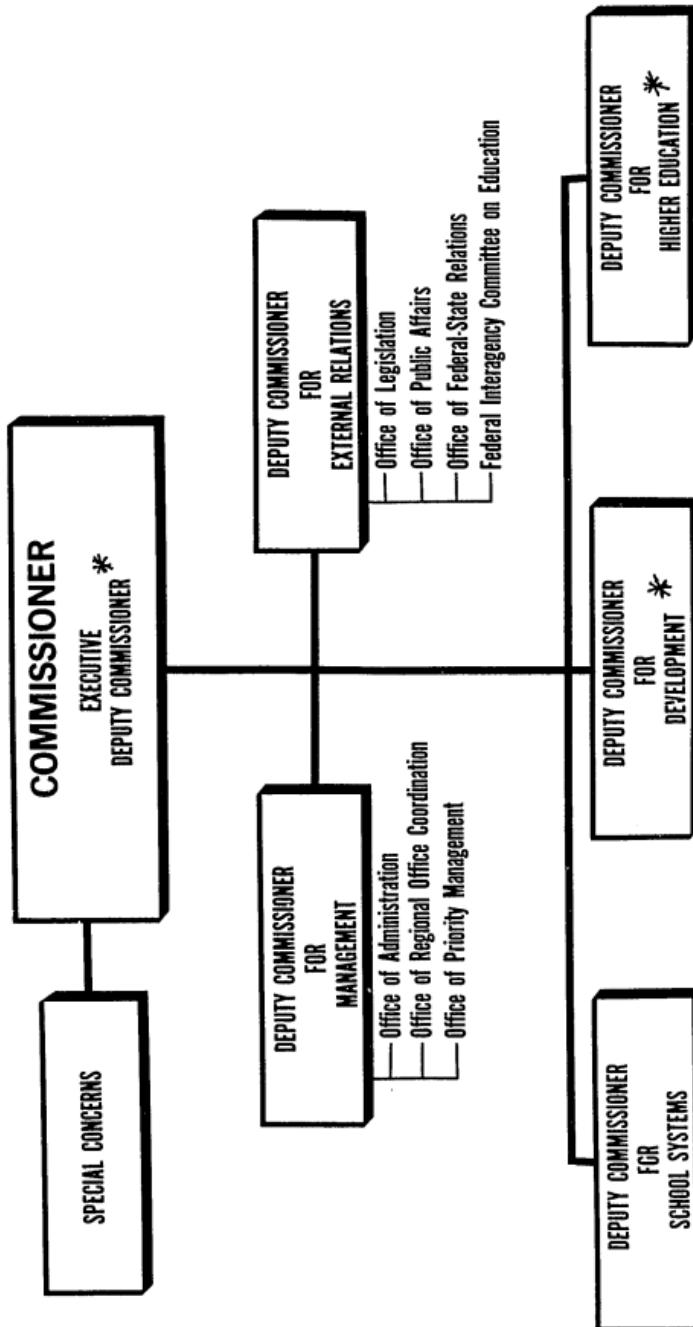
affected sub-units and, if so, under what conditions? Can they really provide improved working environments for personnel, and can they positively affect individuals' subsequent work assignments and preferences?

Additional insights into such issues, derived from the actual experience of temporary systems within large organizations, should deepen our understanding of their behavior and enable us to better assess the enthusiasm which a few theorists have expressed regarding their potential.
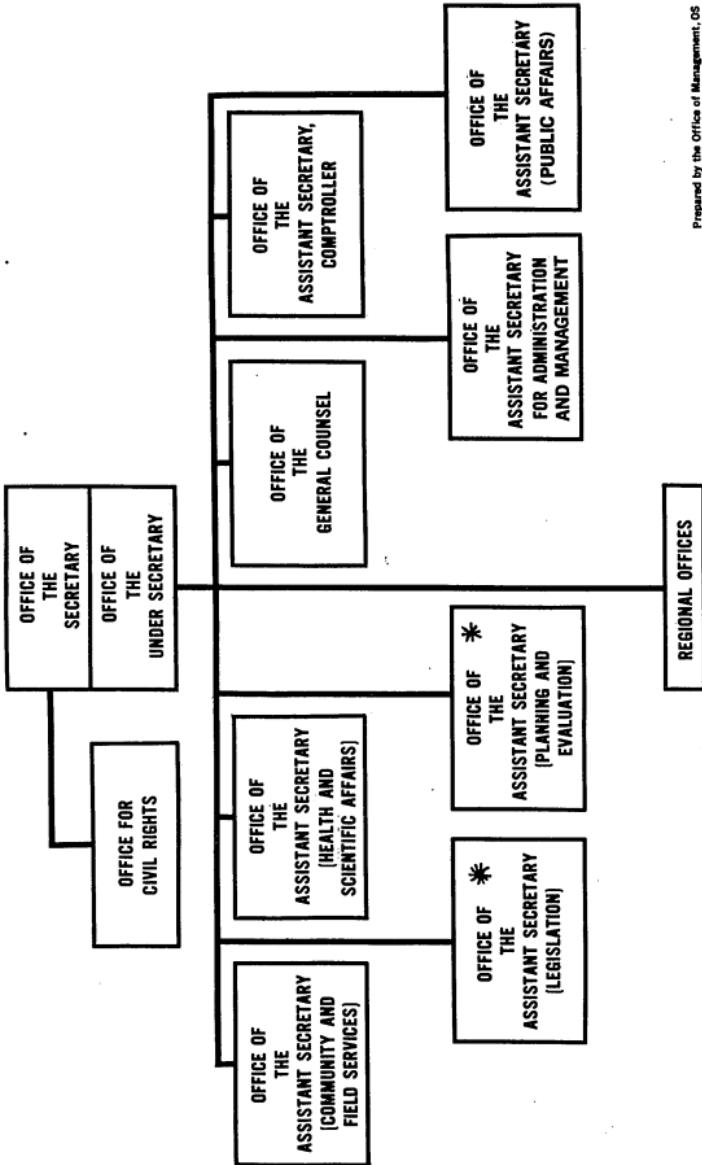
APPENDIX

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION

COMMISSIONER
EXECUTIVE
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER *

SPECIAL CONCERNS

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FOR MANAGEMENT
- Office of Administration
- Office of Regional Office Coordination
- Office of Priority Management

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FOR EXTERNAL RELATIONS
- Office of Legislation
- Office of Public Affairs
- Office of Federal-State Relations
- Federal Interagency Committee on Education

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FOR SCHOOL SYSTEMS

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FOR DEVELOPMENT *

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FOR HIGHER EDUCATION *

Department of Health, Education, and Welfare

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Prepared by the Office of Management, OS
April 1971

FOOTNOTES

1. Warren G. Bennis and Philip E. Slater, *The Temporary Society* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), p. 73.

2. Alvin Toffler, *Future Shock* (New York: Random House, 1970).

3. Beverlee A. Myers, "The Formulation of Federal Health Policy: Lessons From the Task Force on Medicaid and Related Programs", in *Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine*, 2nd. ser., XLVII (December, 1971), 1509-1532. (Reprint.)

4. Warren G. Bennis, *Changing Organizations* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), p. 201.

5. Toffler, pp. 132-136.

6. Gordon Tullock, *The Politics of Bureaucracy* (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs, 1965), p. 52.

7. Bennis, pp. 169-170.

8. James G. March and Herbert Simon, *Organizations* (New York: Wiley, 1967), p. 169.

9. Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), p. 251.

10. P. Selznick, "Foundations of the Theory of Organizations", *American Sociological Review*, XIII (1948), p. 26.

11. Aaron Wildavsky, *Politics of the Budgetary Process* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1964), pp. 32-35.

12. Robert Presthus, *Behavioral Approaches to Public Administration* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama, 1965), p. 21.

13. Anthony Downs, *Inside Bureaucracy* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1967), p. 198.

14. Bennis, p. 170.

15. Amitai Etzioni, *Modern Organizations* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prestiss-Hall, 1964), p. 10.

16. Herbert A. Simon, *Administrative Behavior* (New York: MacMillan, 1957), p. 201.

17. _Ibid._, p. 62.

18. Bennis and Slater, p. 6.

19. Bennis, p. 11.

20. March and Simon, p. 198.

21. _Ibid._, p. 199.

22. _Ibid._, p. 197.

23. Robert K. Merton, "Bureaucratic Structures and Personality," in Organizations and Human Behavior, ed. by Gerald D. Bell (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentiss-Hall, 1967), p. 201.

24. Chris Argyris, "Individual Actualization in Complex Organizations," in _Organizations and Human Behavior_, ed. by Gerald D. Bell, p. 209.

25. Downs, p. 12.

26. Amitai Etzioni, _A Comparative Study of Complex Organizations_ (New York: Free Press, 1961), p. 241.

27. Fred H. Goldner, "Demotions in Industrial Management," in _Organizations and Human Behavior_, ed. by Gerald D. Bell, p. 27.

28. March and Simon, p. 124.

29. Simon, pp. 230-231.

30. Downs, pp. 29-30.

31. Downs, pp. 213-215.

32. March and Simon, p. 121.

33. Harold Seidman, _Politics, Position and Power: The Dynamics of Federal Organization_ (New York: Oxford, 1970), pp. 77-78.

34. Etzioni, _Modern Organizations_, p. 40.

35. Simon, p. 148.

36. Bennis, p. 12.

37. March and Simon, p. 80.

38. *Ibid*., p. 81.

39. Bennis, p. 12.

40. March and Simon, p. 81.

41. *Ibid*., p. 185.

42. Bennis, p. 12.

43. Bennis and Slater, p. 4.

44. Bennis and Slater, p. 79.

45. March and Simon, pp. 76-77.

46. *Ibid*., p. 187.

47. *Ibid*., p. 188.

48. Bennis and Slater, p. 4.

49. March and Simon, p. 173.

50. Downs, pp. 160-161.

51. Internal Memoranda, March-April, 1970.

52. U.S., Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1971).

53. Memorandum from Mr. A. to Executive Deputy, July 26, 1971.

54. *Ibid*.

55. *Ibid*.

56. Merton, p. 200.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Argyris, Chris. "Individual Actualization in Complex Organizations". In *Organizations and Human Behavior*, edited by Gerald D. Bell. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentiss-Hall, 1967. Pp. 208-217.

_____. "The Individual and Organization: Some Problems of Mutual Adjustment". *Administrative Science Quarterly* (June, 1957), Pp. 21-32.

Bennis, Warren G. *Changing Organizations*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966.

_____, and Philip E. Slater. *The Temporary Society*. New York: Harper and Row, 1968.

Blake, Robert R., and J. S. Morton. *The Managerial Grid*. New York: Harper and Row, 1954.

Cyert, Richard M., and James G. March. *A Behavioral Theory of the Firm*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentiss-Hall, 1963.

Dalton, Melville. "Conflicts Between Staff and Line Managerial Officers". *American Sociological Review*, XV (Spring, 1950), 342-351.

Downs, Anthony. *Inside Bureaucracy*. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1967.

Etzioni, Amitai. *A Comparative Study of Complex Organizations*. New York: Free Press, 1961.

_____. *Modern Organizations*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentiss-Hall, 1964.

Goldner, Fred H. "Demotion in Industrial Management". In *Organizations and Human Behavior*, edited by Gerald D. Bell. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentiss-Hall, 1967. Pp. 160-172.

Likert, Rensis. *New Patterns of Management*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961.

March, James G., and Herbert Simon. *Organizations*. New York: Wiley, 1967.

McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964.

Merton, Robert K. "Bureaucratic Structure and Personality". In *Organizations and Human Behavior*, edited by Gerald D. Bell. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentiss-Hall, 1967. Pp. 208-218.

Mosher, Frederick C., ed. Governmental Reorganization, Cases and Commentary. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1967.

Myers, Beverlee A. "The Formulation of Federal Health Policy: Lessons From the Task Force on Medicaid and Related Programs". Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine, 2nd ser., XLVII (December, 1971), 1509-1523.

Perrow, Charles. Organizational Analysis: A Sociological View. Belmont, California: Wadsworth, 1970.

Presthus, Robert. Behavioral Approaches to Public Administration. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama, 1965.

Seidman, Harold. Politics, Position and Power: The Dynamics of Federal Organization. New York: Oxford, 1970.

Selznick, P. "Foundations of the Theory of Organizations". American Sociological Review, XIII (1948). Pp. 25-35.

Simon, Herbert A. Administrative Behavior. New York: MacMillan, 1957.

_____, Donald W. Smithburg, and Victor A. Thompson. Public Administration. New York: Knopf, 1950.

Toffler, Alvin. Future Shock. New York: Random House, 1970.

Tullock, Gordon. The Politics of Bureaucracy. Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs, 1965.

U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Report on Higher Education. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1971.

Wildavsky, Aaron. Politics of the Budgetary Process. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1964.

1961 – 65	Amherst College	A.B. June, 1965
1965 – 66	Teacher, Miles College Birmingham, Alabama	
1967 – 68	Graduate School of Education, Harvard University	M.A.T. June, 1968
1968 – 69	Teacher and Consultant Boston Public Schools	
1969 – 71	Graduate School of Education, Harvard University	C.A.S. June, 1970
1971 – Present	Special Assistant, U.S. Office of Education	