Chapter 3

Research touchstone:
Educational leadership and political reform in New South Wales and England

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Similarities occur in recent research on the reactions of schools in England and New South Wales to the imposed political reforms embodied in the Education Reform Act *(England) and the* Education Reform Act No. 8 *(New South Wales). Theoretical and methodological touchstone is evident in the common strategies and commensurate epistemic stance of both projects. The conclusions drawn reflect a common assessment of policy as interpreted, recontextualised and transformed by the practitioners, what the Hunter project depicts as culturally-defined problem solving which reflects a process of principled pragmatism.*

There are a number of critical parallels between contemporary English (Ball, 1990, Ball & Bowe, 1990) and Australian (Crump, Cocklin & Maley, 1990; Crump & Monfries, 1990) research into school community responses to political reforms imposed on the organisation of education in both countries. The best representation of these reforms is to be found in the legislation which empowered and legitimated their implementation: the *Education Reform Act 1988* for England and Wales and the *Education Reform Act 1990 No. 8* for New South Wales (NSW), Australia. These research parallels suggest an international 'touchstone' which provides educators and policy-makers with a powerful source of information about the efficacy of these reforms and the future direction of the management of schools.

The term 'research touchstone' has been coined to refer to shared elements of complementary investigations. The use of 'touchstone' (Lakatos & Musgrave, 1970) has been adopted to describe the international common ground shared between the research projects of the University of London *Education Reform Action* project (London project) team and Hunter Leading Teacher Project (Hunter project), now based at the University of Sydney but initiated at Newcastle University. Both projects are investigating politically-driven educational reforms, particularly those related to school management. The search for 'touchstone' is based on a view that the growth of knowledge is a problem-solving activity. The problems are those perceived by key decision makers and the solutions are the practices and coping strategies which depict a response to specific leadership problems. While there are clear differences between the various problem-solution repertoires under the spotlight of the London project and Hunter project research there are - perhaps surprisingly - many shared contexts and problem situations. These commonalities are the 'research touchstone' to be explored as detected in theory and method, context, and data.

Theoretical and methodological touchstone

Theory and method share significant ground both within the individual research projects and between the London and Hunter projects. Within the Hunter project team, there is a common theoretical and methodological orientation. The team agrees that knowledge grows in response to practical

problems, that is, when hypothesised solutions are applied to actual problems. It is also acknowledged that changes in the environment create new problems which must be dealt with in practical ways. As Walker (1988:35) suggests:

> ... views and values - whether cultural or strictly personal - develop and change only through problem-solving activity. This can include, of course, reflective thought outside the immediate practical problem context, in which new views and values are perceived as relevant to practical problems. We can revise and rewrite our programs without having to be simultaneously testing the revisions; and we can anticipate and prepare for possible future problems.

The implication for research into the reform of school management is that key decision-makers are likely to develop a variety of problem solving responses according to each situation. In order to research these responses, the Hunter project team employed a variety of quantitative (for example, Social Avoidance and Distress Scale, and the Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale questionnaires) and qualitative (interview and observation) research strategies to provide different perspectives on the complex culturally-based problem-solving repertoires of those who are required to lead schools through the contemporary array of reforms.

There is significant methodological and theoretical touchstone between the Hunter project research and that conducted by the London team. Both teams accorded a priority to qualitative research strategies on the basis of principles developed through earlier work in naturalistic settings (Ball, 1981, 1987; Crump, 1985, 1990a) with the Hunter team developing an approach drawing on the differing expertise of the researchers. The London and Hunter projects display strong similarities in their theoretical stance and analytical procedures, concentrating on cultural aspects delineated by the practical issue of implementing imposed political reforms. Both projects suggest an analysis which discerns the direction of conflict and power in the new and changing social relations of the school community. Both projects began with four differing comprehensive secondary schools across two Local Education Authorities in England and within a single education-system region in NSW. Both projects explore the interpretations of policy by some of the policy makers, through instances of senior school management and in specific staff reactions. Both teams argue that the findings provide powerful commentary on the process of implementing educational policy reform. The Hunter team additionally hypothesises that the establishment of international research touchstone empowers the relationship between qualitative research and policy decision-making. To return to the starting point of the theoretical and

methodological touchstone: Walker's (1989) proposition that policy making is that of a problem-solving, hypothesis testing process, or - as Ball (1990) presents it - policy making is what individuals and groups actually do and say in the arenas of influence in which they move. First, the shared policy and legislative contexts are reviewed, followed by brief outlines of research into each project.

Context touchstone

There is an international effort currently under way to measure and assess the nature of imposed political reforms to state education systems; 'international' as this effort has so far been reported in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, United States of America, Britain and Western Europe (Beare, 1989; Blase, 1988; Brown, 1990; Brown, P., 1990; Ditcher, 1989; Farrar & Connolly, 1990; Frutcher, 1989; Grace, 1990; Jones, Wilson, & Winser, 1989; Lightfoot, 1983; Miller & Leiberman, 1988; Murphy, 1983; Reynolds, 1988; Vandenberghe, 1988). Much of this research in England has concentrated on the impact of the introduction or development of a national curriculum. However, there is a growing body of research in Britain on the impact on school cultures of the *Education Reform Act*, which will be reviewed. Research is just beginning in NSW into the impact of the Scott *School-Centred Education* Report (1990) on the renewal of the management of the government school system, the Carrick Report into schooling in NSW and the *Excellence and Equity* (1989) statement on curriculum reform.

An instance of this international touchstone can be presented by comparing and contrasting the changes to government schools in NSW and to maintained schools in England uncovered by the research teams. Both teams are exploring the response of key educational decision makers to the restructuring of state education systems by conservative political parties exercising what they see as their mandate for change. This restructuring is related to economic considerations and to the educational vision of key radical conservative politicians such as Kenneth Baker (the UK Minister for Education in the mid-1980s) and Dr. Terry Metherell (Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, NSW, 1987-90). Both Dr Metherell and Mr Baker were subjects of high public attention during their terms of office. Dr Metherell explained the background to his government's view on political reform and his self-professed rigorous view of politics:

> I believe that you're there to carry out your promises and, secondly, that if you thought through your policies, and they do hang together, that you should implement them. I also believe that we had a mandate. I believe in setting our policies fairly clearly and coherently and [then] you've got four years to implement that package ... and that's what we did, that's what we said we would do, and we've done it and I'm immensely proud of that. I've seen a lot of backsliding governments on both sides of politics. ... You need to ride the idealism and a sense of reform in a new government with a new mandate very hard because it doesn't last forever. ... So that was a very conscious effort on my part and I probably saw that more strongly than anybody other than the Premier [Mr. Greiner]. As you probably noticed, he was as committed to it as I was or I wouldn't have been able to do what I did! We shared the very strong view of the importance of education, the belief that we did have the right vision for the 21st century and the determination to do it. You need to have those three things, and that was the strategy we set out upon.

With the "seven wasted years" of the (Federal) Fraser government haunting him, Dr Metherell steered his strongly ideological legislative statements through the State Parliament, just as Kenneth Baker influenced educational legislation in England. Both Acts of Parliament aimed to spark a striving for 'excellence' in state schools through increasing choice and competition and through taking control of the structure of the formal curriculum. Following a number of upper house amendments to the Bill, it passed through all stages on May 10th, 1990.

The NSW *Education Reform Act, 1990, No. 8* addressed the political problems inherent in the *Education and Public Instruction Act* of 1987 which was a major legislative reform of the previous Labor government. Both pieces of legislation represent the increasing intensity of imposed political reform. Reform has been politically imposed, in NSW for example, since at least the Peter Board Report of 1910; however, it is the emphasis, pace and nature of the contemporary imposition which spurred us into active research for this project. As Beare (1989) recounts, the new breed of elite public servants of state and national educational ministries lack empathy with educators. More importantly, the legislation alluded to above gives significantly more power to the Minister than Director-General, a development reflecting further international touchstone as policy changes in education increasingly reveal the extraordinary commitment of the responsible Minister to their reform program. This is just one of the reasons why the interview with Dr Metherell features heavily in the data presented in the paper.

Yet the Hunter project's response to the NSW reform program is equivocal. As previously argued (Crump, 1990[b]), Dr. Metherell had every right to be 'ideological' and I commended the way he provided open access to policy documents. Further, he accurately targeted the systemic and classroom

problems which, if we are honest, teachers and their unions had bemoaned for decades. While I remain less sure of the viability of planned curriculum reforms, the final Scott Report (1990) released in May this year provides a reassuring account of mistakes made in England and offers recommendations on maintaining teacher participation in curriculum development which counteract the devaluing of school-based courses as outlined in the *Excellence and Equity* document. As far as the restructuring of school management is concerned, we find ourselves sharing the vision if not the politics. And that is an interesting issue in itself as there are members of the right wing of the NSW Liberal Party who shared Dr Metherell's politics but not his 'vision'. One of the great ironies of his time as Minister for Education and Youth Affairs was the failure of those associated with state schools to acknowledge at least the intention to strengthen public education as a challenge to the drift towards the private school alternative. Similarly, in England, while the effects of the 1988 Act are not as a whole progressive nor benign, Ball (1990:136) argues that the deliberations surrounding its implementation have allowed the possibility for expressing what Ball terms a 'new progressivism'. This position is currently articulated from within mathematics and science education circles and gives emphasis to problem solving, investigations and applications, an epistemology akin to Dewey's principles of education. Walker, (1989) also argues that there is no point at which policy making stops and implementation begins, providing some reason to be positive about the 1990s. Walker (1989:11) is encouraged that:

> the numerous reports on education are advocating conditions to provide incentives for teachers and educational administrators to be creative and enterprising. This in itself ... concedes the point about organisations and their members being part of the solution as agents and contexts of action. ... Now that the point is conceded we can ask that it be applied as widely as possible.

As Ball (1990) argues for the *Education Reform Act* 1988 (England and Wales), the consequences for (progressive) change are not forgone in the restructuring of education in NSW and one would be 'making history from theory' if one simply read off the effects of the 1988 and 1990 Acts without collecting the type of empirical data achieved in the London and Hunter projects. The concept of devolution embodied in the Scott Report also offers the opportunity to exploit the contradiction between Scott's efforts to make the school, not the system, the key organisational unit and the drive to reduce school-based curriculum decision making. For example, Scott's model for renewing government schools consciously establishes mechanisms to build:

- greater autonomy and on-site management for schools,
- greater authority for principals and teachers in decision-making,
- greater involvement of parents in decision-making, and
- an emphasis on participatory management.

The onus is on key decision makers to lead government schools in NSW through these imposed reforms towards these democratic ends.

The British *Education and Reform Act 1988* was the most far-reaching educational legislation for England and Wales since the *Education Act* of 1944. According to Maclure (in Coulton, 1989) the Act:

- increased the power of central government;
- gave parents more choice and responsibility;
- imposed a centrally directed national curriculum and assessment program;
- eroded the role of the Local Education Authority through making schools more autonomous with more powerful governing bodies;
- created a new category of 'maintained schools'.

As in NSW, these reforms were calculated to make schools subject to market forces such as supply and demand and consumer preference. As a consequence, Coulton (1989:3) proposes that "schools can no longer afford to be innovative until they have firstly explained their intentions to the students and parents and secured their support". Failure to do this could mean they will go out of existence. However, in the middle of 1989, only a handful of schools had received permission from the Secretary of State to opt out of Local Education Authority control and there were only about a dozen City Technology Colleges. Coulton admits that, despite the longer working hours and other negative factors, there was no shortage of teachers or students wishing to attend Kingshurst College in Solihull near Birmingham. These contradictions do not surprise Ball (1990:133) who understood that the 1988 Act was "the product of a set of complex compromises and coercive interventions and its formation, writing, progress and, latterly, implementation, constitute a field of dispute and conflict in which interpretation and control are contested".

This situation illustrates a variety of tensions which need to be rigorously investigated. There is a growing list of publications on how the *Education Reform Act 1988* came about (Flude & Hammer, 1990; Fidler & Bowles, 1989), on local management of schools (Davies & Braund, 1989) or about learning to change (Clough, Aspinall & Gibbs, 1989) as well as assessment of the broad political context (Ranson, 1990; Dale, 1989; Chitty, 1989). However, it is Ball's (1990) *Politics and Policy Making* which provides the first sophisticated theoretically-based critique of the construction and implementation of the 1988 Act based on Ball's (1987) seminal micro-political theory on school organisation. Ball suggests that the internal conflicts in what

is a multi-interest organisation often mediate, in surprising ways, the projects of politicians and policy makers. It is precisely these processes which our complementary studies endeavour to investigate.

If we accept that the *Education Reform Act* was one of the most notorious items of legislation during the 1980s and a hallmark of Thatcherism, one revelation provided by the Hunter project data is that, during his time as Shadow Minister for Education, Dr Metherell:

> became acquainted with what some of the key issues were that were dealt with in that legislation ... but I've never read the Act and I've never been fully briefed on the Act. ... [the *Education: The Facts* document] was a deliberate attempt to bring together what I believe to be the best ideas current ... there is a bit of France, a bit of Israel, a bit of America and a bit of the UK. What there isn't is an attempt to emulate any one system. Far from it. ... But I did consciously borrow the name and that's probably what has fooled a lot of people.

Furthermore, Dr. Metherell revealed Kenneth Baker's visit to Australia as something that happened after the event, and that they had only met socially. Dr Metherell further revealed that:

> I happen to think our legislation is not only far better than the English legislation but goes a lot further and on the other hand doesn't fall into the trap in the Baker legislation to be overly prescriptive in terms of the amount of time allocated to the core [curriculum] and so on. I think it goes too far in that direction and it is an attempt to over-prescribe the national curriculum. ... I did quite deliberately, as we got towards drafting our legislation, tell the Ministry that I did not want them to copy Baker's approach. I'd been in the UK by then as Minister and talked to them about it and I was uncomfortable about what they were attempting to do in terms of their rigid benchmarks in terms of different age groups.

This insight should have been previously understood by those involved in the national curriculum debate, given Dr Metherell's public differences with the Federal Minister for Education Training and Employment, John Dawkins, over the establishment of a national schools curriculum agency, The Curriculum Corporation of Australia.

Examples of 'context touchstone'

There are a number of striking similarities in the NSW and English reform agendas.

1. In both instances, the concept of a cash voucher has been mooted and withdrawn, replaced by more subtle procedures for establishing a 'cash exchange' between client and school. This development has the potential

to undermine the apathy and mediocrity which has crept into the cultures of many state schools, a process which has severely disadvantaged working class communities. However, the imperfect implementation of the concept might only increase that disadvantage while schools, in NSW and England, are restricted in their ability to respond by inflexible staffing arrangements. Removing compulsory attendance zones for schools has allowed for a shift in school populations as students move out of their home community to attend a specialised selective or technology high school in NSW, or a grant maintained school or city technology college in England. While this development may empower certain individuals, access is restricted by virtue of the finite resources in each site. Evidence so far suggests that these individuals are likely to come from a middle class background, one that is able to understand and access the new system and one that is able to financially and emotionally support new uniforms and the like. Those who 'miss out' on these options might enrol in a government-nominated 'centre of excellence' which specialises in the student's interest area. The rest have little choice but to attend their local school.

2. While the English approach allows for natural attrition to remove what are judged to be economically inefficient schools, the NSW government identified sites with low populations and earmarked them for closure to be sold as a redundant asset. Dr. Metherell promised that this money would finance the construction of long overdue new schools in working class Western Sydney. This was an unusually brave stance for a politician to make, especially a Liberal politician, as many of the schools earmarked for closure were located in blue-ribbon conservative communities. After 'public' outcry, largely orchestrated by vested interests, an inquiry into the sell-offs reduced the number of closures and, to a certain extent, saved face for the government in seats it feared might go to an Independent candidate at the next election. Meanwhile, many working class schools remain temporary, crowded and ill-equipped.

3. The impact of the reforms has inspired many schools in England and NSW to produce a print and/or video prospectus detailing the school's profile and arguing the worth of its approach to education. This process entails a redefinition of 'validated knowledge' (Grace, 1978; Crump, 1990[b]) as schools focus on particular strengths and highlight a specialisation in an overall narrower range of subjects. At the same time, there has been a

strengthening of government control over a common core of subjects aimed at setting minimum levels of competence in mathematics, science, the humanities and performing arts. The intention is to provide equity through variety and choice, abandoning the as yet unrealised ideal of providing equity through equal educational provision in each school site. While economic rationalism is the driving force behind this reform, it holds a realisable potential to provide a curriculum truly organic - 'school-centred' - to each community. This position is, again potentially, strengthened by the devolution of school budgeting, a strategy accorded high priority in both research contexts. In England, this strategy which has applied to most schools since April, 1990, is referred to as Local Management of Schools; in Australia it is generally termed 'global budgeting'. This economic reform will continue to place permanent teachers as employees of the NSW Department of School Education. However, school principals are already exercising control over the employment of casual staff, they can advertise for 'special fitness' appointments and they control funding for staff development. While we recognise that this approach invites assorted disasters if the senior management of a school is not properly skilled, it also allows a school to re-organise its financial and educational priorities. If this is conducted through negotiated, democratic, School Council procedures, it would have to be an improvement on how most schools currently develop their educational profile. In one of the Hunter project schools, Surfside, the Leading Teacher (a deputy principal position mainly responsible for staff development and curriculum) took on the task of selling the school: first, to the students, and second, to the community. This process involves being:

> positive in how we're presenting our school. One of the things I've been doing in assembly is taking the students through our mission statement and spelling out the initiatives that we're doing. One meeting I might say, "This is what we're doing for technology in our school, or this is what we're doing for academic excellence, or this is what we're doing for pastoral care" so that ... we are really publicising ourselves fairly positively. ... As a school that wasn't designated as a 'centre for anything' we really needed to push ourselves as being the sort of school that could compete with everybody. The P. and C. reaction was great - particularly [to] the prospectus ... and the primary feeder schools were elated about it. So there is a sense that Surfside is going forward.

4. Both England and NSW share a re-engagement with an external assessment of 'basic skills', a strategy which legitimated other aspects of the reform agenda. NSW primary school students in Year 3 (7 years old) and Year 6 (10 years old) now sit for a common test set by the Australian

Council for Educational Research. The tests are presented as a diagnostic tool for teachers and parents. Individual results are sent home and state-wide results are publicised, in part, as the government's report card on the effectiveness of its policies in education. Various community groups object to these tests on the grounds that they discriminate against, for example, immigrant and Aboriginal students and measure artificial constructs rather than the complex package of knowledge gained in each classroom. There are also fears that teachers will teach to the test and ignore a broad curriculum. In NSW, negative public reaction to these tests has been minimal, despite wide media coverage of the issues, suggesting that the government effectively judged the mood of the electorate on this matter. Further, it could be argued that the tests will establish the credibility and viability of state schools, particularly as most of the Catholic system has refused to cooperate in the administration of the tests.

While state issues have delayed the introduction of a national curriculum in Australia, the *Education Reform Act 1988* requires all maintained schools in England to provide a curriculum covering:

- 3 core subjects: mathematics, English and science;
- 7 foundation subjects: history, geography, technology, music, art and physical education at all stages PLUS a modern foreign language at key stages (12-14 and 15-16 year olds); and
- religious education (Coulton, 1989:4).

This national curriculum is linked to a national assessment system for 7, 11, 14 and 16 year-old students which is associated with attainment targets (knowledge and skills expected by the end of each key stage) set by the Secretary of State for Education and Science, and programs of study (matters and processes to be taught to pupils of different abilities during each key stage). While there is some commonality between the national curriculum and the key learning areas identified between the National Curriculum in England and the definition of 'curriculum' expounded in the NSW Carrick Report and the *Excellence and Equity* document, there are significant differences and little chance that we will teach a common curriculum across Australia.

Research touchstone

The NSW project began in 1989 as a pilot investigation for the Hunter region (NSW) into decision-making by the first group of Leading Teachers appointed to secondary schools as one of the early concrete reforms of the

recently-elected Liberal government. The project is part of a broad research program on the occupational culture of teachers headed by Prof. J.C. Walker, University of Canberra. The Hunter project began as an ethnographic case study into the implementation of policy related to educational administration. The project expanded in 1990 to include broader research strategies built on initial findings and increased the sample to include the second wave of Leading Teacher appointments in the Hunter region. We are currently negotiating the participation in the project of the region's Cluster Directors appointed in April this year. The Leading Teacher and Cluster Director positions were completely new management positions, the former (Dr. Metherell's idea) within certain schools and the latter (Dr. Scott's idea) across a network of about three secondary schools as well as the relevant feeder primary schools.

Dr. Metherell claims he built up the idea of the Leading Teacher position from innovations in the United States:

> My recollection is that some of the Premier's staff had been with him as Leader of the Opposition to the States not long before I became Shadow Minister. They'd brought back the usual crate load of documents ... but amongst that was some material comparing various reform initiatives in the States since the early '80s and references to the Leading Teacher concept, and the various states' attempts to trial that or something comparable with it, and that just struck me as a useful change agent, a useful catalyst in the struggle to get better leadership in schools. So quite unashamedly we borrowed the concept. It came with a different name, I think, from the States. ... We changed it to Leading Teacher because we felt that had the leadership element to it, but it didn't have some of the perhaps more elitist feel that the American phrase had to it.

We judged this development to be worthy of research and accepted as a working hypothesis the government's expectation that fast-track promotion on merit would allow these people to become a different and, by inference, better educational leader than previous generations. Further, these people were viewed as change agents sent on a mission to reverse the degenerating culture of many government secondary schools. Dr Metherell foreshadowed the Leading Teachers' rôle in his policy document, written while shadow Minister, *Education: The Facts* (1987: Fact Sheet No. 12):

> Up until now, outstanding teachers have been promoted to administrative positions within our schools or to Head Office. By introducing the Leading Teacher program ... excellent teachers have the option of remaining in the classroom - providing encouragement and an example to fellow teachers and students alike.

Leading Teachers are appointed with the salary and status equivalent to a Deputy Principal but are responsible for teaching classes, providing leadership in improved classroom techniques, school in-servicing and professional development, development of probationary teachers and school-based curriculum development. There were 53 Leading Teachers appointed to schools in 1989, 50 in 1990 and 47 appointments are approved for 1991. Cluster Directors are responsible for a 'cluster' of about 16 schools and they are expected to spend about 70% of their time in schools providing educational leadership and supporting principals in promoting excellence and accountability in the schools' operation. They are also expected to assist with the management of financial and human resources, be available to speak to parent and community groups, and oversee regional and central policy implementation. In March 1990, 149 Cluster Directors were appointed within the restructured NSW Department of School Education. Cluster Directors will eventually be located at an Educational Resource Centre which will provide local access to educational aids and be a shop-front for Departmental curriculum documents.

The Hunter project also focuses on self-reported socio-cognitive decision-making processes of Leading Teachers in the micro-political context of their practice in managing change. We are attempting to understand how Leading Teachers, and now Cluster Directors, operate in new leadership positions in an environment which requires new leadership practices. In becoming elite decision-makers, they accepted an elevation in employment status which required adaptation to increasing responsibilities, often in a hostile setting. This process is mediated by their sense of self, by the culture of their setting, and by the wider social and political contexts.

There are significant similarities between the research of the Hunter and London projects. The University of London team is investigating four comprehensive secondary schools (called Flightpath, Parkside, Pankhurst and Overbury) in two Local Education Authorities (Westway and Riverway) in England which are in the process of implementing the Local Management of Schools, comparable with 'global budgeting' in NSW. Each school is being treated as a case study involving extensive ethnographic research strategies. Comparisons are made between cases to detect themes for extensive analysis. This project is an exemplar of policy ethnography, basing itself on the premiss that policy implementation is highly problematic and subject to mediation and recontextualisation. There is a significant degree of touchstone between the data collected in England and NSW, a touchstone which informs a sociology of policy as well as insights into socio-cognitive processes in decision making by key personnel.

Data touchstone

There are a number of specific parallels in the data collected by the London and Hunter teams. These parallels apply at a number of levels and are presented in a sequence which tracks macro-systemic parallels through local school levels to parallels between individual personnel. The touchstone between England and NSW vividly illustrates shared perspectives, practices and concerns. The account is mainly descriptive at this stage as the Hunter research is two years behind the London project team due to the Acts' promulgation dates. The first parallel undoubtedly depicts an international issue.

1. Schools in NSW have not yet approached the extent of market-oriented decision-making as identified by the London team at Flightpath where a number of proactive strategies were promulgated in response to directives of the Act. These strategies included:

   - setting up a Marketing Group,
   - floating a private loan to build a school gymnasium with the loan partly offset by profits from a licensed bar,
   - establishing an Academic Performance Group,
   - participating in commercial advertising with a computer company,
   - consulting a public relations firm to improve the school's image,
   - offering private health insurance as a recruitment incentive, and
   - seeking industrial sponsorship.

   Yet the generation of this level of business ethos within school organisations is part and parcel of the NSW reform agenda. While the Scott Report presents a model of management for the total system that is fairly innovative, indeed ahead of many large Australian industries as revealed in the recently exposed management and production troubles in Ford Australia, there is evidence suggesting that some school executives are adopting old-fashioned top-down autocratic theories within schools, simultaneously abandoning a concern for the management of learning. It has been argued elsewhere (Crump, 1990c) that this process is likely to engender inappropriate values and increase internal conflict, a fear echoed by a senior teacher at Flightpath when commenting to the London team:

   > I'm worried about this gap that is growing between teachers and teacher management. ... It is increasingly becoming a situation where a small group at the top, if you can use that phrase, are telling or encouraging, by any

> means they can employ ... other people to actually do things. Now, as I understand it, schools are different to industry, I mean I have this egalitarian view, that the people I am trying to encourage to change, cajole are my equals. Yet in industry that isn't necessarily true.
>
> (Ball & Bowe, 1990:27-28).

This view is not only egalitarian, it is also an empirical point: assistant and executive staff share similar professional qualifications, much more so than managers and workers in industry and business. The Leading Teacher at Bridgetown (NSW) understood that there are different factors to take into account in the management of social organisations:

> The least qualified person we have here is a graduate, a university person. You're not talking about an untrained, uninterested, uninformed workforce. You're talking about working with intelligent, professional people. ... I think you have to believe that people are doing a good job and then find out that they aren't.

Yet in England and NSW, the cultural change towards specialised management is revealed by the exclusion of words with an educational connotation from the titles of most administrative positions and where teachers and students have become 'human resources'. This form of 'educational newspeak' suggests an inappropriate and potentially obsessive use of commercial lexicon, and a degree of naivety as one can judge by the ineffectiveness of employing non-sexist terms to change sexist behaviour. Although the vocabulary of school management may change during the 1990s, the change may evolve from the way people solve problems; as knowledge about leadership grows, the way we communicate will reflect that growth.

2. Underlying the economic imperative of the first parallel between the data of the London and Hunter projects is an understanding that there is a difference between policy rhetoric and practice and that policy formation does not end with the legislative moment (Ball & Bowe, 1990). In the Hunter project, one Leading Teacher suggested at a Staff Development Day on designing school-based action plans, that the staff take up the policy rhetoric to achieve their own ends: if the policy trumpets 'school-centred education', then power could be devolved to schools and teachers should seek every opportunity to turn that rhetoric into local action. The staff then set about brainstorming school-level problems, allocating priorities and developing strategies to deal with them in a systematic manner. An outsider lacking experience in schools may well have judged this a mundane achievement; however, the discussion focused time and

again on the teachers' concern for the academic, social and individual well-being of their pupils. The major topic of discussion was the new Fair Discipline Code which the NSW government asked each school to implement in 1989. The outcome of the discussion was not to affirm the punishment-oriented values but to modify its procedures so that there was a mechanism for rewards and, thus, for building up the pupils' self-esteem. The teachers also voiced their concerns over the future of mixed ability teaching, a policy the school had adopted in 1987 for the whole of the junior school on the basis of their professional experience and on what they perceived to be sound educational arguments.

These examples express one form of the emergence of a new group of progressive educators in NSW and England, educators taking policy and shaping it to express a commitment to values and action reminiscent of the 1960s but reflecting a pragmatism built up from the experience of the intervening years. In the London project data, similar tensions between marketing concerns and educational preferences were expressed by three senior teachers at Flightpath who implemented new management practices while protecting beliefs in educational opportunity, the value of non-measurable outcomes and the primacy of classroom teaching over financial dictates (Ball and Bowe, 1990:26-27). Both projects thus identified resistance to superordinate policy directives, documenting reinterpretation as participants protected their philosophies and interests. The implications reach beyond mere description of implementation and/or accommodation of policy directives towards an international understanding about policy as contested and problematic during formation and implementation.

The decision-making strategies adopted by the principal of 'Flightpath' mirror the stated rôles for Leading Teachers who are expected to shift the organisation from its present to a desired state. The appointment of an outside to a leadership position such as Leading Teacher is the catalyst for the surfacing of oppositional forces long and deeply embedded in school structures, a situation Ball (1987:263) revealed to represent "the beginning not the end of conflict inside the school". This can be very damaging when it occurs between school executive and assistant teachers. In one of the NSW schools the Leading Teacher acknowledged that it was mainly the diligence and professionalism of classroom teachers which held the school together early in 1990 during a period of crisis and chaos, yet some teachers dismissed this person as 'a company man', trapping the Leading Teacher in a management stereotype even when she was on their side.

That is, the local conflict was a micro-representation of the macro conflict over state-wide change. Both 'Flightpath' (England) and various NSW research schools have been centres of power struggles forced into the open by a 'critical incident' arising from the development of action/management plans. Clearly, the arrival of a Leading Teacher sets off an examination of the school's basic assumptions and historical modes of (in)action and thus often produces changes in direction and changes in the social and political relationships. While this may instigate a power struggle (Ball and Bowe, 1990:35), Dr Metherell would not have been troubled. He told us:

> I was looking for an agent in schools who would first of all spark change because I was, and remain convinced that there's a fundamental malaise in our high schools. That malaise relates to the leadership of schools. ... So I saw the Leading Teacher as coming into a leadership group to strengthen it in a new way ... they were a senior part of the management but different and they were meant to bring about the sort of changes I've mentioned. ... It's much harder to change a system if you are trying to do it within the existing framework. ... The emphasis was always on change agents who had a view of the future and who saw themselves as active professionals. ... The sort of feedback I got in the early days was that they [Leading Teachers] were feeling the heat because they were Metherell's change agents at a time when it was explosive in schools. ... They were also to make the leadership themselves more aware. ... They'd become so burdened with what it is to run a school that they've - many of them - ceased to reflect on what it is to be an educator and certainly what it is to be an educator in a school environment.

The Hunter project identified a number of examples of the Leading Teacher acting as a change agent in precisely this manner. One wanted to use a general staff meeting to discuss the possibility of similar issues arising from the implementation of the Scott Report:

> I wanted to talk to staff about the implications of [the Scott Report] if accepted. ... [Ask them] "What are the implications for you as a classroom teacher?". I was told "No". My principal did not want the Scott Report mentioned at all. I thought that was a shame. It is probably the most revolutionary document that teachers are going to come up against in the next three years. If they don't have time to talk about it, to ... have an informed opinion, then I believe the idea of staff development and professional responsibility is just empty words. ... My feeling is that the principal was reluctant because he wasn't confident enough to manage the comments - and there could have been a number of very negative comments. ... Now I don't think a professional body of people, if you treat them as responsible adults, will react like that. I think it's important for them to have that safety valve, to be able to jump up and down and say "Look what they're doing now!" then, after they've had their cathartic experience, say "Now let's look at how it may affect us." (LTaF1:2/8/89)

The Leading Teacher aimed to facilitate a mood for change but the Scott Report itself was not the main impediment. One problem this example illustrates is the advanced age bracket of most leaders in the NSW government system which is the outcome of decades of promotion on 'seniority' rather than merit. One of the Hunter Leading Teachers had taught in Canada and England. The principal of one of those schools, which had over 1700 pupils, was only 36 years old. He remarked, "That just wouldn't happen in our system", the corrected himself by adding "Well, it wouldn't have happened". The Leading Teacher initiative quite accurately targeted a simmering discontent in the middle ranks of school administration and has provided a mechanism for those who have talent to work towards changing the passive 'roll with the punches' mentality of principals like those at Minesville.

Other Leading Teachers have also faced the situation Dr Metherell hoped they would! In another instance, the Leading Teacher at Surfside remarked how the traditional organisation of the school (for example, timetabling and school reports) could not accommodate the reforms the Leading Teacher was attempting to introduce. It appeared that the traditional matrix model of timetabling was starting to 'fall apart' as the school looked at alternative ways of approaching the curriculum:

> There was a realisation on everybody's part last year [1989] that the old approaches are not going to work, are not going to sustain us any longer, and I think this year people have become more accepting of my position. ... I had it out with the boss [principal] and deputy saying that we needed to make sure we avoided those problems in future so I've set up a senior management meeting - we meet once a week. ... The boss is the first to admit that he did have some poor administrative planning. ... My view is that the new model of leadership has to be one that is quite clearly pre-planned, well planned, with clearly defined goals. (LTaM1:12/4/1990)

The Leading Teacher at Alberton remarked that when taking up the position:

> I saw my rôle as trying to provide the opportunity for some of those planning sides - be they in professional development or curriculum development - ... I saw that I'd be taking on a lot of those responsibilities that were left on the back burner while the principal went about his crisis management. And that's pretty much the way it has turned out and I like that! ... I keep stressing [to the staff] that my rôle isn't as consistently public ... the job is different and I'm just trying to provide some support in as many areas as possible and be seen as a positive thing in the school rather than a threat to anybody.

The Minesville approach was to openly assume leadership and manage from the top down. This approach failed in this situation but succeeded at Surfside where the principal was more receptive. The

Alberton approach was to do much the same less publicly. A third approach, detected at Newton, was to seek out the issues as the staff saw them and lead them towards shared solutions. The following comment from the Leading Teacher at Newton suggests 'educative leadership': "One of the first things I did was take a survey of the Head Teachers, what their needs were - as a group - as well as what they were for individuals. I developed a program for that. It was done quite early [and] is still running".

This approach was also adopted by the Leading Teacher at Bridgetown who questioned the 'hit the ground running' advice passed down from the Department:

> That's an unrealistic view of how a school is run and the kinds of people you are dealing with. I don't understand how you can change things when you don't know what works already. I think you have to be fairly visible and get involved in some things straight away but the idea of 'change for changes sake' is naturally counter-productive. ... You've got to work with the people who are there, who know it best and work with their strengths.

One Head Teacher, acting as Leading Teacher for three terms, found implementing change a lot easier than the new appointments did: "I understand the politics of the place, I understand where the movers and shakers are and where the problems and difficulties lie; whereas if you were coming from the outside you've got to suss all that out".

It is suspected that Leading Teachers, and their equivalent in England, make rapid progress in learning about the relationship between implementing change and the social/political sub-cultures in their schools, or fail. Before exploring that dimension an alternative 'leader', one opposed to change, has been detected.

3. The 'maintainer' (don't rock the boat) administration rôle assumed by the principal of Pankhurst (England) offers a contrast to the rôles played by Leading Teachers yet resembles the approach found in the senior administration of Lakeside in NSW. Interestingly, Pankhurst and Lakeside share similar socio-economic communities and a notably conservative staff. Lakeside serves a very middle class and affluent area. There was a feeling, however, that the school had not been achieving high results in the Higher School Certificate (the external matriculation exam given at the end of secondary school, Year 12). The Leading Teacher noted:

> My first impression of the school and the place [was that] we have got teachers here who have been teaching in excess of 25 years, very experienced staff, no first-year-out teachers. There hasn't been a first year teacher [here] for some years. One of the [new] Head Teachers had a transfer from the school around the corner. He'd been there as an assistant for 20-25 years I think it was. So that's the nature of the place and once people get here they're very reluctant to leave. ... [So] I tried to find areas [to

> change] that would be least threatening to the staff, areas which were obviously in need [of change] ... and to steer clear of the more sensitive areas. ... It turns out that I was wrong and that all matters were sensitive even if there was an acknowledged need. Moving in deeper to actually do anything in any area was viewed with grave suspicion by a lot of the staff.

While the Leading Teacher at Lakeside was very aware of external forces and educational issues, difficulty was experienced in arousing a sense of staff commitment towards change. Some schools exist in a time-warp, banking on the not unrealistic hope that policies and/or Ministers will change before they have to! While Dr Metherell is no longer responsible for the Education portfolio, Virginia Chadwick appears to be committed to the implementation of his policies before the next election (by mid-1991), while putting considerable effort into consensus building and reassurance work, a strategy also adopted by Kenneth Baker's successor (Ball, 1990). If the 'head in the sand' strategy has worked in the past, we doubt it will in the future as communities take a closer interest in their school, especially when they see neighbouring schools set up as technology centres, centres of excellence in specialist subject areas, and embarking on completely new ways of staffing and financing their institution.

The philosophy of maintaining an even keel is likely to be reflected in the rôles adopted by many of those ex-school inspectors now appointed as Cluster Directors. In the Hunter region, only one appointment out of 17 Cluster Director positions was made to a person outside NSW, a primary school principal from South Australia. The principal of Taree High School was the only other appointment of a person not previously holding a position as an inspector, or higher, in the old bureaucracy (*Schools Renewal* Task Force Bulletin 9, 30th April, 1990). On the basis of the Hunter region experience, it is predicted that Leading Teachers' and Cluster Directors' views on the necessity of change might clash. The prediction is based on the potential conflict between Leading Teachers acting as agents in a process of change and those inspectors-turned-Cluster Directors who fear change. One fairly representative Leading Teacher response to the appointment of Directors was:

> In the Hunter there were 17 appointed, 15 of them were from the Hunter, and 14 of the 15 were already inspectors. The ones that were appointed from outside ... have a big question mark over them, we don't know who they are or what their claim to fame is, ... so it made the Hunter [appointments] seem to be a little bit farcical. So X and I have been joking about the fact that we could have done it cheaper by sending them out a 41cent letter say "Hey! You're a Cluster Director! Where would you like to be?" So there's been [only] a cosmetic shuffle around.... It was pretty obvious that they'd [the interview panel] pencilled people in and they were just making up the quota with other people.

It is understood that the person responsible for interviews for the Hunter region was told by the Director-General to add to the original short list, particularly as it listed very few women. While more people were interviewed, the outcome suggested the additions were undertaken as a formality. As architect of the *Schools Renewal* strategies, Dr Brian Scott expected about 50% changing of the guard. However, the educational bureaucracy appears to have been suffering from an occupational culture shock and was unable or unwilling to react effectively to external expectations about the degree and nature of change in promotion practices.

As if confirming this defensiveness, one Cluster Director remarked how the new rôle was seen as similar in many ways to the previous rôle as District Inspector, with the main change reflecting a greater emphasis on support for schools rather than assessment of individual teachers. It was claimed that a good inspector always played the rôle outlined for Cluster Directors (*NAED* Newsletter, 4, August, 1990:4). Dr. Metherell was aware that there are people in the Department "who might not like Terry Metherell and the way he does things" but overall, Leading Teachers and Cluster Directors have great things expected of them and "they will be held accountable for their performance". The Department of Education in NSW was widely regarded as the last unreconstructed 19th century bureaucracy. It is to Dr Metherell's credit that he oversaw the development of a blueprint to create an appropriately responsive state school system. He stated:

> The last thing I would want to suggest is that everyone in the Department of Education in 1988 was dead wood. Far from it. ... There's more talent in the administration of education, let alone in the schools, than there is in any other single Department in NSW. There's some awful, awful people, too. Most of them have now departed the scene over the last couple of years. I think they just couldn't cut the pace. Their mediocrity was exposed to their colleagues and they took their early retirement. Those who have remained are, I think, by and large, pretty excited.

If Cluster Directors represent the most crucial element in Metherell's strategy for changing the culture of schools, they will need to exhibit the same insights that Leading Teachers have gained into what it means to lead a school through imposed political reforms.

4. One significant comparison between the London and Hunter projects is in the rôles played by women in the leadership of the research schools. The London project team found the new forms of school leadership at Flightpath, the emergence of a specialist management cadre charged with implementing the government initiatives, to be male dominated (Ball, 1987;

Ball & Bowe, 1990). They noted how, stereotypically, the three women on the senior staff were responsible for pastoral care, the first year program, and supportive education; responsibilities all marginal to the new sources of power in school management. The London project team correctly understand this to be a significant problem, one well illustrated in Gray's (1989) study of masculine and feminine leadership styles in school management. Gray argues that many heads are ineffective at management because of their sense of sexual identity: real men do not make mistakes. Many heads fear feminine qualities and are drawn to administration rather than management because this is their 'male' side.

One of Dr Metherell's first actions as Minister was to abolish the affirmative action policy of the previous government, a policy which guaranteed 40% of new senior positions to women. However, as Dr. Metherell explained:

> What we wanted to demonstrate was that by pursuing the merit principle, and by driving the Department to recognise the talent of talented women, you could achieve the same result ... you could get the same numbers of women, but you would get the most talented women, not the women who were lifted up the list because they happened to fit the number in the quota. ... One of the results was that we got a higher number of women applying than there were proportionally qualified in the band. ... I wasn't all that happy with the final result. I think we ended up with ... around a quarter to 30% who came through the first time round, but that was compared to 10% of women who were eligible. ... So we felt we had a break through there and we were never criticised on the basis of the affirmative action and merit question so I think that was a sign that people saw that we were serious about what we were on about.

Two female Leading Teachers in the Hunter region confirm this interpretation, sensing that their problems were situated within the school. The Leading Teacher at Newton remarked: "The principal and deputy here would not think of themselves as chauvinists, and I don't think would deliberately do anything in that way, but are consistent with their generation, it's just the way they are".

The Leading Teacher at Minesville agreed, adding:

> There's been no overt "You're a woman, so therefore...". I've come into a situation where the principal and deputy are a very close team. ... I think [my job] is harder being female but they are never overtly chauvinistic. It might have been easier if I was a male. ... It's a nice fantasy to think "If I was a male, would they still be reacting the same way?" ... There's been absolutely no evidence from any other staff member that gender has anything to do with how they relate to me. It's been excellent.

The principal at Minesville provided the Leading Teacher with an opportunity to run the school for 4 weeks during 1990 as part of her

professional development. However, while women have gained credible access to senior leadership positions through the NSW reforms, particularly at the Leading Teacher level, some remain encumbered by the oddity of their existence and the resistance of senior males.

6. Finally, as a cautionary note to this analysis, there is a sense of personal failure shadowing Leading Teachers and senior staff in the London project data. This sense of failure is one dynamic in the 'politics of career' (Ball, 1987). A member of the senior management team at Flightpath observed:

> I think the school is very much over-reacting. We keep shooting ourselves in the foot. It's a bit like Salvador Dali's paintings. We could do ourselves a lot of damage because we are creating a lot of our own stress. We've had people on the senior management team, you'll have spoken to them, who are really worried, they see it as their personal failing, their responsibility to actually make sure that these things happen. (Ball & Bowe, 1990:31)

The Principal at Flightpath expressed the following discontent with the pressures on everyone's time:

> Once upon a time we used to have a paper brought to this body [the SMC] and then everything was dealt with. Now, we're so pressured to do forward planning and such like that we don't have time. That means people aren't trained to do those jobs and the basic things aren't being organised properly. (Ball & Bowe, 1990:38)

In the Hunter project, the Leading Teachers in their second year suspect that they are not achieving the enormous task set for them by the rôle description. One part of the project was to explore the cognitive processes involved when a person is confronted with the idea or reality of possible evaluations by others and how people attempt to control the images they project to others (Monfries, 1990). Monfries notes that anxiety can arise when individuals perceive that they either can or will not make the desired impression and that this is more likely to occur when the motivation to create the desired impression is high. Leading Teachers are, by the nature of merit selection, fast track promotions with the public expectation being 'Super Teachers' or high fliers. Monfries suspects that people who worry about performance tend to be perfectionists; however, a certain level of anxiety may facilitate performance while excessive levels impede performance. Leading Teachers in the Hunter project showed little fear of negative evaluation and the 'Fear of Negative Evaluation' scales suggest Leading Teachers maintain their high ideals irrespective of the judgments made by peers.

At Surfside, the Hunter project team conducted extensive interviews with a number of staff nominated by the Leading Teacher as "significant others". All who had worked with the Leading Teacher reported greater acceptance of the person than of the position. They acknowledged that staff who had not worked with the Leading Teacher were less positive and felt that the 'Super Teacher' tag was a slight on their own competence. There was also a difference between the "significant others" and staff who had little professional contact with the Leading Teacher in their perception of the latter's impact on the school: "significant others" felt that the Leading Teacher had contributed to curriculum development, assisted faculty organisation, defined the school's goals and aims, had done extra work in areas that had been neglected in the past, and had directed the staff's energies in a more efficient way thus easing the pressure and providing support and encouragement. They concluded that the Leading Teacher received criticism because change was being induced on a group of "staid teachers who don't like change". They concluded that the Leading Teacher's main achievements were improving staff morale and maximising excellence in the educational setting.

Teachers in less direct contact with the Leading Teacher resisted the changes: they felt that the Leading Teacher was merely using the school as a stepping stone for fast-track promotion, that goals were introduced at a time when staff already had too much to do, that personal goals were uppermost, that the Leading Teacher was insufficiently involved with the pupils, that the rôle was not all that relevant as a lot of the items addressed were really decisions an individual could make and that, as the teachers had been in the school a long time, they did not need classroom supervision. Both groups in the school agreed that they did not want the Leading Teacher to become a business manager and that financial responsibilities should go to the principal or to a bursar, someone with financial qualifications.

The Leading Teacher at Surfside was not insensitive to the ambiguity of the position, acknowledging the hostility but viewing it as coming from people who still felt threatened by the rôle though not so much on a personal level. The Leading Teacher at Lakeside met a more entrenched hostility:

> The first day was fairly challenging .... I very thoroughly prepared myself with some very amusing overheads which I hoped might break the ice. ... One of the overheads was a picture of a caped crusader with the stars and spangles, a woman of incredible qualities who had a cape. I had written across it "A Leading Teacher" and then underneath ..., "This is what I'm

> NOT". I started with that because the idea of a Super Teacher was very much in the minds of everybody at that time. I really thought that nobody could live up to the expectations that were being put on us and the sooner that was laid to rest the better.

Other Leading Teachers felt boxed in by the rôles they were supposed to fulfil as it excluded them from management areas which require a quick fix and thus allowed them to demonstrate their abilities. The Leading Teacher at Minesville felt the rôles were too rigid and explained how the staff were very positive in their end-of-year evaluation of the position but asked to see the Leading Teacher play a rôle in student welfare:

> It's amazing that just the fact that they can ask me to help with a concern that they have with one of their students - and I can do something about it almost instantly - then the pay off is that when I ask them to be involved in something that's fairly long term ..., they participate willingly in staff development and curriculum development.

The Leading Teacher at Newton sensed how "a deputy is accepted and really valued by the staff of a school because he has handled a particular thing, or a child, or in the playground, or with rolls - things like that pay off straight away. Our position doesn't allow us to do that".

The Leading Teacher at Alberton observed how peer perceptions changed after time was spent as relieving principal:

> I think my periods down there [in the principal's office] when we've had a few crises to manage - and the fact that I did manage them - certainly enhanced my standing in the eyes of my colleagues. I've shown that I can do that but my rôle is different and I keep stressing that the rôle isn't as consistently public. ... I suppose you could call it a problem. I've just got to keep convincing myself that I'm doing a good job and doing what's required of me and keep people informed.

Other coping strategies include playing for time. The Leading Teacher at Surfside altered course a little at the beginning of 1990:

> My view is that I've played a bit of a waiting game this term, just consolidating and doing the basic important planning within the school that had to be done. ... My view about Term 1 was to consolidate, get the planning done at the school level to avoid the hiccups of last year.

Finally, the Leading Teacher at Dalesville told us:

> There are a lot of cynics out there who feel we've been shunted to a siding after the initial flurry of development ... and some Leading Teachers, many Leading Teachers, are feeling unwanted both by their schools and by the region. It's very hard to do the job that they're doing let alone consider going further in the Department. There are some quite horrific stories about the way LTs have been treated particularly in schools but also in regions.

The early data suggests that individual cognitive judgments of self-worth are translated by a change in employment status and through the micro-political interactions based in the management of reform. While a degree of 'fear of negative evaluation' is a component of the Leading Teacher profile, the data also suggests that Leading Teachers are none-the-less able to maintain high self-esteem. The Hunter and London projects' data suggest that leading a school through imposed political change is a genuine micro-political minefield. It is a personal human experience which, for all the rhetoric, will only enable a change in the culture of schools if those conflicts and power struggles which do occur are ones worth winning. Otherwise, we risk falling morale among school leaders and that must be avoided if there is to be any change of deep, lasting, progressive reforms.

Conclusions

A number of aspects about school leadership have been indicated in this paper. However, the starting point is to suggest that if a number of schools, half the globe apart, have experienced the same micro-political conflicts, a phenomenon overcoming all the variables associated with systemic, cultural and social differences, then case studies can speak to a wide audience. A cross-paradigmatic dialogue has been demonstrated within the Hunter project team and a cross-cultural conversation across international barriers. When teachers in an inner city London school articulate almost verbatim the same concerns as teachers in a small rural town sheltered by the Great Dividing Range in NSW, then this suggests an international research touchstone which could provide coherent and valid data to increase the problem solving potential of policy and decision makers in education. Miller & Leiberman (1988:15) indicated that:

> If what we are seeking is full understanding of the phenomenon of school change, then we need to draw on both the quantitative and qualitative traditions to provide that understanding. The power of the qualitative study is that it presents a human face to school improvement. It helps us see the process as slow, complex, non-linear, untidy and unpredictable.

The London and Hunter projects also help in understanding that leadership is an educational task. The qualities needed to bring about these changes are viewed variously by different actors in the policy-making process. The Director-General of School Education in NSW, Dr. Fenton Sharpe (1989) notes that the era of teachers becoming senior educational administrators has passed and that school leadership and management reflect commonalities among different types of organisations rather than their distinguishing

features, a process which is worth contesting. As Evers (1987) observed, leadership is more than a set of social management skills and more than behaviours found in an executive team of an institution or system. Senior managers of many of the schools researched by the London and Hunter project teams have something to offer the business world. The Leading Teachers were educative in the way they initiated change, negotiated shared views and in the way they acted to both manage and lead. The approach adopted in most situations was what could be called 'principled pragmatism' (Walker, 1987; Crump, 1989). This is not the pragmatism usually associated with opportunism but rather a disposition, or set of actions and behaviours which reflect a philosophical and moral approach to negotiated and representative authority.

Yet the danger is that Leading Teachers and Cluster Directors face an impossible task if they are not given the resources to be efficient managers as well as effective leaders; if the models they use are ambiguous and are inconsistent with the practical context of organisational politics; and if, in bargaining and persuading their way through the micro-politics of their reform agenda, they contribute in ways which are more likely to promote stability rather than change. Efficiency and effectiveness do not result from administrative influence, they contribute to it (Fraatz, 1989). One option is to ensure that leadership styles, organisational structures and resources, communication procedures and policy decision making provide and maintain a school climate supportive of reflective practice - for executive, assistant and general staff. Unreflective context hinders curriculum development, acceptance of responsibility for decisions, self-confidence and job satisfaction (Hayes & Ross, 1989). As Brammar (1989) argued, to improve management in Australian industry, significant creative input from employees is one of the distinguishing features of a world class company and employee involvement is 30% of the cost advantage enjoyed by Japanese car manufacturers. In this era of economic rationalism, this is one lesson education systems should not forget. Given the rhetoric - and probable intent - of the NSW Scott Report, it can be confidently stated that we are "celebrating a new era in education" in the 1990s, an era in which we will define a new progressive administration and practice in our schools.

Notes

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