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## ABSTRACT

### THE USE OF SELECTED ASPECTS OF FUNCTIONALISM IN DEVELOPING PROPOSITIONS RELEVANT TO ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP

by Geoffrey W. Gibson

This study is about administrative leadership. It is concerned with some of the first steps in the construction of a theory - the fashioning of tools consisting of an adequate vocabulary and an analytic scheme, which will make it possible to analyze the nature and tasks of administrative leadership.

It was felt that a clear understanding of the tasks of leadership is frequently lacking. Hence, a conceptualization and analysis of administrative leadership is basic since all enterprises require the performance of administrative functions in the achievement of specified purposes. The study endeavors to provide this by a summary and synthesis of what are considered relevant concepts and ideas that have developed to date; notably those of Parsons on social systems, Easton on political systems and Selznick on administration.

It is based on the assumption that a formal organization is a social system. Accordingly, a study of

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the nature of social systems may be expected to yield insights as to the tasks of leadership.

The study examines an organization as an open-ended system of interactions existing in a changing environment. It is capable of responding to internal and external pressures in the interests of achieving specified purposes and of survival. The functions regarded as essential to the fulfillment and persistence of a system are identified as goal attainment, pattern maintenance, adaptation and integration. It indicates that administration is concerned with the consequences of social activity which make for the preservation or adjustment of a given system. It is the system of interactions through which critical decisions are made and implemented. It is not merely the quantity of decisions plus the efficiency with which they are put into effect. It includes also the ends of those decisions considered both as purpose and as process.

The administrator's job, then, is seen as one in which primary concern with policy is manifested in the organization and coordination of a complex and dynamic system to carry out policy decisions. This includes -

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- . definition of purpose of group existence
- . design of an enterprise adapted to these ends
- . realization of this design through
  - . communication of purpose
  - . infusion of purpose
  - . defense of integrity
  - . adaptation to internal and external pressures

The value of such studies is seen in the fact that change can be planned and structured through well directed innovative organizations.



THE USE OF SELECTED ASPECTS OF FUNCTIONALISM  
IN DEVELOPING PROPOSITIONS RELEVANT  
TO ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP

by

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My special thanks go to all those who were so willing to give of their time, knowledge and experience to make this study a profitable one - particularly Drs. Brembeck and Leu. Their personal interest and encouragement served as a guide and stimulus throughout a unique opportunity to read, discuss and examine under congenial conditions some of the basic problems of administrative leadership.

\* \* \* \* \*

Those rules of old, discover'd, not devis'd,  
Are nature still, but nature methodis'd.

Pope

## PREFACE

This study is merely the tangible result of a program of study at Michigan State University College of Education and I count myself fortunate to have had an opportunity to study under such congenial conditions.

A study of the nature of the theory and practice of administrative leadership has two definite advantages. It provides many new ideas and leads to a re-examination of procedures that have been taken for granted. Too often we become so immersed in the routine activities of our occupations that we neglect to consider the reason behind it all - the foundations.

This study has provided time to consider the former in relationship to the latter. The real benefit must necessarily be a personal one. However, in the hope some aspects may be of special interest to others, who are genuinely concerned about administration and about leadership, I have endeavoured to detail ideas and concepts relevant to the tasks of administrative leadership. The principles are more important than the details which vary greatly according to specific conditions and circumstances.

The study makes no claim to be exhaustive in treatment nor is it intended to be comprehensive in scope. It covers what are considered to be some important ideas and the application of these to the practical situation will provide a fruitful field for initiative and enterprise. If it develops, even to a limited degree, a greater awareness of what is involved in practical problems, stimulates discussion of the nature of, and a rethinking of possibilities concerning the tasks facing administrative leadership, then its primary purpose will have been fulfilled. So long as a continuing examination of ends and means goes on, problems will be more clearly defined and hence more likely to be solved.

Nor could it be claimed that the ideas expressed in this study are original except in the sense that they are one person's synthesis of what has been gleaned from wide reading. Where not expressly stated it will be apparent to those familiar with the subject that much of what is covered is the result of the thoughts and labors of others and to all these I gratefully acknowledge my indebtedness. This will be readily apparent to anyone acquainted with the works of Parsons, Barnard, Simon Easton, Selznick and others, for example, whose ideas have been analyzed, used, adopted, adapted, summarized and extended as seemed desirable and necessary. Chapter

III is basically a summary of Parsons and Chapters IV and V of Barnard, Fromm, Easton and Selznick. A number of the ideas and concepts have been recognized for some years, although applied with varying degrees of effectiveness. However, a comprehensive synthesis needs to be attempted and if this study assists towards this it will be regarded as worthwhile.

The topic was chosen because I believe it to be of the utmost importance. Leadership is essential if a more effective use of human resources is to be achieved and the failure of leadership in large scale organizations when it occurs, is largely due to lack of understanding. Leadership fails because it does not recognize or deal with the basic sources of vulnerability.

Any study of leadership in large scale organizations needs to consider the nature of such enterprises and the characteristic problems that arise within them. This can usefully be based on an understanding of those activities essential to the survival of a social system (called in sociological language, functional imperatives) since there is a close connection between these and the key functions of leadership. The objective of this study then is to indicate the possible contribution of an analysis of an enterprise as a social system, to administrative leadership.

The first section outlines the problem and questions the validity of such conventionally accepted elements as efficiency being the prime concern of leadership. In the second a review of relevant literature indicates the need for a comprehensive theory of administrative leadership. This is followed by a short summary of the functional imperatives of a social system as applicable to large scale organizations and a summary collation and more detailed development of ideas and concepts considered of value. Section five applies these more specifically to significant aspects of leadership in large scale organizations. The final section summarizes the ideas developed on the nature of administrative leadership and points to an approach which, if put into operation, might contribute towards more effective and efficient leadership in the interests of a better use of human resources.

Conventional approaches to administrative leadership will not do and a new approach needs to be made. This will necessitate much expenditure of thought and energy. Will the required expenditures be forthcoming? It seems so, and although there is no commonly accepted, comprehensive theory of administration or administrative leadership, the subject is receiving increasing attention. It is hoped that this study makes a contribution in some

way to the solution of the problems faced by those interested in administrative leadership.

Over time it can be expected that, as the body of empirical research provides more than general guidelines for decision and action and as theoretical studies become more explicit in interrelating and integrating administrative functions and processes, an attempt will be made to develop a comprehensive theory of administrative leadership which will receive general support. Success in this attempt is still in the future.

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## CHAPTER I

### A PROBLEM AND SOME PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

#### Beginning an Inquiry

What is the first thing to do when one initiates an inquiry? Textbooks on methodology do not help very much and even the authorities, the classical experts in science and philosophy disagree on the procedure to be followed at the very beginning of an inquiry as Northrup<sup>1</sup> and Hearn<sup>2</sup> indicate so clearly.

Is there any way of determining what is a correct approach at the initial stage of any inquiry? The answer is clearly that inquiry starts only when something is unsatisfactory; when traditional beliefs are inadequate or in question, when the facts necessary to resolve uncertainties are unknown, and when the likely relevant hypotheses are not even imagined.

The positive thing to do at the beginning of an inquiry, after doubting traditional approaches, is to

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<sup>1</sup>F.S.C. Northrup, The Logic of the Sciences and the Humanities (New York: Macmillan, 1947).

<sup>2</sup>G. Hearn, Theory Building in Social Work (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1958).

concentrate attention on the character of the problem. It is the problem and its characteristics as revealed by analysis which leads to the relevant facts and then, once these are known, to the relevant hypotheses. The analysis of the problem which initiates inquiry is a different procedure from the act of imagination which proposes a hypothesis to solve the problem, after it has been analyzed and the relevant facts have been determined.

The analysis of the problem is of some importance and requires special attention. After outlining the problem with which this study is concerned, the nature of administrative leadership, it will be profitable to consider the nature of generalizations in the social sciences and the value of theory.

### A Problem - The Importance of Leadership

A pluralist society which is composed of many influential and largely autonomous groups -- both governmental and private -- whose leaders are responsible for the well being of increasingly large segments of the entire community emphasizes the need for leadership. . . for administrative leadership.

What is the nature and quality of leadership? Do we possess an adequate understanding of leadership in both public and private organizations?

This is an elusive theme but an important one if a better use of human resources and a more adequate

understanding of administrative leadership is to be achieved and there is a constant search for fresh ways of looking at organization and administration and new "models" to help in achieving such understanding.

Much of this interest is practical and based on the assumption that overall efficiency must be the guiding criterion in administration. The typical concern is expressed or implied in such questions as:

1. How can the organization be made more efficient?
2. In what ways can incentives, communications, and decision making be improved so as to achieve a smoother running operation?
3. How can the job be done most surely and at the least cost?

This is evidenced even in the more authoritative works such as Simon<sup>3</sup> where it is stated that:

The theory of administration is concerned with how an organization should be constructed and operated in order to accomplish its work efficiently.

Elsewhere it is stated that efficiency is a definition of what is meant by "good" or "correct" administrative behavior. It does not tell how accomplishments are to be maximized, but merely states that this

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<sup>3</sup>H. A. Simon, Administrative Behavior (New York: Macmillan, 1950), p. 38-39.

maximization is the aim of administrative activity and that administrative theory must indicate under what conditions the maximization takes place.

Although this is a necessary and reasonable quest, since there is evidence that many organizations operate at levels well below their potential capacity, it is not an easy one.

### Analysis of the Problem

It is suggested, however, that preoccupation with administrative efficiency to the virtual exclusion of others matters may not contribute as much as is commonly supposed to an understanding of the most significant problems of leadership in large scale organizations.

- . Is efficiency getting the basic element in the experience of institutional leaders?
- . Does concentration of efficiency help to improve the self-knowledge, and the skill of men charged with the responsibilities of leadership?
- . Can the development of managerial skills be linked to the larger problems of policy?

This study will attempt to deal with such questions by exploring the nature of leadership in large scale enterprises and the tasks it is called on to perform. The latter are generally considered to be in the realm of decision making and the significant question is -- Decisions about what? Decisions concern purposes or processes and before proceeding it is

desirable to prepare the ground for a worthwhile approach by some preliminary clarification of terminology.

### Ambiguities in Terms

As Simon<sup>4</sup> has pointed out, purposes may be defined broadly as the objective or end for which an activity is carried on, process as a means of accomplishing a purpose. Processes, then, are carried on in order to achieve purposes. However, purposes themselves may generally be arranged in some sort of hierarchy and it follows that the same activity may be described as purpose or process.

It seems clear that there can be no such thing as a purpose, or a single purpose institution. Purposes then form a hierarchy, each sub-purpose contributing to some more final and comprehensive end, and this helps to clarify the relation between purpose and process.

The difference, then, between a purpose and a process is essentially a distinction of degree rather than kind. A process is an activity whose immediate purpose is at a low level in the hierarchy of means and ends, while a purpose is a collection of activities whose orienting value or aim is at a high level in the means-end hierarchy. Decisions are made about purposes and processes.

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<sup>4</sup>Op. cit., p. 30.

As one ascends in the administrative hierarchy the analysis of decision making becomes more difficult as Selznick<sup>5</sup> points out, not merely because the decisions are more important or complex but because the logic of efficiency applies most clearly to subordinate units which tend to have:

- . clearly defined operating responsibilities
- . limited discretion
- . set channels of communication, and
- . a sure position in the command structure

It tends to lose force, however, at the upper levels of administrative responsibility where problems are less amenable to the procedures of management experts and it has been suggested that an overemphasis on neat organization and efficient techniques obscures the interrelation of policy and administration (of purpose and process) with the result that critical aspects of organizational leadership may be overlooked.

What then are their real problems of leadership and how do they affect its nature?

#### Generalizations in Social Science

As Northrup<sup>6</sup> points out, social science is no exception to the rule that science does not begin with

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<sup>5</sup>P. Selznick, Leadership in Administration (New York: Row Peterson and Co., 1957), p. 3.

<sup>6</sup>Op. cit., p. 14.



facts, with hypotheses, or even with a method, but with a specific problem.

This is more important in the field of social science than any other field because, unlike natural science, social science faces two fundamentally different kinds of problems.

In natural science the problems are mainly of fact and the normative problem of what should be does not arise initially.

But social institutions and processes, being in part at least man made, present two different questions -- 1) What is the character of social institutions in fact? and 2) How ought social institutions to be?

The first of these two questions is factual, the second is normative. In contrast to natural science then, which faces primarily problems of fact, social science is confronted with problems of fact and with problems of value. This does not mean an abdication of responsibility on the part of the natural scientist. It simply means that values do not play a large part in the observation, description and explanation of natural science facts.

The generalizations appropriate for these two types of problems and the methods used to determine these generalizations, are different. To distinguish between the two types of theory in social science it seems

appropriate to use different names and Northrups.<sup>7</sup> classification into factual social theory and normative social theory seems appropriate.

A factual social theory is in accord with what is the case, and describes existing conditions as they are. It will go beyond this and involve hypotheses but its unique characteristic is that it is in accord with the facts.

A normative social theory indicates what ought to be rather than what is and does not correspond perfectly to any de facto state of affairs anywhere. It points to possible ideals rather than the actual.

This means that the method for determining normative social theory is not that of natural science applied to social facts although the latter is appropriate for factual social theory. Moreover, even with respect to factual theory in any one science there are two stages and each has its unique scientific methods.

- . The natural history stage
- . The stage of deductively formulated theory

It should be noted that factual social theory can include norms in its subject matter as factual data. However, this does not make it normative. A social theory becomes normative when it restricts itself to

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<sup>7</sup>Op. cit.

the normative and passes judgement on its norm as compared with other normative theories.

Thus, a method for determining normative social theory is a method which enables, out of all possible normative theories constructed or possible of construction, the scientifically correct one to be determined.

The achievement of deductively formulated theory in social science involves the key concepts in terms of which, any and all of the factual data of the natural history type are to be analyzed. A deductive theory can be verified in various ways. However, it is the predictive element, the deduction of the future state of a system from its present state, that is likely to be of most value. Determinism is possible at all only in a deductively formulated science since factual science at the natural history stage can establish no necessary connections.

This study is not concerned with normative social theory, but with the deductively formulated area of factual social theory. It does not claim to develop theory but merely to point to key concepts important in the ordering of data and essential to an adequate understanding of leadership.

Perhaps it is a mistake to attempt to seek for a prediction of the future state of a social system in factual social theory, rather than normative social theory.

Since social institutions are partly man made, and normative social theories define the ends of human action, they may throw more light on the future state of a social system than factual theory.

It is likely that a science of administration is impossible without both factual theory and normative theory since the administrator must think and operate in two worlds. He must know things as they are and he must also know things as ought to be.

To expect more of the normative in fact, than possible changes in the factual will allow, may result in the defeat of one's ideals, whereas to require less than perfection may be to achieve more.

Scientifically based, wise administrative leadership consists in possessing scientifically verified factual administrative theory concerning what is the case, and scientifically verified normative theory of what ought to be the case and then achieving as much of the ideal as possible changes in the factual will allow.

### The Value of Theory

While it is readily admitted that theory is helpful to the physical scientist dealing with non-human material it is not so widely recognized that theory can be very useful to the practitioner in the field of social sciences. Prevalent beliefs are that it is too "difficult," "unpractical," or "useless" and

this is pointed out by numerous writers on the subject as evidenced in Coladarci and Getzel's<sup>8</sup> work on the value of theory in educational administration.

The practicality comes from the ability gained from a knowledge of theory which enables action to be taken in a specific situation based on knowing the generality of situations. In the administrative field, for example, it would be poor theory that could not provide guidance for the administrator when he needed to act. The assistance he receives would be in terms of what would happen if he did a certain thing and is related to the consequences of actions if . . . then. Intelligent action needs some guiding principles tentatively held. Theory can provide these as a tool and guide to practice enabling observation and comprehension of what is going on. Moreover, it gives greater flexibility in response than does following tradition or a precedent since it opens up a wider range of relationships, possibilities and opportunities. In the physical sciences theories are the basis of working concepts and there is no reason why this should not apply in other fields. It is assumed that they do enable a person to collect and consider relevant facts and deal with them successfully.

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<sup>8</sup>A. P. Coladarci and J. W. Getzels, The Use of Theory in Educational Administration (Stanford University Press, 1955).

### The Nature of Theory

Theory is a set of assumptions from which principles may be derived. They are not laws. They are not of eternal validity and they cannot be proved by direct experimentation.

They are, as Griffiths<sup>9</sup> points out, general assumptions which seem to predict or account for events with more than chance accuracy so that we say they are "true." A theory enabling better than chance decisions to be made is not easy to formulate as it is:

- . induced from common events
- . it must be tested by making deductions from it. Its validity is judged by results, by the degree to which it can maximize practical predictions and understanding

### Theory and Practice

There is, then, no real distinction between theory and practice since the former is always present, even if implicitly, in human behavior. Whenever we make choices and judgements we have reasons for our actions based on assumptions and generalizations. If we do this subconsciously we are likely to make poor decisions.

It is maintained that a more explicit concern for theory is necessary to successful practice since in its absence practice can only be accidentally successful.

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<sup>9</sup>D. Griffiths, Administrative Theory (Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1959), Chapter 2.

Moreover, it is easier to see where a difficulty exists if the basis for decisions are made explicit and examinable.

### Further Uses of Theory

Apart from the more obvious uses of administrative theory as a guide to action there are other values and advantages which have been pointed out in numerous works:

1. Adequate theory could contribute to administrative training by helping prepare students for change. Administration seen as a process based on variables rather than a specific set of techniques would lead to the theory which would explain why current practices work (rather than describe them) and why they might not work, if and when the context changes.

2. Adequate theory might advance a system of thinking which would enable the amalgamation of interdisciplinary knowledge into a coherent whole which would serve to provide administrators with a realistic guide so that they could alter their behavior in the light of changing circumstances. This is a systematic way of thinking that will lead to a continual reexamination of structure, of processes and procedures.

3. An adequate theory would also provide for further growth in the light of experiences by providing an efficient way of ordering that experience. The more explicit the system for generalizing specific events the greater the use.

In summary, an adequate theory would direct attention to processes and relationships rather than to techniques and provide a framework for future findings in the social sciences.

### Theory in Educational Administration

The assumption that jobs in education are being done properly is not necessarily valid. It is possible to go wrong with confidence. In fact, the inadequacies of present practice and the complexity of the jobs to be done necessitate better and more explicit theoretical orientations. Because of the influence of educational leadership in deciding the nature of the total educative enterprise it is considered that this provides the most strategic target for attack. It is important because of its relevance to the improvement of educational practice.

In this study it is proposed to consider the nature of administrative leadership as it relates to social systems on the assumption that what is true for social systems generally will be true also for the educational enterprise in particular. It is suggested that a realistic approach to the problems facing educational leadership requires an understanding of the social context within which it operates and it is maintained that many insights may be gained from a study of relevant sociological theory.



Administrative Theory - Criteria

A useful and adequate theory it seems then should display certain characteristics.<sup>10</sup>

1. It should be based on operational and logical accuracy rather than common sense.

2. It should be generalizable. The wider the range of specific events which can be explained the more useful the theory. An adequate theory should be of universal validity and not limited by time or place.

3. It should regard values as variables rather than part of the theoretical system otherwise they limit the theory.

4. It will be grounded in the basic social and behavioral sciences since administration is accomplished through the behavior of administrators in interaction with others.

5. It will focus on processes since the behavior which contributes to administration is a series of re-actions rather than a cause and effect relationship. Showing that a particular pattern of relationships is correlated with performance is part of the task, explaining how the relationship occurs is the remainder.

Thus, structural concepts indicating "what" must be supplemented by functional concepts indicating "how."

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<sup>10</sup>A. W. Halpin (ed) Administrative Theory In Education (Midwest Administration Center, 1958), pp. 29-39.

### This Study

The reason for an extended outline of method in the social sciences and the value of theory is two-fold:

1. The need to indicate clearly the method to be followed in this study--what is, and what is not, being attempted.

2. The necessity to show how this approach fits into the framework of scientific method as conceived for the purpose of this study.

The purpose is not to attempt to develop a new deductive theory of administrative leadership. It is to take a specific aspect of sociological theory and examine it to see what can be ascertained that would be of value of those interested in the phenomenon of administrative leadership. It may then be possible to consider the implications of these propositions for leadership in the field of education.

In terms of the method outlined the main creative aspect of the study will be to outline concepts by postulation that seem to provide insights into the nature of administrative leadership. For this purpose the concept of a social system and its functional imperatives, as detailed in Parson's sociological theory are accepted as an appropriate starting point.

### A Social Systems Approach

The search for a fresh approach to administration has led to many different lines of inquiry. One of the most prolific has been studies on leadership. More recently, this has centered on a considerable interest in human relations which has been useful in understanding why and how people get along together.

However, in large enterprises one needs to look beyond personal relations and human problems of participation in organizations to the more comprehensive patterns of institutional development. Yet no social process can be understood except as located in the behavior of individuals, in people's perceptions of themselves and others.

The problem is to link the larger view to the more limited one, to determine how institutional change is produced by and in turn shapes, the interaction of individuals in day-to-day situations. The greater the concern with far reaching decisions, the greater is the need for a more comprehensive understanding of social organization.

It is maintained that the executive becomes a leader as he makes the transition from administrative management to institutional leadership. This means that he must reassess his own tasks and the needs of the enterprise, become concerned with the development of the organization as a whole, including its changing aims and capabilities.

## Leadership

To know about the work of leaders it is necessary to know something about the social situations they are called on to handle. This suggests a wide range of activities associated with leadership. Although leadership is specific to a given situation it does not follow that the tasks of leadership vary with specific situations. It is assumed that significant leadership patterns are relatively few and that they are related to types of social situations. Thus certain general activities of leaders reflect general characteristics of human groups and the functions of leadership will best be understood as we develop some understanding of the main types of groups and the recurrent problems they face. A theory of leadership is dependent on a theory of social organization since leadership patterns are related to types of social situations.

Leadership, then as Selznick<sup>11</sup> indicates, is not a familiar everyday idea and what leaders do (or do not do) is not always self-evident. The common idea of the leader as displaying aggressive self-confidence, intuitive sureness, and ability to inspire provides little assistance in understanding the true tasks of leadership. It is likely that inadequate understanding results in the failure of much leadership.

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<sup>11</sup>Op. cit., p. 22.

It becomes important then to identify and analyze more specifically the chief functions of leadership, whether it be termed organizational, administrative or institutional leadership. This is necessary in the interests of improved performance and the development of more effective training for leadership.

#### Summary - Administration and Administrators

What is meant by administration?

Some see it as an art, some as a science. Individual approaches within these broad fields are each one of many, all of which tend to make uncertain just what is involved in administration, and conflicting views are held by recognized authorities.

Tead<sup>12</sup> sees administration as the necessary activities of those individuals in an organization who are charged with ordering, forwarding and facilitating the associated efforts of a group of individuals brought together to realize certain defined purposes.

This provides an adequate starting point and differing approaches relevant to this study will be outlined in Chapter II.

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<sup>12</sup>O. Tead, The Art of Administration (McGraw-Hill, 1951).

Recent approaches to the administrative process attempt to synthesize all activity into the three areas of the man, the job and the social setting, and identify the three contexts within which administration functions -- the social, the institutional and the professional. This indicates the rather obvious fact that administration cannot be studied in a vacuum and there is need for a broader scope and wider aim in studies of administrative leadership.

Administration is regarded as the total of activities through which appropriate human and material resources are made available and made effective for accomplishing the purposes of an enterprise. Essential to this is administrative leadership. The administrative manager's effectiveness is based on efficiency and depends upon his understanding of the techniques of administration and such processes as planning, organization, coordination, evaluation, communication and so on. The administrative leader on the other hand, while possessing a knowledge and understanding of administrative processes is more interested in the effectiveness of an enterprise in achieving objectives, the necessity to change or alter objectives in light of changed circumstances and appropriate overall strategies for accomplishing ends.

The administrative leader is an agent of institutionalization, providing guidance to a process that would otherwise occur more haphazardly. As indicated, no institutional leader can avoid concern for the minimum conditions of continued organizational existence but he must not allow organizational achievement in resources, stability, or reputation, to become the criterion of success. It seems as though one of the most effective ways to accomplish this is to build social values and a distinctive competence into an organization.

The chief function of administrative leadership then is seen as defining the ends of group existence, designing an enterprise distinctively adapted to those ends and seeing that that design becomes a living reality.

This view of administrative leadership is further explored in Chapters III and IV, through a summary of relevant ideas from Barnard, Easton and Selznick following a survey of relevant studies in the fields of administrative theory and sociological functionalism.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Before commencing an examination of the sociological background to this study it will be of interest to review the relevant literature to outline trends and developments in functionalism in sociological theory, in general administrative theory, in administrative theory in education and in educational leadership.

#### The Nature and Value of Functionalism in Sociology

Functionalism is conceived as a doctrine which asserts that all recurrent social activities have the function of maintaining a social system. It studies social phenomena as operations within, or effects of, specified social structures.

Support of this usage is found in such functionalists as Radcliffe-Brown, Malinowski and others. Theirs tends to be a descriptive inquiry into whole societies and this is evident in the works of many other famous anthropologists such as Sanders, Pitt-Rivers, Arensberg (see bibliography).



"Individual human beings," says Radcliffe-Brown<sup>1</sup>

are connected by a definite set of social relations into an integrated whole. The continuity of the social structure . . . is not destroyed by changes in the units. Individuals may leave the society . . . or . . . enter it. The continuity is maintained by the process of social life, which consists of the activities and interactions of the individual human beings and of the organized groups into which they are united. The social life of the community is here defined as the functioning of the social structure. The function of any recurrent activity . . . is the part it plays in the social life as a whole and therefore the contribution which it makes to the maintenance of the structural continuity.

Malinowski's<sup>2</sup> statement of functionalism was in terms of needs.

Function means, therefore, always the satisfaction of a need from the simplest act . . . to (one which) is related to a whole system of beliefs determined by a cultural necessity . . .

These needs are, however, in the final analysis defined in terms of maintenance of the social system.

. . . the cultural satisfaction of primary biological needs imposes upon man secondary or delivered imperatives . . . . The functional approach to the comparative study of cultures thus postulates that the study of systems of production distribution and consumption must be carried out, even in the most primitive societies.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, Structure and Function in Primitive Society (London: Cohen and West, 1952), p. 180.

<sup>2</sup>B. Malinowski, A Scientific Theory of Culture (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), p. 159.

<sup>3</sup>B. Malinowski, The Dynamics of Culture Change (Yale University Press, 1945).

However, it is in the broader theoretical generalizations of the larger social units that this study is primarily based. Theorists in this field exist in plenty, although their writings are not always easily read. Some of the better known advocates of functional analysis are Marion J. Levy, Jr., Talcott Parsons, Kingsley Davis and Robert K. Merton.

Those who appear to have had the most influence on sociological theory are Parsons and Merton. Parsons seems to have had the greater impact through his frequent but obscure writings and as the center of a group of sociological thinkers. His work has been entirely theoretical and any attempt to assess his contribution will find much of assistance in the series of essays written by members of the faculty of Cornell University.<sup>4</sup>

Parson's detailed analysis is contained in The Social System.<sup>5</sup> He details a structural functional analysis and sees society as a "large-scale persistent, self-sufficient system of social interaction which must train its own members since it lasts longer than the individual."

In reducing the social system to essentials he takes up the analysis of "status roles" which govern

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<sup>4</sup>T. Parsons, The Social System (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1951).

<sup>5</sup>M. Black (ed) The Social Theories of Talcott Parsons. A Critical Examination (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1961).

the relationships between actors, who are themselves governed by normative beliefs. The exercise of the roles is dependent upon a personal hierarchy of gratifications, comprising "self-orientation" and "collectivity-orientation." He claims that in terms of these five exhaustive dichotomies that society can be defined.

This formulation was somewhat modified later on in studies<sup>6</sup> where he is concerned with problems of goal attainment, adaptation, integration and of pattern maintenance and tension management.

Homans' work<sup>7</sup> is easier to understand and more empirical than most of the theoretical functionalists and is based on studies by Firth and Whyte.

Homans emphasizes the system, which may be of varying size, and which, having been defined, is to be analyzed in terms of its elements -- activity, interaction, sentiment and norms. He makes a distinction between "external" and "internal" systems which together comprise his unit "the human group" although the exact structure of this relationship is somewhat obscure.

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<sup>6</sup>T. Parsons, R.F. Bales and E.A. Shils, Working Papers in the Theory of Action (Glencoe: Free Press, 1953) and Family Socialization and Interaction Process (Glencoe: Free Press, 1955).

<sup>7</sup>G. C. Homans, The Human Group (Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc., 1950).

Homans deals with both large and small units and believes them to be subject to the same basic sociological laws.

Merton<sup>8</sup> who is one of the clearest and most precise of the functionalists is also considered by many observers to be the most useful. He does not accept the definition of function as system-maintaining, as a totality, and leaves room in his formulation for motives as not precisely equatable with functions. He makes a useful distinction between manifest functions, which are the objective consequences of social or cultural activity as recognized by the participants, and the latent functions which are neither intended nor recognized by participants but which can nevertheless be observed. Merton also formulated the concept of dysfunction both in connection with the parts of the total system and for the system as a whole.

#### Criticisms of Functionalism

To establish the value of this approach it is worth considering some of the principal criticisms levelled against functionalism in sociology.

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<sup>8</sup>R. K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure (Glencoe: Free Press, 1957).

1. One of the most pertinent is that of Barber who states that the theoretical functionalists tend to orbit at too abstract a level with little reference to practical reality. He admits, however, that such "typologizing is procedurally essential before analyzing concrete situations of change and conflict."<sup>9</sup>

2. He repeats another oft mentioned criticism of functionalists--that they tend to deal with static closed systems rather than with change. This tends to be more true, however, of the functionalists interested in descriptive inquiries rather than the "holistic" theoretical functionalists interested in a social system over a period of time and the factors relevant to its survival.

3. Finally, he mentions the criticism of conservatism, suggesting that they seek to justify the maintenance of the status quo through the doctrine of functional connections. This is not a valid application to many, however, who have a strong and liberal political philosophy.

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<sup>9</sup>B. Barber, "Structural--Functional Analysis: Some Problems and Misunderstandings," American Sociological Review, Vol. 21, 1956, p. 133.

As Martindale<sup>10</sup> points out this is an annoying but easily rectifiable characteristic. By regarding the social system as a prior social reality to its parts, and by identifying it with the status quo, functionalism was well adapted to the postwar milieu, in which it developed, and in which there was naturally a desire to consolidate and return to normal after the upset of war.

4. Davis<sup>11</sup> considers that the problems of functionalism are those of all sociology --

. . . functionalism is most commonly said to do two things: to relate the parts of society to the whole, to relate one part to another . . . simply describe what any science does. Every science describes and explains phenomena from the standpoint of a system of reasoning which presumably bears a relation to a corresponding system in nature . . . . Given its subject the least (Sociology) could do is to relate the parts to the whole of society and to one another.

Although this criticism has some validity it should be pointed out that when the majority of non-functional social theorists encounter fields of social phenomena, which cannot conveniently be included within their frames of reference, they are conveniently

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<sup>10</sup>D. Martindale, "Limits of and Alternatives to Functionalism in Sociology," Monograph 5, American Academy of Political and Social Science, Feb., 1965, p. 157.

<sup>11</sup>K. Davis, "The Myth of Functional Analysis as a Special Method in Sociology and Anthropology," American Sociological Review, Vol. 24, 1959, p. 758.

dismissed as belonging to other disciplines. The functionalist cannot dispose of data in this way and this prevents the dismissal of empirical data without consideration which leaves little ground for a further criticism mentioned by Davis--that they are opposed to empiricism.

5. Buckley's<sup>12</sup> main point of argument with the functionalists is this lack of empirical data to substantiate the theory--particularly what he calls "Parsonian theory weaving."

6. He also calls to attention the danger of overstressing integration to the extent that the dysfunctional may be unrecognized. This has led to some preoccupation with conflict theory by functionalists studying societies undergoing great transformation and drastic social change.

7. Mills<sup>13</sup> charges a lack of methodological clarity relating to a preference for teleological constructions of social life. It is a form of grand theory which somehow never seems to get down to the

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<sup>12</sup>W. Buckley, "Structural-Functional Analysis in Modern Sociology," Modern Sociological Theory in Continuity and Change, (Ed. H. Becker and A. Boskoff) (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1957), p. 244.

<sup>13</sup>C. W. Mills, The Sociological Imagination (Ohio University Press, 1958), pp. 25-50.

facts; and persons concerned with factual studies never rise to the level of theory. However, Merton has proposed the elaboration of middle range theories to bridge the gap between global theorizing and grass roots empiricism. Moreover, as Hempel<sup>14</sup> points out in his critique--

. . . functional analysis is a modification of teleological explanation, i.e. of explanation not by reference to causes which 'bring about' the event in question, but by reference to ends which determine its course . . .

Rex<sup>15</sup> also mentions the common accusation that functionalism has strong teleological overtones and disposes of it. He agrees that the functionalists do not properly cope with the concept of change but more importantly criticizes the distinction between the social and the individual determinants of human behavior. He thinks this merely an attempt to produce an obscure definition of social. He asks,

Does not the true distinction lie in the fact that the former is the product of social interaction and is this concept not closely akin to, though much more complex than, the concepts in terms of which individual action is explained?

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<sup>14</sup>C. G. Hempel, "The Logic of Functional Analysis," L. Gross (ed) Symposium on Sociological Theory (Row, Peterson, 1959), p. 227.

<sup>15</sup>J. Rex, Key Problems of Sociological Theory (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961), p. 75-76.



8. This seems a fair point as does his argument that--

the needs of the system cannot be so decisively demonstrated as functionalism supposes, because of the difficulty of demonstrating that any activity is vital for the system's survival.

However, it should be emphasized that what the theoretical functionalists are discussing is a speculative scheme based on analytical abstractions but pointing to an empirical field. From this point of view then such criticisms as the difficulty of demonstrating functionalism and the lack of empirical data to substantiate the theory point the way to further research and more refined theorizing rather than a renunciation of the field.

This is not the place for a detailed discussion of the properties and values of the various functionalist positions, the available alternatives to them or the lines along which various of these theories may, eventually, be consolidated. It is appropriate to observe, however, that sooner or later a consolidation, synthesis, and elimination of alternative theoretical positions will be attempted, and that if methodological differences (based in the body-mind problem) are ever overcome, this will have major consequences for the development of theory.

9. There are difficulties in treating change since the whole system, as itself the prior cause of all more limited social realities, can consistently account for change in only one of two ways--

a. by modifying the idea of an autonomous system sufficiently to provide for the pressure of extra social phenomena on the system and the adaptation of the system to them. This has been provided for particularly in that early sociological holists provided for such external influences in the idea that demographic factors may bring about social change.

b. by postulating the existence within the social system of forces which bring about immanent development.

Neither of these expedients has been popular with sociological functionalists. However, Parsons<sup>16</sup> has taken the step although there is no indication that the majority of functionalists are prepared to follow him.

The principal charges against functionalism may be summarized as its--

1. verbal obscurity
2. lack of reference to objective reality

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<sup>16</sup>T. ,Parsons, Theories of Society, Foundations of Modern Sociological Theory, 2 Vols. (Glencoe, Ill: Free Press, 1961).

3. teleological overtones
4. faulty distinction between individual and social determinants of behavior
5. use of static models which do not permit the analysis of change
6. conservatism through stressing the functional to the exclusion of the dysfunctional
7. inability to prove that an activity is essential to the survival of the system
8. claim to be unique in relating all social phenomena into one system of thought

The first two points may be true of some functionalists but are certainly not applicable to all. Although the next five points have some degree of cognizance the last cannot be used to detract from the strength of the doctrine. To the non-functionalist the four main limitations in sociological functionalism then are--

1. a conservative ideological bias in favor of the status quo
2. a lack of methodological clarity relating to its preference for teleological constructions of social life
3. an unwarranted emphasis on the significance and role of closed systems in social life, and
4. a comparative failure to handle adequately the problem of social change

These limitations are of variable seriousness. The first two are annoying but not insurmountable. The last two are the more serious since they concern the definition of social reality and capacity to handle it.

The functionalists would say that the infinitely varied acts of individuals and pluralities which rarely and only temporarily act as a closed system, as reality in social life, is an immersion in the details of social life which loses from sight the primary explanation-- the role of the system.

It should be recognized that there are definite advantages to the functionalists point of view--

1. It reintroduced the concept of system at a time when sociological analysis was being directed into an analysis of individual behavior.

2. It has excluded speculation about human motives and introduced objectively determinable factors maintaining social systems.

3. By its emphasis of the organic social system it has brought much nearer realization of a natural science of society.

4. It makes unnecessary any speculation about the origin of particular institutions, or the processes by which they change.

5. It does, even if not in a unique way, relate all social phenomena into one system of thought.

These are important steps forward in an understanding of society and it is maintained that highly suggestive insights may be gained from considering social systems from a functionalist point of view that are valuable to any realistic appraisal of the tasks of administrative leadership.

Whether social science is yet ready for the kind of theory Parsons and associates are endeavoring to construct, an integration of the social sciences in the form of the development and propagation of a "general theory" in the science of action, is another question.

As indicated previously, it is proposed to focus on leadership so far as those activities are concerned which are essential to a system's survival. For this purpose functions are regarded as those observed consequences of social activity which made for the adaptation or adjustment of a given system. The parts of a social system are regarded as interdependent and, in balance, contributing to the maintenance and integration of the whole system. Social systems seek to maintain their own equilibrium but this equilibrium may be viewed either in static or dynamic terms.

### The Present State of Administrative Theory

Historically, says Thompson<sup>17</sup> there are four main sources of administrative theory and this is obvious in any survey of the literature. The first two are traditional and long established and the last two reflect more recent developments. These are--

- . the comments and reports made by practicing administrators
- . the survey research of "scholars" and others
- . the deductive reasoning of scholars
- . the adaptation of models from other disciplines

It is not possible to summarize all attempts at theory building in the past, nor if it were would such a summary be very useful in the context of this study. Many works<sup>18</sup> contain such summaries and a selection has been made which indicate different approaches that have received serious consideration by others.

### The Traditional Approach

Theorizing may be implicit in what an administrator does but his theories only become important when recorded and passed on to others.

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<sup>17</sup> A. W. Halpin, Administrative Theory in Education (Midwest Administration Center, 1958), p. 24-29.

<sup>18</sup> D. E. Griffiths, Administrative Theory (Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1959), Chapter 3.

Much of what has been written on administration has resulted from an attempt by administrators to generalize from their experience. While they do have creative insights and much can be learned from what they say and what they do, their advice tends to be of the "rules of success," or "three easy lessons" type rather than reflective critical thought. The danger in such so-called theorizing is that the voice of the practitioner tends to become accepted as the voice of authority.

It was found necessary to supplement what the practitioners say and systematize their advice by a pattern of research which generally tends to be of the descriptive survey variety. This is combined with "scholarly" research which surveys, collates and compares the efforts of distinguished writers in an endeavor to distill the essentials or develop a comprehensive list of administrative categories or processes.

These approaches rarely result in new knowledge but simply new forms for the same old sayings and any survey of the theoretical literature on administration indicates that the greater part is what has been called the "grass roots" variety. Such descriptions and explanations have done little more than consider what has been. They have not faced the future adequately.

The most damaging criticism that can be made of any theory is that it does not generate new knowledge and the descriptive categories of traditional administrative theory have neglected the dynamic relationships among such categories that is likely to lead to new knowledge. Because they are weak in developing relationships they do not raise new questions to be answered.

A further criticism of the "grass roots" variety of theory is its inability to use new knowledge by incorporating it into what is already known and developing a synthesis.

Finally, such theories are more specific or special than general - theories of educational, military, business, hospital or public administration rather than just administration.

Although differences between systems being organized and administered are likely to lead to differences in administrative behavior similarities may exist that have been obscured by too narrow a framework that has focused on the unique and distinctive.

#### Toward Partial Theories - Recent Developments

The sources of modern developments in administrative theory, particularly since the second world war, are



- . the deductive reasoning of scholars
- . the adaptation of models from other disciplines

Griffiths<sup>19</sup> contains a useful summary and points out that although it is difficult to identify theories as having been derived exclusively from one of these sources it is possible to identify those belonging predominantly to one or other of these approaches.

The two most important deductive approaches to general administrative theory have been those of Barnard<sup>20</sup> and Simon.<sup>21</sup>

Barnard's book, The Functions of the Executive, contains many insights into the nature of administration and his postulates and assumptions anticipate many modern theories, particularly those based on the individual and his relation to an organization; on informal organizations and their relation to formal organization; and on decision making.

Simon's most recent studies deal with concepts and mathematical formulations rather than theory as such. In Administrative Behavior he was interested

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<sup>19</sup>Op. cit., p. 47.

<sup>20</sup>C. I. Barnard, The Functions of the Executive (Harvard University Press, 1960).

<sup>21</sup>H. A. Simon, Administrative Behavior (Macmillan, 1950).

in how the rationality of organizational decisions could be increased, whereas in later works he used Homans postulates on group interaction as a basis for developing mathematical formula relevant to administration.

Argyris and Bakke<sup>22</sup> of the Yale Management and Labor Center generated a set of assumptions from which organizational processes are derived. The most important, and obviously influenced by Barnard, is that the developmental processes and goals of the individual and his organization are, at important points, essentially different and antagonistic. The fusion process, whereby both the individual and the organization fulfill their needs and achieve their goals is necessary and receives emphasis.

Later, Argyris<sup>23</sup> developed a dependency concept of organizational leadership based on the assumption that a work group is concerned only with the "work-flow process" - the behavior required by organizational purposes. The leader, in order to blend his work group into the formal organization, supplies such things as authority, rewards, penalties, and communications.

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<sup>22</sup>E. W. Bakke, Organization and the Individual (Yale Labor and Management Center, 1962).

<sup>23</sup>C. Argyris, Executive Leadership (Harper and Brothers, 1953).

Litchfield<sup>24</sup> suggested a series of propositions on the assumption that administration is based on universals relevant to whatever is being administered, that administration should make use of all disciplines for useful information and that the role of variables is important.

His propositions on the process of administration covers ground similar to those of Simon and of Griffiths although placed in the perspective of a larger action system, the ecology within which both the individual and the enterprise function.

Attempts at theorizing in the field of educational administration have tended to concentrate on the effectiveness of the performance of those in positions of leadership and this will be taken up after a progressive summary.

### Summary

Early theorists analyzed administration into a number of parts or functions and authorities such as Gulick, Urwick and Follett (see bibliography) described it in such terms as planning, organizing, staffing,

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<sup>24</sup>E.H. Litchfield, "Notes on a General Theory of Administration," Administrative Science Quarterly Vol. 1, No. 1, June, 1956.

directing, evaluating and reporting. This taxonomic approach is still popular with many. Later emphasis was laid on the group approach, or human relationships and interactions and the term "democratic leadership" was much employed. Simon stated that all administration could be designated in terms of decision making.

Most recent works see administration as interaction and consideration and as a social process. Helpful models have been constructed, such as those of Getzel's,<sup>25</sup> Guba and Halpin, that might be validated through experiment and research. Indeed this approach seems to provide more possibilities for insights than alternatives. Others have attempted to define administration in mathematical terms.

By some administration is referred to as a science and by others as an art. As Lipham<sup>26</sup> points out, during the past few years there has been less theorizing about theory and considerably more application

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<sup>25</sup>J. W. Getzels, "Administration As a Social Process," Administrative Theory in Education, A. W. Halpin (ed) (Chicago: Midwest Administration Center, 1958).

<sup>26</sup>J. M. Lipham, "Organizational Character of Education," Review of Educational Research, AERA, Vol. 34, No. 4, 1964.

of behavioral science theory to administration. However, Griffiths<sup>27</sup> would add that interest in the construction of a theoretical framework is developing and that this is fortunate since--

. . . improved understanding of administrative behavior depends upon the progress that can be made in the development of a theory. Research without sound theory has little meaning and it is unfortunate but true that research in the field of educational administration has been so characterized in the past.

Just as the task of science was to impose an order on the universe, so the development of a framework of theory will result in the unification of what are now separate acts into a set of principles and concepts with a defined terminology so different to that which has been acquired piecemeal, and with consequent confusion, from other fields. Thus, while there is a definite trend toward the development of a science of administration the theoretical basis of such a science has yet to be adequately established.

As Hencley<sup>28</sup> points out at least four definitions of administrative function have been current over the past fifteen to twenty years--

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<sup>27</sup> J. M. Griffiths, "Toward a Theory in Administrative Behavior," Campbell and Gregg, Administrative Behavior in Education (Harper, 1957).

<sup>28</sup> Donald J. Leu and H. C. Rudman (eds) Preparation Programs for School Administrators (East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University, 1963), p. 62.

- . the inclusive type, which includes everything for which administrators may be held accountable
- . the exclusive or restrictive type, which emphasizes organizational maintenance and separates administration from policy making
- . the standardized or division-of-labor type, which impersonalizes administrative operation through job descriptions, bureaucratic working patterns and so on
- . the integrative type, which sees the administrator's task as that of developing, managing and maintaining decision making with respect to goals and purposes, operations, intra and extraorganizational interactions and adjustments

Each definition is based on different, though overlapping, sets of assumptions concerning the nature and purposes of administration. Each leads to an emphasis on different types of functional interrelationships considered appropriately the concern of leadership.

Such, then, are some of the conflicting views held by recognized authorities on administration in general. The question arises as to whether there is such a thing as educational administration. There are certain characteristics that give the service of education a unique appearance. However, in addition to its unique characteristics, educational administration has much in common with other areas of public and business administration. It is now time to consider more specifically approaches to administrative leadership in education.

## Administrative Leadership in Education

### The Traits Approach

Early twentieth century studies on administrative leadership in education centered on leader traits to explain the effectiveness of administration on the assumption that leaders could be made and that leadership was not exclusively the province of those born to it.

That this approach is still popular is evidenced by current literature on the topic such as a recently published 1965 volume titled Staff Leadership in Public Schools - A Sociological Enquiry and advertised as a way of finding out how the principal's personal traits affect his professional leadership.

The traits approach concentrated on knowledge and intelligence, physical characteristics and on sociopsychological factors as an explanation of performance. An advantage of this early research was that it led to the development of leadership training courses. However, although it has received considerable attention the results have been largely negative or

inconclusive.<sup>29</sup> Weaknesses include such factors as those mentioned by Bird<sup>30</sup> and Gouldner:<sup>31</sup>

- . the difficulty of common agreement on characteristics regarded as relevant
- . lack of indication as to the relative importance of characteristics
- . the difficulty of defining qualities or traits so that they are mutually exclusive
- . lack of indication as to whether different traits are required for obtaining and maintaining positions of leadership and as to whether there is a difference between status and leadership
- . descriptive lists of traits are of little value in explaining how they were acquired and may infer that they are inherent
- . emphasis on the specifics of particular leadership has not led to useful generalizations

A later development of this approach is personality theory as evidenced in the works of Bills and Hopper<sup>32</sup> of the S.S.C.P.E.A. They generalize that there

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<sup>29</sup>W. O. Jenkins, "A Review of Leadership Studies with Particular Reference to Military Problems," Psychological Bulletin, 1947, Vol. 44, p. 54-77.

R. Stogdill, "Personal Factors Associated with Leadership: A Survey of the Literature," Journal of Psychology, 1948, Vol. 25, pp. 35-76.

<sup>30</sup>G. Bird, Social Psychology (Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1940).

<sup>31</sup>A. W. Gouldner (ed) Studies in Leadership (Harper and Brothers, 1950),

<sup>32</sup>R.L. Hopper and R.E. Bills, "What's a Good Administrator Made Of?" The School Executive, Vol. 74, March, 1955, pp. 93-95.



are three types of administrators based on broad personality groupings differentiated in terms of attitudes held towards oneself and other people. These are--

the	+	+	group
the	+	-	group
the	-	+	group

Implicit in the personality type of study is the notion that the main factor in administrative effectiveness is the leader's personality and that to control the latter is to control the former.

Other studies, as indicated by Jenkins<sup>33</sup> state that although leadership is specific to a particular situation who becomes the leader and what the leadership characteristics are in a given case are a function of the specific situation (including the measuring instruments employed).

Stogdill<sup>34</sup> clarifies the matter still further--

- . the evidence suggests that leadership is a relation that exists between persons in a social situation, and
- . persons who are leaders in one situation may not necessarily be leaders in another situation

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<sup>33</sup>Op. cit.

<sup>34</sup>Op. cit.

This does not mean to say that leadership is incidental, haphazard or unpredictable - it means that leadership patterns of behavior are persistent and relatively stable. This is in line with current concepts in political science in which a pluralistic view of community power is receiving increasing attention as evidenced in works such as Polsby's Community Power and Political Theory<sup>35</sup> as compared to the more traditional approach of Hunter's Community Power Structure.<sup>36</sup>

#### The Situational Approach

Limitations of the traits approach led to a reaction and investigation of situations in which leadership was exercised for a further appreciation of leader effectiveness. This situation approach to a wide variety of activities associated with and affecting administrative leadership in education is a forerunner of later field theory.

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<sup>35</sup>N. W. Polsby, Community Power and Political Theory (Yale University Press, 1963).

<sup>36</sup>F. Hunter, Community Power Structure. A Study of Decision Makers (Doubleday and Co., 1963).

As indicated by Campbell<sup>37</sup> it seems to point to a number of generalizations resulting from the uniqueness of communities, differences in the organization of education systems and schools and conflicting expectations.

- . the administrator is seen in a different light by different interest groups
- . within interest groups there are variations in perceptions
- . leadership tends to reflect community values
- . leadership is faced with conflicting expectations

And, most relevant of all is the generalization that--

- . situational variables which affect administrative behavior have not yet been fully documented

The value of this approach to understanding administrative leadership lies in the fact that it has emphasized factors, in addition to leadership traits, which are considered of importance to leadership performance and are likely to lead to a better appreciation and, perhaps understanding, of what leadership is.

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<sup>37</sup>R. F. Campbell, "Situational Factors in Educational Administration," Administrative Behavior in Education, R. F. Campbell and R. T. Gregg (eds) (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), p. 54.

### An Integrated Approach

This approach endeavors to overcome the limitations of the approaches previously outlined and bridge the gap between traits and situations to explain more effectively administrative performance. The value of an integrated approach is that it sought to explain leadership in terms of individuals (with unique personal qualities) operating in social situations (once again with unique characteristics). It was an attempt to conceptualize about administrative leadership which was regarded as a "totality" comprising personalities in situations and sought to explain leadership in terms of responsibility to a specific organization as well as to society as a whole.

Several theoretical approaches worthy of mention are those of the Middle Atlantic Co-operative Program in Educational Administration Center and the Southern States Co-operative Program in Educational Administration Center.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>CPEA Center, Albany, A Developing Concept of the Superintendency of Education, Resource Manual 1. (Albany, New York: Co-operative Development of Public School Administration, State Education Department, 1955).

The former<sup>39</sup> sought to include all essential elements of educational administration into a three dimensional concept - the job, the man and the social setting. The job included all the tasks and responsibilities relevant to the administration of schools. The man brought to this his beliefs, values, behavior, energy and skills, which helped mold the job while it was molding him.

The social setting covered the pressures and compulsions of society which established the bounds of the job, influenced the thinking of the man and set values by which he adjusted himself and was judged.

#### The Criterion Approach

Criterion measures of leader performance have been based on checklists of agreed upon effective leader practices and the Southern States CPEA project<sup>40</sup> is one of the best known, perhaps because it is distinguished from other theoretical approaches by a value oriented approach to a definition of theory. In many

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<sup>39</sup>Op. cit.

<sup>40</sup>CPEA Center, Nashville, Better Teaching in School Administration (George Peabody College, 1955).

ways it seems to be related to the earlier integrated approach.

The main theme of this approach is known as the competency pattern or concept. This particular measure of successful practice is comprised of three basic elements--the job, the theory and the know how. It was developed through the use of empirical methods, was tested in group discussions and substantiated by the judgments of numerous competent individuals. The job is analyzed into critical areas and effective performance assessed on the basis of an acceptable theory of educational administration. Know-how consists of what is required (in the way of operational beliefs, knowledge and skills) to perform tasks, as enumerated in accordance with directions based on the theory of educational administration. It can be seen that behavior which enables a particular task to be performed in the most desirable manner emphasizes what ought to be - or values.

Halpin<sup>41</sup> worked on a series of school community studies at Ohio State University which classified administrator performance according to two dimensions--initiating structure and consideration.

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<sup>41</sup>A. W. Halpin, The Leader Behavior of School Superintendents (SCDS Series, Ohio State University, 1956).

Subsequently, he developed a model for research into administrative behavior with four basic elements--

- . the organization task
- . administrator behavior
- . variables associated with (2)
- . criteria of administrator effectiveness

### Current Trends

Some of the more promising approaches to the formulation of administrative theory have been attempted--

1. Clarify administrative functions and roles e.g. deliberative, policy making, consultative, adjudicative and conflict-resolving.

2. To have other disciplines contribute to the development of a general theory.

### Clarification of Administrative Roles

Role theory seems to be related to earlier studies of situational variables that affect administrator performance. Campbell<sup>42</sup> outlines the nature of this theory of leadership and implications for administrator effectiveness. He suggests that the situational variables

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<sup>42</sup>Op. cit.

establish an area of tolerance within which relevant action takes place. It becomes necessary then, for the administrator to find some way of developing more unity among the perceptions of individuals and groups involved in specific situations.

The Midwest C.P.E.A. Center proposed an approach based on the work of Getzels and described administration as a social process in which behavior is seen as a function of the institutional and individual dimensions of the social system. Structurally, administration is seen as a hierarchy of subordinate-superordinate relationships within a social system and functionally this hierarchy is the place where roles and facilities are allocated and integrated to achieve the goals of the social system. Three administrative dimensions are postulated--

- . the authority dimension
- . the roles and facilities dimension
- . the affectivity dimension

From the model a series of hypotheses are developed with emphasis on the nature of the human relationship as the crucial factor in the administrative process. The theory advances beyond the earlier work of Coladarci



and Getzels<sup>43</sup> by contributing to a definition of the problem of role conflict as a divisive factor in effective administrative leadership.

Application of Models  
From Other Disciplines

Increasingly popular are attempts to formulate administrative theory on the basis of models derived from other sources such as learning models, personality models, decision making models, group dynamics models, leadership models, game models, social systems models and so on.

The proliferation of models suggests increasing dissatisfaction with traditional approaches and a willingness to explore all possible sources of useful information. It is likely that all models contain an element of truth and they are helpful in broadening the field of inquiry although none in its present formulation is adequate. Game theory, for example, emphasizes the interaction between two or more organizations with similar or competing goals and thus points to the necessity for strategies to deal with external pressures and forces.

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<sup>43</sup>A. P. Coladarci and J. W. Getzels, The Use of Theory in Educational Administration (Stanford University Press, 1955.)

Parson's concept of a social system, as outlined in his earlier works and the Administrative Science Quarterly articles of 1956<sup>44</sup> indicates the importance of an organization requiring "legitimization" or becoming "institutionalized"--the necessity for objectives and values to be socially acceptable (in terms of the relevant societies or publics).

This calls for a concept of authority that extends beyond organizational boundaries. Indeed it is with a concept of administrative leadership developed from aspects of the sociological theory of Parsons that this study is primarily concerned. It is an approach to administration based on those activities considered necessary to the survival of a social system, as contrasted with its maintenance, which introduces a dynamic approach to the problem of survival.

Thus the search for a new approach has led to a discernible shift of emphasis from the enumeration of common sense rule of thumb exhortations through taxonomic classifications of the process of administration to the study of models to determine the principles of administration and the conditions under which the principles are applicable.

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<sup>44</sup>T. Parsons, "Suggestions for a Sociological Approach to the **Theory** of Organizations," Administration Science Quarterly, I, 1956, pp. 63-85, 225-239.

In spite of differences, most current approaches to theory reveal similar underlying themes which may be summarized as follows--

- . a recognition that human behavior is a result of persons in situation
- . an attempt at operational definitions
- . an approach which attempts to predict human behavior under stated conditions so that when compared with actual behavior it can be seen whether they were correct or not.
- . an attempt to develop general propositions that can explain administration behavior in a variety of specific situations
- . an attempt to develop insights and models that use culturally defined values (such as democratic) as variable data rather than as basic assumptions and which predict how administrators will behave, if they happen to be committed to one or another of these values.
- . an attempt to explain the process of administration. This is a sequence which involves process concepts and is important so far as the outcomes of administration activities are concerned.

Thus, modern approaches to administrative theory have further to go if the value of a scientific theory can be regarded as its usefulness in adding to our understanding. However, progress in the development of concepts, of variables which can be defined operationally, which are generalizable and free from value limitations, and which focus on the sources and consequences of human behavior in groups can help to lay

the foundation for further progress in the direction of a more complete theory.

### Weaknesses

Apart from the use of values as assumptions rather than as variables the main weaknesses in administrative theory seem to be in the enumeration of taxonomies dealing with a few aspects of administrative behavior in selected types of administrative situations.

Moreover, there seems to have been an undue emphasis on internal relations and structures to the exclusion of a full realization of the significance of external relations or the interaction between internal and external activities. This may well be where the impetus for administrative change is generated.

A further weakness is the scarcity of testable hypotheses.

As Griffiths<sup>45</sup> points out, theories seem to take two forms--molar or molecular. They attempt to be all inclusive or stress a relatively narrow range of phenomena. Of course, both are valuable with the ultimate objective of the all-inclusive theory. However, this requires a foundation and current attempts

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<sup>45</sup>Op. cit., p. 68.

at theorizing may do best to focus on the relation of molecular theories to one another as a preliminary move towards an all-inclusive theory.

It is hoped that this study will assist in some small way in this process by synthesizing what is appropriate in past studies with current concepts and perhaps by developing a few insights of its own.

## CHAPTER III

### SOCIOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

#### Administration - A Universal Phenomenon

##### The Universality of Administrative Structure

There is no social system which maintains internal order and external relations which does not have an administrative structure--legitimate patterns of interaction by means of which this order and these relations are maintained. The interactions, or the structures, may be differentiated and clearly visible or less visible and intermittent but they exist.

This is not a verbal quibble but a matter of theoretical and operational importance. A classification which postulates systems that possess or do not possess administrative structure may identify administration with the existence of a specialized structure.

However, an adequate analysis of administrative activities must locate and characterize all the relevant functions and not simply those performed by a specialized structure. An emphasis on specialized structure is likely to lead to a stereotyped conception of traditional administrative systems as static systems

concerned with routine management functions. If functions are there, then it is reasonable to assume that the structures are there too although the main concern of this study is with the functions rather than with the structures.

#### The Universality of Administrative Functions

Structural comparison is of only limited utility, like comparative anatomy without a comparative physiology. It is possible to be misled by following structural lines whereas a functional approach leads to more accurate representation of a dynamic process. Such questions as "How are interests articulated in a social system?" open the way to a whole range of interest phenomena in the system.

#### The Administrative System

If the concept of administration is to separate out analytically the administrative functions in all social systems regardless of scale, degree of differentiation, and culture, it will be necessary to specify what is meant by administration, administrative functions and administrative system. If we consult the literature, past and current, for adequate definitions we find considerable variety and some help.

It is proposed that administration is a system of interactions to be found in all social systems which is concerned with critical decisions related to system functions of integration, adaptation, pattern maintenance and goal attainment. Although concerned primarily with policy, the administrative leader is interested also in the organization and coordination of a complex and dynamic system to carry out policy decisions. There are inputs into the system and outputs from the system and with these concepts we move from a definition of administration as a certain set of interactions in a social system, as compared to other sets, to administrative system since to this set of interactions is attributed such properties as:

- . comprehensiveness
- . interdependence
- . existence of boundaries

#### The Administrative Process as Concerned with Behavior

No one way of conceptualizing any major area of human behavior will do full justice to all its variety and complexity. Each particular type of theoretical orientation tends to bring to light its own set of problems, provide unique insights and emphasis and thus makes it possible for alternative



and even competing theories to be equally and simultaneously useful, although often for quite different purposes.

The conceptual orientation suggested in this study--a social systems approach with particular reference to functional imperatives is one that originates from a decision to view the administrative process as a system of behavior, as concerned with those activities of a social system essential to survival. It is based on ideas developed by Easton (see bibliography) in connection with political systems.

#### Functional Approach - An Overview

It is built upon the following general premises:

1. System. It is useful to view a system as an organized set of interactions for a specific purpose.

2. Environment. A system is distinguishable from the environment in which it exists and open to influences from it.

3. Functional imperatives. Those critical activities concerned with the survival of a social system and identified as goal attainment, pattern, maintenance, adaptation and integration. The tasks of leadership are to make decisions in these areas in the interests of system survival.

4. Response. Variations in the structures and processes within a system may usefully be interpreted as alternative efforts by members of a system to regulate or cope with pressures originating from environmental as well as internal sources.

5. Feedback. The ability of a system to survive in face of pressures is a function of the presence and nature of the information and other influences that return to its actors and decision makers.

The approach of this study takes its departure from the idea of a social system as a boundary maintaining set of intereactions embedded in and surrounded by other social systems to the influence of which it is constantly exposed. A social system is an open system, one that must cope with the problems generated by its exposure to influences from other environmental systems. But it may also include efforts to modify old goals or transform them entirely as simple adaptation may not be enough.

By conceptualizing a social system as an open system distinct from its environment it is possible to consider a range of matters otherwise difficult to pin down. The kinds of exchanges that such a system has with its environment and the way in which the members of the system respond to these exchanges can be considered.

From this perspective an analysis of the functional imperatives of a social system as a basis for considering leadership in the administrative process seems to develop most rewardingly when it is endeavored to understand the processes through which a social system is able to cope with the various pressures placed upon it.

The essentials, then, by way of concepts that need to be understood for the analysis of administrative leadership in a framework of functional imperatives of a social system are system, environment, functional imperatives, response and feedback, the latter two particularly as administrative leadership is a dynamic rather than a static process.

### Systems

It is not proposed to raise the question, apart from mentioning it briefly in passing, as to when any set of interactions may be conceived as forming a system.

Where selected aspects of social life are relevant and show some degree of interdependence we can say that we have a useful system from the point of view of understanding the way in which social systems are likely to operate.

While logically we are free to include within the selected system any range of actions at all through experience, insight and wisdom it has become apparent that, given the kind of questions to which answers are being sought, the observer will probably not be able to resolve them without considering a specified set of variables. It is likely that these will fall somewhere within a range of phenomena with respect to the relevance of which most students of the selected system would agree. These comprise a natural system in the sense that they appear to cohere significantly. Without them it does not appear likely on a priori grounds that an adequate explanation of the major aspects of the system could be obtained. The interconnectedness of the variables seems clear and obvious, at least until dispelled by subsequent inquiry. Concepts then are neither true nor false; they are only more or less useful.

#### Theoretical Status

Regardless of whether a social system is an artificial construct of the mind or a symbolic reproduction of natural phenomena it cannot be taken for granted that all systems share typical elements which are readily known. It is not a matter of the characteristics that differentiate one type of system from another but rather of basic elements of which all systems are composed.

It is useful then to consider systems of behavior as analytic. Some are more differentiated, specific and integrated for a limited purpose; these can be called organizations--systems of roles and structures defined as corporate structures. Others are diffuse and undifferentiated, enmeshed in other analytical kinds of interactions. But regardless of the structural expression of behavior, all systems can usefully be conceived as abstractions from reality, empirically relevant but isolating only a part of the phenomenal world.

It remains to isolate the critical administrative variables for inclusion within the range of interest of this study.

#### The Identification

The premises adopted with regard to the characteristics of systems are two-fold--

- . any set of variables may be selected to represent the system under consideration
- . society, as the most inclusive social system is the only one that covers all the social interactions of the biological persons concerned. Every other social system isolates only some aspects of total behavior and must therefore be analytic in nature

So far as this study is concerned the interactions comprising any system less than the total social system are interpreted as a system conceptually distinct from other systems in a society. Those interactions that fall outside a system may be designated

as the environment in which the system under discussion exists. This implies that there is some kind of boundary between different kinds of systems and their environment. This enables us to talk of exchanges or transactions that take place between a system and its environment. Any attempt at detailed theory would need to identify these exchanges and account for the way in which a system manages to cope with the problems they create for its persistence.

It would be impossible to conceptualize an open and self-regulating system unless it were feasible analytically and empirically to distinguish such a system from its total environment. If a specified system is to be distinguished from other kinds of systems several questions require consideration:

1. What is included within the system and how are we to identify it?

2. What is meant by speaking about a boundary between analytic systems?

3. What is to be excluded from a system, to be interpreted as part of its environment?

4. And, most important of all in terms of this paper, are there any features common to all social systems, that can be identified as constituting an administrative system and if so, what are they?

### Criteria for Identification of an Administrative System

Identifying those interactions in society which are regarded as a component of an administrative system is a critical step in examining the dynamics of administrative life since this establishes the kinds of behavior that will be omitted. It is important to omit no essential elements that may help to account for the way administrative systems function; otherwise the purpose for isolating them will have been defeated. Yet, as has been indicated, any attempt to study cannot include all phenomena and a simplification introduces the possibility that some important factors may have been excluded.

This is inevitable as there is no guide as to what elements are to be included in an administrative system apart from anticipated explanatory power. However, this is an "ex post facto" kind of test, providing little advance guidance.

### Interactions as the Units of a System

The traditional study of administration behavior has characterized administration in many ways. These are not rejected because they are wrong since it is likely that they each contain an element of truth but

it is considered that they are less useful at our present level of knowledge than the alternative presented.

In its broadest context the study of administration as compared and contrasted with economic, religious, political or other aspects of life, can be described as a set of social interactions on the part of individuals and groups. Interactions are the basic unit of analysis. This means that a study of particular structures, formal or informal, through which administrative interactions manifest themselves is of secondary importance and will not receive systematic attention on the assumption that there are certain basic administrative activities and processes characteristic of all administrative systems even though the structural forms through which they manifest themselves may, and do, vary considerably from place to place and time to time.

This stress on the processes of administrative interactions gives a dynamic character to administrative behavior not evident in the study of forms or patterns of administrative behavior. Furthermore what distinguishes administrative interactions from all other kinds of interactions is that they are predominantly oriented towards the making of critical decisions



concerned with the survival of a system (either explicitly or implicitly).

Administrative research thus endeavors to understand that system of interactions in any social system through which critical decisions are made and implemented. This is not merely the quantity of decisions, plus the efficiency with which they are put into effect, as postulated by some writers on administration. It includes also the ends of these decisions considered both as purpose and as process, with an emphasis on critical as contrasted with routine decisions.

### Summary

An administrative system is identified as a set of interactions abstracted from the totality of social behavior through which decisions (critical decisions) relevant to the survival of a social system are made. This conceptualization of administrative behavior as a system necessitates the identification of the general elements of the system and a description of what lies outside it.

### Parsonian Theory Weaving

Before proceeding, however, to a more detailed consideration of concepts it will be advantageous to

outline Parson's approach to a theory of social system within the framework of action since it seems to provide one useful and comprehensive theoretical background against which to consider the process of leadership in administration and is the point of departure for this study. The system with which Parson is concerned is the social system at the societal level. However, society as a whole is composed of individuals and groups. It is an aggregate of people making up a given social body, interacting in groups and associations, structured along the various social and institutional lines, yet shaped by the force of common understandings that have become accepted (i.e. culture) to create a functional whole.

The question which then arises (in terms of such sociocultural morphology) is one of the maintenance and perpetuation of the whole. It is argued that the purpose of society is its own preservation. But this is to anticipate. Parson's concepts are seen as applicable to subsystems, such as organizations and institutions within society, and it is with the development of propositions from his concept of the functional imperatives of a social system that this study is primarily concerned.

What are the general truths about individual and social behavior which Parsons takes to be established and recognizes in his system? They may be stated simply, as in Black's book<sup>1</sup> as--

1. All human action is directed towards goals.
2. All human action is relational in the sense of being a function of needs, acquired orientations and a particular situation. Orientations are acquired pre-dispositions to respond in certain ways to given stimuli and these are largely the products of the goals and standards of the social system to which the individual belongs.
3. All human responses to stimuli has two distinct dimensions--the cognitive and what he calls the cathectic. This is a distinction between thinking or perceiving and feeling. The former involves truth or falsity and the latter satisfaction or dissatisfaction.
4. All human action involves selection between alternative orientations and responses. Deciding is called evaluation.
5. Selection involves the use of standards, which are rules or prescriptions for making choices.

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<sup>1</sup>M. Black (ed.) The Social Theories of Talcott Parsons.- A Critical Examination (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1961).

6. All interaction involves complementarity of expectations, which means that the action of each is oriented to the expectations of the other.

7. Orientations and actions are organized in systems which are boundary and structure maintaining. This means that they resist external attack and exercise internal control over components .

8. Action is particularly concerned with the control and direction of behavior and the structure and processes through which that control is implemented.

9. These principles apply equally to social systems of all levels of complexity, up to and including total society, as well as to individuals.

As Black also points out, these may well appear as laymen's concepts in the thin disguise of technical terminology and would seem to receive general approval when stated as such.

1. Whenever you do anything you are trying to get something done.

2. What you do depends on what you want, how you look at things, and the position you find yourself in.

3. You can't do anything without thinking and having feelings at the same time.

4. Human life is one long set of choices.

5. Choosing means taking what seems best for you or what others say is the right thing.

6. When you deal with other people, you always have to take account of what they expect you to do.

7. There is a lasting pattern to the way people behave.

8. Action is directed towards the control and direction of behavior.

9. Families, business firms and other groups of persons often behave surprisingly like individuals.

Whether laymen's concepts or sociologists' abstractions is of little concern here since they are accepted as assumptions of a general theory of action and form the background of the sociological theory on which this paper is based. They provide a useful starting point for a consideration of the functional imperatives of a social system.

In essence, the functional approach does no more than to effect an analysis of the components of a society and to seek a description of the ways in which these are interrelated. It seeks to determine the place of a particular element of culture or societal institutions in relation to others. The question may then be posed as to whether this particular element leads to or assists in the preservation of the social entity in which it appears. The approach has been

refined over time and centered on the kinds of integration operative in a society and the building of models of a given sociocultural system. This latter approach has become known as that of structure-function.

Structure implies some form of integration or cohesion and analysis of integration as a process provides an interesting aspect of contemporary research in administration. Every social system possesses what may be termed functional imperatives, forms necessary to its preservation. Granted that a social system succeeds in meeting these needs, and its existence is witness to the fact that it has, the administrative leader is interested in the improvement of integration in the interest of effectiveness. But this is only one aspect of the problem.

In a modern world and unquestionably through time, every social system is confronted with the problem of change. This leads to the issue of the functional as opposed to the dysfunctional. Change is an important issue and it is likely that through the kinds of analysis made possible by a functional systems approach some answers may be provided. Functionalism then helps to provide an approach by which problems and data can be defined, ordered and possibly brought closer to solution.

Not all phases of the structure and functioning of social systems are considered. The primary concern is with those activities of organized social systems essential to survival and hence necessitating the attention of leadership.

If a functional framework is to provide the basis for useful description, explanation and approach, care must be taken to define crucial concepts.

### Some Definitions

Role is the normatively regulated behavior of a member of a social system.

A structure is a pattern of interrelated roles, and a corporate structure (Parsons collectivity) is a structure that can be identified in terms of its membership and which has a central decision making apparatus that enables it to act purposively as a group. It is, along with the role, one of the basic units of the social system.

A society -- a type of organization -- is a system of action that is --

- . composed of a number of interacting individuals who are primarily oriented to this system
- . theoretically self-sufficient for the actions of the group
- . is capable of existing longer than the life span of the individuals

From any society there can be abstracted two societal systems--a social system and a cultural system.

The social system is the system of interdependent roles and corporate structures of the society and focuses on the conditions involved in the interactions of individuals in groups or collectivities with a specified membership.

The cultural system is the system of interrelated beliefs and values and focuses on patterns of meaning (values, norms, organized knowledge, beliefs, etc.)

The basic concept for the integration of the two is that of institutionalization. This is the process of infusion with value. It is the integration of cultural pattern elements at the level of norms and values with elements of the motivational systems of individuals in such ways as to define and support structured systems of social interaction.

Functional requisites or imperatives are operational conditions that must be satisfied if the system is to continue to exist. They are activities essential to the survival of the system.

### Functional Imperatives

Essential to the approach of this study is the postulation of the functional imperatives of the system



under consideration. Parsons states that any social system has four functional imperatives and it is useful to adopt this conceptualization. They are pattern maintenance and tension management, goal attainment, adaptation and integration. These are significant in that they control the action processes of a social system.

### Pattern Maintenance

Every social system exists in an environment that has a nonhuman component, a cultural component and a social component.

One of the functional requisites of the social system is the preservation of the values of the cultural system through the maintenance of conformity to its prescriptions. Thus, the focus of pattern maintenance is in values and the essential function is the maintenance of values. There are two aspects to this--

- . the character of this value pattern
- . their state of institutionalization

Three major processes are involved in pattern maintenance:

1. major values must be passed on from one generation to another

2. a social control process is concerned with the application of sanctions for violations of the prescriptions of the value system.

3. a tension management process attempts to prevent the development of situations that increase the probability that large numbers of members will violate basic norms.

So far as the individual in a social system is concerned, pattern maintenance is his motivation to act in accordance with certain value patterns. This means their internalization in the structure of his personality. A central problem of control, so far as the motivation of the individual is concerned, is that of the processes by which the values of a social system are internalized in his personality. Of course, values are subject to change and the important fact is that potential disruption at this point is great even if it is orderliness in the process of change.

#### Goal Attainment

The cultural system specifies a set of goals for the social system as a whole. These goals are sets of desired relationships between the system and its environment. The environment relevant for goal attainment includes aspects of the cultural system,

the material environment, and other societies. As the environment is continually changing goals are not terminal states of being that can be finally achieved but rather a cluster of on-going activities. They are specific to a situation and any complex system has a series of goals and this necessitates some priority to protect the integrity of the system.

A goal is a change which tends to reduce the difference between the needs of the system and the conditions in the external situation that are relevant to the fulfillment of such needs.

Goal attainment becomes a problem insofar as the gap between the tendencies of a system toward stability and its needs resulting from interchange with the situation is too great.

The focus of goal attainment lies in its relationship to the personalities of the members of the system. It does not concern commitment to the values of the system but rather motivation to contribute what is necessary for the functioning of the system.

In order to maintain desired relationships with the environment it is necessary to have resources and thus the most significant process related to goal attainment is the process of mobilizing resources for a cooperative effort.

### Adaptation

Resources must be mobilized before they can be used in support of system goals. They must be available to be mobilized. The adaptive function involves the activities that provide these facilities and resources. It is concerned with the relationships between the social system and its nonhuman environment--relationships that are relevant to the supply of resources which can be used to realize the goals of the system as a whole or those of any of its sub-units.

The processes that are relevant to the satisfaction of the adaptive function are those typically associated with economics--processes of production, resource allocation and resource management.

### Integration

All of the activities necessary if the functional requirements of a system are to be satisfied cannot be carried on by each individual member of it. There are differences in the role that various individuals occupy. Since differentiated roles are likely to be interdependent provisions must be made for their integration. Thus one of the functional requisites of the social system is to provide for the integration of interdependent units--roles and structures--in it. This is the mutual adjustment of the sub-units (individuals and groups) within a system from the point of view of their contributions to the effective functioning of the

system as a whole. This, in turn, concerns their relation to the problem of pattern maintenance, as well as to the external situation through processes of goal attainment and adaptation.

The integrative function is the focus of a system's most distinctive properties and processes.

### A Model

The accompanying diagram adopted from Holt<sup>2</sup> is an aid to understanding this particular statement of functional imperatives. It indicates that three of the four requisites are specifically concerned with interaction between the social system and its complex environment.

The adaptive requisite is concerned with the relations between the social system and its nonhuman environment.

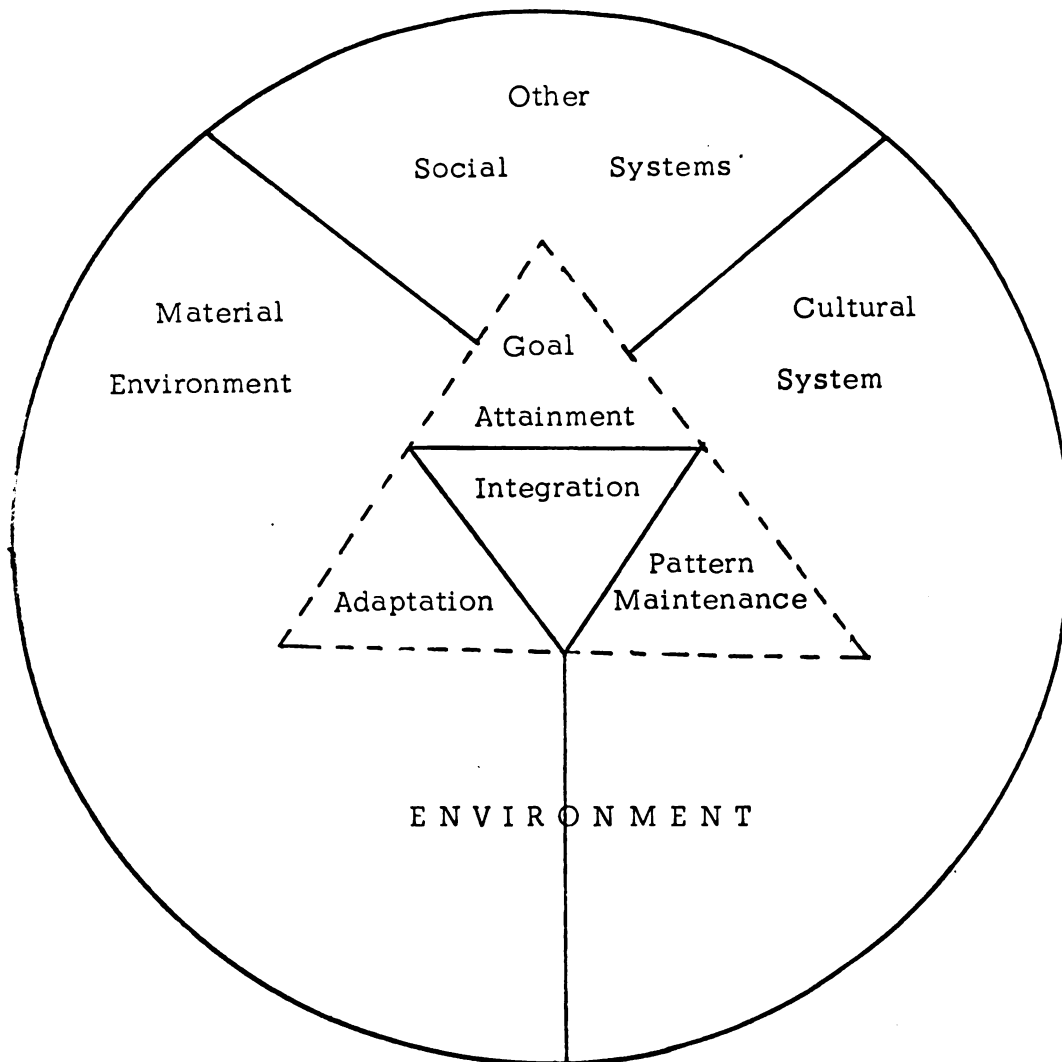
The pattern maintenance requisite involves relationships with the cultural environment-relevant aspects of the cultural system.

The goal attainment requisite is concerned with relations with specific aspects of these two environments plus relations with other societies.

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<sup>2</sup>The American Academy of Political and Social Sciences, February, 1965, p. 96.

# FUNCTIONAL IMPERATIVES OF A SOCIAL SYSTEM



An organization, considered as a small social system, within its environment.

It will be seen that for purposes of analysis the environment can be divided and that three of the four functional imperatives operate directly with it.

Adopted from Holt, R.T.  
A Proposed Structural-Functional  
Framework for Political Science. p.96.

The integration requisite is primarily concerned with the internal problem of coordination of differentiated but interdependent roles.

This formulation specifically identifies the different environments within which a social system operates, and indicates the functional requisite that is primarily concerned with changes occurring in one or another of these environments.

As Blau and Scott<sup>3</sup> point out in a summary of Parsons working papers in The Theory of Action, this schema has sufficient generality to be applicable to all social systems and obvious relevance to organizations as corporate structures.

all social systems must solve four basic problems: (1) adaptation: the accommodation of the system to the reality demands of the environment coupled with the active transformation of the external situation; (2) goal achievement: the defining of objectives and the mobilization of resources to attain them; (3) integration: establishing and organizing a set of relations among the member units of the system that serve to coordinate and unify them into a single entity; and (4) latency: the maintenance over time of the system's motivational and cultural patterns. This scheme has sufficient generality to be applicable to all social systems . . . .

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<sup>3</sup>P. M. Blau and W. R. Scott, Formal Organizations (Chandler Publishing Co., 1962) p. 38-39.

Each formal organization may be viewed as a social system in its own right that must possess its own set of subsystems concerned with the solution of the four basic problems. Accordingly, each organization must have structures that enable it to adapt to its environment and mobilize the resources required for its continued functioning. Mechanisms are also required to enable the organization to implement its goals, including structures devoted to specification of objectives, to allocation of resources within the organization to "production," and to distribution. To solve its integrative problems the organization must find ways to command the loyalties of its members to motivate their effort, and to coordinate the operations of its various segments. Finally, institutions must be developed to cope with the latency problem, that is, to promote consensus on the values that define and legitimate the organization's goals. All organizations are faced with these problems. However, the particular structures devised to meet them will vary with the type of organization under consideration.

### Summary

A social system is a going concern, an impersonal system of coordinated human efforts and influences in which a specific purpose provides the coordinating and unifying principle. Its continuance depends upon its ability to carry out its purpose. Its various parts form an interdependent and interactive whole because each is related to every other part included in it in a significant way. Moreover, it is also related to its environment.



Accordingly, any permanent and far-reaching change, whether generated from internal or external forces, is likely to have wider implications than for the social system primarily affected.

Structurally, a social system is a pattern of interrelated roles and collectivities governed by accepted social values and norms.

Functionally, it is within the patterns of activity required to coordinate and integrate the static and dynamic activities of social systems that the administration process operates to assist in achieving the goals of a particular social system and that administrative leadership is evidenced.

It is now proposed to consider a social system within the context of its environment and the next chapter summarizes relevant ideas developed by Easton in his studies on political systems (see bibliography).

## CHAPTER IV

### SYNTHESIS OF CONCEPTS

#### The Environment of a System

An open-ended system means that there are boundaries of some kind that distinguish the system from whatever is not included in it. If this is so it is useful to be able to indicate the nature of the boundary, which is not always clearly distinguishable, that tells us when something is happening in the environment and not the system under consideration. Moreover, once the idea of boundary maintaining systems is introduced it is reasonable to assume that when something happens in the environment it may influence the social system. An exchange will have taken place across the boundaries of the two systems.

The significance of system boundaries is that it will aid in simplifying, interpreting and understanding the way in which changes in the environment are communicated to a system and the way in which a system seeks to cope with these influences. This would mean that although many changes in a given system may be owing to internal factors, other significant

kinds of stress may derive from the fact that a system is open to influences from its environment. This seems a more logical and obvious interpretation than one which accounts for what happens in a system solely in terms of its internal activities (as a closed system).

Thus, once the idea of an open system is entertained it requires a clarification of the meaning conveyed by the idea of a system as distinct from its environment. To say that a system is open to outside influences makes sense only if we can distinguish inside from outside and this necessitates an examination of the properties of the assumed boundary that separates the two. It necessitates also the development of concepts that enables an analysis of the exchanges between a system and its environment. The idea of inputs and outputs seems valuable for this purpose and this idea of exchanges or flows of effect would make little sense apart from boundaries across which such transactions took place.

Furthermore, the adoption of boundaries as a concept will also help to simplify reality by providing a criterion for determining which important elements of the social system under consideration need to be explored in depth as major dependent variables and which may be accepted as given in the form of external independent variables.

For systems not defined by spatial or material limits with regard to other systems, and in which there may be considerable interlacing of behavior from different systems other ways of describing and identifying boundaries are required. They can then be identified by the criteria in terms of which we can determine for each interaction whether it falls inside or outside the system.

For an administrative system the test is whether the interactions are more or less directly related to critical decisions concerned with the survival of a social system.

A boundary once established is by no means fixed. If lack of insight or mistaken interpretation requires the inclusion of elements previously excluded to improve understanding of the social system under consideration then the system is simply redefined to meet analytic needs.

Those aspects of society that fall outside the boundaries of a social system can be categorized by stating that they consist of all the other sub-systems of the society. They constitute the environment of the system and this embraces the social as well as the physical environment. It should be noted that what

happens to a social system, its stability or change, will in a large part be the function of the operation of internal variables, an element in administration which leaders have been concerned with understanding and explaining since they provide in a large measure what have been seen as the critical concerns of leadership. However, the way in which they function, the stresses imposed upon them and the behavior that occurs as a response to such stress will also be a product of what takes place in the total environment of the system. It is desirable then to try and systematize the relationships between a system and its environment, since systems are open in the sense that they are exposed, in varying degrees, to the events that occur in their environment. The concepts boundary and environment help to order an analysis.

#### Progressive Summary

To date then it has been possible to specify the nature of a system, identify functions essential to survival and call attention to the easily neglected setting in which a system must exist. It is now necessary to consider the social system as a responding system.

### Persistence in a World of Stability and Change

As indicated a social system is an open-ended system, which exists in an environment and is exposed to what happens there. It is a responding system and this has important implications for administrative leadership. It consists of a set of behaviors through which positive action may be taken to cope with the influences operating on it.

### System Persistence

A social system through responding actions is capable of persisting even in a world of rapid change. It is important then for administrative leadership to examine the way in which the life processes of social systems are protected. This is broader than the question of specific systems being able to cope with problems and survive.

How is it that in spite of continuing pressure, from within or without, cooperation, commitment of resources and energies and obedience to authority are possible?

Without these conditions binding decisions could not be formulated or put into effect and no social system could persist no matter what particular structure

or form it might take. Of interest then are such questions as: How does a social system operate? What are the forces determining the nature and outcomes of the various processes and structures through which policy decisions are formulated and put into effect? Of more interest, however, are such questions as the persistence of the policy making processes and structures themselves. What are the life processes of any and all systems?

This involves an examination of general processes, common to all social structures, through which threats to the integrity of the system might be handled. It directs attention to the life processes of social systems rather than to the specific structures or processes that make a particular kind of system viable. Such matters are significant to an understanding of administrative leadership. They suggest that if we are to understand the way in which a system persists over time, one of the legitimate concerns of leadership, we must consider what is meant by persistence, stress and responses to it.

### Sources of Stress

Stress is just as likely to stem from the constant daily pressures of social life as from special crises. There are internal strains to which any system is typically and normally subjected and external changes that need to be absorbed.

The most significant and recurring internal sources of strain concern control over political instrumentalities--an effective voice in establishing the basic policy arrangements or the particular objectives and goals within an already existing structure.

The nature and range of external problems that have been thrust upon social systems is likely to alter radically over the years. It is not the nature of these problems that is of most concern but the fact of their existence and the necessity for leadership to recognize problems arising from an accelerated rate of change and take appropriate action. Upon their skill in devising policies and structures to cope with it depends effective survival. Conflict in a social system generated by environmental influences usually concerns such problems as the nature of the system, the personnel who are to hold positions of authority or the policies they ought to pursue.

#### Meaning of Persistence

An examination of the problem of how some social systems have managed to persist while others have disappeared leads to a consideration of the fundamental life processes of social systems. Before this, however, an understanding of what is meant by persistence



is useful. Briefly stated, persistence includes change, but a continued existence in some form. It does not mean absolute stability, continued existence without any change at all. This might be possible if the environment showed no changes or if the system could protect itself from every disturbance in its environment as well as from internally generated pressures on its structures and processes. In the long run, both possibilities are unlikely and persistence is not incompatible with change. Even in the short run, in most cases, if a system is to persist it must be able to change or adapt to fluctuating circumstances.

Thus, persistence by virtue of change, is not as puzzling as may appear at first sight. It means that the cost of survival of some means for dealing with pressures may require the acceptance of change in one or all of the significant aspects of a social system, depending upon the circumstances. The members must be capable of modifying their system, as necessary, with respect to its scope, membership, structure and processes, goals, or rules of behavior or they must be able to manipulate their environment so as to relieve the stress. A system then, needs the capacity to adapt through self-transformation or

manipulation of the environment. The persistence of patterns of interaction capable of meeting fundamental commitments requires that the members engaging in this activity be able to adapt, correct, readjust, control or modify the system or its parameters to cope with the problems created by internal or external stress. Obviously, there are variable means at hand for this purpose, limited only by the resources, the traditions, the ingenuity of its members and their available skills. Self-regulation by the members of a system, including even self-transformation in structure and goals, represents a critical concern of leadership.

The actual transformations that do occur, and are successful in ensuring the persistence of a system, may also be of various types since various policies, structures and innovations are available. The capacity to adapt does not indicate that a specific successful way of doing so is normally better or worse than any other.

#### Persistence Vs. Maintenance

Since persistence includes the idea of change it is worth differentiating this concept from that of the maintenance of a system.

Maintenance, as normally used, is associated with the idea of stability and is somewhat alien to the idea of change. It seems to be associated with the idea of salvaging the existing pattern of relationships and directs attention to their preservation. Persistence emphasizes the importance of the life processes of a system rather than any particular structure or pattern. This study is more interested in an explanation of the capacities of a system to persist, since the maintenance of a particular kind of system so far as a set of structures and processes is concerned, is far less important to leadership than perpetuation of the basic functions of the system.

Persistence is wider than system maintenance. It is concerned with exploring change as well as stability. Of course, it may be more necessary for some systems than others to behave adaptively, and more important at certain times than others. Moreover, all systems are not equally successful in doing so. It is maintained that leadership is most effective where it comes to expect change even though it is unpredictable and indeed in a modern social system specialized attention to the elements involved in persistence is one of the critical concerns of leadership.

### Disturbance and Stress

Disturbances may be regarded as all those activities in the environment or within a system that can be expected to, or do, displace the system from its current pattern of operations and threaten to prevent it from functioning. They will vary greatly in number, variety and consequence--only being stressful to the extent that they affect the chances of the social system to persist.

It is assumed that for a specific type of system there is a normal pattern of operation and that stress is variation from this normal range of operation. Implied in the idea of a system operating within a normal range, beyond which stress may push it is the idea that there are certain essential variables that are being displaced beyond their normal range. The significant point is the essential variables that characterize a social system.

In examining the identifying variables of a particular type of system we tend to operate on the assumption that it is possible to distinguish two different aspects of a system. One identifies those aspects of a system that enable it to operate in a characteristic way and that thereby distinguish it fundamentally from other systems. However, the

persistence of a given type of system requires more than the presence of essential variables. They need to operate above a certain level. If disturbances displace the system beyond this critical range the system will change its character.

The second aspect, or nonessential features, of a system may change without altering the characteristic mode of operation of the system. Essential variables then are the indicators of stress.

A distinction between variables essential to the characteristic mode of operation of a system and those that are of secondary importance and recognition that the former operate within normal ranges is helpful in endeavoring to describe stress. It can be more fully defined as a condition that occurs when disturbances, internal or external in origin, threaten to displace the essential variables of a system beyond their normal range and toward some critical limit, thereby preventing it from operating in its characteristic way.

#### The Essential Variables of a Social System

Since the primary focus of this study is not on the persistence of particular types of systems it is necessary to establish the essential variables, not

of a given type of system, but of any and all systems.

The patterns of interaction essential to the existence of a social system have been identified as activities concerning goal attainment, pattern maintenance, adaptation and integration. It is through the presence of activities that fulfill these basic functions that a social system can commit the resources and energies of its membership. It is these that are the essential variables or sets of variables that characterize social systems.

Accordingly, its behavior related to the capacity to make decisions for the system related to these major variables that is a critical concern of leadership. From this point of view all other variables may be considered non-essential or incidental.

The operation of essential variables need not be an all-or-nothing matter. A system may be more or less able to make decisions, put them into effect and get them accepted. The behavior involved varies on a range of effectiveness and within that normal range a system may be able to persist. Similarly, where leadership is fully capable of making decisions and of seeking to implement them, compliance will vary on a continuum.

Obviously the ratio of rejection to acceptance must fall within a limited range well above that of chance; otherwise a system would collapse for want of sufficient authority being attached to its decisions.

### Stress and Its Regulation

Persistence in a changing world will thus be found to be in part a function of the presence of stressful disturbances. These cannot always be avoided and the consequences of these disturbances on the fortunes of the system itself (whether it survives and in what form) will depend upon its capacity and readiness to cope with such stress.

It is a critical property of social systems that they are able to respond to the influences acting upon them. They can cope with such disturbances and seek to regulate them in some way. The members of a social system do not need to sit back and accept stress supinely, a concept implied in equilibrium analysis as a theory of social life and characteristic of much sociological theory over the past half century.

The fact that social systems have techniques for coping with stress distinguishes them markedly from other kinds of systems and gives them flexibility. The kinds of regulative responses that characterize all systems are:

1) preservation of the status quo by insulation from change

2) control of environmental and internal changes so that they do not become stressful

3) adaptation to change

This last response of social systems--the capacity to transform themselves, their goals, their practices, and the structures of their internal organization is significant. To keep vital processes alive, a system may remodel its structures and processes to the point that they are unrecognizable.

Of importance is the presence of a capacity to use a variety of responses in defense of essential variables. It should be emphasized that the selection of alternatives from the available responses is not necessarily given. Not only is there freedom to select from a range of alternative strategies but in many systems an opportunity to vary strategies within the limits permitted by circumstances and to devise new methods for meeting crises, old and new. In the latter case they will be adding to their store of responses through innovation. This process of adaptation then becomes a constructive and creative task based on goals and direction.



Although it is beyond the scope of this study to consider the major types of stress to which social systems are exposed or the way systems typically handle stress it is of value to define concepts for analyzing the way in which disturbances influence a system.

### Stability and Change

Whether a system exists in a constantly changing environment or a stable one, the elements of the environment continue to exert an effect upon its operation. The analysis of the effect of a stable environment on a system poses the same problems as in the case of rapidly changing ones, even though the rate of change may have important additional consequences. The recent concern of social science with problems of change has at least pointed to the fact that any general theory of change, to be considered adequate, must be able to handle change as well as stability. It is maintained that stability is only a special example of change since there are no social situations in which the patterns of interaction are absolutely unchanging. Stability then, represents a condition in which the rate of change is slow enough to create no special problems as a result of change. Similarly, rapid change is another special case in which the rate is high enough

to create special consequences of which it is necessary to take note.

Any attempt to point to a conceptual framework should be able to cope with both special cases since the object is to develop categories useful for identifying the major variables involved in the functioning of a system rather than a special set for special cases.

#### A System--Its Environment and Linkage Variables

It is clear then, that,

1. A great variety of environmental influences are capable of disturbing the way in which a system carries out its tasks.

2. These influences are present whether the environment is relatively stable or fluctuating widely.

How is it possible to systematize our understanding of the way in which disturbances or influences from the environment are transferred to a social system?

Is it possible to generalize a method of handling the impact of the environment on a system by reducing the great variety of influences into a few and hence a manageable number of indicators or variables?

Influence Across System Boundaries

Since a system is regarded as a boundary-maintaining, open-ended system it is useful to consider the disturbances or influences resulting from behavior in other environmental systems as exchanges or transactions that cross these boundaries. Social systems are not completely independent of one another and complex interpenetration occurs.

Exchange is a useful term to use when referring to a reciprocal relationship or influence. Transaction is best used to refer to the movement of an effect in one direction--across the boundary from one system to another.

This appears quite obvious and is of little practical use unless of some assistance in reducing the variety of interactions to manageable proportions. With this in mind, it seems reasonable to designate the effects that are transmitted across the boundary of a system toward some other system as the outputs of the first and the inputs of the second. A transaction between systems then is a linkage between them in the form of an input-output relationship. Through examining these it should be possible to understand more fully the potential impact of environmental events on the system.

By applying the concept of the points of linkage between a system and its environment it is possible to develop a model of the type illustrated in Diagram 2, based on that of Easton.<sup>1</sup> This obviously oversimplifies reality but at least clarifies the essential framework and dispenses with incidental relationships--both important if there is to be an effective inquiry into a system of behavior.

The diagram of the functioning of a social system indicates, as Easton<sup>2</sup> points out:

1) That what is happening in the environment affects the system through the kinds of influences that flow into it.

2) Through its structure and processes the system then acts on these inputs in such a way that they are converted into outputs.

3) The outputs return to the environment, and its constituent systems and through it back upon the system itself.

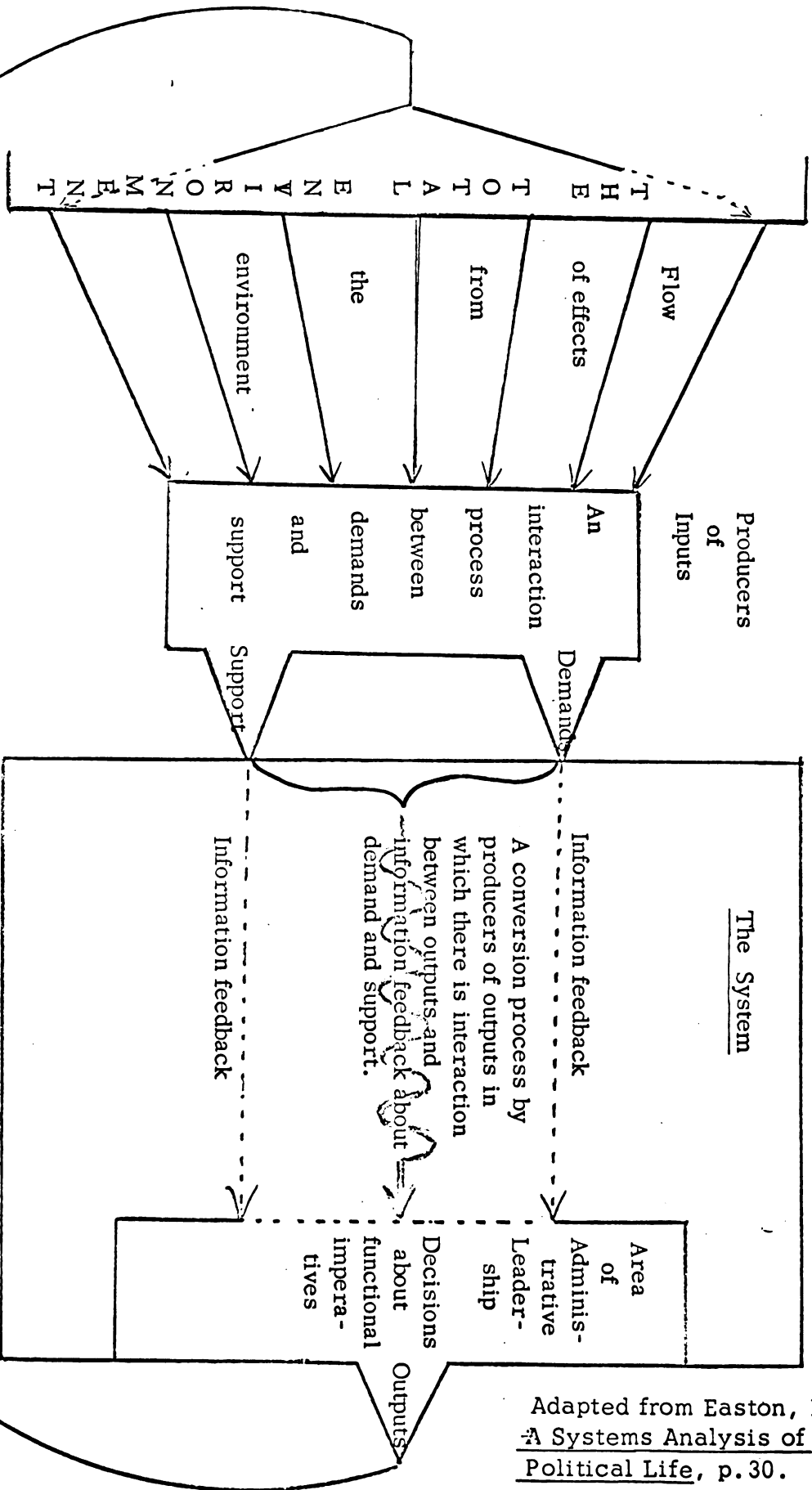
4) The arrows from the environments indicate a great variety of transactions between them and the system.

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<sup>1</sup>D. Easton, A Systems Analysis of Political Life (John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1965), p. 30.

<sup>2</sup>D. Easton, A Framework for Political Analysis (Prentice-Hall, 1965), p. 110.

# THE RESPONDING SOCIAL SYSTEM



Adapted from Easton, D.,  
A Systems Analysis of  
Political Life, p.30.

5) The reciprocal nature of these exchanges between the system and its environment is indicated by the fact that the demands and support inputs feeding into the system are worked upon and converted into outputs which flow into environmental systems.

6) The dotted lines in the environmental systems indicates the dynamics of the relationship between the system and the environment. By modifying the environment, system outputs can influence the effects that move from the environment to the system. In this way a continuous feedback loop can be identified.

7) The structures and processes through which a system converts its inputs into outputs are represented as a wavy line within the system.

8) The dotted lines within the system represent the dynamics of the process of integration.

#### Inputs - As Indicators

The value of the concept of inputs is that it can be used to cover the effect of the great variety of events and conditions in the environment that are relevant to the persistence of a system. Without this it would be difficult to indicate in any precise way how behavior in the various sections of society affects what happens in any specific sub-section of it.

There are two inputs--demands and support--and through them the extensive range of changes in the environment may be channeled, reflected, and summarized. Thus they are indicators of the way in which environmental events and conditions modify and affect the operations of a system. As indicated in Diagram 2, page 107, multiple transactions are refined into these two major inputs, which bridge and link the social system with all other intra-and extra-societal systems.

It is not to be assumed that all the influences or disturbances that need to be considered in how a system manages to persist occur in the environment of the system. As has been indicated already, many of these influences may occur within a system itself. Happenings within a system shape its destinies as a system of interactions and it is proposed that these are the inputs of the members of the system. Since inputs have been used to cover those events occurring outside the system rather than in it they should logically be called something else--possibly withinputs. For convenience, however, it is possible to treat, in a unified way the effects that events and conditions both within a system and without a system may have upon its persistence as inputs. Withinputs as intrasystem indicators, are included in the term inputs.

From the point of view of analysis the environmental changes are considered to be disturbances on the existing social system because of the stress they place upon it, leading to a response and possibly to transformation. The critical question is not the way in which disturbances modify the particular form of the internal structures or processes of the system but--

- . to what extent did the disturbances constitute stress on the pre-existing system?
- . how did the stress manifest and communicate itself?
- . how did the system cope with the stress, if at all?

### Demands

Changes in the environment lead to changes in the volume and variety of demands for which satisfaction is sought through the system and these latter changes represent a neglected type of stress that environmental changes may be interpreted as bringing to bear upon the system. Since the kinds of commitments required from the members of the system for the fulfillment of these types of demands are different from those required under the prior system they can create severe crises. In this way many changes may be observed through a single kind of variable--as they influence the volume and variety of demands.



### Support

In addition, a social system must obtain sufficient support and its leadership must promote and sustain this support. From this point environmental disturbances can be observed through their influence on the level of support for a system since it too serves as a focal point of many different kinds of environmental changes important for an understanding of stress on a system.

Inputs then reflect the changes taking place in the environment of a social system, communicate these changes as disturbances to the system, and in turn are acted upon by the system as a way of coping with stress. This provides a means for tracing the way in which stress may be communicated to a system.

Since few systems succumb to stress, from a stable or a rapidly changing environment, the fact that they are able to cope with disturbances that may threaten their existence leads to an inquiry into the means whereby they have been able to do so.

### The Responding System

Just as there is a need for concepts to order the experiences that lead to stress there is also a

need for some form of analysis that will assist in an understanding of the varying modes of response available to a system.

### Response to Demand Stress

A system may be exposed to stress from demands in two ways:

1. Through the inability or unwillingness of the authorities in a system to meet the demands of those who count, which would tend to undermine support for the system. This is a characteristic kind of stress for a system. In this way output failure would have important consequences for the input of support.

2. Through an excessive volume and variety of demands. These may stimulate so much conflict that they require an excessive amount of time to process. This kind of stress could be described as input demand overload. It arises from the simple fact that no system is able to accept and process through to output an unlimited number and variety of demands.

Various regulators are at work to prevent this from happening and there is no unrestricted flow of demands to the authorities.

As articulated statements of what the authorities ought to do, demands are messages and to reach their

destination they must be able to flow along channels-- word of mouth, mass media, correspondence and so on. No system has so many channels that it has an infinite capacity to carry demands. At some point, varying with the kind of system and its structure, input overload of demands would occur. What, then, are the defences that have been built up to reduce the input of excessive demands?

There are structural regulators of the volume and variety of demands, which restrict entrance to the admission channels of a system. These consist of interest groups, parties, opinion leaders, the mass media, etc. and thus the volume and variety of demands that initially get into a system and begin to move toward the authorities will depend upon the characteristics of these "gate keepers."

There are numerous other kinds of responses through which systems have typically sought to regulate potential demand overload. Processes are available through which the initial volume of demands that manage to be voiced are themselves reduced in one way or another. However, in modern systems more than this is required and a typical response has been to increase the channel capacity for bearing demands. Channels for communicating demands play a vital function in helping a system cope with potential stress.

Response to Support Stress

Demands represent only one of the main indices that can be used to locate and identify the way in which environmental and internal disturbances may stress a system. Support for various aspects of a system represents a second major index and where such support seems likely to fall below a minimal level the system must provide mechanisms to revive the flagging support or its days will be numbered. Responses to a decline in support have typically taken three main forms:

a) Structural Regulation. This covers efforts to change the structure and processes that characterize a particular type of system. This requires a system to transform its goals and structures as a means of maintaining some kind of system to achieve goals.

b) Diffuse Support. This does not require the radical measure of self-transformation by abandonment of the existing regime or its serious modification. The system may endeavor to impart to its members a high level of support so that regardless of what happens they will continue to be bound to it by strong ties of loyalty and affection. This is an additional type of support that is independent of the specific rewards obtained from membership of the systems.

No system could endure for very long if it did not seek to build up a reservoir of support upon which it could count regardless of the specific frustrations and problems members may experience at any particular moment--this is seen in political systems, for example, which endeavor to strengthen ties through "indoctrination," a form of socialization for support in which ideology plays an important part.

c) Outputs. When diffuse support may threaten to fall to a dangerously low point, through outputs, efforts may be made to stimulate the input of specific support. This is an input to a system that occurs as return for the specific benefits and advantages that members of a system and its relevant publics experience as part of their membership. It represents or reflects the satisfaction a member feels when he perceives his demands as having been met. No system can meet all the demands of its members and the consequent discontent and disaffection are modified by the diffuse support a member has become used to extending. In spite of grievances a member remains fundamentally loyal to the system.

But if the system consistently fails to meet the minimal demands that members have come to feel are their due the input of specific support declines

and the system would have to rely increasingly on the general feelings of good will (diffuse support) of its members.

Thus, consistent frustration of what are considered to be just wants over extended periods of time, if not compensated for by an increase in diffuse support must lead to a lessening in specific support that would critically weaken the system.

Output, then, represents a central contribution to the forces that help to sustain the essential variables of a system.

### Outputs

What are these outputs? They are now seen as transactions moving from the system itself to the environment. In any system events occur that have consequences for the environment. However, it is desirable to restrict the term outputs, rather than include all events that have significance for the environment, to the specific purpose for which the system exists. They represent a method of linking up what happens within a system to the environment and thus enables us to look at the exchanges between a system and its environment from a different perspective.

What are the processes through which outputs influence the level of specific support being put into a system? If outputs are to have any impact on support they must be able to meet the existing or anticipated demands of the members of a system by:

1. Modifying environmental or intrasystem conditions so that the circumstances giving rise to the demands no longer exist.

2. Taking steps to create the impression that this has happened even though nothing but the image has changed.

(Coercion of members into continued support, even though no effort is made to meet demands is also a possibility.)

Thus, the capacity of a system to respond to stress can be exercised through its production of outputs. It is of significance then to trace the consequence of these outputs as they affect the environment and the system itself and leadership is faced with the task of creating the kinds of conditions that nurture or destroy support sentiment.

### Feedback

How are the authorities in a system to produce outputs that will regulate the volume and variety of demands or maximize the input of support?

How do they come to learn that some action is required on their part?

How do they arrive at some judgment about what the right actions might be?

In short, if a system is able to respond to stress by regulating it, what is there that allows it to do so?

Such questions lead to the essence of the system, seen as a self-regulating, self-directing set of behaviors. The capacity of a system to respond to stress is related to two control processes found within it--feedback and the capacity to respond to it. Information about the system and its environment can be communicated to its authorities and through their actions the system is able to act so as to attempt to change or maintain any given condition. Through these two properties a system is able to make some effort to regulate stress by modifying or redirecting its behavior.

### The Feedback Loop

If a system is able to respond what sort of information must it seek to obtain?



Obviously the authorities in the system would need to know the conditions prevailing in the environment as well as in the system itself. In this way they can act so as to anticipate any circumstances that might lead to the withdrawal of diffuse or specific support. The authorities also need information about the supportive state of mind of the members and demands being voiced by significant and influential members of the system and its relevant environment.

They must obtain information about the effects which the outputs have already produced. This necessitates a continuous flow of information back to them so that whatever their goals may be with respect to support or fulfillment of demands, they are aware of the extent to which their prior or current outputs have succeeded in achieving these goals.

It is worth noting that, so far as the output of support is concerned, the goals of the authorities cannot be taken for granted. They may, for example, endeavor to undermine the system rather than strengthen it. Regardless of the goals of the authorities, however, if they are to be attained there must be a flow of adequate information coming back to them. Without feedback behavior could be erratic and random, unrelated in any causal way to what had occurred previously.

Feedback is illustrated in Diagram 2, page 107. The effects on outputs flow back to the environment and move through its relevant systems as indicated by the dotted line. The information about these consequences then returns from the environment to the system. Since the authorities are the producers of outputs it is toward them that the feedback must flow if it is to be effective in enabling the system to meet stress from the decline of support.

It is obvious, then, that feedback plays an important part in the way in which the members of a system meet stress. Social systems have a special capacity. In order to preserve some system for making and implementing binding decisions the authorities are able to respond by a variety of actions that are limited only by the inventive and combined intellectual resources of men. Feedback enables these potentials to be used effectively so that efforts are infused with purpose and direction.

Feedback is central in human behavior, both individual and collective.

### Summary

The identification of inputs, outputs, and feedback and the functions they perform in relating a system to its environment, as well as to internal sources of stress, enables a redefinition of the interactions comprising a social system. The inputs of a system are the raw materials from which the outputs are manufactured. Those in positions of leadership select the goals and objectives of the system and commit its limited resources to their realization. The resources may be human or material.

This is a conversion process in which the inputs of demands and support are acted upon in such a way that it is possible for the system to persist and to produce outputs meeting the demands of at least some of the members, and retaining the support of most.

The persistence of a system can now be redefined. If stress threatens to destroy a system, its impact will take the form of interfering in some fundamental way with the capacity of the system to keep such a conversion process working.

Stress can also be seen from a different perspective. Through the identification of inputs and outputs as the indicators of more complex combinations of variables it is possible to pinpoint the stress that may drive the essential variables of a system beyond their critical range.

It is possible to locate stress by examining what is happening to the input of demands and support.

Leadership is interested in knowing some thing about the typical ways in which, through outputs, a system manages either to prevent the occurrence of stressful conditions or to cope with them once they have come about. The persistence of a system will depend on keeping a conversion process operating.

This presents a dynamic model of a social system. As demands and support flow through the system it is able to get something done. The final product of this activity takes the form of outputs, and these may react back upon what the system may subsequently be called upon to do. This is not a passive process. A social system is a goal setting, self-transforming and creatively adaptive something, which consists of human beings who are capable of anticipating, evaluating and acting constructively to prevent disturbances in the systems environment. In the light of goals they may endeavor to correct any disturbances that are potentially stressful. The demands and support can be molded to the purposes and desires of members of the system to the extent that knowledge, resources and inclination allow. The members of a system are able to regulate,

control, direct, modify and innovate with respect to all aspects and parts of the processes involved. This is what is meant by coping constructively with stress.

In this study the persuasive arguments that might be made for the need of general theory are assumed nor is any attempt made to construct such a theory. What has been done so far is to indicate the kinds of concepts that might be useful in adopting a social systems approach, which emphasizes functional imperatives, to administrative leadership. This is not merely another convenient and fashionable way of looking at leadership. It seems to offer the basis of an analytical framework around which could be built a set of interrelated categories and concepts and this has been attempted. This is the primary justification for such studies. In the next chapter an endeavor is made, in the light of what has been found out about social systems and the processes necessary to persistence, to summarize what Barnard<sup>3</sup> and Selznick<sup>4</sup> have detailed as some of the more important tasks of administrative leadership.

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<sup>3</sup>C. I. Barnard, Organization and Management (Harvard University Press, 1948).

<sup>4</sup>Op. cit.

## CHAPTER V

### THE TASKS OF ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP

#### Types of Decisions

Decision making is a facile and fashionable phrase that may well obscure more than it clarifies. It seems to refer to important and significant events and yet decisions are with us always, at every level of experience, in every organization. Even if the general features of all social choice could be stated clearly it would still be necessary to distinguish the more and the less trivial and, if there is any order in the phenomenon, to identify types of decisions, linking them to the distinctive problems or situations out of which they arise. This study is basically concerned with leadership in large enterprises and in the possible existence of a special kind of experience that underlies and actuates leadership decisions.

Two dimensions of individual behavior--the routine and habitual processes, aspects and responses characteristics of all human beings to various types of situations and the specific emotional development and character structure of each individual, as evidenced in the growth and change of total personalities,

seem of significance for this study. Much literature on administration is concerned with routine processes. These are not unimportant. However, they tend to refer to matters of immediate concern for their own sake--personnel selection; morale-building techniques; team organization; communication channels and so on--that have to do with organizational efficiency. The emphasis is on orderly process, on smooth functioning.

In addition to the older techniques of management, routine functions include those related to the newer "human relations" approach which emphasizes a broad understanding of authority and communication as basic to the social psychology of obedience, perception and cooperation. However, nothing in this approach leads to the dynamic adaptation of the total organization to internal strivings and external pressures.

Just what is meant by dynamic and total?

Fromm<sup>1</sup> distinguishes clearly "static" and "dynamic" adaptation.

By static adaptation. . . patterns as leaves  
 . . . the whole character structure unchanged. . . . the adoption of a new habit  
 or pattern . . . have little effect on . . .  
 personality; it does not arouse new drives  
 or character traits.

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<sup>1</sup>E. Fromm, Escape From Freedom (Rinehart, 1941), p. 15.

This does not imply rigid inflexibility but rather routine processes, "everyday" dynamics--ordinary, responsive behavior subject to normal tendencies. Most human responses are of this routine nature and inevitably in the control of large numbers these processes have assumed significance. Yet, certain areas of experience, of critical experience, belong to a different domain.

In dynamic adaptation, says Fromm:

. . . an individual adapts himself to . . . necessary. . . circumstances . . . something happens in him. This kind of adaptation . . . is a dynamic factor in character structure, creating something new, arousing new drives and anxieties. . . modification of the personality and affects future forms of response.

Dynamic here involves more than simple activity, change or growth and suggests certain pressures or forces different in origin and role from routine tensions.

What is relevant is the reconstruction of need, the change in position and strategy resulting from the interaction and counteraction of forces. The emphasis is on inner need, environmental pressure and a mediating structure. The personality is an adaptive equilibrium seeking organization but the process is not a smooth continuum of adjustment. Stress and response are of importance.



The relevance of this to a study of organizations seems fairly obvious. Static and dynamic adaptation occurs in organizations as well as personalities.

The daily routine functioning of an organization requires the continuous solution of problems. The existing structure, including the more formal patterns of communication and control and the more informal patterns of human relations developed, is able to meet such issues as they arise, without internal crisis. Changes do occur as daily work proceeds but normally these do not significantly affect the nature of the enterprise or its leadership. Within broad limits a large organization runs itself so long as this is understood to cover routine activity. Such routine functioning and adaptation is generally regarded as a major concern of leadership and everyday activity is certainly a legitimate and necessary pre-occupation of management.

In organizations it is necessary also to consider less routine kinds of adaptation. This covers those aspects of organizational experience in which adaptations of leadership to the interplay of internal and external forces result in basic organizational changes. This is the area of personality or "character" defining commitments, which affect the organization's capacity to control its own future behavior.

Dynamic adaptation is difficult to analyze--it concerns both policy and management--not merely in the sense that management devices implement, execute, and help to form policy, but more in the sense that organizational processes influence the kinds of policy that can be made, and policy in turn shapes organizational machinery in ways that cannot be explained in terms of efficiency. This is an area outside the concern of administrative routine--an area of critical experience where leadership counts and managerial expertise is of subordinate importance.

The term "leadership" seems to mean critical experience rather than routine practice and this is indicated by Barnard.<sup>2</sup>

The overvaluation of the apparatus of communication and administration is opposed to leadership and the development of leaders. It opposes leadership whose function is to promote appropriate adjustment of ends and means to new environmental conditions, because it opposes change either of status in general or of established procedures and habitual routine. This overvaluation also discourages the development of leaders by retarding the progress of the abler men and by putting an excessive premium on routine qualities.

It is easy to overemphasize the personal element in leadership. While personal qualities are important

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<sup>2</sup>Op. cit., p. 240.

too much attention may obscure the essential distinction between routine and critical decisions and draw attention away from the role of leadership in the making of critical decisions. Leadership deals with current issues not merely as isolated and routine events but according to their long-term implications for the role and meaning of the group.

Group leadership, then, is more than--

- . the capacity to mobilize personal support
- . the maintenance of equilibrium through the routine solution of everyday problems

It is the leader's function to--

- . define the ends of group existence
- . design an enterprise adapted to these ends
- . see that the design becomes a living reality

This is not a routine matter and may require only a few critical decisions over a long period of time. It may have little to do with speed and vigor and tends to be overshadowed by a traits approach which emphasizes self-confidence, energy, aggressiveness, intuition and so on.

### The Character of an Organization

The process of character formation seems to offer useful leads as to the nature and tasks of leadership particularly as regards the connection

between institutionalization and critical decision making.

Although psychologists disagree as to what character or personality is, and as to its formation, they are agreed on the usefulness of the concept and as to the fact that:

- . It is a historical product, reflecting an individual's development
- . It is an integrated product
- . It is functional and emphasis is on the reconstruction of the self as a way of solving anxiety laden problems
- . It is dynamic and generates new strivings, new needs and new problems

A comparison of these character attitudes with the process by which organizations become institutions is useful.

The character of an enterprise, just like that of individual, is determined by what it does and this in turn on the limits of its own resources, how it fits into the already established community, and how it comes to be regarded by the general public.

Thus, the formation of an institution is marked by the making of value commitments, maybe unconsciously and generally not verbally, and these character-defining choices fix the assumptions of policymakers as to the nature of the enterprise--its specific aims,

methods and role in the community. These commitments or values are built into the social structure of the enterprise.

### Policy and Critical Decisions

Decisions affecting institutional development are critical decisions and when made consciously constitute policy in its traditional sense. Analytically, there is a need to distinguish between policy making and policy serving decisions and this has been reflected in the separation of policy and administration. However, there is a continuity of policy and administration in that organizational practices can enter the critical experience of leadership. These practices and associated attitudes help to shape the key values (something in the organization taken as an end in itself) and especially the distribution of the power to affect these values.

What are some of these practices?

1. The recruitment of personnel, particularly when individuals are chosen for commitment to precarious aims and methods. When the social composition of the staff significantly affects the interplay of policy and administration, personnel selection is more than a routine management practice.

2. Personnel training, particularly when implementation of policy depends on the attitudes and ways of thinking of staff. Then an effort must be made to translate policy into an organization doctrine and inculcate these ideas.

3. The establishment of a system for representing internal group interest. Freedom to promote and defend the interests of sub-units must be combined with effective coordination by top leadership, responsible for the total organization, which involves more than harmonious action. It consists also of formal procedures for creating balanced representation and for adjudicating conflicts. Such conflicts are not routine and tend to raise issues relevant to the determination of key values and thus ensure that policy issues come to the fore for scrutiny and action. Thus, problems of coordination seen as the interplay of values, power and organizational practice, form a large part of the critical experience of institutional leadership.

4. Cooperation with other organizations also has policy implications. Cooperation endangers control since commitments in practice rarely coincide with verbal agreements and cooperation proposals may reflect a strategy for organizational expansion or

protection. Such proposals then must be examined to see whether they will, in practice, generate undesirable consequences for an organization as a whole or parts of its program.

This means, in effect, considering the consequences for public opinion, personnel selection, organizational machinery and so on, which means the power implications of cooperation. This is because the development and implementation of policy require it rather than for the sake of power itself.

This helps to clarify the distinction between routine and critical experience and the difference between static and dynamic adaptation. Routine experience works out detailed applications for established policy and when most things about an organization are routine leadership is often dispensable (for the bare continuity of organizational existence). Leadership is important in matters of critical experience where the problems is to choose key values and create a social structure that embodies them. When key choices have been made and related policies firmly established then efficient administration can play a significant role.

### Summary

Various organizational practices suggest dynamic rather than static adaptation. The latter cover changes that do not affect the central or self-defining aims or methods of the enterprise. However, just such aims or methods are what may be at stake in selective recruitment, indoctrination of essential attitudes, the representation of interests and administrative cooperation with external agencies. These processes may be affected without policy makers being aware so that the consequences for organization character may be unanticipated and uncontrolled.

### The Functions of Leadership

Policy and administration are interdependent in the sense that certain areas of organizational activity are particularly sensitive to policy matters. Because of this creative leadership is needed to transform a neutral body of men into one that is committed, Their business is politics.

This is not so much a struggle for power, although a contest of wills may be involved, but the continuous redefinition of group interest and objectives and the embodiment of these in policy and in structure. A political orientation is not so much concerned with technical efficiency as decisions that are open and potentially controversial.



Leadership, then--

- . sets goals, in the light of possibilities, necessities and limitations
- . creates and shapes an organization to coincide with the value premises of policy
- . reconciles internal strivings and environmental pressures, noting the way adaptive behavior brings about changes in organizational character
- . is aware of how the changing social structure affects the evolution of policy

If leadership is lacking these tasks are inadequately done, if at all, no matter how efficient the flow of paper and smooth the channels of command and communication. The importance of leadership and its relationship to organizational character can be seen more clearly by a careful examination of these key tasks of leadership.

1. The definition of institutional role. The setting of goals is a creative task and entails self-assessment to discover the true commitments of the organization, as set by effective internal and external demands.

2. The infusion of purpose. Building policy into the organization's social structure is just as important as making it. This, too, is a creative job requiring shaping the "character" of the organization, sensitizing it to ways of thinking and responding so that it will elaborate and carry out policy according to its spirit as well as its letter.

### 3. The defense of institutional integrity.

Survival, as such, is not the main subject; survival with the persistence of values and distinctive identity is. This function of leadership is very important and little understood.

### 4. The ordering of internal conflict. Informal

groups form naturally in large-scale organizations and struggle amongst competing interests claims time and attention because changes in the internal balance of power can influence the direction of an enterprise. It is necessary to win the consent of constituent interest groups (to maximize cooperation) and this is achieved largely by giving them representation. At the same time it is necessary to maintain a balance of power appropriate to the fulfillment of key commitments. This is the aspect of leadership that has received most attention to date in studies on administration.

### The Definition of Purpose

The aims of large organizations are often very broad and somewhat vague since it is difficult to foresee whether more specific goals will be realistic or wise. Here it is relevant to note that the goal setting under consideration is that at the upper end of the purpose-process hierarchy applicable to institutions rather than organizations and taking into account the

open-endedness of institutional experience. It is the adaptive structuring of aims that presents the leader with one of his most difficult and important tasks. He must specify and recast the aims of his organization so as to adapt them, without any serious corruption to the requirements of institutional survival.

While a clear statement of purpose universally understood is an important aspect of effective administration, as pointed out by Gulick<sup>3</sup> it is also true that some kind of assessment is necessary before the required clarity can be achieved. This may require a period of actual experience during which the capabilities of an organization and the pressures of its environment may be tested. It is maintained that this sort of self-assessment is one of the main duties of administrative leadership.

Thus, in defining the mission of an organization leaders must take account of the internal state of the organized group--its striving, competencies and so on and external expectations that determine what must be sought or achieved if the institution is to survive.

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<sup>3</sup>L. Gulick, Administrative Reflections from World War II, (University of Alabama Press, 1948).



A Danger

One danger to the adequate definition of institutional mission is a concentration on ways and means in which ends are taken for granted. The interrelation and close interdependence of means and ends is important, not the subordination of one to the other.

The effective leader continually explores the specialized activities for which he is responsible to see whether the aims taken for granted are consistent with the evolving mission of the enterprise as a whole. The administrative managers, as technicians, accepts specific goals as given and then apply their technical skills.

In summary, then, institutional aims cannot be accepted as given since they are conditioned by changing self-definitions, by alterations in the internal and external commitments of the enterprise. If the effect of this process is to be controlled rather than left to opportunistic adaptation, an awareness of it is essential. Emphasis on means inhibits this awareness.

### Infusion of Purpose

The definition of mission and role is complementary to that of building purpose into the social structure of an organization which means transforming an uncommitted body of men into a committed agency. In this way policy is not superficial nor is it distorted with the expansion and the extension of lines of communication.

### Policy and Social Structure

It is readily seen that when studying large communities and great issues that policy is dependent on social conditions. However, the basic principle that policy needs social support seems to be neglected when a transition is made from the wider sphere of society as a whole to smaller entities. This is largely due to an inadequate understanding of the elements of social structure. The internal structure of smaller social groups is often hidden, obscured by unfamiliar forms, or emphasis on aims.

What then are some of those aspects of social structure that affect policy decisions? As Selznick<sup>4</sup> indicates these include:

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<sup>4</sup>Op. cit., pp. 91-100.

1. Assigned Roles is one of the most obvious ways of connecting policy and social structure. These roles set out the tasks, powers and expected procedures of participants in some officially approved pattern or structure. This is the technical organization but not necessarily the only source of order within the group or enterprise, although perhaps the most important. It is maintained that leadership declines in importance as the formal structure approaches complete determination of behavior. However, the formal system is not always readily observed and understood. The question is what patterns will be openly recognized and enforced as part of official policy. In any complex organization it is not easy to find out and an assigned role may carry inherent difficulties that endanger the aims of the policy.

Hence organizational design even when dealing with the division of labor must be based on an accurate understanding of the social structure created in the process of assigning formal roles.

2. Informal Groups. These take many forms but from the point of view of this study are significant in that they represent sources of energy, self-stimulation and are not wholly amenable to control by official authority. They may lend life and strength to an enterprise or they may subvert it. Leadership is faced with the task of building purpose into an enterprise which

encompasses fitting the aims of the organization to the spontaneous interests of the groups within it and binding parochial group interests to larger loyalties and aspirations.

3. Social Stratification. The system of ranking common in any administrative organization has many uses. Apart from fixing authority, dividing work effectively and supplementing formal incentives the ranking system shapes the general social behavior of the men in the ranks and so social stratification emerges.

4. Beliefs. The social structure of an organization also includes the relevant shared beliefs of the participants. The existence of set beliefs creates problems for the leader who desires to move in new directions.

It is often necessary to adapt the technical organization to this aspect of the social structure in order to redistribute or isolate resistant elements. At the same time the existence of such beliefs can be a constructive source of creative effort.

5. Participation. The members of an enterprise have different kinds and degrees of commitment to it. The degree of personal investment is closely related to the importance assigned to an organization and membership in it.



Morale is closely related to the possibility of increasing participation as a way of developing personal commitment to the organization. The division of labor, however, offers few opportunities for significant participation by members.

6. Dependency. Frequently an individual or unit in an enterprise depends on another--for information skills and work. This suggests the value of understanding who needs whom.

Thus, the elements of social structure form a complex set of interdependent relations among persons and groups, which acts as a filter through which policy is communicated and represents a system of balanced forces among potentially conflicting parts. A leader needs to know how to deal with the various dimensions of the social structure.

To build policy into the social structures of an enterprise means that official aims and methods are spontaneously protected or advanced. The aspirations of individuals and groups are so stimulated and controlled and ordered as to produce the desired balance of forces. This is the aim of formal role assignment but the latter is inadequate by itself to fulfill the aim, e.g. in order to provide support for a policy it may be necessary to alter the social structure by bringing in new men or changing old lines of communication

and dependency. Alternatively the policy may be rejected as unworkable. In any case, a clear understanding of the social structure of an enterprise is required as an essential basis for making decisions.

Of value would be the discovery of general relations between types of policy orientation and kinds of special support--clues as it were to the characteristic troubles that arise in typical situations? Is this assumption of "typical situations" which impose more or less uniform limitations upon the policy maker, or offer characteristic opportunities, a valid one? This study takes a position that it is.

### Historical Perspective

A search for general connections between policy and social structure gains from a study of organization history. Katz<sup>4</sup> refers to the characteristics of organizations that may be associated with growth patterns. However, it is necessary to differentiate between problems posed by the job to be done from those set for an organization by the stage of growth in which it finds itself. Certain types of problems seem to characterize certain phases of an organization's life history.

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<sup>4</sup>D. Katz, "Social Psychology and Group Processes," C. P. Stone and D. W. Taylor, eds. Annual Review of Psychology, Vol. III, 1951.

Thus, a sensitivity to historical background will help the planner adjust organizational structure in the light of a changing situation which provides new risks and opportunities.

### Summary

We have been,

1) considering some of the natural processes that condition organizational experience. This has been evidenced in a concern for the products of adaptive, responsive behavior which include social homogeneity and cohesion.

2) examining the area of critical experience which calls for leadership rather than routine management. This has been evidenced in a look at stages of growth as they bear on the restructuring of role and needs.

3) finding that development patterns seem to have a common element in that they reflect changes in commitment in relation to men and ideas that are not readily altered. Changes in commitment are the things that create organizational crises, whose resolution affects the range of competence of the enterprise as well as the survival of its distinctive aims and methods.

The Defense of Integrity

Effective policy requires supportive conditions but most urgently when aims are not well defined when external direction is not easily imposed or maintained, when a changing situation requires constant adaptation, and when goals or values are open to corruption. This open-endedness generates the key problems of institutional leadership. Among these is the defense of institutional integrity--the persistence of an organization's distinctive values, competence and role.

The integrity of an institution may be threatened, regardless of its own inner strength, if sufficient external pressure is applied, as has been seen, but the main concern at this stage is with inner weaknesses. From this point of view institutional integrity is most vulnerable when values are insecure. Values, aims, and standards are important but those responsible for sustaining them will not be equally capable of doing so.

What then are the social conditions that affect this competence? The ability to sustain integrity is dependent on a number of general conditions, including the adequacy with which goals have been defined.

Summary

It can be seen that such aspects of organization are very significant for administrative leadership and yet the existence of institutional integrity is often endangered by internal rivalry of sub-units. Such rivalry, however, is not simply the result of personal egotism--it is closely related to the legitimate effort of leadership to defend the values with which they have been entrusted.

It is practically important then to identify conditions that sustain the integrity of an enterprise. This applies to all organizations and constituent units that have some policy to protect. It is evident also that the defense of integrity is not merely a matter of sheer organizational survival--it is rather the policy, the mission, the special capability--the identity of the group that is at stake.

## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It is now necessary to draw the threads together and see whether they make a recognizable pattern.

The main aim of the study has been to explore the meaning of administrative leadership of large scale organizations in the light of sociological theory as to the activities essential to the survival of the social system. It has been oriented to a synthesis of ideas and an examination of concepts required for their advancement. The relative primacy of one analytical element over others has been stressed - the control of critical decision making.

It is farily obvious that there are no easy solutions to immediate problems of administrative leadership but that reflection and self-knowledge may provide some new approaches. Approaches that seem to indicate that the narrow view and limited aspirations of the usual executive are inadequate for effective institutional development.

It is agreed that administration is a process of directing and controlling life in a social organization and concerned with developing and regulating the decision making process in the most effective manner possible. However, it seems that decisions that facilitate or hinder the effective operation of an enterprise will be concerned more with controlling the life of, as contrasted with the life in, a social organization. A small point, maybe, and possible a view which could be assumed under the term effective, but one that needs to be emphasized as it directs attention to external orientations and places internal control and direction in the proper perspective.

The vital process in any organization is the control of decisions, all sorts of decisions, but particularly those related to the persistence of an enterprise-critical decisions as compared to routine ones.

The tasks of leadership within administrative performance systems then may be summarized under three broad dimensions of functions as--

- . the policy-purpose determination function
- . the technical-operational function
- . the energizing-process function

This certainly makes a recognizable pattern but in broad outline it seems to differ little. if any, from patterns already developed.

What is new about a systems approach is the tendency not to isolate phenomena in narrow contexts but to consider interactions in increasingly larger and larger areas of relevance.

Its contribution lies not in the originality of the concepts and ideas since they represent a synthesis of those of others but in the presentation of some ideas on the process by which disturbances affect an enterprise and by which response is manifested.

It differs from the conventional emphasis on internal organizational problems and possibilities and emphasizes an enterprise as a totality and its response to problems generated by the necessity to exist and to persist in a changing environment.

The study constitutes no theory. It does point to concepts and an analytic framework considered useful as a context within which to consider the tasks of administrative leadership.

It does seem to be true as stated by so many writers on the subject that if any "theory" is involved



in the study it is that decision making is the heart of administration and the chief concern of administrators.

Some of the main ideas developed are now summarized, together with the addition of some further thoughts on responsible and creative leadership.

### Efficiency

It is often postulated that the job of the executive is to blend harmoniously means and ends but there is a practical tendency in administrative life, as in all social action, to separate them by stressing one or the other. The cult of efficiency is one way of overstressing means to the neglect of ends.

Efficiency as an operating ideal assumes that goals are determined, resources and appropriate methods available and that the problem is one of joining available means to known ends. This has been distinguished as routine decision making, something different from critical decision making, which involves choices that affect the basic character of an organization. The latter is the true job of leadership as distinct from administrative management.

Leadership goes beyond efficiency,

1) when it establishes the basic mission of the organization, and

2) when it creates a social organism capable of fulfilling that mission.

### And Organization

The establishment and maintenance of an organization is often straight-forward--the problem of adapting known quantities through known techniques to predetermined ends.

However, there are limits to this sort of organization engineering when it is necessary to create a structure uniquely adapted to the role of a specific enterprise. This includes adaptation in depth, affecting the nature of the constituent elements themselves.

Integrity covers more than efficiency, than organization, than group cohesion and is the unity that results from a combination of policy and organization when a particular orientation becomes so much a part of group life that it colors and directs a wide variety of attitudes, decisions, and forms of organization at many levels.

The job of leadership is to guide in the transition from organization to institution so that the ultimate result effectively embodies desired aims and standards.

The study of institutions requires an emphasis on historical origins and growth stages. It is necessary to see the enterprise as a whole and how it is transformed as new ways of dealing with a changing environment evolve. As in the case of personality study a developmental approach means that effective diagnosis rests upon identifying special problems associated with a particular character and growth structure.

The problem is to discover characteristic ways in which types of institutions respond to types of circumstances. Moreover, significant classifications may well differ from the common sense distinctions into organizations according to functions--economic, military, political, educational and so on. More general characteristics such as ability to make full use of creative talents may be more helpful in classifying organizations and in understanding the types of problems they face and solutions that may be available.

### Combined With Responsibility

As an organization becomes an institution new problems face the leaders, among which is the need for institutional responsibility.

From a personal standpoint this is a blend of commitment, understanding and determination. It means transcending his speciality, an understanding, not only of his own weaknesses and potentialities but of these qualities in the enterprise itself, and a yielding of the will to know and to act in accordance with the requirements of institutional survival and fulfillment.

Responsible leadership is responsible in:

1. Accepting the obligation to give direction instead of merely being interested in organizational equilibrium and efficiency.

2. In adapting aspirations to the character of the organization, remembering that what it has been will affect what it can be and do.

3. In going beyond more organizational survival by seeing that decisions do not weaken or confuse the distinctive identity of the enterprise.

### And Creativity

The responsible leader is essentially concerned with what may be termed conservative functions. To these must be added a concern for change and reconstruction

in the sense of persistence rather than maintenance. Two important aspects of this creative role are the institutional embodiment of purpose and strategic and tactical planning. The latter means analyzing the environment to determine how best to use the existing resources and capabilities of the organization. Although what can be done to establish policy internally depends upon the changing relations between the organization and its environment the problem of externally oriented strategies has not been considered.

The creative leader is interested in institution building--in fashioning an organism that embodies values. This requires sensitivity to the politics of internal change and external pressure. It is a matter of releasing energy as well as avoiding dangers and here it is well to note that consent for new directions depends on how secure the participants feel. Established procedures need to be examined when change is planned to distinguish those important to a sense of security from those essential to the aims of the enterprise. The truly effective leader is both conservative and creative looking to the past and to the future--in the interests of institutional effectiveness. He is an administrative leader rather than an administrative manager, a person who can face up to problems analyze and sort out the factors which matter from

those which are unimportant, and reach a decision.  
Then he does something.

### Some Generalizations

Throughout this study it has been necessary to maintain a level of generality prescribed by the nature of the endeavor and by secondary analysis of existing material. What has resulted is one way of looking at administrative leadership. Such an effort is necessarily exploratory. Propositions have been formulated but the ability to specify and elaborate them is limited by lack of information and experience.

What generalizations can be presented as a result of this study? Those to be listed seem both elementary and obvious. Perhaps they are so but the failure of leadership in many cases seems to indicate that they have not been fully appreciated. Since prediction and control is the main aims of generalizations in the field of social science the justification for this list is a three-fold one:

a) So much is written and done that ignores social realities.

b) Many programs of specific organizations fail to take rather obvious precautions.

c) A checklist based on logical concepts may save time for administrators who require immediate action.

They cover what are considered to be major points only and would have to be adapted to specific circumstances before any application to special cases could be made. They are useful as general guides worthy of consideration and have been developed as such.

The effectiveness of leadership tends to be related directly to:

- . the extent to which it understands and defines the purposes of organizational existence
- . the extent to which it recognizes and sets specific goals in the light of necessities-defined purposes that must be achieved
- . the extent to which it recognizes and sets specific goals in the light of possibilities-defined purposes that are relevant and may be achieved
- . the success with which it communicates organizational purposes and direction to its members
- . the success with which it communicates organizational purposes and direction to those sections of its environment on which it depends for support
- . the degree to which goals aimed at gain, maintain and coordinate organizational interest, support and effort-both individual and group

- . the degree to which goals aimed at gain, maintain and coordinate interest, support and effort from the relevant sections of the environment
- . its awareness of the influence of changing internal structure on the evolution of organizational policy
- . the degree to which it reconciles internal and external pressures in the long term interest of the enterprise
- . the extent to which it can mobilize facilities and resources to achieve organizational objectives
- . the flexibility with which organizational forms and practices change in response to new situations in the interests of organizational persistence and fulfillment
- . the extent to which it sees the necessity for the enterprise to be infused with distinctive values (patterns of meaning) accepted by its members both as individuals and members of a group
- . the effectiveness with which it communicates these distinctive values to its members
- . its success in maintaining or changing these patterns of meaning, as necessary, in the interests of goal attainment and survival
- . the extent to which it sees the necessity for and arranges the integration of the activities of sub-units, each contributing differently to the existence of the enterprise, into the system as a whole

It is obvious that this is, by no means, a complete list of generalizations relevant to the topic. It does contain, however, a number of important considerations, applicable in varying degrees to the



problems facing administrative leaders. Neglect to take such factors into account would seriously hamper the success of leadership in achieving the objectives of most enterprises - goal attainment and survival.

If the more important generalizations were to be refined and summarized into a few basic propositions relevant to the tasks facing administrative leadership the result would require the inclusion of the following.

The effectiveness of leadership tends to be related directly to:

An understanding that any enterprise consists of a series of interactions directed towards specific objectives.

Its ability to develop an organization capable of achieving the group and individual purposes and objectives of its members.

The extent to which there is an appreciation that organizational purposes and goals are limited by effective internal and external pressures.

To the degree to which, over a period of time, it gains, maintains and coordinates continued interest, support and effort for organizational goals, both internally and externally.

The information and other influences that return to it from internal and external sources, relative to its success in meeting demands.

And its awareness of the necessity for a continuous evaluation of organizational values, goals and activities in the light of changing circumstances internal and external.

To the degree to which it is able to ensure that the organization responds adequately to critical internal and external pressures in the interests of goal attainment and persistence.

Even though the study has not led to any clearly identified principles it has provided a framework for the analysis and description of administrative leadership and indicated a set of factors that must be considered by leadership in arriving at any valid proposals regarding administrative organization and processes.

#### Value of Study

No attempt is made at a detailed educational application since the study covers generalizations applicable to administrative leadership and relevant to different types of enterprise. In applying the ideas outlined to a specific situation leadership would need to remember that persistence in a changing environment necessitates goal attainment, pattern maintenance, integration and adaptation.

The outputs through which goals are attained depend upon a conversion and coping process which suggests a pattern of analysis which includes the following variables:

- . the nature of the inputs
- . the varying conditions under which they will become stressful
- . the conditions in the environment and the system which generate stressful conditions
- . typical ways in which systems have endeavored to handle stress
- . the role of information feedback
- . the part outputs play in this process

Specific application would have to take into account a number of situational variables.

So far as education is concerned applications have been attempted as for example, in a number of the contributions to Leu and Rudman's<sup>1</sup> work on training programs for school administrators, by Halpin, Saunders, Griffiths, the AASA and others (see bibliography).

The usefulness of an analytic framework, similar to that outlined, is illustrated in such studies as those being carried out under the Pittsburgh Consortium Inter-University Research Program in Institution Building. The purpose of this program is to "explore systematically the process and strategy of establishing viable innovative organizations in developing countries."

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<sup>1</sup>Op. cit.

This is based on an increasing recognition that,

. . . one of the important problems in the process of national development is the establishment and structuring of organizations which introduce, protect and integrate new physical and social technologies. A basic assumption underlying this research program is that new values, functions and technologies are not introduced in a diffused manner, but in and through organizations which structure a set of relationship and action patterns enhancing the integration of the innovations. A second assumption is that the development of an environment which supports the innovations in physical and social technology need not be an evolutionary process but is susceptible to human design and deliberate social action. A third basic assumption is that the planning, structuring and guidance of these innovative organizations is a generic process. This means that a set of elements and actions can be identified which serves to analyze institution building as a generic process, even though the expression of these elements will differ, depending on the type of institution and the social environment.<sup>2</sup>

An interesting example of the application of this conceptual background is contained in Appendix A which outlines the theoretical background of a study of the "institutionalization" of the professional education program at the University of Nigeria.

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<sup>2</sup>Original documents on Pittsburgh Consortium Institution Building Project.

### Suggestions for Further Study

This study has been concerned with an analytical scheme resulting from the adoption of a systems approach to administrative leadership. It has not considered numerous complexities of significance to leadership such as those involved, for example, in inputs, persistence, stress, outputs and feedback. Relevant areas for further study in which little data exists and even speculation is limited include:

1. The role of professionalism within specific organizations as contrasted with society at large. In organizations where creativity is important the independence of key personnel who initiate ideas is significant. Internal and external professional associations can play a crucial part here. The existence of such elites raises the further question of the balance required between personnel whose primary commitment is to a specific organization and those whose primary sense of responsibility is wider.

2. The matter of externally oriented strategies involving an analysis of the environment to decide how best to use the existing resources and capabilities of the organization as well as the environment.

3. The concept of outputs raises all sorts of questions as to the consequences of these outputs as they affect the environment and the system itself and create the kinds of conditions that stimulate or destroy support.

- . Whose demands have to be satisfied to maintain a level of support adequate to persistence?
- . How frequently do these demands have to be met?
- . How many of the demands have to be met?

4. So far as feedback is concerned, one would need to know:

- . The kinds of information that typically returns to the authorities along the loop and the extent to which it is accurate, false or distorted.
- . The degree to which time, the number of channels, the type and variety of channels (as transmission belts) influence the type of information received.
- , The extent to which accuracy is dependent upon the perceptions of the authorities and the way it may be influenced by ideology, prejudice, indifference or lack of ability to obtain and interpret information.
- . The extent to which lack of will, ability or resources contributes to inability to meet stress rather than the absence of accurate information.

5. The degree to which a particular adaptation of a system is a function of more than the capacity of its members to cope with change. It possibly includes an understanding of why policies are adopted by the relevant members in a system.

APPENDIX A

INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA



## APPENDIX A

### INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

The study of the "institutionalization" of the professional education program at the University of Nigeria is defined as an attempt -

1) To determine the status of the "institutionalization" of the professional education program as measured against broad defining characteristics of "institutionalization;" that is, this status five years after the founding of the University.

2) To examine the way in which the status was achieved.

The criteria of institutionalization are listed as:

- . survival
- . normative spread
- . usage
- . influence
- . respect
- . morale
- . autonomy
- . support

The explanatory variables are postulated as:

- . leadership
- . resources
- . internal structure and organization
- . doctrine
- . program
- . linkages

It is based on the assumptions that -

1. It is possible to analyze and describe the process of institutionalization, whereby an organization becomes accepted in its environment, in terms of requirements and processes so that results can be used to guide social action.

2. There are essential ingredients in the process which are universal, although their expression would differ according to the type of organization in mind and the local environment.

3. Something can be done to ensure that changes considered desirable are introduced into an educational system so that they will become readily accepted and used.

### Institutionalization

How do organizations which aim at introducing new values, functions and skills become accepted?

This involves the identification of forces and elements within the organization and its environment which affect this purpose.

- . The relationship among these forces and elements
- . Their implications in terms of choices of action

### Institutionalization - Key Elements

1. Leaders - those responsible for setting aims, developing programs and directing objectives.

2. Doctrine - the specific values, objectives and methods used to achieve aims.

3. The organization - This is the actual vehicle of change in and through which leadership hopes to effect change. It cannot be studied in isolation.

4. The environment - An essential aspect since the organization works within the environment and there are many interdependencies with other organizations. More importantly, the aim of the organization is to have what it offers in the way of skills, attitudes, etc. accepted by other organizations and individuals in society.

### Institutionalization - Success

An organization has been successful in introducing new functions and processes when these are accepted not only within the organization but also by other organizations in the social system and when its services are valued in the environment.

It is difficult to indicate a point of time in the process when this happens but there are trends and certain indications. These are:

1. Survival. The fact that the organization exists. A relevant query is whether it has had to sacrifice its distinctive elements in order to survive.

2. Value. This is the extent to which the organization is regarded as valuable. Relevant queries include the extent to which it is independent and its influence on the environment.

3. Acceptance. This is the extent to which the organization's values and skills have been accepted by other organizations and within society.

### Institutionalization - Analytical Concepts

How can the concept of institutionalization be analyzed?

1. The structure of the organization as a system. There are many inter-related variables which determine the effectiveness of the organization in achieving its objectives.

2. The environment in which the organization exists and with which it interacts.

3. The linkages between the organization and the environment. These are the organizations points of contact with the environment. This is an exchange relationship since:

- . The organization obtains from the environment its authority, support and resources.
- . The environment uses the output of the organization.
- . The objectives of the organization is to transfer values, skills, norms to the environment.

4. The transactions or actual relationships developed between the organization and the environment. The kinds and purposes of these relationships are significant.

Intra-organizational variables are those elements necessary to explain the behavior of an organization. They can be conveniently summarized under the following headings.

Leadership is the degree to which the individuals in the organization, who decide policy and plan programs, are accepted and stay in their positions long enough to exert an influence. Their status and technical competence within their particular field

and their ability to administer the organization to achieve goals is important also.

Doctrine is the extent to which objectives, and means for attaining them, are stated, understood and accepted by the individuals in the organization. Their relationship to existing patterns and expectations and the preferences and priorities of society are also relevant.

Program consists of the activities undertaken by the organization to achieve its aims. Obviously these must be consistent with aims, useful in that they contribute to the needs of society, realistic in possibilities and stable enough to avoid the confusion of fluctuating priorities.

Resources are the human and physical requirements necessary to work the organization. Two factors of significance are the source of resources and the extent to which they are available.

Internal structure. This is the structure and process established within an organization so that it will function effectively. Here it is necessary for individual needs to be balanced with organizational expectations so that individual efficiency will lead

to organizational effectiveness in achieving accepted goals. Internal communication, motivation and morale, and ability to adapt to changed circumstances are significant aspects of internal structure.

### Inter-Organization Variables (Linkages)

Linkage variables are those elements in the interaction which exist between an organization and other parts of society.

Enabling linkages are connections with organizations and groups controlling authority and the resources necessary for the organization's existence and functioning.

Functional linkages are connections with organizations which carry out work or perform services which are either complementary or competitive.

Normative linkages are connections with organizations whose values are relevant to the objectives and program of the organization.

Diffused linkages are connections with the public and public opinion as expressed in news media and other means of expressing individual and group opinion not reflected in formal organizations.

Transactions are the actual process by which goods, services, power and influence are exchanged with the other points of contact in the environment with which an organization has connections. These are aimed at gaining sufficient resources to operate and support to overcome resistance, structure the environment and transfer norms and values.



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