EDITORIAL¹

Papers produced from an international conference on higher education by academic researchers and academic and professional administrators are bound to reflect tensions in the academic community. Participants from all continents spoke about the issues as they had developed in their home bases. While the problems were similar, the degrees of likeness, conflict and prophecy varied.

Professors were mainly suspicious of managerialism; the non-academics were often sceptical of academia's awareness and concern for societal needs. The growing use of the term 'staff' for faculty, a word formerly reserved for non-teaching support personnel, seemed to mirror the reality of the dominance of management. The inevitable increase in use of computers contributed to the more weighty authority of managers. Faculty accepted grudgingly the economic necessity of intimate relations with the corporate world, again contributing to the importance of administration. The traditional academic community was wary of 'technopedagogy' and the consequent bureaucratic managerialism and what they considered artificial modes of assessment, narrowing horizons by accountability processes and performance indicators.

Administrators regarded these attitudes as archaic, 'head in sand' behaviour as they confronted the very real demand of society for justification of expenditure for higher education amidst pressing requirements from other social institutions.

The session rapporteurs, however, did find common ground as evidenced in their perceptive analyses.

John Fürstenbach (University of Stockholm) detected in his group similar objectives in addressing general policy issues. Even discussing staffing issues quickly shifts to policy and management. Movement from teaching towards research exists in various countries; faculty output is not necessarily new – the professoriate has not succeeded in presenting a clear picture of academia to society. Institutional efficiency and quality of teaching have been typical concerns. Problems arise from a free labour market established between countries in different economic circumstances.

Maia Bergman (University of Michigan) was able to find communality among the papers in her session with respect to change and controls: locus of responsibility, and spacing and communication. Specifically, in these categories, it is possible to discover a continuum within polarities – quantity versus quality, flexibility versus continuity, challenge versus support and tradition versus innovation – a process that exists in all systems of higher education.

Karel Tavernier (Catholic University of Leuven) believed the organizing principle for his group's papers to be how the message is perceived rather than its content. The point of gravity in university decision-making has devolved from Minister to University President to Academic Department Head who then has the impossible burden of translating mission, resolving conflict, planning and raising funds at the same time. Moreover the question arises as to whether the content of university education changes under pressure emanating from the new focus in university decision-making.

The professional researchers of higher education sought answers to these divergent views by exploring the nature of the professoriate, the lineaments of the profession. Schwartzman (University of São Paulo, Brazil) finds three categories for the ways in which academics look at their vocation. As a liberal profession, academia's first objective is to be free-standing as in medicine or law. The second is to be unionized skilled workers, in a line of descent from medieval guilds. Here, specialized skills are eroded by the introduction of modern machinery and division of labour in modern industrial production. The term 'profession' migrated from craftsmen to those with university education – the learned professions. The trinity is completed with the civil servant (mandarin). He has the pride and prestige of the learned profession, but is not free to decide his career, as is also true of the unionized worker.

Academics at present see themselves first and foremost as members of their academic disciplines and do not give much importance to their institutional affiliation. Schwartzman attributes the impressive achievements of American higher education in part to the absence of the mandarin and to the high mobility of American academics. He finds it paradoxical that in Europe and in countries influenced by Europe, higher education remains more akin to the civil servant and the values of the mandarin than experience would dictate.

The new type of academic is closer to professional unions than to the learned professions, especially those faculty in former polytechnics, community colleges, district colleges, and other post-secondary, non-university institutions. The traditional academic is squeezed between the mandarin and the 'union' faculty while prizing his individuality and independence, stressing his links with the international and scientific/scholarly community in reducing his involvement with this institution.

Teichler (Comprehensive University of Kassel, Germany) contends that the key issues affecting academic staff are diversification, financial pressures, and subsequent cuts in research provision, decline in the socio-economic status of the academic profession and the endangerment of the research role in higher education. He notes that the measures necessary to preserve or improve quality included restructuring institutions and management, revising curricula, improving training institutions and elaborating assessments with rewards and sanctions. The approach to these problems that Teichler recommends is to explore the typical methods that a production or service company takes to increase the quantity and quality of its products and services without the addition of resources or staff. These include targeting different market

segments and changing quality standards and work organization for both management and shop floor staff. The aim is to arrive at an appropriate mix of prescriptive or normative quantitative measures of work tasks and loads and soft monitoring of self-regulation activities within a broad frame of goals and quality.

On the other hand, Trow (University of California, Berkeley, and London School of Economics) in his instructive case history of Great Britain declares that the emerging force of managerialism has replaced the relationship of trust between government and universities. The government has made a systematic effort to make universities into 'knowledge shops' run in business-like ways. It intends the de-professionalizing of the academic work-force, transforming academics into middle managers interested in promotion and increased salaries or rewards for better performance as determined by the central government and applied by outside assessors. The quality of university work will decline as more energy is spent on bureaucratic reports and university activities begin to adapt to the simplifying tendencies of the quantifications of outputs. The life of the university will be impoverished as it is always more complex and varied than assessment of output can capture. In the end, assessment in Great Britain has turned out to be more the product of an ideology than a way of improving the quality of education.

Nevertheless, Sizer (Scottish Higher Education Funding Council) relates how quality assessments, decried by Trow, actually work. They are conducted within the context of an institution's declared objectives, purposes and mission. Assessment is meant to test awareness of objectives, presence of innovative teaching, depth of commitment to pastoral care and scholarly activity, to confirm details of organizational structure and review policies, procedures and individual staff development programmes. The components of the framework in quality assessment include aims, curricular design, teaching and learning environment, resources, practice, monitoring and output.

Denton and Kellett (Glasgow and Liverpool Universities, United Kingdom), however, are more polemical in their paper curiously titled 'Time for New Practices'. They assert that the academic ethos has diluted the terms of personnel professionalism. Financial constraints require value for money with respect to staff. To pursue this goal, partnerships must be created between administrative and academic departments. Career managers should be placed in each academic unit with reward strategies operative. Restructuring is necessary in that grading existing structures is a dominating influence. Salaries must be linked to performance and market conditions. Costs for administrative functions and academic services must be itemized in a department budget. Ultimately, a management career structure must be in place for academic members of the staff.

Reponen (Turku School of Economics and Business Administration, Finland) elaborates this position. Faculty are required to be result-oriented in a world of increasing competition. Like businesses, universities produce anywhere and market everywhere. This business-like environment is developed by networking with industry, useful in a modern information society.

In their analysis, Wolf and Sullivan (De Montfort University, Leicester, United Kingdom) confirm this approach in declaring that the British government has established more formal controls over quality, increasing the use of performance indicators and inspection processes involving peer reviews. They find the locus of power in the new structure, not in academic departments, but in schools which have become cost centres with devalued budgets.

Current management principle is that income attributable to teaching activity should not be exceeded by the costs incurred at the cost centres. Moreover, learning and interacting must be done in groups rather than individually. Teaching teams and structured patterns of teaching are part of the new scheme which perceives faculty representatives or planning committees as middle managers working with senior management.

Less sanguine is Gordon (University of Strathclyde, Scotland) who sees the major challenge as motivating and rewarding staff. He is surprised that the higher education community is opposed to measurement of its performance since it measures student performance and has a referee system for scholarly papers and research proposals. Indeed, he questions the actual and opportunity costs of the research selectivity process and the continuing studies of quality assurance and assessment appraisal for being summative instead of formative. In detecting conflict between short-term and long-term evaluations of performance standards, he declares the necessity of any evaluation having a professional development programme.

Brook and Davies (University of Liverpool) take a micro view in emphasizing the increasing demands on an academic head of department which they see underscoring a growing need for managerial skills in that position.

Technopedagogy is a concern of Newson (York University, Canada) as a key aspect of managerialism. Public policy, she says, often advocates and promotes in lieu of evaluating the extension of computer applications in social and economic life. It fails to acknowledge that to adapt to a new technology, higher education would require reduced faculty autonomy over teaching areas, increased administrative ability to set and implement prioritized objectives, changing faculty skills and approaches and altering the relationships between teaching and research. Such policy would also force retraining faculty in computer skills and knowledge, lowering priority of faculty labour costs in resource allocation and weakening the influence of negotiated contracts. The results will be the elimination of diverse role demands on the faculty and change in faculty attitudes. She concludes that many of the functions now considered part of university administrative apparatus were once an integral part of the educational responsibilities of faculty members.

The contributions of German presenters look at staffing practices as related to specific case histories. De Rudder (University of Lüneburg), for example, deals with restaffing issues in the

East German system after reunification. The policy of renewing and restructuring took priority over protecting the old academic staff. Transformation of East German higher education brought new departments, new disciplines formerly banned, such as public and business administration, social sciences (Western), social work, philosophy (Western), and the modification of one of the best teacher/student ratios in the world – 1:4.3.

Daxner (Carl von Ossietzky University, Oldenburg, Germany) believes that the academic corporation in Germany never really accepted comparison to business and consequently to being an important factor in the economic system. Recent proposals within Lower Saxony permit flexibility of budget allocation with regard to staff and other costs once the 'lump sum' budget has been assigned by the state in accord with mission and development plans. Relations between administrators and decision-making bodies need reshaping as does the interdependence between science/scholarship and administration, but there would remain a broad range of possibilities for staff development.

A comparative approach is taken by Moses (University of Canberra, Australia) with regard to Germany and Australia. German universities do not have a personal development function and hardly any systematic evaluation of teaching as in Australia. The College of Advanced Education, comparable to the German *Fachhochschulen*, has more involvement in research activity as present in conferences, research student supervision and communication. In both countries, peer review with respect to research gives an accurate picture for higher education that is not available for teaching which has no peer review.

Drawing upon his African experience, Wagaw (University of Michigan, United States) postulates that not enough thought in African universities has been given to conception, location and programme offerings. There had been a multiplicity of institutions established in response to social and political demand. Conflicting mandates regarding development, recruitment, promotion and retention of academics have created an atmosphere in which attracting and holding them will continue to be elusive.

The Americans detect trends from survey results. McGuinness (National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, United States) cites a recent study to show that faculty workload was rated far less important than financial issues or quality of undergraduate education. Yet, embedded in the figures are matters of class size, contact with senior and tenure-track faculty and the availability of faculty advising. 'Learning productivity', or the most efficient way of moving the student through the system toward a degree, is currently being debated. The strategy to elevate the present low place of higher education on the state government agendas is to emphasize the contribution of universities to the quality of life in the states' and nations' population, to report accountability systems to the public, to respond to major societal priorities, to counter the trend toward systems that link units with different missions, faculty roles, reward procedures within the same bureaucratic processes, and to devise new mechanisms to bridge the gap between public and 'expert' opinion.

With a list of questions, El-Khawas (American Council on Education) considers staffing. Management has not sufficiently recognized such dilemmas as mixed quality of appointments, rift between junior and senior staff, the great number of teaching and research associates (one half of all academic staff), and lack of specific duties for faculty. The prospect is that in place of universities recognizing and rewarding faculties and differential policy changes, there will be fewer rewards, greater responsibility, increased teaching load, and the 'greying' of academe and its disciplines.

The presentations would appear to confirm the impression that contributors, without having planned to do so, but by addressing the significant issues of staffing, had, in fact, confirmed the introductory remarks by Ernest Boyer, in his interpretation of data from the Carnegie Foundation's major study of the professorate. Ihsan Doğramıcı addressed the same theme and pointed out that the significance of the knowledge gained from the exchange of ideas and information at the conference is to remind the participants that, in addition to their teaching, training and research obligations, academics as leaders of the intelligentsia have the responsibility to arouse the social consciousness of their respective communities to the issues.

Henry Wasser

NOTE

1. The ICHE (International Conference on Higher Education, Sweden and Finland, August 1993) Steering Committee assigned Henry Wasser, Roddy Begg, Co-Editor, Elaine El-Khawas and John Fürstenbach to peruse Conference papers. The Editor takes sole responsibility for publication in *Higher Education Policy*.