Teacher Empowerment as the Focus of School Restructuring

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The educational reform thrust of the 1980s has focused considerably on the concept of school restructuring. While no single measure has been formulated to determine its exact meaning, at a minimum the emerging vernacular points to teacher empowerment as a central fixture in school based change (Lieberman and Miller 1990). Prawat asserts that the term teacher empowerment is not merely fashionable but in fact has become mandatory in educational discourse (Prawat 1991).

While it may now be obligatory for policy makers to speak of empowerment, they have been driven to this by the recognition that school improvement, seen as increased student performance, cannot result from legislated requirements. The history of educational reform in the modern era translates into legislated or other imposed forms of increased school productivity. In the process three parallel yet significant occurrences have emerged. One is that top-down or externally imposed measures have not been successful (Sarason 1990). A second is teachers know they receive an inordinate amount of the blame for poor school performance yet possess a very small voice regarding the important decisions that affect their ability to be more successful. And a third point is that the accepted standard for school performance, i.e., rising test scores, has been established to the exclusion of other important criteria and has been decided largely on the basis of national economic performance and goals.

This article examines the concept of teacher empowerment as it appears in current educational reform by analyzing it against a template of democratic assumptions and conditions. It begins with an analysis of empowerment's meaning and the accompanying school conditions which must be present for the concept to have meaning and to become a reality. It then provides a democratic rationale for both the existence of public education and any efforts to restructure schools. This rationale is provided because the democratic theme is almost completely absent in the rhetoric surrounding school change. Rather one finds that the language of production is

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employed and the mechanisms of the workplace are cited as the basis for new educational directions. By analyzing the purposes and effects of reforms in American manufacturing, the study draws comparisons to school reform efforts which contain predictive value for the future of educational structures.

Teacher Empowerment and School Change

The first thing to be acknowledged in the school reform crusade of the past ten years is that it has been, from the very beginning, a non-teacher driven phenomenon. Starting with the publication of *A Nation At Risk,* followed by the Holmes Group report, *Tomorrow's Teachers,* and the Carnegie Forum report, *A Nation Prepared,* one sees that business leaders, government officials, and academics dominated the panels that launched the tide of position papers which then spawned the reform movement. George Wood notes that of the six most publicized and promoted reports, teachers numbered a grand total of three among the group of 132 members (Wood 1988). This stark fact sits juxtaposed to the reality that most of the initiatives to restructure schools emanate from state legislatures or their proxies in state education departments or agencies which in turn draw much of their intellectual influence from the business community. Added to this is the increasing tendency of the federal government to impose its own national standards and educational conditions. By the time politicians or bureaucrats have spoken, there is precious little remaining for teachers to speak about.

Empowerment's meaning, then, must be considered before anyone can state that teachers are on the road to an enlarged voice in educational affairs. In truth there is little evidence to demonstrate that teachers are being emancipated under current reform initiatives, and where some changes have appeared, the record is spotty at best. In Rochester, New York, where school reform received considerable national attention including claims of increased teacher power, it appears public support for the reforms is waning and teachers may lose much of what they were initially promised (Bradley 1990, 1989). Often the public pronouncements accompanying school reform measures are seen very differently by teachers who experience them. Some teachers sense the new reforms neutralize the unions by seducing them into various forms of labor/management partnerships or amount to versions of work speed ups in the name of reform (Young 1989; Lupackino, 1990). Still others remain skeptical because teachers are at the bottom of the educational food chain and reforms have done little to change that condition (Thomas 1992).

One official has observed that teachers receive an inordinate amount of the blame for educational failure while other groups escape the accountability they should meet (McNeil 1990, 129). What is almost certain to remain if school districts withdraw their minimal commitments to enlarged teacher voices, particularly in the face of eroding financial support, is the residue of increased teacher accountability. "External standards of various kinds have

been established, not only to provide incentives for students to achieve but to guarantee that teachers are held accountable to precise public objectives. Teachers often perceive such standards as reducing their already marginal educational authority and diminishing the quality of their work life. The erosion of their authority seems a demeaning workplace condition" (Maeroff 1988, 36). Increased pressure for improvements in educational performance will bring greater obligations from teachers but without giving them concomitant control. Any movement toward genuine school restructuring, therefore, must be preceded by a clear declaration of what an empowered stance for teachers will mean.

In one of the first contemporary books focusing on the subject of empowering teachers, Maeroff argues that a central component of teacher empowerment is increased teacher knowledge. Asserting that far too many teachers are inept, he claims that increasing their knowledge and ability will increase their power: "A stronger and surer knowledge base and a greater command of methodology inevitably contribute to a teacher's power. They lend authority of the sort that allows a person to teach with confidence and to command the respect of students and colleagues" (Cotton-Pogrebin 1990, 491). Maeroff operates from the premise that if teachers are better equipped, they will do their job better and respect will flow their way. They then will be better able to persuade decision-makers to listen to them. He claims that teachers already hold considerable authority over their settings and their curriculum.

Maeroff's sanguine analysis favors increased teacher obligations with no assurance that their professional voice will be enlarged and in the process fails to consider several concerns. The first is that if one acknowledges that there are many fine and effective teachers, which even the harshest critics of the field must concede, what evidence can be offered to show that enhanced teacher performance and knowledge translates into increased influence in the decisions which affect their capacity to teach? By narrowing the scope of what teachers are entitled to have a voice in, namely the confines of the classroom walls, Maeroff at once reduces the concept of teacher empowerment to a minimal form. To the extent teachers seek greater decision-making authority, they do so precisely because they lack the ability to change those aspects of the educational enterprise that represent barriers to sound teaching practices. Reforming schools is not simply an issue of improving upon existing classroom practices. It is a reconsideration of the entire school apparatus for the purpose of overhauling a system in need of more than minor repair. Asking teachers to focus their attention on limited classroom considerations alone fails to recognize how many things outside the classroom significantly affect what can be achieved inside.

A second issue raised by the Maeroff perspective is the concept of power or authority within the classroom, what he terms deportment on the authority of rules. When it is assumed that teachers already have power and their control over students is cited as confirmation, two very different uses of the word power are being employed. The power that teachers have in relation to students is simply power *over* a less powerful group and the power a

teacher has in this regard has been assigned for that express purpose. Teachers, therefore, have power *over* students but this is in no way comparable to the power others have to *affect* the system through their decision-making authority. Teachers' power in the classroom is prescribed. Evidence of this is seen in the discipline policies or programs adopted by some districts whereby all teachers are to employ the discipline measures alike and consistently. In this example it is clear that the power teachers have in the classroom is not theirs (Prawat 1991). Instead teachers are merely the means through which the system exercises its will in the classroom.

Maeroff's position offers no challenges to the top-down hierarchical structure of the status quo. Instead he cites instances of how effectively the current structure can be moved to affect desired changes. He seeks to have teachers work within the system and seek partnerships with those who actually hold the decision-making power. In the end, what he offers most is for teachers to work harder when what teachers need is to be able to work differently.

A more thoughtful analysis of teacher empowerment is presented by Richard S. Prawat in which he distinguishes between the epistemological and political aspects of empowerment. These are situated either in what he terms conversations with self or with settings. The first can be described as conversations which enable teachers to acquire the critical capacities required for judging the worthiness of the proposals advanced by experts. The second relates to the features and dynamics of school settings in which power and authority can be viewed as obstacles to personal development. By providing the insight that separates improvements for teachers as professionals who can in turn better serve the educational needs of students as opposed to the kind of empowerment that focuses heavily on workplace overhaul, Prawat opens the door for commitment by teachers commensurate with their epistemological as well as political needs as regards empowerment (Prawat 1991).

Prawat's categorization is useful for purposes of analysis but one must caution against a potentially unnecessary dualism. He quotes Newmann who states, "Most of the talk about school site-management, teacher career ladders, or schools of choice, never considers how these mechanisms will teach students to write about literature, to reason about scientific phenomena, or to learn important geographical facts" (McDonald 1988). The issue, in my view, should not be drawn between whether teachers desire a greater voice in school decisions or whether they are devoted to increasing their instructional capacities. It can be seen in teachers' desires for greater decision-making authority that without increased power they will not be able to overcome in any meaningful degree the barriers to effective practice that their daily experiences tell them is necessary. It seems reasonable to conclude that most teachers seek to be effective in the practice of their craft as they understand it. And they recognize that the plethora of educational decisions which affect their capacity to be effective are not made or even influenced by teachers. But it can be the determination of teachers themselves which arena they see as most worthy of their energy and time. It is

unfair to cite career ladders or site-based management or choice plans as evidence of how teachers call for empowerment but give little or no recognition to the essential concerns of their work. It is unfair because the reforms most discussed have not been proposed by teachers or teacher spokespersons. Rather teachers have confronted the Hobson's choice of either participating in reform initiatives peddled by legislatures or school districts, albeit undesirable in that their primary considerations almost always relate to increased accountability, or stand by while the local train of reform leaves its decision-making station with no teachers aboard at all.

McDonald explains the supposed emergence of the teacher's voice in educational reform by positing it within various research paradigms. While his thesis postulates that recent reforms invite the teachers' presence out of recognition of earlier failed reforms which did not include them, the new found voice for teachers is one which must fit within the confines of what he terms a technocratic and positivist paradigm (Dewey 1916, 85). This suggests that the aim is not to provide teachers with an authentic voice, one they generate and own, but rather to give them the opportunity now to say for themselves what the system would have said for them anyway. In Dewey's words, "The tendency to reduce such things as efficiency of activity and scientific management to purely technical externals is evidence of the one-sided stimulation of thought given to those in control of industry—those who supply its aims . . . there is not sufficient stimulus for attention to the human factors and relationships in industry" (Duffy 1992). Dewey's insight applies nicely to schools as well.

The accommodating demeanor teachers must accept requires not only that they engage their craft in a technocratic way but that they additionally adopt a technocratic belief system. The issue is not only about practice; it is equally about belief and thought, neither of which teachers are entitled to exercise in consequential amounts. According to Gerald G. Duffy, "In following the tenets of a philosophy or theory in compliantly passive ways, teachers are effectively disempowered . . . insisting on rigid compliance with one or another approach tends to convince teachers that the key to improved instruction lies outside themselves" (Garman and Hazi 1988).

A good example of teacher voicelessness exists in their teaching methodologies. A long established bit of folklore in education holds that teachers possess a significant level of control and autonomy regarding classroom practice. From this perspective curriculum planners and other decision-makers establish parameters but teachers employ discretion in the day-to-day implementation of instruction. It can now be argued, however, that teachers are controlled even at the implementation of instruction where they once exercised a modicum of judgment and independence. This accommodating stance required of teachers results from their "being forced to adopt a single model of teaching" (Glickman 1987).

A contemporary illustration is found in the Madeline Hunter model. While nothing inherent in the model requires that teachers be coerced in adopting it, the effect is precisely that. Under the educational effectiveness movement, which routinely subscribes to Hunterism, teachers disclose

being told what to teach, how to teach, and when to teach (Garman and Hazi 1988). Teachers describe how they "accommodate" the program as part of their survival strategies. They refer to the "Madeline Hunter tap dance" and one classroom teacher poignantly described the controlling elements of what has been done to teachers: "It's just easier to go along with the program and not be identified as malcontent by the administration" (Garman and Hazi 1988).

The important point to realize is that teachers typically have no say in whether they are to be Hunterized or Cantorized or OBE-ized. The absence of voice means they have no opportunity to reject it or suspend it once its undesirable features become evident; their only option is to oblige. While many of these models can be critiqued as pulling education closer and closer to a technocratic ideology, the more disturbing side of it all, and with Hunter in particular, is the manner in which they have been foisted upon entire teaching faculties (Glickman 1987). Treating teachers as mindless automatons who are paid to teach, not to think, these programs have been shoved down the throats of teachers coast to coast (Romanish 1991). In most instances administrators adopt the program and impose it from on high. This single model mentality, increasingly employed as an evaluation tool which virtually requires teachers to acquiesce or suffer the career consequences (since the leading grounds for dismissal associated with teaching practice is insubordination), has required teachers to demonstrate their capacities for accommodationism. "Being obsequious becomes a professional virtue; being investigative about popularized programs becomes a professional liability" (Brandt 1992).

Sergiovanni lends support to what many teachers have intuitively rejected in prevailing forms of instructional practice. He notes that the findings from school effectiveness and teaching effectiveness research reflect a technical rationality and have led to prescriptive forms of practice. He asserts that "there's a strong case for teachers needing to create their practice in use—for not treating the research on teaching as a set of prescriptions. It doesn't tell you what to do, it informs your practice" (Kimball 1988).

But teachers, in the main, lack the authority to exercise those judgments. The expectation that teachers will follow the dictates of the imposed models represents the models' most pernicious features because the result moves teaching in the opposite direction from developing a genuinely professional set of conditions. Being a professional means having expertise and the authority to exercise judgments within that expertise (Giroux 1988; Giroux and McLaren; Bradley 1991). To be a professional requires reflection, understanding, and a desire to interrogate practice in order to discern hidden implications. Moreover, professionals are not in need of direct and condescending supervision by those who no longer are members of the profession under review. This professional posture is not one an individual arrives at by chance. It is part of one's professional development which begins in the college of education. But one must question the nature of teacher preparation and what it equips future teachers to do. Are teacher education programs designed to prepare future teachers who expect to practice their

craft in a setting that affords a considerable measure of flexibility and that welcomes diversity in teaching methods and philosophies? Or is the rigidity of the present school system such that teacher education programs see their basic mission as one of preparing future teachers to fit into the role the system has defined? If it is the former then preservice teachers will be equipped with a foundational knowledge base that arms them with the understanding and accompanying capacities to assess educational practice in light of its theoretical grounding and its social and political implications. If it is the latter then the mainstay of their preparation can focus on lesson plan design and strategies of classroom management.

If the school system practitioners make important professional judgments and justify those choices on the basis of sound theory and research, teacher education would feel the pressure to furnish their graduates with the requisite backgrounds to accomplish this. Teacher education would then operate from the premise that graduates will occupy an empowered status as teachers. Teachers are not expected to assume such a posture and teacher preparation operates with this knowledge in hand which helps explain the accommodating pressures teachers encounter (Gutmann 1987).

To change the status of teaching requires that the concept of empowerment be defined broadly rather than narrowly. If teachers are to become central shapers of the educational enterprise the arenas for their input have to be expanded. Further, their voice in educational affairs is one that cannot be given and taken away by the vicissitudes of changing administrators. To be authentic their power must be assured, not allowed. To allow teachers to have a say means it can be taken away. Moreover, to allow is to acknowledge that a more powerful force has authority to grant or suspend the teacher's professional prerogatives.

Since almost every decision reached in a school district has some impact directly or indirectly on classroom life, it follows that teachers should have a say in almost all educational decisions. Their control over decisions should not be exclusive. And some decisions, such as salary levels and tax levies, would remain outside their domain. But once the funding levels have been established by duly elected bodies, all decisions that are made regarding expenditures should involve teachers. The reason for this is simple. Any budgetary decision has an impact on other areas of the budget. If keeping campus greens is an important budgetary consideration, naturally reducing funds available for instructional needs, teachers should participate in the decisions which establish immaculate lawn care as a high district priority. In other words, the overall agenda is one that should have teacher fingerprints on it every step of the way—to the extent teachers desire it. There is no blueprint for each setting. If teachers truly participated in the construction of their professional lives the forms and shapes of schools could be many. So could the governance structures created to reach decisions. The essential point is that teachers would be able to share in all this as they see the need.

Let me briefly cite a few of the decisions in which teachers should be expected to play a prominent role. Teachers should be hired by teachers.

Entry into most professions is ultimately in the hands of the profession. Whether one is chosen to occupy a teaching post should be predominantly a teacher decision. It can be argued that for a series of reasons other stake holders should have their voices heard in such an important decision. If so, then teachers should constitute a majority number on any selection committees. Related to hiring is the issue of tenure and in some instances, promotion. For the same reasons teachers should participate directly in these as well. In addition, teachers should have a significant say in who becomes an administrator and in establishing the criteria for what an administrator does. Until the structure of schools can take authentically new forms, administrators wield considerable influence over the system and teachers should play a part in their selection. Indeed teachers should be able to function without traditionally defined principals and could choose to have lead teachers if they desire. Teachers should decide their schedules and teaching assignments if they represent an area of concern. Faculty meetings should be led by teachers with an agenda that is teacher generated. If non-teachers want to conduct the meetings they should not be called faculty meetings. Budget matters too should have direct teacher involvement. Traditional sphere of teacher influence related to curriculum and instruction should be returned to more teacher determined realms. And issues of staff development need to be in teacher hands so that as professionals they can identify their greatest needs and interests as well as how those needs can best be met.

Democracy and the Schools

While teacher voices are barely audible in reform discourse, another disturbing omission is evident in the dialogue surrounding educational reform and that is the connection between democratic school structures and the civic obligations public schools were created to perform. Without a clear understanding of a set of educational aims dedicated to democratic principles, there is no basis for assessing the meaning and impact of reform (Dewey 1938). Likewise, it becomes possible for school restructuring to be abandoned to the coalition of political interests represented by business and government. In that context, any conversation which employs the language of empowerment is destined to give it meaning which is fraught with contradictions.

Reconnecting the civic functions of schools to the reform agenda will provide a rationale for democratizing the internal workings of schools. If the most compelling rationale for the existence of public education is political in that democracy requires an educated citizenry, then the organization and routine functioning of the schools must reflect that purpose. There must be something about the nature of public education that connects to democratic ends; otherwise a defense for their existence disappears because a society can arrange its schools in a host of ways if the primary educational aim is mere literacy.

What then is the role education can play in supporting democracy beyond the provision of a general education? The answer lies both in the nature of the curriculum and more importantly, the nature of the student experiences. Schools arranged with democratic ends as central to their mission will insure that those who inhabit them are witness to democratic ways and encounter a democratic experience in major aspects of the program. This concept is vital to a comprehension of democracy. In addition the curriculum will support the experience by furnishing knowledge and understandings that nourish, explain, and provide intellectual sustenance to it.

The importance of experience can be drawn from the insights of Dewey, who described how experiences can be educative or miseducative. To be educative they must contribute to growth and not have a limiting and narrowing effect (Dewey 1916, 87). Moreover, they have to enhance rather than restrict the prospects of future growth. Dewey connected the concept of experience to both democracy and education when he wrote, "It is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. The extension in space of the number of individuals who participate in an interest so that each has to refer his own action to that of others, and to consider the action of others to give point and direction to his own, is equivalent to breaking down the barriers of class, race, and national territory which kept men from perceiving the full import of their activity" (Wood 1988). Dewey's perspective connected lived experience with the prospects for democracy. If it was not something the citizenry knew through the marrow of daily life it would be at risk because forces of oppression feed on the absence of democratic knowledge and experience of the public.

What Dewey demonstrated is that democracy does not flourish simply as the result of people voting, or what Wood terms the protectionist form of democracy where individuals expect to participate in governance only when their own interests are at stake and that representatives are elected to protect those interests (Bellah 1991). Nor is it nourished merely by instruction in civics classes. To survive and advance, our experiment in democracy must be reflected in all aspects of living. People do not learn in school alone, they learn from the society as a whole (Dewey 1903). Schools must lead the way in providing democratic experiences for all who inhabit them. Teachers are learners too—they cannot create democratic sites for students if their own experiences as teachers accumulate in anti-democratic settings. Most recently Senator Bill Bradley, in response to the tragedy of Los Angeles, echoed Jefferson by warning, "We have to fight for and build democracy in every generation. We have to do it at every level: the presidency, every state, every community, every family" (Bradley 1992). Dare we add every school?

It is imperative, therefore, that school restructuring have as its anchor the employment of democratic practices within schools. Only in this way can public education claim to be the life support system for democracy in the way Thomas Jefferson and Horace Mann envisioned. Only by becoming democratic organisms can schools fulfill their obligations as the engine of our democracy. It is through democratic learning environments that students gain the capacities to participate in the construction of their society

and the amelioration of present social ills in ways that are fully compatible with a recognition of the worth and dignity of all people. As Dewey (Pauly 1991) asked, "What does democracy mean save that the individual is to share in determining the conditions and the aims of his own work; and that, upon the whole, through the free and mutual harmonizing of different individuals, the work of the world is better done than when planned, arranged, and directed by a few, no matter how wise or of how good intent that few?"

If school experiences are not devoted to a democratic ethic, students become socialized to accept power differentials between groups. They become willing to consent to their own sense of powerlessness and alienation. They become accustomed to inaction in the face of unfairness and inequity. In anti-democratic settings their critical skills cannot develop and their education soon becomes one better suited for citizenship in places where words such as freedom and democracy are empty phrases. If schools are not restructured along democratic lines, it is impossible to speak of teacher empowerment.

It is these political educational achievements that provide the rationale for making schools more democratic in nature and thereby enlarging the voices of teachers within. It is not that teachers are to be entrusted because they possess a higher moral stance. As Pauly observed, "In the end, we must rely on the people in classrooms to carry out the work of education—not because they will always do it perfectly, but because they are the only ones who can do it all" (Callan 1962; Cetron 1985; Lewis 1986; Olson 1992).

The Business Model and School Reform

That schools follow the lead and influence of business is a long established and well documented phenomenon (Tarbox 1991). As American corporations shift their production processes to parallel more closely the Japanese models, it is apparent that educational managers in the United States are seeking to adapt public schools to the management rules of the industrial and business sectors. Recent reforms such as OBE (outcome based education) are direct descendants of management strategies in the corporate world.

As economic hardship has visited increasing numbers of corporations, progressive forms of management have taken it "on the chin." Since schools follow the example of business practices in management, we can expect participatory gestures under some reforms to disappear and the slow spread of participatory frameworks that ostensibly empower teachers to diminish markedly. Instead of moving toward organizational patterns that view schools differently than neatly structured production lines, the trend may be to move the control of schools out of the hands of educational administrators and into the hands of business experts who will run the public schools for their own profit (Reuther 1988). Or rather than hand teachers more control, the drift may be to strip the school districts from having the authority to govern themselves.

Only time will tell whether the reforms that have been touted as empowering for teachers will in fact be so. It must be understood that the people who cite the Japanese model as the prototype arrangement for teacher empowerment fail to acknowledge that Japanese workers have limited realms within which to affect production and none of their voice is given for the purpose of worker empowerment. They have a restricted say in specified matters as a means to improve productivity, efficiency, and quality control.

In the private sector, quality circles have been the vehicle used to ape the Japanese in order to improve productivity. They have not been without controversy, however. Unions in particular have objected to the new-found collaborative spirit among managers because they see it as part of a strategy to keep existing power arrangements in place and take back the gains made collectively by unions during earlier periods of greater union strength. Victor Reuther claims corporations are attempting to undermine the "unity and solidarity of the workers on the plant floor and in the union to draw workers into a mythical partnership. They offer the enticing illusion that the worker will have a voice in management" (Kanter, Summers, and Stein 1986). He believes this is part of a calculated effort to control worker behavior on the job as well as the thoughts and feelings of workers.

In this way, the labor movement is further weakened inside the plant because traditional grievance mechanisms either cease to exist or are so restricted by management that the unions cannot continue to serve their members in traditional ways. To grieve is to be outside the team approach. A parallel in schools can be seen with the imposition on teachers of various teaching and management models. Imposed in climates of school reform where teachers are increasingly to view themselves as team players, the effect silences many.

In some instances administrative thinking promotes teacher empowerment due to a readily available cadre of aspiring administrators who are still in the classroom. Seeking self-advancement, these "teachers" are selected to spearhead reform activities. Typically sold as staff development packages they are touted as "teacher directed" but once in place quickly emerge as the evaluation schemes they were meant to be. But teachers have little to object to because they are promptly reminded that these are teacher-led phenomena—through such forms of teacher leadership it is argued teachers become empowered. Yet the lives of average classroom teachers are not changed, save the increased visits to their rooms by checklist-armed monitors. In addition, teachers are expected to subscribe to the educational ideology underpinning these empowering initiatives. If one does not pledge allegiance to the new program, one is not exhibiting the desired traits of true partners or team players. The implications of such a status are menacing.

The new quality and partnership initiatives in industry have not resulted in universal success. Kanter's extensive survey of American Manufacturing Association companies spanning every industry reveals that the practices most commonly used to employ new work arrangements are those which provide workers with the most limited impact, and the "practices that provide workers with the greatest amount of control . . . rarely were adopted

by the sample organizations" (Kanter, Summers, and Stein 1986). Their review of the data shows that organizations prefer "new" approaches that affect existing systems very little, with the least effects occurring with executive and managerial roles, status, power, and rewards. These organizations typically "prefer alternatives that are limited in scope, are low in their influence over the organization (as opposed to select individuals), and that require little modification of existing systems" (Vogt and Hunt 1988).

Vogt and Hunt indicate that a major problem with participative work groups, even though many Fortune 500 firms use some form of them, is that they are "not well integrated into the organization's hierarchy" (Ruffner and Ettkin 1987). This reveals that many managers see these new arrangements as a means to extract more from employees without altering the structure in any ways that will affect management control. The motivation instead flows from the realization that the Japenese have demonstrated a unique capacity to extract labor from the process and improve productivity (Lawler and Mohrman 1987).

The expectation of management in new cooperation with labor is that contented workers will be more productive and profits will be increased. But what is required to create contented workers is something apparently lost on many executives. To the extent some participatory arrangements have been successful, managers want them to work without genuinely altering the existing structure. Therefore it is not uncommon to find references to maintaining authority in top down forms (Koeppel 1989). Moreover, by developing different belief systems among workers the aim is to have the traditional adversarial labor posture diminish. Under General Motor's team concept, for instance, workers were to gain autonomy and would no longer be mere assembly line automatons. Yet the net effect saw unions lose power while workloads increased (Sarason 1990).

For teachers to adopt a corporately devised notion of empowerment is to secure their marginal status into the next century. The dominance of business management principles in education indicates that the focus of school reform will almost always be exclusively on outcomes which means that teachers will be considered simply a factor of production. When teachers are cast as basically a means to the system's ends, there is little reason to change their position of power within the system. Unless there is a fundamental alteration of power in the system, true reform and school restructuring will be elusive goals. In Sarason's words: "I do not take kindly to assertions that schools will improve to the extent they adopt the presumably successful managerial style and values of the private sector... to imitate the private sector would be both irrelevant and another faddish disaster" (Sarason 1990).

Conclusion

The rationale that should drive school restructuring needs to be tied to democratic aims for education. Schools should not do all that they attempt for the singular purpose of academic achievement as verified through

standardized measures. Instead they should be seen as sites for the creation of democratic understandings and sympathies among the citizenry so that our great democratic experiment can be successful and endure. For that to occur, the status and power of teachers will have to change as well.

When teachers are truly speaking for themselves, only teachers chosen by teachers will represent and speak on their behalf. There are many dimensions to this issue including the creation of structures that will make professionalization of teaching a possibility. There is the related concern of the purpose and nature of a professional preparation intended to authorize teachers to think for and speak for themselves. But none of the larger issues surrounding empowerment can begin to blossom until fundamental assumptions regarding the role and authority of teachers experience a transformation. The challenge is great, resistance will be considerable, but the options are few.

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