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ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

THE CARNEGIE REPORT
"A NATION PREPARED"

Prepared for the Iowa Educational Forum

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ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

THE CARNEGIE REPORT

1. Overview.

The Carnegie Report is unlike other national reports. It calls for additional financial resources and provides a rationale for obtaining them. It seeks to impact politicians and has a strategy for doing so. It sees itself as extending, not repealing, the tradition of John Dewey. It recognizes the need for minority representation in schools and the profession. It identifies its mission as providing both equity and excellence, not merely for democracy and the economy, but for students. Unique among the national reports, it offers a coherent vision of the future and is willing to back its vision with hard cash. More than any other report, it takes a systems approach to problems. It tries to anticipate its consequences. In short, it is sincere about doing something "for" education.

2. Excessive Haste.

One could still be critical. There were no working teachers on the task force. The Report's first draft was written before the task force's first meeting.[1] A great foundation is trying to control events by lobbying, threatening its objectivity as a charity. And there is hype in the pronouncement that the Report is "round two" of educational reform. "Round one" isn't over. The "risks" in the "Nation at Risk" Report have not been corrected. And like the other reports, the Carnegie Report understates what is good and overstates

what is wrong. It gives little credit for incremental change which is underway. It advocates "radical" change, a revolution. In so far as it is seeking radical change, the Carnegie Report is seeking to do something "to" education.

3. What Carnegie Wants.

Mere criticism would be a mistake. After all, the report is advocating what teachers have been seeking for years. It is calling for a massive increase in spending to achieve massive improvements; a professional salary for professional work as the only way of obtaining professional results and retaining skill in the workforce; a new curriculum for teacher preparation programs; and a new school structure which empowers teachers to take responsibility for the learning environment at the building level.

4. Congruent with the Profession's Agenda.

Teachers and their organizations have sought these changes for years and for the same reasons as Carnegie: to make teaching a true profession. Like Carnegie, teachers know they lack the prerogatives of other professionals. Now that others have recognized the importance of the task, it would be foolish for teachers to react petulantly.

5. Some Problems.

It would also be foolish to ignore the Report's problems. Like the Holmes Report, it proposes to establish a single model of teacher preparation, the graduate model. It does so although today's elementary practitioners, prepared in undergraduate programs, are the most effective cohort now in practice. It does not say what will

befall professors who become unemployed; the colleges which rely on teacher education students for survival; or the towns where these colleges are the only industry. It provides no research about the efficacy of the graduate model or mention of contrary evidence in recent "Master of Arts in Teaching" programs. Simple prudence suggests that the implementation of such a proposal should follow rather than precede demonstration programs and research.

6. Repeats the Holmes Report.

Like the Holmes Report, Carnegie supports hiring persons to teach before they have begun teacher education programs. It is difficult to accept that a teacher with ninety clockhours of preparation will be as effective as a teacher as a one with 2,350 clockhours of preparation and 720 clockhours of practicum. But this is suggested as a mechanism for improving effectiveness in instruction. Yet what Carnegie is proposing is a lower standard than 48 states now permit.[2] If teaching is a profession having an organized body of knowledge which is uniquely its own, it follows that one must know something about that knowledge before being admitted to practice. B.A.'s in biology are not licensed to remove an appendix after 90 clockhours of training.

7. Is It Really a "Systems Approach?"

Carnegie seems to have accepted the Holmes recommendations uncritically. This suggests a review procedure far less systematic than the claim to a systems approach implies. Note that the Report was presented to its plenary committee at its first meeting. This does not suggest systematic review. It suggests that extant reports

were placed in a computer, redundancy eliminated and the result subjected to a single editorial style. The Carnegie Report resembles a review of the recommendations of others rather than an integration of recommendations approached systematically and wholistically.

8. Exporting Higher Education to K-12.

With its "instructor" concept, the Report is exporting the concept of teaching assistants from Higher Education to K-12. Like teaching assistants, Carnegie's instructors would have a Bachelor's degree only. Like teaching assistants, these persons would have no deep knowledge of an academic-subject matter, research methods or recent research. They would also know nothing about teaching. Like the Holmes report, the Carnegie Report advocates increasingly specialized roles for teachers, but finds no contradiction in advocating less preparation and more specialization.

The use of teaching assistants in higher education is widespread. A national study on teaching assistants found that thirty to fifty percent of contact hours of instruction in the lower division of research universities are taught by teaching assistants. One of three teaching assistants is fully responsible for all aspects of his teaching assignment, including lecturing, grading, testing and counseling. One of three teaching assistants is new each year. If a B.A. degree (or better) in a subject-matter is a valid criterion, one in twenty-five fails to meet the degree requirement and one in six teaches outside his or her disciplinary area. Twenty-five percent have difficulty meeting both their teaching and academic responsibilities. Female teaching assistants report less adequate guidance and

support than male teaching assistants. One in five reports a need for improved supervision and guidance, which varies greatly from one academic unit to another with Arts and Sciences reporting the greatest difficulty. The more significant the teaching function, such as lecturing and leading seminars, the less sufficient is the training being provided to teaching assistants. There is little difference in the perceptions of foreign and American T.A.'s.[3]

One wonders why we should wish to recommend or replicate a system which exploits its practitioners; provides little or no guidance, training or support; and abandons students to each other. Such training is more in keeping with the apprentice model than with a professional model of preparation, for it assumes that experience alone is a sufficient teacher. The apprentice model is an anachronism which has died out in professions which have achieved legitimacy and professional status. Maintaining or expanding the teaching assistant concept perpetuates a condition which prevents the profession from achieving legitimacy. Thus, the Report's T.A. concept runs counter to its purpose of raising the status of the profession.

9. A Failed Concept.

The use of teaching assistants in higher education is a failed concept. It is not uncommon for teaching assistants to provide up to 50% of all contact hours of instruction in Colleges of Liberal Arts at our multiversities, and up to 60% in the lower (Freshman and Sophomore) division. This may be salutary for professors who do not wish to teach those who have the most to learn. And it generates an

economic surplus which finds its way into the Graduate College for released time and research. But it is not salutary for the undergraduate student, who pays full tuition for a teacher and receives a substitute instead. Surely, this economic, educational and moral short-coming should not be maintained in higher education, let alone exported to other settings.

10. "Separate but Equal" is "Inferior."

The claim that teaching assistants make up in enthusiasm what they lack in knowledge and experience reaffirms that teaching assistants lack knowledge and experience. Teaching assistants are not as effective as faculty. If they were advanced degrees and permanent faculty would be unnecessary. And if the quality of K-12 teaching has declined, one reason may be the use of teaching assistants. The preparation of future teachers in courses taught by persons who know neither a subject-matter nor how to teach it cannot produce effective K-12 teachers.

11. Negative Reinforcement.

Consider "role modeling." Colleges of Education work diligently to instill good teaching habits and behaviors by example. Meanwhile, Colleges of Liberal Arts, by employing T.A.'s with minimal training, undo professional courses by providing undisciplined and uninformed instruction. The most effective (and least expensive) reform may be to utilize only faculty with regular appointments when providing instruction to future teachers.

12. Fallacious Logic.

While the Report's "instructor" concept is intended to fill rooms which may be empty because of a teacher shortage, it will not fill

rooms with those who can be effective on the first day of employment. The "instructor" proposal will not improve teaching, except serendipitously, particularly at the elementary level, where the link between professional preparation and student learning is clear.

13. Little Use in Relieving Shortages.

Alternate certification it will not generate large numbers of teachers. New Jersey, at the insistence of Gov. Thomas Kean, recently instituted a licensure which allows persons to become teachers without attending college-level teacher education programs. The procedure was implemented to eliminate the impending teacher shortage and bring new blood into the teaching profession. After its first year of operation in 1985, of about 1,200 applying under the program, only 193 (16.1%) were hired by local school districts. Of these, 21 (11%) left the profession by the end of the year. In 1986, of 1,900 qualifiers, only 198 (10.4%, a lower rate than the previous year) were hired.[4] Alternate certification will not produce sufficient numbers of teachers to impact any teacher shortage.

14. Moral Issue.

There are moral questions about exploiting "instructors" to support "lead teachers." Should some teachers be paid less so that others can be paid more? Is teaching a "zero-sum" profession? Should some be paid less than market rates? Should some be less than fully qualified? How does one explain to a parent that her child is being taught by someone who is less than fully qualified? Carnegie supports higher standards, except when it is speaking about "instructors."

15. "Instructors" Disfavor K-6 Disproportionately.

The "instructor" concept will affect K-6 disproportionately. This is because resources in a complex organization tend to gravitate toward the level of greatest prestige. In Higher Education, for example, resources from whatever source waft to the Graduate College in the form of support for unsponsored research, a prestige activity. In the public school, we expect "B.A. only" instructors to accumulate disproportionately in the elementary school. This is the level at which preparation and experience are extremely important. It is also the level which is disproportionately female. The "instructor" concept means the least paid, least experienced, least tenured, least effective "instructors" accrue at the level which is female.

16. "Lead Teacher" Concept.

The Report proposes the creation of a new class of teacher, the "lead teacher." These teachers would be empowered to make decisions about the local teaching environment and would be held accountable. These "lead teachers" are conceived as "instructional leaders" like effective principals. But rather than help principals transform their role from educational cop to educational leader, Carnegie is proposing a new class of practitioner which would be responsible for what principals are doing (or should be doing). The Report forgets that "principal" is from "principal teacher." Principals' organizations are justifiably upset. This is unfortunate because principals are a key element in restructuring schools.

17. Misreading Public Attitudes.

The Report's "lead teacher" proposal pays lip-service to those who believe that politicians must do something "to" teachers in order

to do something "for" them. This idea is based on public opinion polls. But opinion polls return answers only to the exact question which is asked. More precise polling indicates that the public will pay higher taxes to support education without extracting a price from the profession. The Iowa State Education Association has been polling the Iowa public on this subject since 1979. In answer to the question, "Would you pay more taxes to maintain present school programs?" the response of the public has been increasing since 1979.

Table 1.

Comparison of Public Responses
on Maintenance of Funding Issue,
1979-81.

Year/Mo.	Should	Shouldn't	Don't Know	Sample Base
1978	47%	40%	13%	595
1981/Feb.	61%	30%	9%	1,020[5]
1981/Nov.	62%	26%	12%	1,020[6]

The public does not feel that "changes" and "reforms" are a condition of additional resources for schools. Carnegie has accepted this idea uncritically.

18. Pyramid Structure Inconsistent With Goals.

The "lead teacher" concept doesn't give responsibility to all teachers, but to a few. Thus, the Report maintains the pyramidal structure of authority in schools even as it advocates its elimination through collegeal structures. By proposing empowerment for an elite only, the Report is proposing relationships which are inappropriate for a profession which operates in a public setting and within the legal context which such a setting implies. The concept of equity is now so basic to public sector teaching that it cannot be

divorced from the profession's organization, structure or code of conduct.

Also, by imposing a structure on the profession from the outside, Carnegie, like the other reports, prevents K-12 solutions from emerging from K-12 problems. This shortcoming is serious. Applied to Abnormal Psychology, it leads to dependency. Applied to social policy, it leads to Welfare. Applied to teaching, it implies that public school teaching has no unique professional character. Yet a lack of professional identity -- the treatment of teaching professionals as personnel -- is what Carnegie is seeking to amend. Carnegie places the burden of school reform on teachers and schools, but does not deal with school governance. This is unfortunate because the collegeality which Carnegie seeks for practitioners is impossible because of the structure of governance. The narrow, legalistic conception of governance which governs public schools causes corporatism, alienation and anomie in the workplace. Collegeality cannot occur unless and until practitioners are empowered to practice like colleagues in the clinical setting. And professionalism cannot occur unless and until autonomous professional behavior is legitimated by schools' governance. Unless teachers are empowered to act as professionals, it is not productive to demand professional results.

19. Another Moral Shortcoming.

Importing an entire professional structure from outside prevents teaching from locating, identifying and developing its own unique role. Teachers believe they have the right and the obligation to determine how their profession should be structured; other

professions do. Yet the national reports assume teachers can't develop policy for their own profession. This leads to paradox: Carnegie is denying autonomy in the act of calling for it. This vitiates its moral authority. The result is not only inimical to reform, but bad politics: It ignores the consent of the governed.

20. National Certification Board.

The Report's keystone is a national certification board. This board would offer examinations, develop model teacher education curricula, certify practitioners, establish a code of ethics, and discipline practitioners for unprofessional conduct. Participation would be voluntary at first, but compulsory as the system becomes established. Licensure by the board would become the basis of compensation and assignments for teachers at the local level. Central to its mission is the development of tests. A majority of the board would be master teachers elected by master teachers in their regions; but business, schoolboards and politicians would be represented.

21. False Democracy.

Why? What do amateurs have to offer to the technical problems of professional preparation? Is there a qualified public interest in what is required to qualify for a teacher of reading beyond what teachers of reading stipulate? Do we ask businesspeople to decide what a surgeon needs to know to take out an appendix? When applied to any other profession, the concept is ludicrous and demeaning. Yet Carnegie suggests it for teachers.

In doing so, Carnegie is being consistent with its mission: Reforming schools for the sake of business. Representation for business is entirely in keeping with this aim. But by including amateurs, it is perpetuating the disenfranchisement of the classroom professional. Carnegie seeks to transform teaching into a true profession, but to do so, it must empower -- trust -- teachers to control their profession in all plenary forums. It must also exclude those who are not professionally qualified to make professional decisions. The determination of professional qualifications is, and has not been, a prerogative of lay public or legislative control. Diluting professional prerogative denies teaching the right to professional status.

22. Other Problems with National Certification.

It would be rash to say that no formal test of teaching effectiveness can be developed, but one is entitled to doubt it. Also, the Report is unsure about how state and national licensure should interface, although it is sure that they should. And opting for national licensure could reduce the profession's autonomy in the states, since teachers have substantial influence over state standards. Carnegie is now working to solve these problems in its planning group for the National Licensing Board.

23. Positive Aspects.

A national standards board could raise the quality of teachers in certain states. It could provide order to conflicting state requirements. It could help provide dignity and respect to those who make teaching a life-long career. It could strengthen teacher education

programs and liberal arts programs. It could eliminate substandard programs, as state licensure and voluntary national accreditation have failed to do.

24. Negative Aspects.

But it may encourage policy-makers to opt for a quick fix instead of providing new resources. Raising standards is inexpensive; it shifts costs to practitioners. Many states have taken this approach, some to their regret. For raising standards without raising salaries reduces standards. This is because education is a state monopoly which doesn't operate on the basis of supply and demand. If qualified people can't be found to fill classrooms, unqualified people will be found. By emphasizing licensure as its main proposal, the Carnegie Report gives politicians an easy out.

25. Short-term Strategy.

The Reagan Administration opposes national licensure at this time. And it is difficult to imagine a board of standards without a federal role, unless Carnegie expects teachers to pay for its innovation.[7] In other words, a national standards board is a longshot. Yet, Carnegie has made this its centerpiece, linking it with proposals in many other areas. This may be the most serious point against it. If national licensure is not realized, many of the Report's recommendations may be jeopardized. A surer strategy might concentrate on professional compensation or reduced class size.

From the point-of-view of compatibility with state structures, the Report might have been on surer footing to promote a concept more compatible with existing state structures as the center of reform,

since compatibility with existing structures is an important factor in innovation and since the major action in reform is and will remain at the state level. National certification is not a state issue; it is a federal issue which disturbs state arrangements with anomalous institutions. In any case, it is not prudent to base a comprehensive plan for reform around an institution which does not exist, particularly when reforms must be made in a political arena.

26. Cause and Effect Confused on Salary Schedules.

The report suggests that present compensation structures are dysfunctional. Quite the opposite is the case. Such structures are adaptive to corporatized schools. Step-salary schedules exist because we have step-structured schools. "Merit" plans don't work because they seek to reward behaviors which are not supported by the present school environment. Before we have viable "merit" compensation, we must have schools which empower teachers to take responsibility for the learning environment at the building level based on effective clinical practice and with sufficient support to carry out the task. Carnegie recognizes this principle elsewhere in its "systems approach" for "radical" change. Indeed, this is the "radical" change which Carnegie seeks. But when dealing with compensation issue, Carnegie abandons its own logic. Once again, it is accepting received wisdom without question or examination. And, once again, this suggests that the method behind the development of the Report was compendious rather than critical or developmental.

As a general matter, it is questionable that improved results in performance can be obtained from teachers by establishing some form

of compensation for performance. Other professions are not compensated for performance, yet they achieve high results. Doctors and lawyers are paid for expertise and services, not for results. Professionals are paid regardless of results. Even contingency arrangements, where they exist, are dependent upon practitioner approval and consent. While there is evidence that "merit" pay does not work in schools as schools are now structured, there is no evidence that performance-based compensation is appropriate for a profession.

The Report's emphasis on performance-based compensation runs counter to its goal of achieving collegeality. It reinforces a piecework conception of the teaching task which is based on a personnel model of employment rather than a professional model. Performance-based pay is based on evaluation of work which can be reduced to units. Those who do piecework are, by law, non-professionals. A professional, by legal definition, is one whose work cannot be unitized.[8]

27. Reality in Reforming Reward Systems.

New compensation patterns will rise in response to changes in the structure of schools, not in anticipation of them. When compensation patterns are changed without changing schools, the new compensation system fails. This has been the experience in Tennessee where the merit component of its "career ladder" has not changed school culture or created collegeality. While "merit pay" on a building basis has merit -- provided each building sets its own goals (with appropriate review), new salary structures will not replace old step-structured

ones until schools are transformed. Schools must change before teachers can be evaluated on the basis of behaviors which the environment is capable of supporting. Carnegie's notion that compensation systems can be changed prior to changing schools and in order to change schools is incorrect, and prejudicial to good order. But, then, Carnegie is not supporting incremental change. It is proposing "radical" change. By doing so, it may be attempting to do more good than schools can bear.

28. "Liberal Arts" are not "Liberal Education."

Liberal Arts are not organized to encourage students to relate culture to society or themselves. They are organized to provide pre-professional preparation for university careers in academic disciplines, particularly in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Liberal arts programs are programs which assume that their students are preparing to become professors. But less than ten percent of undergraduates enter graduate school. This narrow pre-professional bias -- based on the self-interest of national academic subject-matter organizations -- may provide some vertical integration with the K-12 curriculum. But it provides little horizontal integration. Liberal arts programs do not provide culture in a form which is usable for K-12 students. Future teachers require liberal arts which is applicable to general culture and student developmental needs.

29. Slightly Off-Center.

Carnegie is off the mark when it suggests that excellence can come at the expense of equity in employment; that teacher education programs can be transformed without attending to research; that the

profession can be improved by allowing a permanent underclass of teaching assistants to practice on children without professional preparation; that teaching should be the employer of last resort for otherwise unemployable liberal arts graduates or a form of VISTA-like volunteerism; that liberal arts, with its emphasis on pre-professional education, are synonymous with usable culture; that colleageality follows rather than precedes performance based compensation systems; or that professional results can be achieved by giving "lead teachers" rights and all others responsibilities. Despite good intentions, these proposals will reduce retention, not increase it.

30. Moral Lapse.

By not empowering teachers to transform themselves or their own profession, Carnegie is perpetuating the distrust which has been part of our national attitude toward teachers since Boston's Puritan ministers created the first schoolboard in 1635. Lay faculty, then and now, remain illegitimate and suspect. Our legacy is governance where oligarchy poses as democracy. The result has not been salutary for an organization whose mission includes educating children for citizenship in a democracy. As Carnegie points out brilliantly, our nation, its institutions and our economy are beginning to pay the price for our failure to authorize teachers to practice their profession autonomously.

31. A More Serious Moral Failure.

A more serious moral failure is the Report's motivation. The Report of the Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession is an

adjunct of the Carnegie Forum on Business and Industry. Its theme is that education must be improved to make the world safe for American multinational corporations. While our nation needs a healthy economy, we need it for the sake of our people and not for the sake of corporations. Carnegie has its priorities backwards. It has placed property ahead of people. When it says we must improve education for the sake of the economy, it is in danger of doing the right thing for the wrong reason.

32. And the Moral.

Where moral authority is lost, constructive change is impossible. This principle was familiar to Ghandi, Mohamet, the Twelve Disciples, Martin Luther King and Saul Alinsky. It is familiar today to labor organizers, social reformers, environmental protectionists and others who promote "radical" social change or changes in conventional morality. But it is not familiar to Carnegie. This is unfortunate because Carnegie's mission is a moral one. And to achieve its mission it must convince others of its moral purpose and sincerity. It particularly needs to convince teachers, who are themselves often altruistic and self-exploiting. Teachers see themselves as developing children, not as making good consumers or employees, except incidentally. Because Carnegie justifies its recommendations for the wrong reason, it reduces its effectiveness, generally and with the profession, by undercutting its moral authority. Those who seek change, whether "radical" or incremental, must protect their moral authority.

(1) Marc Tucker, in conversation. The development of the Report was evidently a staff-driven process.

(2) Only New Jersey and Florida permit "alternate route" certification, whereby people are licensed to teach without preparation in a teacher education program.

(3) Diamond, Robert M.; Gray, Peter, "National Study of Teaching Assistants", Center for Instructional Development, Syracuse University, Syracuse, N.Y., January 1987, pp. 59-61. The study was not available to the authors of the Carnegie or Holmes Reports.

(4) "New Jersey Finds Success with 'Alternate route' Teachers," Report on Teacher Education, Vol. 18, No. 27, December 31, 1986, p. 2.

(5) 1978 and Feb. 1981 results from private poll for the ISEA by Iowa Market/Opinion Survey, Inc., of Cedar Rapids, IA.

(6) Private Poll, Central Surveys of Shenandoah, Iowa, for the ISEA.

(7) Certification will cost a minimum of \$150-\$200 per applicant for initial testing and bookkeeping. Unless practitioners pay this cost directly through fees or indirectly through organizational dues, a federal role seems necessary, even if foundations provide support for planning.

(8) Code of Iowa, Section 20.2. Iowa Law repeats the definition of a professional which appears in the National Labor Relations Act. Under both laws, a professional is one whose work requires an extended period of academic preparation and whose work cannot be reduced to units.