CHAPTER FIVE

THE TEMPORAL NATURE OF POWER
Power, Culture and the Dynamics of Change

INTRODUCTION

As has been highlighted in the preceding chapter, the central issues relating to understanding the processes of change focus on how people work and interact within this institution, the culture of this institution from the perspective of the teachers themselves and why the teachers and the administrators act, or do not act, as they do. The differing views of the organisational realities, the contrasting goals and visions as to the future directions of the School lie at the heart of the conflict between the individuals and groups involved and the reasons why things do or do not change.

This chapter deals with the historical, traditional and structural nature of power. Discussions will include the values, goals and traditions which are perpetuated through and vested in the Headmaster and other executive staff. The structures of power, hierarchies and prescribed rules and regulations maintained and sustained by those 'in power' to perpetuate the status quo and traditional structures of domination and control as they relate to this School will be investigated. The rituals, myths and hierarchical nature of the School's structure which relate to how traditional authority is established, displayed and nurtured will also be assessed. This is the power of tradition, the past aspect of the temporal nature of power.

In Chapter 6 the present aspects of power will be discussed and the methods by which the organisational framework is stabilised and perpetuated to ensure the continuance of the present 'status quo', this is power in action or inaction. Examples of actions, non-actions and sanctions will be cited to explain how power is used to perpetuate the 'status quo' and maintenance of external order and structure. Political expediencies, actions and sanctions which affect staff will also be assessed together with their effect on the staff's ability to control the mechanisms of change and the decision-making process .

Lastly, in Chapter 7, conclusions will be reached concerning the future effects of power on the culture of the School and change. Why people act as they do and the implications this has for the styles of leadership, communication, decision-making, goal-setting, conflict and ultimately on the curriculum-based changes themselves.

The concept of power is seen to be a key feature within the organisational framework - how it is used, exploited and structured form the foundation to an understanding of the daily operations of the School. The idea of treating power as a temporal phenomenon is highlighted in order to delineate between the established hierarchical nature of the School's structure, the means by which such authority is maintained and the subsequent effects on the daily operation of the School and in particular the curriculum changes. Power must be seen in the context of time as well as space if its full effects are to be investigated.

Before proceeding with a closer look at these differing perspectives of power it is necessary to reiterate how the nature of organisational reality is viewed in this study in order to frame the cultural context of this phenomenon.

1. Organisations are seen to be sanctioned by people and that people within the School community are accountable for what transpires within it. All aspects of power, whether structural, causal or cultural are people centred.

2. People within the School have differing views of organisational realities. What may, for example, be commonsense managerial practice to one person may be viewed elsewhere as an exhibition of domination and authoritative power.

3. Actions, or the consequences of others' inaction, highlight the operational values and goals of the School. ('School' here is not taken in its reified sense)

4. Organisations are fundamentally viewed as expressions of order, personal and cultural values, morality, political expediency and power.

5. Conflicting goals, expedient actions, opposing organisational realities and control over the decision-making process are evidence of a political foundation to the concept of power.

The above five points will be amplified in this and the next chapter so that the change process itself can have meaning and understanding in the context of the operation and running of this

School.

Greenfield (1980: 27) sees the fundamental dynamics of organisations being concerned with an understanding of human intention and meaning. As usual he goes to the heart of the matter when he remarks that:

> ... organisations are limited by and defined by human action. In their deepest, subjective reality they are simply manifestations of mind and will.

Greenfield (quoted in Greenfield and Ribbins 1993: 265) extends this line of thinking and the part played by all personnel within any institution by centring on the concept of:

> ... the irreducibility of value choice and the unavoidability of human responsibility for that choice.

The importance of the responsibility of choice reflects the concept that the 'system' is never to blame for any misadventure, only the people within the 'system'. This implies a further need to explore the relationship of 'moral order' within the operations of an institution - a need to find the underlying causal link between decision-making, that is choice, and the reasons for that decision, a topic which Machiavelli (1958[1513]) eschews and Greenfield (1993) and Hodgkinson (1991) develop but unfortunately not to any conclusion. The dilemma which needs to be comprehended is whether decisions taken are a refection of personal goals, perceived educational directions, espoused organisational objectives or politically driven to maintain traditional order.

Simon (1957) tries to divorce the decision-making process from the value domain in an attempt to create a more structured and logical inquiry into the issue of choice within an organisation. However, to ignore the place of personal sentiment and morality is to reject the very nature of human subjective reality within an institution. This School is a community of people who have aspirations, feelings and values, all of which must be recognised for their inherent worth if decisions and actions are to be grasped. As Silverman (1970: 127) explains the situation:

> ... human actions must take account of the meanings which those concerned assign to their acts; the manner in which the everyday world is socially constructed yet perceived as real and routine becomes a crucial concern.

The place of power in this scenario can be highlighted if one contrasts the Getzels-Guba (1957) social systems model of organisations with that reflected in this particular School.

1. There is no presumption in this research that all individuals or groups seek to attain the stated organisational goals. The nomothetic dimension is rejected.

2. Individual or group behaviour is not imagined to be dominated entirely by rules or a bureaucratic, hierarchical structure. There are other agenda operating.

3. The decision-making process is not envisioned to be always a systematic, logical or rational process and that internal politics coupled with strategic and expedient choices often prevail and decide outcomes.

4. An outward display of centralised control, rationality, division of labour, a chain of command, functional roles and systems do not reflect the complete picture of the daily life of this School.

The point that needs to be stressed here is that if goals or values of members of the School are not concomitant, or are perceived not to be so, then conflict will result. If conflict of goals or ideologies prevail then the use of power by those in the hierarchy will be required to establish whose goals or values triumph.

Power may be institutionalised in the form of a traditional hierarchy or bureaucracy, which may or may not be accepted by those governed. The de-emphasis of power in the rational, functional approach to organisational analysis does not question the legitimacy of such structures and understates their effect on those managed. As Greenfield (1991: 201) suggests:

> The result of contestation between social groups of unequal power in terms of ... organisational structures can be seen as facilitating the **agency** of certain groups and limiting that of others. (original emphasis)

The concept of power requires that an organisation exists in the first place. There could be no social power without a belonging of a group of people to that organisation. Power is limited to that body and power can not be exercised unless there is a social relationship between the parties concerned. Crozier (1973: 2 9) identifies this important point when he states that:

> ... a power relation can only develop if the two parties are already part of, or choose to participate in, an organised system.

The following discussion on power will be built on the premise that power cannot exist 'in vacuo' and that power must be considered part of a culture that, temporally speaking, was, is now and will be. As Greenfield (1981a: 13), paraphrasing Sartre, rather pessimistically puts it:

> ... hell has no need of brimstone and turning on the spit. Hell is other people. It exists here and now. We ourselves make it. Once made, we call the resulting order organisation.

People make the world we live in. Through their will order is imposed over the perceived chaos. Power is the means by which this order and social stability is achieved. Whether in this context the use of power is a legitimate, socially acceptable practice by those of the community is a key aspect of discussion of power in this study. How positions of power and authority are perceived by staff and the conditions and responsibilities attached to such hierarchical status will be assessed. Is it the case, as Crozier (1963: 225) suggests, that:

> ... shameful power practices become less so when legitimate power loses its halo of nobility ...?

The concept of power will be discussed at length in this and the following chapters but it is seen simplistically as being the ability to achieve 'ends', where authority is seen as the legitimated form of power. As Giddens (1968: 262-3) remarks, 'power is **usually** connected with sanctions but not necessarily', authority being the '**right** of a party to make binding prescriptions' (original emphasis).

THREE TEMPORAL ASPECTS OF POWER

Clegg (1979) identifies two types of power, firstly an elitist, stratified concept which is exhibited by a hierarchical organisational structure and secondly, one which is pluralistic and reflects organisational power based on group interests. However, Clegg does not separate these ideas from demonstrations of power as it is exercised on a daily basis. Clegg (1979) quotes liberally from Dahl (1957), Schattschneider (1960), Bachrach and Baratz (1962), Wolfinger (1971) and Lukes (1974, 1976) as to the operational manifestations of power but he does not explicitly discriminate between what is essentially an historical phenomenon of power, identified by its structural nature, and the expedient, strategic nature of power in its causal and agency forms.

Power does not imply conflict if the goals of the organisation are shared and mutually agreed. Neither is power, as Hodgkinson (1978: 81) suggests, simply based on the statement that 'one man's power is another man's impotence'. Power does not have to be divisive or confrontational, neither should power be equated simply with a 'zero-sum' equation. All members of an organisation can benefit from the order and harmony that follow from an agreed legitimate and socially mediated exercise of authority. This is the essence of Parsonian power (1963) outlined three hundred years before by Hobbes (1968[1651]). Power does not have to be a specific class of action exerted in the pursuit of some end which is successful 'despite resistance' (Weber 1968: 53, quoted in Clegg 1979: 51). This is Machiavelli's image of leadership; leadership by a person of *virtù*, where power is exercised by someone or some group for the accepted good of that community. Machiavelli skirts the moral dilemma implied in these statements by simply suggesting that the ends justify the means and what is ultimately good for the society is good for the majority of the people within that society. Hodgkinson (1978: 146) also recognises the moral quandary of the actions of those in power with his statement that:

> ... administrators need a technique for resolving value conflicts which is superior to the methods of avoidance, least resistance, or lowest principle.

Any analysis of power needs to dwell not only on its structural, causal or agency features but also on the reasons why such power is exercised in the first place. The following sections will outline not only the temporal nature of power as it is seen in this School but also, and just as importantly, the moral dilemma and values behind the structures and artefacts that maintain and perpetuate the organisation.

STRUCTURAL POWER: *A Legacy of the Past*

When summarising his work on power Clegg (1989: 225) avoids adopting the individual's perspective of reality and suggests that:

> ... agency may well be organisational rather than human ... an achievement of episodic power in the institutional field, stabilising relations of power between organisational agencies.

Clegg underestimates the purpose of traditional power structures in that he presumes that the individuals within the institution would be unaware of the effects of the 'system' on their personal freedom and choice. It will be seen that the individual's and interest groups' awareness of the role of organisational structures are far from naive or a reflection of a state of 'false consciousness' (Marx 1973; quoted in Miller, Rowlands and Tilley 1989: 17). While many staff at the School are perhaps not fully cognisant of the effects of the hierarchical nature of the administration they are indeed aware that such structures, as outlined in Chapter 3, exist. How individuals perceive the structures of power affect both actions and thoughts and have a significant influence on the processes of change within the School.

Elitism

Hobbes' (1968[1651]) view of humankind is one which reflects people's need to gain power and hence control over their destiny, control being the possession power to escape from 'existential dread: the fear of uncertainty and chaos that lurks in the existential world' (Clegg and Dunkerley 1980: 276). Hobbes decries the war and tyranny that plague his 17th century England and sees sovereign power as a means by which law and order might prevail. Hobbes (quoted in Raphael 1977: 29) recognises that:

> ... the cause of ordered society is the desire for security; the main causes of disorder are competition, distrust and glory.

Hobbes' (1968) premise is that it is immaterial who is in power as long as that power is absolute and the authority engendered consummate. Hobbes sees authority as the institutionalised legitimation of power and reflects the ability of the leader to rule. Such a system is necessarily contrived and artificial but, in Hobbes' view, necessary to counter the natural forces of anarchy and rebellion. The populace would acquiesce to such sovereign power if they saw it as prudential and obligatory for peace to prevail. As Raphael (1977: 58) expresses Hobbes' opinion, the hierarchical structure requires:

> ... acknowledged authority whereby the sovereign has a right to be obeyed and the subjects have an obligation to him to obey.

Such power is seen to be attained by either tacit agreement and general support or if necessary by force. This concept of the sovereign ruler 'knowing best' is remarkably similar to Machiavelli's views on the principle of *necessità* of government. That is, in order to create harmony and peace within the community decisions would have to be made in the best interests of that community, if the community are to survive the ravages of time and insurrection by disaffected groups.

Hobbes' outlook on government is qualified by Locke (1967[1690], quoted in Raphael 1977: 72) in that there are certain obligations on the part of the ruler to establish rule as a moral art, reflecting Machiavelli's *virtù*, and that:

> ... the sovereign is to be understood as having promised to protect the rights of the citizens and promote the common good. If he fails to satisfy these

> conditions he has not carried out his trust and is no longer entitled to obedience: he no longer has authority, since the authority vested in him is entrusted on conditions.

The key difference between Machiavelli's and Hobbes' views is that the former's concept of power is seen to be strategic and expedient as opposed to the latter's structural conceptions. Hobbes hopes to attain a moral order through obligation and reason whereas Machiavelli avoids the ethical issue and concentrates on the ways of keeping power at whatever cost. Machiavelli, however, fails to solve the paradox of how a person of virtue can act in an essentially amoral manner to attain ends which are deemed necessary for law and order to prevail. Machiavelli flounders on the task of pronouncing a systematic philosophy as to how a ruler is to rule fairly and morally. Neither does Hobbes answer the questions, who decides what is legitimate power and who decides who should rule? However, the great contribution that Machiavelli makes is his examination of the political world in which he lived, the illusions, states of flux, intrigue and corruption that are endemic. In contrast to Machiavelli, Hobbes is, as Clegg (1989: 32) describes:

> ... the great designer, architectonically legislating on the **right method** for constituting power. (original emphasis)

There is no place for pluralism in Hobbes' world, only supreme authoritarian power led by an almost Nietzchean sovereign over an accepting people.

This rational, necessarily elitist perspective is central to Parsons' (1963) approach to power. His conception of power is a 'direct derivative of authority' (Giddens 1968: 260); authority is institutionalised, legitimate and implicit, within its framework, with the power to instigate necessary sanctions in order to ensure that structure is perpetuated. This form of power is not necessarily domineering and as Lukes (1974: 33) highlights:

> The power is seen as institutionalised authority for mobilising commitments for effective collective goals.

Parsons' ideas are idealistic in assuming that the existence of mutually agreed or pre-ordained goals of the community would eliminate conflict. As Giddens (1968: 264) remarks:

> ... the very fact that power, even as Parsons defines it, is always exercised over someone ... ignores ... the necessarily hierarchical character of power and the divisions of interest which are frequently consequent upon it.

Parsons' view of power is one of consensus and order, akin to Hobbes' theories. Yet it fails to incorporate the notion that the structures themselves will create hierarchical divisions which limit personal choice and control for the majority. Hobbes', Locke's and Parsons' pictures of legitimated institutions assume that power does not have to be linked with conflict nor does power need to be inherently destructive or oppressive. The keys to their visions of a just society are founded on the concepts that the goals, objectives and structures are agreed by all, the resulting stability welcomed and that Machiavellian strategies by interest groups to wrest power from those in authority would, as a result, not be necessary.

Giddens (1968) refers to the practical inability to separate power from its structured framework as the 'duality of structure'. This concept identifies the paradox of social actions in an organisation being both liberated and confined by the power vested within its fabric. Hobbes (1968) sees the sovereign leader as having absolute authority, a vehicle for freedom and an escape from tyranny and war, yet at the same time such authoritarian rule is in itself oppressive and divisive if unity of direction are not mutually agreed upon by the community. As Beteille (1977) concurs, the very things that keep society cohesive and structured inevitably create the inequalities that exist.

Dahl (1971) challenges the elitist model of organisational structure concluding that no particular group is able to govern unconditionally and that power distribution changes depending on the issues raised. This essentially pluralistic perspective is summarised by Bachrach and Baratz (1962: 948) in their statement that:

> ... pluralists concentrate their attention, not upon the sources of power, but its exercise. Power to them means **participation** in the decision-making ... careful examination of concrete decisions. (original emphasis)

However, the pluralist model assumes that firstly, such groups exist and secondly, that the groups have equitable political power and leverage. Many groups for whatever reasons, might not be party to the decision process and that interest groups may be simply 'a set of competing oligarchies' (Newton 1969: 210) which do not make a pluralist system. The structure may simply heavily favour one or more particular groups in preference to others.

As Schattschneider (1960: 34) succinctly puts the argument:

> The vice of the groupist theory is that it conceals the most significant aspect of the system. The flaw in the pluralist heaven is that the heavenly chorus sings with a strong upper-class accent.

What Schattschneider (ibid.: 30) calls the 'mobilisation of bias' recognises that some people in the community have no say in the decision-making process. The system is structured that way, 'some issues are organised into [the decision-making process] while others are organised out' (ibid.: 69).

Schattschneider's opinions on democracy reflect the position of a ruling elite, a minority group or groups who have an inequitable control over the organisational goals and political agenda. This has Marxist overtones but lacks the ideological definition that Marxist philosophy attaches to a class system and the capitalist society.

The above models of organisational structures are essentially hierarchical with one or more people or groups having a dominant say in the mechanisms of control and choice. Even the pluralist theory which may in principle allow active participation by all people depending on the issues involved is politically driven and biased. As Schattschneider (1960: 34) again realistically remarks:

> ... if everyone got into the act, the unique advantages of this form of organisation would be destroyed, for it is possible that if all interests could be mobilised the result would be a stalemate.

The important points that will be covered in the examination of this School's structure must answer the following questions.

a. Who governs? Is the structure elitist or pluralist (that is shared power) or a combination of both depending on what issues are raised?

b. What do they govern? What are the spheres of authority and control?

c. What is the 'mobilisation of bias'? In whose favour are the decisions made?

d. Under what conditions is the power and authority vested and how is it perpetuated?

The School's Structure

Historical perspective

The School is a Church school. This Church background is an important feature as it establishes the formal, moral structure of institution and as Meyer and Rowan (1977: 351) propose:

> ... organisations that incorporate societally legitimated rationalised elements in their formal structures maximise their legitimacy and increase their resources and survival capabilities.

As staff 12 (9/1994) remarks concerning this external, societal moral validity and the actions of the Headmaster:

> ... if you gravitate to the underdog [the rebellious, disobedient student] and you are doing it for basic Christian principles, it becomes very difficult to criticise it because then implicitly you are criticising his Christianity.

As has been outlined in Chapter 1, the School is modelled on English Public School traditions, the Headmaster's role resembling that evoked by Dr. Arnold at Rugby (McCrum 1989), the paternalistic leader with strong religious credentials who nurtures and cares for the moral fibre of his boys. The School promotes, as stated by a previous Headmaster (staff 24: 9/1994):

> ... traditions, stability, touch of class, family involvement and will get away from the macho boy and the institutionalisation.

The ethos of these 'great' English Public Schools traditions was deliberately transported to Australia, and the Headmasters with them, to ensure their perpetuation. As a departed staff member (staff 24: 8/1994) remarks, 'some of the things which go on [in the School] went out of the English Public School system in the early 50's ... are still a part of the scene here'. Or as a long time member of the present staff (staff 4: 9/1994) suggests:

> ... the School is really a hang-over from the past, it does not really matter what year you look at, you can look back 30 years, and that is what it is trying to keep going.

This traditional culture of the School, promoting Christian and family values in a caring, disciplined environment is a central feature of its aims and objectives. The structure is distinctly hierarchical with Church doctrine as the keystone to the underlying philosophy with the Headmaster the educational and religious mentor and guardian. The effect of this situation is stated by a long standing and respected member of the School when he (staff 11: 11/1994) reflects:

> ... it [the traditional moral culture] affects the content of the education. It does seem to affect them [the students], even the younger ones who I would have thought possibly are not so affected by it. Later on they begin to appreciate it, more so than I would have thought. It becomes part and parcel of the education they have here and later on, for whatever reason, [the students] seem to value it or at least glad that it continues. It is because we have inculcated into them that this is important so they now perceive it to be important, they hope it is going on. They probably do not look critically enough at it in the first place.

For example at an evening's concert at the School a staff member (staff 11) speaks about traditions and the meaning of the School's values. Tradition is security, something tried and tested and of worth, historical and a spectacle over and above the daily round. Staff 11 is one of the masters-of-ceremony for the evening and recounts many times during the evening the historical significance of any item on the program. References are made to other generations of boys who have been at the School and how often the same part in a musical or play is enacted by the son of a former pupil. A strong family-centred approach is promoted which embodies the virtues of tradition espoused by staff 11 at the beginning of the evening, all the homely values that people seem to need and require.

The European traditions present an older culture which the School has acquired and perpetuated, initially through the employment of British staff, and then once established through differing Councils, Headmasters and staff. As Berger and Luckmann (1966: 52-3) state in regard to the maintenance of traditions:

> Social order exists only as a product of human activity ... institutionalisation occurs whenever there is a reciprocal typification of habitualized actions by types of actors.

The collective reality, the traditional structures and ways of doing thing are not stagnant but require continual, what Clegg (1989) calls 'episodic' reaffirmation and renewal. As Scott (1987: 498) also suggests:

> Organisations do not necessarily conform to a set of institutionalised beliefs because they **constitute reality** or are taken for granted, but often because they [the staff] are rewarded for doing so through increased legitimacy, resources and survival capabilities. (original emphasis)

The School is a hierarchical, authoritative structure, not necessarily of class domination, with a figurehead represented by the Headmaster who, although not sovereign in the Hobbessian sense, is patriarchal and empowered to act and control the decision-making process. Power to

Parsons, says Giddens (1968: 260). is a direct derivative of authority and that 'authority is the institutionalised legitimation which underlies power'. However, it will be suggested later that in fact the reverse is the more likely to be the case and that although authority does not equal power it certainly is related closely to it. Pfeffer (1981: 4) goes nearer the mark when he proposes:

> ... power is so legitimated (within the social setting), it is denoted as authority. The exercise of authority, power which has become legitimated, is expected and desired in the social context. Thus the exercise of authority, far from diminishing through use, may actually serve to enhance the amount of authority subsequently possessed.

As will be seen later the important point that Pfeffer makes is that such authority is **expected and desired** by the teachers and that if the anticipated traditional style of leadership is not evident, in other words if the Headmaster is not seen to act as the collective culture demands that he should act, conflict or confusion develop. As cited in the last chapter, the departure of the last Headmaster could be partly attributed to the fact that he did not act in accordance with expected behavioural and cultural leadership patterns.

The Headmaster's authority

The Headmaster's authority, even though legitimated through precedent and the traditions of the School and sanctioned through the Council, is conditional and not absolute. The authority vested in the Headmaster requires a third party to activate it. Authority like power cannot act in a vacuum and like power is conditional on the acceptance of the School community to respect this authority. The authority can be instrumental through the forces of sanctions and punitive measures which is the basis of Foucault's (1985) philosophy on power, but at any stage any person within the School has the capacity to reject this authority if they are prepared to accept the consequences of such actions. Foucault (1980: 91-92, quoted in Merquior 1985: 111) speaks not so much about authority but of dominance and invites us to regard repression as 'the realisation, within the continual warfare of this pseudo-peace'. Foucault's power focuses on the disciplinary nature of the hierarchical relationship and rejects the ideas of Parsons (1963) that common goals and direction alleviate the necessity for sanctions through consensus.

This reciprocal nature of the Headmaster's authority is recognised by staff 1 (12/1994) who states:

> ... they [Headmasters] have always being given an incredible amount of power and it is really given. Obviously Headmasters in schools like this assume they have a lot of power but it has also been given to them by the staff. At the beginning of each year and the election of the officers of the Staff Association the first motion is to send a letter of loyalty to the Headmaster, every year, and that requests an attitude. In [the last Headmaster's] time staff 25 would not have a bar of anything done against the Headmaster because he is the Headmaster, not because he got on well with [him] ... but because he is the Headmaster. Staff 25 was an old boy at the School and ... he is the Headmaster, and that is all there was to it.

That staff perceive a hierarchical structure in the management of the School is beyond question. All teaching staff perceive the Headmaster as the final arbiter on educational and curriculum issues at least and as staff 20 (10/1994) says:

> ... I do not think it is possible in the sort of management structure we have got at the moment for anything to be achieved that directly confronts the system as it stands or as the Headmaster wants it.

Or as staff 9 (9/1994) sees the relationship between staff and the administration:

> ... my first impressions of the School [were that] the executive have barriers between us, the academics, and the School structure proper.

The elevated, elitist perspective of the Headmaster's position is voiced by staff 1 (12/1994) who states that:

> ... it is the divine right of Headmasters. I have never seen it until I came here. I have always seen Headmasters as Headmasters, top of ... a teacher, a practising teacher who has gone up a bit further and is now administering. But with schools like this it is really . . they create another planet for the Headmaster to live on.

Even those who hold more senior positions within the School accept the chain of command and legitimacy of the hierarchical structure. Staff 26 (10/994) recognises the limitations of his control over the decision-making process with the statement that:

> ... I am in a senior position, so I have some power. But when it comes down to when I want action, it really is at the whim of the people above me.

Another senior member of staff (staff 7: 12/1994) recognises that decisions of note are made at the Headmaster's behest and observes:

> ... he (the Headmaster) is the fulcrum of the School, yes the key person. But it is mainly a product of the administrative structure of the School and it is not very often that staff get to meet or know who is on Council. They are the final arbiters, they are the decision makers but they rely heavily on him. To a lesser extent the sub-committees provide an interface but even then I do not know. As a member of the planning committee I am told I am a representative of the staff but whenever anything happens at planning, which needs to be announced to the staff the boss will want to announce it.

Likewise, a senior staff member (staff 15: 10/1994) agrees and summarises the position with the statement that:

> ... it is hierarchical, executive management, middle management, staff, students. I am not sure how it should function, it is the only school I have worked in which has that structure clearly defined and understood, basically autocratic.

At the heart of the relationship between structural, traditional power of the Headmaster's authority and the teaching staff is the mutual acceptance of each individual's roles within that community. The teaching staff relinquish the freedom to act independently under the proviso that the Headmaster will provide an effective (what the cultural imagery portrays as effective) educational environment within which the teachers are free to teach without administrative hassle. Roles are defined not in their functionalist form but that as Griffiths (1983: 99) stresses:

> ... probably the most common concept through which administrative theorists view the world is that of role. I submit that the concept of role as the **set** of expectations held for a position has little value in today's complex organisations. We would be better off if we described behaviours and perceptions and dropped the role spectacles. (original emphasis)

The important point here is that the School cannot be viewed simply in terms of role theory or hierarchical structures but as a synthesis and interplay between the **actual** and **perceived** goals and roles of the staff, coupled with respective capabilities to effect these goals and roles within the accepted power structures.

Formal structures and communication

As stated previously, the School Council whilst being the governing body does not block any curriculum changes within the School if the Headmaster wishes to pursue a certain direction, except on economic grounds or if it is felt that the proposed changes were ill-conceived or detrimental in some way to the School. As a senior member of staff (staff 11: 11/1994) remarks:

> ... on curriculum matters the Headmaster has a pretty free hand. It would be extraordinary [for the Council to countermand any curriculum proposals]. They can [object] in terms of budgeting the costs. We [the Council] are going to have to cut back the academic budget on it somehow ... but they would find a compromise.

The Headmaster and the Council coordinate three standing committees which advise on key areas within the School's administration and planning. As staff 11 (11/1994) explains the structure:

> ... the spade work has been done by the committees first. There are three committees, the finance, planning, and property committees and mostly, not always, the Council certainly questions and wants to know how the spade work has been done. They are more than a rubber stamp, they do not just necessarily rubber stamp, they mostly rule. Or if something is a bit dubious they send it back to the committee.

The executive body, chaired by the Headmaster and assisted by senior administrators in the School, determines day-to-day policy and coordinates procedural regulation and management. Subject Coordinators meet with the Director of Studies, also on a weekly basis, to discuss educational issues and Housemasters the pastoral aspects of the School's direction. All meetings are minuted and copies sent to the Headmaster although only the Coordinator's meetings' minutes are posted on the staffroom noticeboard. The Housemasters are perceived to have 'power' (more likely to be listened to by the Headmaster) than the Coordinators as is evident from the following comment of staff 12 (9/1994):

> [The past Headmaster] had the Housemasters against him and what [he] had to do was to create another body in the School ... so he built up the Coordinators. He tried to set up a counterbalance, but he was not very successful as it was still the perception that Housemasters were more powerful than the Coordinators.

As a Coordinator (staff 9: 9/1994) himself remarks concerning the divisions of the hierarchy:

> ... they are [Housemasters] and they really rule the roost. They believe they have access [to the Headmaster] before the Coordinators do.

Within the body of the teaching staff, the perception of the hierarchical nature of the School is characterised by the Headmaster at the apex in control of the executive who monitor the performance and decisions of the Housemasters and the Coordinators. The teachers understand that the Council is in overall control but as staff have little information concerning the decisions, planning and strategies of this body see the Headmaster as the focal point and final arbiter. As stated before, the collective image of the teachers suggests that it is the Headmaster who has ultimate control over the mechanisms of school procedure and decision-making. The following comment by a senior Housemaster (staff 26: 10/1994) portrays this attitude clearly:

> ... it [an alternative view, opinion, or change in policy] gets squashed under the toes of the executive. The Headmaster does not agree, although six of his members of the senior staff do. I think change in this place unfortunately has to come from the top.

The formal lines of communication mirror the hierarchical structure. The teachers officially and formally communicate their opinions through their respective Coordinators and likewise the boarding house staff air their views in the Housemasters' meetings. The senior Housemaster and Director of Studies are present at executive meetings where summaries of previously raised issues are itemed on the agenda. Staff perceive a distinct 'pecking order' which reflects not only status, responsibilities and access to the Headmaster but also the degree of respective influence in the decision-making process. Staff are expected to follow highly structured methods of communication which are actively pursued by the Headmaster. They are seen by him to be a non-confrontational way of disseminating and receiving information. As the Headmaster (2/1995) outlines:

> ... [there is] a lot of communication within the School. There are some formal things, briefings, meetings, notices, minutes, especially minutes. If we can get people to read them, they can see what is being discussed. I read them avidly, all the minutes that come to me. I think that if you have made a formal communication of some kind, somewhere, it is recorded and staff have the opportunity of seeing that and reading that.

The Headmaster, as seen in Chapter 4's first study, does not promote unstructured discussion or means of communication. Open forums are seen by the Headmaster to be more 'industrial rather than educational' and of little benefit either educationally or for staff morale. Staff meetings are platforms for dissemination of information rather than arenas for controversial discussions and voicing of opinion or concern. This apparently formal and rigid communication system reflects the Headmaster's power and control which some teachers perceive as 'divide and rule' strategy, a theme which will be pursued in the next section.

Concerning this traditional, structural aspect of power, Clegg (1989: 207) aptly remarks:

> ... the greatest achievement of power is its reification. When power is regarded as thing-like, as something solid, real and material, as something an agent has, then this represents power in its most pervasive and concrete mode.

However, it is evident from conversations with staff that such a formal system of communication depends heavily on certain key people for its implementation. If, for whatever reason their communication or political skills at delivering the messages are poor, then informational traffic is impeded. There are many examples of such problems with delegating the communication of information and these issues will be discussed later when considering the ramifications and maintenance of the traditional, managerial structures. Lord Morris of Grasmere's (1975: 14) comments in this regard are pertinent as he foresees the problems associated with too autocratic an administration:

> The new Machiavelli can no longer make up his mind what he wants to do, and then bring the people round to putting up with it.

Interest groups and traditional power bases

What is remarkable within the School is the dearth of active interest groups or strong power bases pursuing their educational goals and objectives, a situation which can be attributable to a variety of factors. Some teachers, it will be seen, perceive this state of affairs to be a direct consequence of 'divide and rule' tactics of the Headmaster, each group having a vested interest in the maintenance of the status quo. Others see the sanctioned responses of the Headmaster to the voicing of controversial ideas as episodes to be avoided and thus do not pursue them.[1] Also teachers view the actions and motives of the Headmaster differently. There is no consensus of opinion as to his objectives and no subsequent focus of action; there is no 'common enemy' against whom the 'troops' can be rallied. These and other factors will be explored in this section as their outcomes have direct implications to the processes of change.

The concept of pluralism requires that groups have the power to communicate and implement their ideas. They have the ability to have their opinions become part of the political agenda, if not on all issues then at least on some. However, the organisational bias of the system at this School allows only the powerful to act. In contradiction to this, though, is the knowledge within the School's collective culture that the previous Headmaster was effectively rolled by

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1 See Study 5 in Chapter 4 for an example of this.

staff. Such a paradox can be explained if one considers not only the changes in the power bases and structures but also the exercise of power and the sanctions that are bought to bear. In Mann's (1986: 7) terms, many of the pre-existing interest groups and power bases have been 'organisationally outflanked'. And as Clegg (1989: 224) proposes the circuits of power have had to be 're-fixed' since that episode (of the last Headmaster's early departure) to ensure there is no repeat of such a situation.

Staff 1 (12/1994) sees the Headmaster's actions simply in this light, an effort to make sure that the teachers are no longer an active power base within the School and to clip their wings:

> Coming into a school which has just sacked its Headmaster, and the staff have obviously been very involved in that, he saw straight away what he had to do was disarm the staff. And of course taking that tack he created the 'them and us' [situation]. The staff were so easy to knock over because they were not being aggressive, that is the way he saw it.

However, the tactics of 'divide and rule', although successfully weakening the teachers to act as an powerful interest group, have produced a situation similar to that of the previous Headmaster. That is, as staff 14 (1/ 995) remarks, a position of isolation:

> ... the Headmaster has isolated the staff by putting them all into separate departments. That has always happened to a certain extent but not to the extent it has now.

The Headmaster 'has totally destroyed the staff as a group' (staff 27: 4/1995). The unintended consequences of this strategy, Machiavelli's *fortunà*, have been that staff are resentful and frustrated, a situation which could precipitate the very scenario that the Headmaster is hoping to avoid.

The term 'them and us' occurs many times in the course of interviews and many staff's pictures of organisational reality are framed in this way. Whether this is true or not, and the Headmaster certainly denies that this is either his intention or the case and sees himself as being 'heeler of wounds' rather than a person who is out to break staff, is not the point. The perception of the majority of staff is that his managerial practice creates the impression real or imaginary of being divisive and oppositional and as a Coordinator summarises, 'the classic case of the School being divided and conquered' (staff 9: 9/1994).

The inability of staff to articulate their opinions frustrates many teachers. One in particular (staff 1: 12/1994) could not understand how a once vocal group could now be so submissive:

> To move on the staff need to definitely stand up and say 'no'. They did say 'no' [to the last Headmaster]. I do not understand, it is virtually the same crowd that said 'no' before. They said 'no' and they meant it. They stood up and they knew why they stood up.

This unwillingness of the teachers to either act or state opinion is believed by many staff to a conscious decision and as staff 8 (10/1994) disparagingly comments:

> ... the staff choose not to empower themselves quite often. They choose not to attend the staff association meetings ... albeit they find themselves in a position to say something and not doing anything about it ... They articulate them in small groups where it matters not. But when it comes to the crunch of perhaps going forward and saying this is what I feel, this is what I think, they do not do it.

Even at the subject department level there is little evidence of collegiality and cohesion to create an agenda for curriculum appraisal. One Coordinator (staff 6: 11/1994) is hopeful, however, that:

> ... if anything life threatening to the department were to bare itself, then we would all be together. I do see it as a reasonably cohesive department for things that affect all of us. However, otherwise people can and do go their separate ways.

The Staff Association, once a powerful voice within the School still with direct access to the Headmaster, is felt by the teachers to be ineffectual. They state their feelings on the matter through silence, inaction, passive resistance, absenteeism or apathy. Many meetings are cancelled due to the lack of a quorum, a situation which depresses most teachers including staff 8 (10/1994):

> The Staff Association is a vehicle through which they [the teachers] can in fact choose to exercise a considerable amount of influence. [It] could not find a president unless someone volunteered. Three to four meetings of the year no one turned up. It was only after a long gathering period that we actually had staff turning up.

One long-standing member of staff (staff 1: 12/1994) who appreciates the Staff Association's past influence in the decision-making process comments that:

> ... he [the Headmaster] allows the Coordinators and others to have committees

> but he will not accept that people there have listened to what has been discussed, come-up with a distilled essence and it is the best there is on the table. He has got to bugger it up or simply say no, or not make a decision about it. So he cannot use other people to make up for his frailties.

Thus power bases and interest groups are at best muted and usually silent or ineffective. As one very senior member of staff (staff 27: 4/1994) outlines:

> ... the Headmaster is very good at eliminating power bases. Now look at some of the people he cut out ... [a past senior administrator] ... bang. [The axed teacher] would have had a lot of support, a lot of people liked him.

Thus the power to influence the decision-making processes could be achieved through the formal channels or through key staff, and not through interest groups or specific power bases. Those individual teachers who seem to have influence can be divided into two main groups.

a. Tribal elders.

b. Those staff with 'technological' power.

a. Tribal elders

Harman's (1989: 3) comments concerning the tribal elders in universities can be applied to this School:

> **Tribal elders** represent the embodiment of a distinctive culture as they contribute to, partake of, protect, manage and sustain particular traditions, myths, university ideas and values and other forms of expressive symbolism that have grown up about universities and the occupational life and work of academics. (original emphasis)

One particular member of staff who has been at the School for a long period of time is recognised by staff as having great influence over the directions taken by the various administrative bodies within the School. The last Headmaster recognised the influence of this particular person when he was overheard by staff 14 saying, 'he [the Headmaster] was running the school and not staff 11' (staff 14, Jan 1995). However, even though the last Headmaster appreciated the influence of this person, history has reinforced the fact that he did not have the political astuteness or Machiavellian guile to counter this tribal elder's personal power.

One teacher (staff 8: 10/1994) considers that this power originates from extensive, organisational and cultural knowledge and comments:

> ... staff 11 is well respected for his experience by people in all areas of the school; respect for his innate ability for working with people. People respect that.

This experiential aspect is the key to staff 11's position of influence. This tribal elder has experienced the ebb and flow of successes or failures of certain ventures within the School's history. He has witnessed and understands the processes of change of the past; he has seen the new become old and Headmasters come and go. He is an established figure with recognised authority suggests staff 5 (11/1994):

> ... he is the repository, the history, the tradition and culture. It seems he is the reference point, the person for those sorts of things.

Another teacher perceives (staff 1: 12/1994) that staff 11 has real power to change the Headmaster's mind and has undue (in relation to his formal, positional status) influence and capacity to re-align policy matters.

> [With] the boss's disarming of the staff [staff 11] is the main weapon of course because he has so much power before. He has come down whenever there is any issue on and has said the right words and people would be afraid to discuss the matter openly.

However, although staff 7 (12/1994) accepts the respected patronage that staff 11 receives notes the difference between his influence as opposed to his authority and power to act:

> ... staff 11 seems to have a bit of a peerage really. I think he does have some power but it is more consultative now rather than authoritative.

The distinction between authority and influence is an important one. As Baratz and Bachrach (1963: 637) state, 'power frequently generates influence and **vice-versa**' (original emphasis). Authority, in the context of this thesis, denotes either an unequivocal, ascribed ability to call upon sanctions to effect the actor's wishes or self-appointed, as a consequence of particular expertise in a valued field (valued that is by those in power). However, influence may be indefinite and transitory depending on the quality of information bestowed and the relationship between the interlocutors. Such advice may be rejected or taken at the whim of the person to whom one is trying to influence. This point is noted by the 'tribal elder' (Staff 11: 11/1994) himself:

> ... I do not know if power is the word. I think I have a bit. One, I know the Headmaster personally; [he] takes me into his confidence. [He does that with very few I think?], yes, and he takes me in more than most, but even so ... that is how I know he is a very private man because I do not share many confidences with him.

However, experience is not the only prerequisite of the tribal elder, his influence is also governed by the political astuteness of knowing what to say, when to say it, and to whom. As staff 22 (10/1994) assesses this aspect of a tribal elder:

> Since the Headmaster['s arrival] he [the tribal elder] has gone to his camp. Become a very strong supporter of the Headmaster. I think he probably realises that you can probably get rid of one Headmaster [staff 11 was largely attributed of being the catalyst behind the previous Headmaster's departure], but it might be a bit too careless [to get rid of two].

Such a tribal elder with experience and strategic political acumen could be ignored only with peril. The last Headmaster certainly underestimated the influence of this person and attributed his own downfall to the duplicity of this person. As the former Headmaster (9/1994) explains:

> Staff 11 resented the fact that because he had been there so long I did not seek his advice on everything that had happened. You had a series of key people like that who because you undermine their power base essentially ... There is no doubt that one of the reasons that staff 11 feels sour about it is that we did not regard him as being god's gift to the School. People thought that the sun shone out of [staff 11's] backside.

The last Headmaster wished to implement non-curriculum changes but failed to take into consideration the power of vested interest groups and individuals. A teacher (staff 4: 9/1994) who was at the School at the time remarks:

> [The last Headmaster] must have taken power away from people and the one person he must have taken power from was staff 11. He [the last Headmaster] broke the old guard, but the old-guard was able to rally.

There are other staff within the School who because of a combination of experience, longevity at the School, links with power bases outside the educational domain (for example, the Old-Boys or Council members) have influence in the decision-making process or the ear of the Headmaster. Their status as the tribal elders far outweighs that of any particular staff or interest group. When dealing with educational issues this School is not a pluralist organisation.

b. Staff with 'technological' power

Technological power, in the sense used here, refers to the specific skills of some members of staff which are unique within the community and are valued accordingly for the kudos and promotion they bring to the School in the exercise of their expertise. The two notable curriculum areas are Computer Studies and Music. The teachers in this area have a heavy extra-curricular burden, are high profile members of staff and importantly are given greater freedom to control their own departments. Both are highly skilled in their respective areas and thus difficult to replace. The funding for these departments is disproportionately high owing to the specialised equipment needed. However, the costs are seen to be justified as the public profile of the School is promoted through these faculties which encourages new enrolments.

The views of the organisational culture of these staff differ markedly from those of other staff in lower profile subjects. These staff are recognised to hold key portfolios which reflect the prestige, importance and the success they bring to the School in the cultural and technological domains, as in Music and Computing respectively.

These staff are allowed greater freedom to demonstrate their skills, expected to give advice concerning the educational development of their subjects to the Headmaster and are given greater latitude to experiment with their 'technological' endeavours.

Neither of these teachers sees the School as being particularly hierarchical or the Headmaster as being autocratic. With respect to the structure of the School, one of these staff members (Staff 7: 12/1994) comments :

> ... it has become flatter [the hierarchy] not because of any generic policy; it has become flatter because its become flatter. I find the boss works that way a lot. He does not like to make decisions in lots of ways; you make the decision for him. It is one less decision he has to make.

Or, when discussing the decision-making process and the degree of freedom that is tolerated this staff member (loc.cit.) suggests that:

> ... schools are quite anarchic. The methods that I use are not necessarily sitting down on a Tuesday night thinking about what I am going to do, they just happen. I think it is largely anarchic what I do. It comes back to this method

> business and whether it is pre-planned. Often it is not and I am not used to a very hierarchical system. I am used to the Catholic system. The boss is there all the time and you walk up and say I want such and such.

Likewise, the other 'technologically' empowered teacher (staff 16: 3/1995) acts almost autonomously and usually consults directly with the Headmaster:

> ... I would hope that he [the Headmaster] would trust most people. The way I have always dealt with the Headmaster is that I do my own thing and if I want something more, or if I do not agree with something, I will go to the Headmaster and say that I want this, or, I do not agree with that. If he wants something from me, or, if he does not agree with me, then he calls me up and [we discuss it]. Have the other staff tried?

Quite significantly the comments made on the organisational structure of the School reflect a situation which differs markedly from those staff who are not so empowered within their own field. Staff 7 (12/1994) comments on the structure of the School:

> ... whilst it [the School] has the patterns of being highly structured, there is no structure at all, it is amazing. It is not an anarchy thing, just a default thing, choosing one's objectives and letting the rest bubbling away on its own.

The important aspect of technological empowerment is that the influence to control one's immediate educational boundaries is limited to that sphere. Once that boundary is transcended into the broader agenda of School issues influence wanes. Staff 7 (12/1994) recognises that his power and influence are strictly limited:

> ... in that regard the whole School and the management of anything in the School is very reliant on what he [the Headmaster] feels about them. What is going on, because he has not devolved a great deal of decision-making to people further down.

Because the skills of this group of individuals are easily transportable, in high demand and externally recognised they are confident of setting their own limited agenda. One particular member of staff who was awarded a prestigious educational award for his teaching innovations and expertise remarks revealingly, on receiving the award that 'the boss will not be able to sack me now' (staff 1: 9/1994). Staff 1's stability of employment has increased because his skills have been externally recognised and therefore sanctions have less effect. The limited power of these tribal elders and those with special skills gives them greater control over their own goals and values, their authority representing a separate non-traditional power which is dependent upon other attributes.

Myth, Ritual and Ceremony

The traditions of the School, the ceremonies, the usual and accepted practice of 'doing things', and the buildings and their layout are all significant features and expressions of structural power. As Pettigrew (1979: 576) remarks in this respect:

> ... the crucial feature of ritual as a medium of culture is the message it contains ... it is partly through ritual that social relationships become stylised, conventionalised and prescribed.

The established, tried and tested hierarchy is symbolically displayed in many features of the School. For example, the gradual rise in elevation as one walks up the series of steps through the long, picture-lined corridor that leads to the Headmaster's office where it is quieter, almost monastic in feel.

As staff 20 (10/1994) comments concerning the stability generated by the traditions of the School:

> ... a lot of the staff are old boys and are used to the rituals and traditions and therefore do not buck them [the School's goals] on that basis. They like the stability of that ongoing thing ... like the traditions, the ceremonies, the rituals. I think they give kids the sense of time place and security. They give them something to anchor to ... unchanging and stable for them. I think that is a positive thing.

The traditions of the School formalise existing structures and become part of the collective culture of the School. 'The way we do things here' is often difficult for new staff to understand, and as one teacher (staff 14: 1/1995) comments on his perception of the School's culture:

> I think the outsiders at [the School], and I would include everyone who has not grown up in that tradition, have great problems fitting into the tradition for example [cited new staff at the School].

Another new member of staff (staff 2: 11/1994) says that on his arrival at the School, '[a senior staff member] filled me in on the private school code'. A past teacher also comments on the problems the last Headmaster had trying to change the established structures of the School in that, 'he came up against the implacable traditions' (staff 3: 10/1994).

Many staff whilst liking the traditions, old buildings and a sense of belonging that an established culture can nurture see this aspect of the School as also having a negative effect. Staff 1 (12/1994) feels that traditions stifle change:

> It is wearing tradition as a defence against change. It is tradition for the sake of tradition, it is almost as if we have to be like an English school and we have to take on those traditions otherwise we will not look like these English schools. In the meantime the schools we are mimicking have changed, moved forward.

The teachers feel privileged to work in an old established school, recognised within the community as being 'a good school', but see the pomp and circumstance as being an essential but separate part of the School in terms of scholastic and academic endeavour. One teacher (staff 1: 12/1994) recognises the importance to him and other staff of the traditions and rituals of the School but feels that there has to be substance behind the facade:

> ... ceremony and pomp and the rest have a place but only when it is a reflection, when it is the cream on top of the cake and really represents the cake that is underneath. But when the cake is a bit empty, hollow ...

This and other analogies reflect an organisation which the staff commonly respond to as, 'all froth and no substance'. The majority see the benefits of the stability of a traditional structure and the pride that is engendered by belonging to an established and recognised institution, but they expect substance and academic rigour to underpin 'the facade, the marching, the plays, the show ...' (staff 4: 9/1994).

CONCLUSION: *Structured and Vested Powers*

Teachers seek employment at the School knowing ostensibly the sort of school in which they will be working. There is an implicit acceptance upon employment that if you dislike the structure of the School the doors are always open to seek a job elsewhere.

However, while the possibility of seeking alternative employment is an option open for everyone, for those who accept the status quo there is a clear relationship, but delineation, between the structural, traditional power of the Headmaster and his delegates and the vesting and relinquishing of teachers' individual power to that organisational authority.

The long corridors of power, closed doors, ritualised ceremonies conducted by the leader and a hierarchical retinue of deputies and administrative labour symbolise the use of traditional power. The authoritarian symbol, the decision-maker, the autocrat, the father figure are names ascribed to the Headmaster by staff, all of which reflect perceptions of position and place within the organisational structure. However, no members of staff seek to change the power structure of the School. There is no rebellion or dissension against these traditional arrangements. The structural power is not disapproved: the Headmaster is deemed and expected to have the authority to run the School and staff see this as a right of his position. Such is the acceptance of the traditional power structure that there are no Marxist plots or anarchic uprisings in this School. The teachers anticipate that the rituals are perpetuated as part of the School's identity and uniqueness.

However, in return for the dissolution of individual power, in return for the acceptance and recognition of the ideals and traditions of the School, educational leadership is expected. There is an expectation that there will be respect for the goals and aspirations of staff, a responsibility to provide a disciplined structure and educational environment by which the teaching staff might be able to honour their professional skills and expertise.

It is important to realise that the stability and security that the School provides through this framework are appreciated and valued. However, in return for this acceptance of the status quo and the relinquishing of a certain degree of individual freedom there are certain expectations on a professional, educational level that the School's hierarchy will provide. This relationship between the goals and values of the wider community, the Council, the Old-Boys, parents who have certain expectations as to the type of school they wish to perpetuate and who see the Headmaster as their ambassador and the educational values of the teachers, is the cornerstone of any analysis of power which facilitates an understanding of conflict within the School community.

Although the authority of the Headmaster is not questioned, it is the use of his power, the style of leadership and managerial practice that lie at the root of an understanding of the organisational dynamics which so affect the processes of change within this School.

Conflict, as will be seen in the next chapter, arises not with argument over ceremony, traditions, or rituals that daily reinforce the culture, but with the processes of power and the methods by which the Headmaster leads the School. There is a fundamental separation between the role which the Headmaster plays perpetuating the values and goals symbolised by the institution as a traditional school and the educational, professional direction of the teaching body. The greater the divide between the two, the greater will be the conflict. Just as importantly if there are seen to be divisions between the two, for whatever reason, then the perceived rifts to all intents and purposes exist. It will be seen that central to the inter-personal dynamics of the situation are the channels of communication and the enunciation and consideration of respective goals and values.

What is in evidence here is described by Weick (1979) as a 'loosely coupled system', by Meyer and Rowan (1977) as 'de-coupling' and Satow (1975) as an organisation with 'value-rational authority'.

As Meyer and Rowan (1977: 357) state, decoupled organisations are not anarchies; day-to-day procedures are orderly and stable with structural elements being maintained through 'avoidance, discretion and overlooking', and that:

> ... formal structures dramatically reflect the myths of their institutional environments instead of the demands of their work activities. (ibid.: 341)

The organisational structure of the School empowers the Headmaster to buffer the traditional values and aims of the wider community from the vagaries of educational change and idealistic staff. Change, if change is to occur, will happen slowly and with due care and consideration. The process of change will be time consuming and require perseverance and moral courage above all other qualities by the actors concerned.

However, Blau's (1976: 148) statement that 'authority involves unconditional willing obedience on the part of subordinates' does not apply here. Authority is acquiesced to the Headmaster by staff but it is certainly conditional upon him providing educational leadership. This 'acquiescence' is both structural and traditional - structural in the sense that it is implicit that employment also engenders an acceptance of the hierarchical status quo, and traditional because the power regime perpetuates the established order.

Miller, Rowlands and Tilley's (1989: 6) suggestion that 'since authority entails voluntary submission to a superior, it obviates the need for coercive force to enforce obedience' fails to appreciate the strength and flexibility of Giddens' (1968) theory of structuration which acknowledges the constraining and enabling aspects of traditional power. Giddens recognises that coercion is needed to maintain the 'system' even though staff voluntarily submit to that 'system'. As will be seen in the next chapter coercion is very much a part of the perpetuation of the status quo. Again, it must be stressed that even though the threat of sanctions may have been imagined it is still part of the collective imagery of the operations of the School and thus part of the organisational reality. At this school the socialisation process is so complete that staff either think that is wrong to question the existing structures, feel that sanctions will operate if they do question them too vigorously or feel that they will be isolated if they do.

The underlying social dynamics of this School do not reflect simply either integration or coercion theories but something which embodies the flexibility of Weber and Giddens. That is, an organisation theory which relies heavily on the concept of power, traditional structures and political strategies to 'oil the wheels'. There is also a socially agreed consensus as to the hierarchical order and inequality of the power distribution which serves to rationalise the domination-submission condition. Set against this is the fear that if the status quo is not actively maintained then anarchy will arise which will break the Headmaster's authority. This stance reflects Weber's (1968) political sociology which couples the concepts of force with traditional legitimacy. This political theory is compatible with Giddens' (1979) ideas but is not as rigorous as the latter's concept of the 'duality of structure'. This study likewise unravels the conditions of social obedience set against the conflict between individual, group and organisational goals and values but is less concerned with the more Marxist perspective of exploitation.

The focus here is on the problems of power and structure being both enabling and constraining, set within a political framework of the actions and conflicts of staff. As Clegg (1989: 189) clearly summarises, conflict is such that:

> Perturbations need not necessarily represent a challenge to this structure but may instead be purely local struggles for autonomy and control, which pose no threat to the 'structure' per se. On empirically rare occasions, however, there might be such a challenge.

The departure of the last Headmaster would be an example of such an occasion.

Satow's (1975) extension of Weber's typology to incorporate value-rational organisations is an attempt to codify those institutions which balance absolute (externally justified) goals with those separate aims of the organisation. The value-rational authority gives obedience to an ideal rather than formal laws or goals and although there are similarities with this School's organisational structure there are also distinct differences. As shown by staff's reaction to the last Headmaster. However, the key word here is 'ultimately'. The teachers show greater obedience to the power structures of the School and for the majority of the time conform to this order in sufferance to their own ideological objectives. It is only as a last resort do the ideals of their profession result in actions which precipitate their return. In terms of Satow's typology the School is a value-rational organisation but the power evoked by the institution and the sanctions it could draw upon result in an institution which in daily terms is more bureaucratic than value driven. Satow (1975: 530) calls these institutions 'heteronomous' organisations in which:

> ... professional employees are clearly subordinate to an administrative framework and the autonomy granted professionals is relatively small, they are not very different from bureaucracies.

The conflict between value-driven professionalism and the forces which maintain the status-quo will be the subject of the next chapter. The focus will be the use of strategic, Machiavellian power to ensure that order, at least formally, is preserved. Temporally speaking, the use of expedient, present power to perpetuate traditional goals, structures and stability within an educationally and socially changing world will be examined.

CHAPTER SIX

PRESENT POWER
Power of Action and Non-Action

INTRODUCTION

In the last chapter structural power was discussed and portrayed as a historical legacy of a traditional hierarchy with power vested in, and acceded to, the Headmaster. In particular, the concepts of Giddens' duality of structure and domination were highlighted to portray the dichotomy between the organisational hierarchy, promoting stability of both control and the decision-making process and the power needed to maintain that structure; a power which necessarily limits the freedom of choice of individuals and groups.

The traditional organisational structures are not seen by staff in themselves to be a source of conflict. Neither is the power vested in the Headmaster seen as a matter for contention. Staff relinquish their independence in return for stability of structure and the perpetuation of the traditions and rituals of the School. This state of affairs is accepted and even desired by some teachers and reflects the Hobbessian and Parsonian concepts of sovereign power within an established hierarchy. There is very little discussion by staff as to the legitimacy of this arrangement and the vesting of control and power in certain people, notably the Headmaster. However, in return staff have expectations on a professional level which are expected to be fulfilled by the processes of governance of the Headmaster.

The relationships to be examined in this chapter are the perceived and actual goals, roles and values of the respective parties, notably the Headmaster and the teaching staff. As already noted the wider the gulf between the perceived and actual realities of these goals and values the greater the conflict. This chapter will delve into the constraining and enabling aspects of power within the structural framework of the School and the consequences for the processes of change. The exercise of power to maintain the traditional operations of the School and to ensure that everyone knows their place', that is their 'role' in the social dynamics of this institution, will be scrutinised.

Lukes' (1974: 34) statement that "A exercises power over 'B' when 'A' affects 'B' in a manner contrary to 'B''s interests' mirrors the basic definitions of the individualistic dimension to power. Weber (1947), Dahl (1957), Hodgkinson (1978) and Benton (1981) also see this capacity of interpersonal power as the ability to gain desired end objectives despite resistance.

To present the definition within a structural framework, the absence of which limits Dahl's (1957) and Bachrach and Baratz's (1962) work, Lukes expands this concept and says that:

> 'A' may exercise power over 'B', within given structural conditions, by precluding the options that 'B' **would** take up but for the power of 'A'. (original emphasis)

The causal, agency and strategic nature of power relationships present power in a more immediate form. Beteille (1977) comments that hierarchy is not based simply on principles of inequality, just a division of roles, and this can indeed be the case. However, this assumes an acceptance of individual roles and goals. Where such compatibility is not complete more Machiavellian ideology needs to be assessed.

Clegg (1979) suggests that it is not necessary for some outward manifestation of power to be seen to have happened for us to say that something has happened. The outward displays of power in action are potent in the communication of organisational reality but just as important are the analyses of '**non-actions**', covert dynamics which affect behavioural patterns and are examples of power in its passive form.

Ball (1976) also considers the importance of power frameworks which exist despite any outward manifestation of power being displayed. Even though there might be no directly observable, causal links between the outcomes of the decision-making process and the power to affect them, enigmatic factors may be in operation. As Lukes (1974: 23) pertinently assesses the situation, 'the most effective and insidious use of power is to prevent such conflict from arising in the first place'.

Even though the majority of this chapter will centre on the overt and covert aspects of interpersonal power it must be stressed that no power relationship can be treated in isolation from the structural constraints that prejudice and bias the rules of the interactions. This, as has been highlighted earlier, is a fundamental premise to any discussion on power in this study. One of the more formidable aspects of any power regime is this structural element. Its significance cannot be underestimated as it affects the way in which the teachers act and modify their behaviour to accept the role they play within the organisation.

In this chapter the active and passive forms of power are discussed. In particular four areas will be considered in the present, expedient nature of power. Firstly, the **power of sanctions** will be assessed; disciplinary measures which are used to perpetuate the power structures and ensure that staff do not unbalance the existing status quo. Secondly, examples of **power in action** will be given which demonstrate the existence of power relationships in this School through observable events and actions taken by staff. Thirdly, **passive power** will be analysed through the non-actions and behaviour of submissive staff affected by the power structures. Lastly, procedures which ensure that the 'status-quo' is maintained through the **legacy of traditional power** will be outlined; a passive power which maintains the established structures of the School.

THE POWER OF SANCTIONS

Crozier (1973: 222) sees the virtuous aspect of power, which corresponds to Parsons' (1963) and Hobbes' (1977) organisational ideals, with his statement that:

> ... power is good and noble if it corresponds to the officially accepted social pact; it is reprehensible and immoral if it is used as a means to take advantage of one's situation in order to manipulate others outside the recognised pact.

Crozier (ibid.: 224) goes on to qualify this opinion by saying that:

> ... hierarchical power need depend less on constraint, and can divest itself of its problematical moral attributes in favour of greater flexibility and effectiveness, playing the less prestigious role of inspirer and facilitator. This is a very different kind of evolution from what is hoped for in anarchist and revolutionary demands for the withering away of power.

However, in contrast to these ideas central to Foucault's (1982) conception of power is the supposition that the exercise of power is inextricably linked to discipline and the employment of sanctions. This is coercive power, power represented by a combination of force and legitimacy based on the tacit assumption in the power relationship that the wielder of power will invoke disciplinary measures to the detriment of the individual or the group. Merquior (1985: 109) stresses that Foucault's power 'is a matter of domination, not of capacity'. Expanding Foucault's (1980: 217, 220) ideas Merquior (ibid.: 110) suggests that the exercise of power being neither violence nor consent, is a total structure of 'actions brought to bear upon possible actions, inciting, seducing or, in the extreme, constraining and forbidding'.

Foucault's thrust is that the power relationship is one of domination and not equivalence. Weber (1968) sees this domination in terms of economic power which, it will be seen, figures largely in this study. However, in tandem with this determinant of power in the value-rational institution is also the exercise of power to repress people's goals, to prevent the fulfilment of others' ideals and professional aspirations.

The use of sanctions is a feature in the operations at this School and plays a significant role in maintaining the power structures and reinforcing the Headmaster's authority. It is this threat of sanctions that differentiates the Headmaster's power as opposed to his influence in determining what decisions are made and by whom. **Economic sanctions** and the **thwarting of professional, personal and educational goals** are seen as the two prominent examples of such sanctioned power.

Economic Sanctions

Economic sanctions are not defined here as simply representing a limitation to personal gain, the distribution of resources and utilities or the stability and continuity of employment but also the psychological stresses that they engender. In all the discussions with teaching staff pay rarely warrants a mention, neither does the division of educational resources; it is simply the tenure of employment that is seen as the key display of sanctionable power of the Headmaster. This sanction affects staff both psychologically and financially.

It is quite remarkable that a significant number of staff see their continuation of employment as a reflection of their passivity to the 'status quo' - remarkable, because it would be difficult to dismiss a teacher unless there is evidence of professional misconduct or a lengthy, documented appraisal which finds the teacher wanting. However, the collective imagery, the organisational reality, is that there are methods that could be employed by the Headmaster to precipitate a person's resignation and departure. In other words, staff know they will not be sacked but that there are 'other ways to skin a cat'. These perceptions arise through observation and discussion by members of staff over past events and ignorance as to why certain teachers depart. The knowledge that circulates on the matter of job security is rumour, innuendo and half-truths simply because no other concrete information is forthcoming as to the real reasons why people leave or are made redundant.

Staff 21 (10/1994) commenting on the sudden exit of one senior and widely respected teacher concludes that:

> ... if he [the Headmaster] can knock off him, he can knock off any of us. We are nothing really.

The effect on the organisational culture is further amplified by another statement by a teacher (staff 2: 11/1994) who does not understand why one particular staff member left:

> ... we are never ever told why [the teacher cited above] left. [It was because] he was too powerful for the boss. The boss likes people under him who he can push around. [The teacher] knew too many Old-Boys, everyone liked him.

There may have been no justifiable reasons for staff 2 to make these accusations but in the absence of other information conclusions are formulated and circulated which form the collective imagery. These events coupled with pervasive personal theories that certain staff are 'out of favour' with the Headmaster fuel the uncertainty. Staff 27 (4/1995) suggests that the Headmaster has a 'blacklist' of staff:

> He has got definite people on the staff he [the Headmaster] does not have faith in. If they go too far he will act [and] his opinion is not going to change. [Staff 1, 28, 29, 5], you can go through the list. If he spots them, particularly weaknesses in the classroom, or [staff 1] with the religion, and [staff 28] disrespect, or anything like that.

Many teachers see this 'blacklisting' of some staff and preferential treatment of others as very divisive, adding to the insecurities of the teachers. The following particular episode recited by staff 16 (3/1995) is a powerful metaphor which reinforces the collective image of professional instability and job insecurity.

> If you look at the techniques that the Headmaster used, certainly when he first got here. He paid bonuses; they took four years to phase out. I got a bonus and I went along to see him and said I do not work at this School to get a bonus. I said that do you know you have probably opened up the biggest can of worms that you could ever, ever, ever open?
>
> I do not know whether he had been to a management course - here is your staff, free enterprise mate, they are doing a good job, reward them. You had the detractors at the time who stood at the pigeon holes and worked out who got one and who did not. It went round like a hot fire, it was the scariest thing. So I said thank you very much, I do not want it and do you realise what you have just done?

As another long-time member of staff (staff 14: 1/1995) who considers himself out of favour with the hierarchy remarks, concerning this particular managerial divisiveness:

> ... I think that is the problem it is carrot and stick all the time. Once people are getting all these lurks and perks they are not prepared to give them up. That is the power I was talking about, it is divide and rule. We are not going to get a united staff, again for a long time. Too many people have had too many backhanders that other people do not know about.

Apprehension and fear of dismissal are exacerbated by the Headmaster's perceived inability to communicate effectively the reasons why decisions are made. The Headmaster states the need to be loyal, confidential and professional with respect to other members of staff when discussing their performance or other issues deemed inappropriate for general discussion, but most staff see this as a sign of a hidden agenda. Staff 11 (11/1994) certainly sees this lack of communication as a problem which creates insecurity:

> He [the Headmaster] is very much to the extent his own man, stubbornly so at times. He is a person who always plays his cards close to his chest. He really has very little personal contact with anyone. Once he makes up his mind he finds it almost impossible to see another point of view. Before he makes it up he canvasses every point of view, too much often, and will not come to the final decision, but then having come to the final decision, it is there and everyone is judged in how they relate to him and his decisions and what he wants to do.

However, teachers also interpret the barriers, the silence and the unapproachable edicts as being 'Machiavellian' (staff 14: 1/1995), 'emotional blackmail' (staff 2: 11/1994) and that the Headmaster rules 'by a mixture of bullying and fear [with the result that staff] are afraid of losing their jobs' (staff 12: 9/1994).

Whether the Headmaster is actually Machiavellian is a matter for conjecture. However, the collective perceptions of staff are that job security depends on the Headmaster's opinion of your worth to the School. These thoughts of self-doubt whether real or imaginary are certainly keenly experienced by some staff, particularly those who for a variety of reasons feel vulnerable.

One senior member of staff (staff 27: 4/1995) tried to convince one apprehensive teacher whom he felt was a dedicated and hard-working person that fears of dismissal were unsubstantiated. However, such is the power of the collective reality little heed was taken. He remarks:

I talk to people like [staff 20] and they are scared of losing their jobs and I keep saying [to them] you are mad, who would get rid of you?

The sanctions that are perceived to exist play on the fears and insecurities of staff undermining their confidence, power and ability to voice grievances or controversial, personal opinion.

Staff 14 (1/1995) states the case of teacher powerlessness quite plainly when he suggests that:

... where you say that the staff have a lot of power, the power is undermined considerably if the Headmaster does have the right to push people out. At least half of the staff are financially insecure and particularly those with families.

Or as a former member of staff (staff 12: 9/1994) suggests concerning the effects sanctions have on the staff:

[Staff 3] is absolutely terrified of losing her job. Eventually [staff 3] stopped discussing anything that was in the least bit controversial.

And as staff 13 (10/1994) himself reinforces, 'the whole system breeds a sort of sycophancy. [If] I want to keep my job I must keep in with the right people'. Or as staff 10 (11/1994) states the problem when discussing how energetically he would pursue a contentious topic:

... a driving factor in why people do not do anything [is] because the job market is very difficult at the moment, plus [the town] is a great place. My wife likes it, I have a young family. All sorts of things come into your decision as to how hard you are going to go in. I do not go in particularly hard, I enjoy the place. If I was fair-dinkum I would go to the Headmaster [and speak my mind].

The threat of the loss of employment is a potent sanction that can be used to maintain control and limit disruption to accepted practices. One senior member of staff (staff 27: 4/1994) recognises that economic and psychological power related to employment is used to affirm the hierarchical nature and that the Headmaster 'expects to have that power. I think there is an expectation from his background that the Headmaster has a different role and different responsibilities and a different aura and a respect about him ... I expect he exercises that power sometimes'.

This member of staff (loc.cit.) summarises the issue with the statement that:

> ... I can understand [why the staff are scared]. They cannot go to the State system. That is out now. You cannot go back, you come back at the bottom rung, wait three years and all the targeted graduates have first priority. So you are not going to get [this town]. [For] someone here that does not want to leave [this town] there is only [private school 2] and [private school 3] and if you get booted out of here you are not going to get in [there], so it is understandable.

Thwarting of Professional, Personal and Educational Goals

As a former Coordinator states (staff 12: 9/1994), concerning the power of sanctions to affect career prospects:

> ... there is a ridiculous system over here [in Australia] of using your present boss as a referee.

Not only can the threat of the loss of employment be used as sanctioned power but also other resources in particular professional advancement and the ability to seek promotional positions within and without the School. If the Headmaster must be used as a referee, and for the private school network this is basically mandatory, as stated above, this breeds a sycophancy which would not encourage open and free speech, innovation or change within the institution. Staff are thus beholden to the Headmaster for a good reference and to get his full backing must 'play the game'.

POWER IN ACTION

Displays of power are noticeable features of the organisational routines and are methods by which control is reasserted. Active power is invoked when structured power fails and normal routines are not being followed or when problems in role definition occur. An overt exercise of power is used to remind staff of these structures, procedures and expected roles.

Such open exercises of power are important in establishing patterns of behaviour and reactions to issues. Typified behavioural responses are part of the collective imagery and set the organisational reality for people's anticipated reactions to other events. Overt actions and demonstrations of power are a necessary precursor to these 'anticipated reactions' which will be discussed in the next section on the power of 'non-action'. Such displays of power provide the knowledge which establishes the collective imagery of likely actions to be taken by the leaders at critical times and events or organisational crises. Demonstrations of power reinforce the structural elements of traditional power and serve to perpetuate the hierarchy and people's positions within the organisation.

As has been stated in the last chapter, an important feature of power within the School is that the established hierarchical structure is seen to be a just and proper system of governance. The exercising of power is seen as a 'natural' part of such an organisational structure and staff acquiesce to demands made by those in control as long as those demands are appropriate to the teachers' value-rational goals. If a teacher is incompetent there would be an expectation that the person would be asked to leave. If teachers are not professional or lax in their attitude and conduct there would be an expectation that the offending person would be spoken to and the aberrant behaviour addressed. However, the demands of the power relationship between those empowered and the rank and file staff have unintended consequences. The use of power to constrain or suppress has damaging or oppressive effects on staff's attitudes and behaviours.

What are questioned by staff are not the 'normal' displays of power by the leaders of the School - chairing meetings, leading assemblies, acquisition of privileges and greater access to resources and utilities - but the disruptive, destabilising and constraining use of overt power.

The significant impact of the following events should not be underestimated. They serve as a reminder to all staff of not only the sanctions that could be instigated and the importance of abiding by the accepted practices of the School emphasised by the collective organisational culture but also, and just as importantly, they influence such aspects as staff morale, involvement, enthusiasm, dedication and willingness to be involved in and accept change.

The examples given below explore the problems which relate to the exercise of sanctioned power and political expediency, the balance between political and cultural stability and control versus personal, professional freedom. They are 'typical' episodes which are often witnessed by staff on a daily basis. These events are not all the scenarios of overt power but those relayed by the teachers during the private interviews, observed by me or communicated informally, for example over lunch or at morning tea. It should also be noted that these examples of 'power in action' preoccupy staff's conversations outweighing any positive comments they have to make about the 'hierarchy'. These issues are high profile matters and notable signposts to the collective culture of the School and have a portentous impact on the behaviour and morale of staff. Their importance to the organisational culture should not be under-estimated and hence their significance to this study.

Mechanisms of Control

a. The 'shut-out'

A successful example of overt power is the practice of terminating difficult and sensitive public conversations. Curtailment of an awkward discussion could be instigated in meetings by a process called the 'shut-out', a method by which the power of a leader's position could be used to control communication and talk.

At one morning meeting (3/1994), held in the commonroom, staff 10 is trying to clarify his understanding of the circumstances of the boys' voluntary early morning fitness sessions which have previously been viewed by both staff and students alike as in fact compulsory rugby training. As far as he is aware training is not mandatory and that students cannot use the time spent at early morning to excuse themselves from other meetings or for being tired during class. This is the first most staff have even heard of the sessions officially but many know that staff 10 is at logger-heads with a senior staff member (who has a vested interest in the training sessions going ahead) over the issue. It had been previously decided at a Sports Committee meeting that there was to be no pre-season training sessions as such practices would interfere with current sporting programs.

A question relating to the time and days of these morning sessions is asked by staff 31 as such information would be needed by Housemasters, especially if the boys are out early in the mornings. Immediately the senior staff member (staff 32: 2/1994) says, 'you can see (the Sports' Coordinator) about that afterwards'. The retort is mumbled and indistinctly heard as staff 32 turns and moves towards the door of the commonroom. The morning meeting is abruptly closed. Many staff look towards staff 10 who simply shrugs his shoulders.

Staff 32 has executed the 'shut-out', terminated the conversation and closed the meeting by leaving the room assuming correctly that by doing so the topic cannot be discussed further. Continued dialogue would have highlighted to staff, and the Headmaster, his involvement and could have jeopardised the training sessions. Staff 32 is, by his actions, implicitly acknowledging the fact that if the conversation progressed further he might have no option but to follow consensus opinion and abide by a democratic decision. By quickly terminating the meeting, control of outcomes could be managed by expedient actions and the exercise of authority to meet differing goals and priorities.

b. The steam-roller approach

An important aspect of keeping control over the flow of information and communications, which are the medium of political activity and cultural influence, is the management of meetings. This can be achieved by either careful monitoring of agenda items or by regulating the passage of conversation during the discussions in the meeting of the various items on the schedule. As Bachrach and Baratz (1962: 948-9) state, 'power may be ... exercised by confining the scope of decision-making to relatively safe issues'. Pfeffer (1981: 146) also comments that to keep control it is best to 'keep the issues submerged and out of the political arena if at all possible'. Pfeffer (ibid.: 153) rather prosaically continues:

> ... the nice thing about agendas is that few people regard them as elements of political strategy. Thus the decision process and decision outcome can be affected, but altered by means which are relatively unobtrusive and non-reactive.

Staff 32 chairs the Housemaster's meeting held once a week at which he displays notable power play to manage both the agenda and the duration of the topics discussed. A variety of the following tactics are used to steam-roll dissent and to arrest control of the meeting from individuals. These are comprised of the following tactics:

i. Keep the agenda long so that topics can never be fully discussed. For a particular fifty minute meeting (2/1994) 23 items are posted plus a supplementary 10. Items for discussion range from length of the boys' hair to the School's position on alcohol (the latter in itself could have easily taken all the allotted time)

ii. Interject mid-way through a speaker's sentence to move the meeting on to the next item on the agenda. This usually causes enough confusion and surprise on the part of the person speaking that by the time composure has been re-gained the topic of conversation has already moved on.

iii. Ignore interjections and appeals for a halt to the proceedings so that other people can put across their point of view. At one meeting one person interjected four times to try to continue one item of debate but he eventually gave up when the chair did not respond.

By 'steamrolling' a meeting staff 32 is able to focus the discussions on his own priorities and stifle debate on issues which he either considers unimportant or too sensitive for discussion even in a closed forum. Opposition to the way the meetings are run are taken as personal threats to the competency of the chair and thus members of this committee are reluctant to pursue topics of contention vigorously. Such actions and overt use of power frustrate the staff present and instil notions of their inferior status and ineffectuality.

c. Applying the pressure

As outlined in the example given in Chapter 4, asking specific questions to specific people and demanding unequivocal answers is a powerful method of limiting debate on certain issues. The Headmaster demands at another meeting of the Housemasters (8/1994) to know if the students in Year 12 are arrogant. There has been concern amongst the majority of the staff that this year group are 'getting out of hand' and there is pressure from the teachers of this group to fix the matter.

The answer to the Headmaster's question has to be a 'yes' or 'no'. The Housemasters are put on the spot and there is no time or allowance given to qualify answers. Neither is there any time to give the matter further discussion as the question is posed at the end of the meeting. The Headmaster has heard some rumours about the students and wishes to know definitively if there is a problem. All but two of the Housemasters (of eight) equivocate and are ambivalent with their answers. In the staffroom afterwards staff 20 is overheard to say sarcastically, 'so the Housemasters do not think that there is a discipline problem?' Bad or unacceptable news travels fast. By the actions taken, the Headmaster is able to state or imply that an important and senior body like the Housemasters does not think there is a problem. This negates the need if necessary to remedy the situation because the Housemasters themselves have stated that there is no situation to remedy.

d. The dodge

At a Coordinators' meeting on discipline, at which Staff 32 is asked to attend to answer questions about the staff's concerns on matters of student behaviour, a display of prevaricating tactics is used to ensure that there is no real discussion on the topic. Any criticism might imply a failure to provide the necessary structures needed for adequate discipline. Staff 32's tactics are firstly, to cite other relevant but not strictly pertinent examples of problems he has had to handle because of the deficiencies of other staff. Secondly, he avoids the main issue which confronts his position as the chief disciplinarian by following the maxim that when the sharks are circling feed them with a few red herrings. For example, he cites one school prefect who has been given an inappropriate detention by staff 31 who is present at the meeting and says that as the prefect is a role model he should not be put on detention. An implicit reference is made to staff 31 to 'pull his neck in' and adjust his views. Staff 32 refuses to believe there is a problem and by talking around the topic for the duration of the meeting has successfully prevented any adverse discussions or conclusions being reached which might have required action on his part.

e. Point the finger elsewhere

An 'activity' day is looming and many Year 12 students have asked a senior member of staff if they could absent themselves from their obligations (usually denied) and go to Sydney for the weekend. Staff 32 has given them permission but this has repercussions for those organising the programs for the Year 12s and their respective number allocations. Three boys from one particular boarding house have permission to go to Sydney. Staff 27 asks staff 32, in the presence of the Headmaster, specifically to whom he has given permission. One of these three has a legitimate reason to go to Sydney and staff 32 keeps the topic to this boy. When staff 27 brings up the subject of other boys having permission from him he says that he has given no one else permission.

However, staff 27 knows from staff 31 that this is not the case and that others have also been given permission to be absent. Staff 27 asks staff 32 about these boys and staff 32 is very defensive (the Headmaster is still present and listening) and he again switches to the topic of the boy with a good reason to leave. Staff 27 pursues the matter and eventually staff 32 retorts that the Housemaster concerned must have approved it, but as that person is staff 31, staff 27 knows that this is not correct. Staff 27 knows the truth of the matter but lets the issue rest not wanting a confrontation. Staff 32 has pointed the finger of liability elsewhere and being in a tight corner puts the responsibility of the decision to someone else who is not present rather than admit a mistake in the presence of the Headmaster.

Political expediency rules the decision of staff 32 to pass the blame elsewhere when it is thought that very little harm would be done by doing so as no one he thinks will find out.

f. Ignore the problem or if in doubt throw it out!

Staff 27 has suspected for sometime that his memos are being ignored by a senior staff member. Staff 27's suspicions are confirmed when one of the secretaries witnesses the senior staff member take Staff 27's memo from the in-tray and, without reading it, put it straight into the out-tray. On another occasion information is simply put unopened into the bin and is subsequently retrieved by a cleaner and given to staff 27.

Open Displays of Power

As Giddens (1968: 262) rightly suggests, 'the amount of open force used is an indication of a shallow and unstable power base'. Open, aggressive displays of power are infrequent at the School and reflect the passive acceptance of staff to the hierarchical structures and designated positions of authority. One example, however, of such open displays is given in Chapter 4[1] concerning the commandeering of a meeting and again it should be stressed that these episodes very quickly become part of the social gossip and enter the collective culture of the institution. These incidents circulate amongst staff and the demands of the Headmaster, the type of conduct that is expected and the acceptable 'ways of doing things' are quickly transmitted. Another such episode is explained by staff 1 (12/1994):

> I tried to make an appointment [to discuss rates of pay for a certain extra-curricula activity], in the middle of term 3 and every time I went [to make an appointment] the Headmaster was unavailable, unavailable, into term 4 unavailable. I said, 'fuck this'. I wrote a letter to the Staff [Association] and said that essentially we are at this position. We are getting nowhere, these are the options, we give it up or we put the whole of the negotiations in the hands of the Unions. Let them do it for us.
>
> I put it [the letter] in everyone's pigeon hole. Shit hit the fan. I was away that day, the rest of the committee was dragged into his office as a group and the committee was disbanded. They were dressed down, all except staff 5 divorced themselves from my letter. Same old fear. He [the Headmaster] wrote a letter to the Staff Association proposing exactly the same rates that he had denied were possible through the whole negotiations. This is my offer I would like the staff to consider it.
>
> I put it to the staff, I am going to resign before this issue is put because I know there are enough unprincipled people on the staff who will only grab the money and run and ignore that your committee has been simply assassinated by this Headmaster. I am resigning and I left the room. For the next two years I simply kept my mouth shut. But he had broken the Staff Association by doing that.

As another member of staff emphasises, trust is an expected quality of leadership and that 'the

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[1] See Study 5: overt power in action.

lack of trust is sad. You lose, you must lose a professional quality if you cannot trust people' (staff 33: 1/1995).

PASSIVE POWER

Bachrach and Baratz (1962: 948) treat this aspect of power by saying that passive power is exercised when "A' creates an environment which limits 'B"s movements and preferences'. The important issue here, which is alluded to in the previous section, is that in a traditional, legitimated power framework overt power is infrequently exhibited but that covert, hidden power is much more pervasive. Staff's actions and reactions are controlled or modified in anticipation of what might happen if they act or respond counter to the accepted cultural behaviour. Likewise, the teachers at this School often react more seriously to what has not been said rather than what has actually been said. Wolfinger (1971) and Bachrach and Baratz (1962) highlight the main areas of 'non-decisions' and together with the above form the platform and spectrum of passive power as understood by the teachers. The following examples highlight the areas of passive power.

a. **anticipated reaction** (Wolfinger 1971: 1065): staff do not act out of fear of sanctions that may be used or through fear of eliciting negative responses to their suggestions.

b. **absenteeism** (Wolfinger ibid.: 1069): staff make a deliberate decision not to become involved.

c. **passive resistance**: staff do not respond to directives and do so in a manner which belies their real attitude.

d. **non-participation** (Wolfinger ibid.: 1072): staff do would not volunteer for extra duties, activities or responsibilities which take place outside normal school hours.

e. **hidden messages**: staff understand the significance of what has not been said rather than the stated reasons for certain actions or decisions.

f. **non-existence**: staff would not recognise that a problem exists if there is no admission by others that it exists.

Anticipated Reaction

Both Friedrich (1937) and Wolfinger (1971) make reference to the process by which a person's anticipation of a reaction by a hierarchical figure to any action they might take prevents the person from taking this action. Wolfinger (1971: 1078) comments further that it is difficult to monitor or research these non-events. However, through interviews and observation of, as Paoletti (1990: 26) remarks, 'the discrepant, odd and contradictory aspects of participants' accounts and practices', it is possible to monitor the effects of 'anticipated reactions'.

As Study 1 in Chapter 4 outlines, staff are reticent to contribute orally to meetings and as staff 1 (12/1994) remarks, 'people would be afraid to discuss [things] openly', and staff who voice opinion, 'have really suffered quite a lot psychologically' (staff 20: 10/1994). Staff are careful of participating in debate on controversial issues and weigh the cost of having 'their heads being bitten off' (staff 2: 11/1994) or of 'being subjected to extreme pressure, orally, and intimidated' (staff 5: 11/1994).

The concept of 'anticipate reaction' requires a mental process of cost analysis. Is the personal contribution worth the risk in making a comment that would not be culturally acceptable? As one teacher says, 'a lot of people would be giving up an awful lot if they were to rock the boat' (staff 14: 1/1995). Anticipated reaction is power in its intimidatory form - silent and difficult to qualify but a mechanism which powerfully probes and exploits staff's fears and weaknesses.

Absenteeism

This aspect of covert, passive power results from the conscious resolution by some members of staff to absent themselves from the decision-making process. Staff do not submit ideas on the grounds that they perceive in actuality or not that their thoughts are going to be ignored or that the effort of making a stand is not worth the time, energy or risk. Again the word 'perceive' is a crucial point in understanding the behaviour of some staff in abandoning input to the decision-making process. Their ideas may have indeed been used and absorbed into the dialogue pre-dating the making of decisions but teachers would feel, owing to the processes by which decisions are reached, that opinions are often not accepted, encouraged or greeted enthusiastically.

This absenteeism from productive argument on daily issues frustrates those staff who feel themselves empowered to act. As staff 8 (10/1994) comments in this regard:

> If there has been a weakness in the School since I have been here it is at that level (Coordinators) because I think they run the School. The Coordinators should take more responsibility for running their departments and individual teachers. I think those [key] players have tended to abdicate responsibility for what is going on. Instead of getting together and coming up with a system that best supported what they viewed, they perceived [the situation] to be an inaction in another part of the system.

Another member of staff (staff 1: 12/1994) agrees that 'his [the Headmaster's] agents, like the Coordinators and [a senior staff member] are useless. They cannot act and now they will not act'.

Those teachers who for whatever reason have failed to accomplish either their needs or goals often abandon participation in the decision-making process and follow a course of action indicated by the sentiment, 'leave me [alone] and let me do [my job]. I am a hassle resistant type of person, I am not looking for a fight. You can only put your energies into so many areas' (staff 21: 10/1994). A like-minded teacher (staff 22: 10/1994) agrees, commenting:

> ... you belt your head against a brick wall long enough and [staff 4's] attitude to life is more like mine in the sense he does not want hassles. He does his job. Leave me alone and let me do my job.

Passive Resistance

Passive resistance is a much more insidious reaction to covert power. The non-attainment of staff's goals is met with quiet, non-intrusive, non-cooperation and not an open display of disloyalty. As an influential member of staff summarises, 'I think it is not an anarchy thing, just a default thing, choosing one's objectives. No one is scrutinised at all much, it is all this, "I am a professional business"' (staff 7: 12/1994).

Another member of staff thinks that the present situation has developed because, 'you are given the responsibility without any authority, which pushes the [a senior group in the School] into the position where all of a sudden they make their own rules' (Staff 10: 11/1994).

These staff are not openly rebellious or critical but react to the situation by by-passing some of the accepted rules and minuted processes so that they could fulfil to some extent their own agenda and goals.

Non-Participation

Another reaction to the inability of staff to achieve what they perceive to be their professional goals and satisfaction is expressed by not volunteering for additional responsibilities or duties outside normal expectations. One member of staff (staff 1: 12/1994) who feels rather pessimistic about the educational directions sadly remarks:

> ... it was a good place to work ... everyone pulled together. That has been destroyed ... and that is what gets you. That is why in the end you pull out. How can you be a part of this system when it goes against what you believe?

Staff also fail to work extra hours if their efforts are not appreciated or rejected out-of-hand. The following episode recounted by staff 34 (2/1995) is an example of how individual efforts are not handled in a manner likely to perpetuate or nurture enthusiasm:

> ... another time I went up to him [a senior staff member] and said this is how I see [a particular building]. I had the great big plan with the bookroom incorporated, remedial reading and careers.
>
> 'What authority have you got to produce this plan [said the member of staff], who suggested to you that you might do this, what right have you got?' I said these are just my ideas, I thought you might welcome them. I did it on the weekend, I am not taking work time to do it in. He was getting very stroppy. In the end I started bundling up all the bits of cardboard and I was practically in tears because he was so ghastly to me in his office. Staff 13 said to me later that he hates surprises. How are you ever going to have a new idea which is not a surprise?

Key people in key areas, like Staff 10 and 2, react by opting out and would no longer attempt additional tasks or submit new ideas especially if there is little appreciation or thanks for their efforts.

Hidden Messages

A significant aspect of passive power are the hidden messages or persuaders that are implied in statements made by the hierarchy, the differing interpretations of what has been said and alternate meanings to what has actually been said. Almost every decision, and the reasons for that decision, are construed differently by staff who read 'between the lines' as to what has really been said. People want and expect to be told honestly and openly what has occurred or what has been decided and the real reasons for actions taken and decisions reached. Staff develop a multi-level interpretation and understanding of the significance of what has not been said as opposed to the stated reasons and explanations.

Staff become frustrated if they know that the reasons given are just politically pacifying rather than reflecting the facts as they comprehend them. A typical example of the problem of this lack of trust or what is perceived as 'playing games' happens during one of the morning briefings.

A senior boarding student has been caught at one of the local stores shoplifting. A number of staff know of the incident as the pertinent information has been relayed by the boy's Housemaster in the course of daily conversation and dissemination of information prior to the meeting. When the matter is announced by a senior member of staff he refers to an 'incident' at the local supermarket concerning one of the senior boys. As soon as the word 'incident' has been used there is an immediate buzz around the room and other staff rightly assume that the senior member of staff is referring to shoplifting. One member of staff quipped, 'oh! you mean he has been caught shopping [sic]?' This is followed by laughter from the rest of the staff but still the matter is smilingly referred to again as the 'incident'. Naturally such incidents are confidential and have legal implications but staff perceive that they could not be trusted with the correct information or treated as professional equals.

A more significant example of the damage and division to the staff's perception of their place and worth within the organisation that can result from differing interpretations of hidden messages from senior staff relates to an issue concerning student detentions.

There has been a problem with the number of homework detentions that the staff have issued and in particular the number handed out to the Year 12 students. The matter has been discussed at a Coordinators' meeting and the issue is very much a topic of current concern. At one of the subsequent morning meetings a list has been written on the briefing board by one of the senior staff of the numbers of boys who have been on detention that term (320) and the number of different staff who have issued those detentions (14 out of 35).

The next line on the board states that 4 staff have contributed 200 (or over 60%) of these detentions. No statement is made during the meeting concerning the figures as presumably staff are supposed to make their own interpretation of the statistics. However, at the end of the meeting one member of staff asks that the relevance of the figures be explained. The senior member of staff responds that the numbers are just there for the teachers' information and no more is said. What are staff supposed to deduce from this, especially with no statements or conclusions being given from the senior staff? A number of interpretations are discussed afterwards by the staff concerning the significance of the information, these are:

i. That only fourteen staff, and in particular an unnamed four, are doing their job and the rest of the staff are not being as vigilant or as thorough with the standard of homework.

ii. That four staff are not in sufficient control of their classes and students and have had to result to punitive action to ensure that set work has been completed. They are obviously not inspirational in their teaching methods.

iii. That the remaining staff (21) are obviously doing a good job as all their students' homework is to the prescribed high standard and handed-in punctually.

However, staff know that the Headmaster considers the issuing of detentions a sign of failure (he has spoken about his thoughts to some members of staff) and indicates to him a shortcoming of teachers to inspire or motivate the students. Thus the feeling afterwards of staff is that four teachers in particular are being singled out and covertly told to get their act together. They are not named but everyone knows who they are.

It is interesting to note, however, that the number of detentions rapidly drops off in subsequent weeks and the remaining terms. Staff are politically aware that a hidden agenda is operating and appreciate that entering students onto the detention book would be scrutinised, checked and questions asked concerning their competency. The homework detention system is afterwards only occasionally used by a few staff some of whom deliberately use the detention system to provoke the senior staff and to snub the hierarchy. These staff feel particularly secure for reasons discussed above with their position at the School. The remainder of the staff either no longer put students on detention, use it infrequently or create their own system within their respective departments. It is also interesting to note that in fact a significant number of staff actually agree with the Headmaster's concerns and the negative effects of taking punitive action. However, in the absence of any suggestions and creditable alternatives they can see no other option but to use what the current system offers, which is the School policy on homework, or develop the cited strategies.

Non-Existence

As Clegg (1989: 209) outlines concerning passive power:

> ... because of their [the leader's] power, as given by the rules, they are at much greater liberty to make their interpretations of rules stick than those for whom the rules of the game allow only a much more limited set of moves.

If the leaders could convince staff that any particular problem does not exist then staff would often doubt their own thoughts and conclusions and bow to the omnipotence of the hierarchy who are expected to be more informed and appreciate the broader picture. A problem is only a problem if it is perceived to be so and the collective imagery supports that knowledge. If the staff could be convinced that an issue is illusory, even if in fact it is real, the staff might be appeased and the problem might go away. It may seem illogical to deny a problem exists if in fact the predicament is real but if the leaders are unable, or are not adroit enough, to fix the issue or if they found the solution politically unacceptable then its denial would often succeed in preventing the concern from becoming a problem. The repudiation becomes a self-fulfilling prophesy with the leaders using their position of authority to manoeuvre politically the debate, block issues and pour oil on troubled waters.

One such issue is the supposed or perceived (by some people in School and the wider community) academic weaknesses of the School. However, 'in reality', it is stated by the hierarchy, that this is not the case. Staff 31 comments that in his opinion in comparison with his experiences elsewhere, and the mood of staff, the academic performance of the boys is not good enough and that the standards should be higher. This is not greeted with enthusiasm by the senior staff as staff 32 has previously cited that some members of staff have openly discussed the School's 'disease' in the community and this is not a helpful approach in overcoming parental and staff perceptions. It is suggested that staff should change their attitude to the problem and start to play a more active role in promoting the positive aspects of the School's curriculum and student achievement. Staff 32 remarks to the effect that do the staff not realise that their jobs are at stake if they continue to denigrate the academic reputation of the School? The issue has not been raised since in an open forum.

On another occasion, members of the Staff Association go to the Headmaster to discuss a discipline policy survey which has been completed by the staff. A number of staff concerns are raised by staff 8 and he itemises a number of issues relating to student discipline which are felt by the staff to need addressing. An impasse develops over the importance of such perceptions in relation to the 'truth'. The Headmaster does not seem to understand, or is not willing to concede, the juxtaposition of perception and reality and that if staff thought that there is a problem then indeed there is a problem. The issue debated here, returns to the cultural, collective imagery of what constitutes a problem and staff's attitude to the problem. The power of non-existence could be used to define whether in fact a problem exists or does not exist. However, such manipulation of what constitutes the existential dimension of a 'problem' does not detract from the fact that:

i. Problems exist if in fact they do exist.

ii. Problems still exist even if they are not recognised as existing. It would be a matter of time, however, before the problem might be seen to exist.

iii. Problems exist if they are perceived to exist.

iv. Problems continue to exist if they are recognised to exist but nothing is deliberately done to correct them.

v. Problems still exist if the problems are corrected but no one knows that anything has been corrected.

The important conclusion that is reached from the conversations with staff concerning the organisational dynamics in this School is that even though it might be possible for the senior personnel to defy the existence of a problem or postpone its solution by using passive power if a problem is **perceived to exist**, the problem exists. Likewise, even though all actors have not been aware that a problem exists it is only a matter of time before the problem is perceived to exist and requires remediation. The role of passive power will never ultimately prevent the surfacing of a problem but only create a delay in its remediation. However, such expedient procrastination is a powerful example of control and its effect on the processes of change as it might be years before the problem would rise again and the zeal to change may have left with the staff concerned.

THE LEGACY OF TRADITIONAL POWER

Chapter 5 dwelt on the power of traditions in the School which frame the authority structures and hierarchical management. However, not only do the traditional structures of power underpin the culture of the organisation but they also form the foundation to its maintenance. Traditional culture and practices ensure that the 'status-quo' is affirmed. As Clegg (1979: 45) remarks:

> ... the whole ritual maintains an illusion of individual power. This illusion serves to mask actual structures of power which are not signalled in their effects, but whose effects become merely a further occasion for reasserting the hegemony of the ideological framework which enables and justifies those structures.

Staff are very loyal to the School. The School is considered in the community to be better than most, a situation which is reflected by dedicated staff who are often willing to extend their hours of labour beyond the normal classroom times and to focus on the pastoral aspects of a caring, family-centred approach to its students. The staff 'who put in this work and time have a vested interest in the institution' (staff 1: 12/1994).

Two key features of the legacy of traditional power help to assert the accepted culture of the school. Firstly, the **self-selection** or employment of staff who are culturally aware of the School's structures and operations and secondly, the establishment of **designated roles** for staff.

Self-Selection: Employment of Staff Who Are Culturally Aware

As has been stated the majority of staff were educated at the same tertiary educational institution and a significant proportion went to the School in their youth only to return to teach after their tertiary studies.[2]

As one teacher (staff 4: 9/1994) who does not have a past centred on this town or School states:

> ... the School has in some way bought them, supported them and carried them through. It has a hold on them. Things might be wrong but it is the system here and look what its done for you. It has given you a job, given you a future and given you a past.

Such sentiments are reinforced by a former member of staff (staff 12: 9/1994) who remarks that:

> ... if you stayed in an environment, particularly like [the School] for a great length of time, you do not question your worth, you just go on.

[2] 15% of staff actually attended the School in their youth and a further 28% of staff were educated at the same provincial university.

Again, another new member of staff (staff 20: 10/1994) to the School recognises the importance of the traditional culture of the school:

> ... a lot of the staff are Old-Boys and are used to the rituals and traditions and, therefore, do not buck them [the School's goals] on that basis. They like the stability of that ongoing thing.

A previous Headmaster (staff 24: 9/1994) tried to change what he saw, during his time at the School, as the parochial nature of some of staff:

> ... some of them had never had any experience outside [the town]. I tried to break this mould and introduce new staff from outside, arrange trips to the U.K.. [I] brought staff down to the [city] to do some examination marking so that they could see the quality of other people not just what was being done up there [at the School].

Whether or not the employment of staff with similar backgrounds is a deliberate policy or just a dictate of circumstance is unclear. However it is recognised by staff 7 (12/1994) that:

> ... you have got a lot of people who went to the School, left the School to go to university and then came back to the School and their world experience is very limited. I do not know whether it is encouraged.

The Headmaster states that it is not a conscious decision to employ these sorts of people but their employment certainly ensures that the existing culture is perpetuated, accepted more readily and maintained more easily. These staff's expectations of organisational, cultural reality and 'ways of doing things' would be similar and familiar.

Staff Roles

Staff are expected to know their place within the School's functioning and likewise staff themselves have expectations as to the roles of senior staff and the part they are expected to play in assisting and facilitating teachers in their professional capacities. Those in senior positions are further expected to perform certain duties and establish routines and practices to ensure that the day to day operations are smooth and 'hassle-free'. Certain behaviours and expectations are likewise also required of the teachers by the senior staff members.

Such role assimilation is encouraged by all members of the School. This helps maintain both the structures and govern the degree to which any player might contribute to the decision-making process. An example of this clear and expected delineation between people's responsibilities and roles is the following episode.

One particular Coordinator has resigned and an internal appointment is to be made. It has been the practice in this department's staffroom that the Coordinator sits at a certain desk spatially separate from the other staff. Upon promotion the new Coordinator is expected by his colleagues to move his books and possessions to the designated area. There is some equivocation and jest over the matter but the expectation is that he has no choice and should move to the appropriate desk. Not only is the new Coordinator anticipated to accept his new responsibilities and act the role in its professional capacity but he must also be **seen** to be different. The separate location of this subject's senior teacher is a physical reminder of his status and distinctive responsibilities

Staff have expectations of the senior staff and the roles they are to play in the organisation and management of the School. The teachers see the need for one of the senior positions to be 'a day-to-day "grunt" person' with the Headmaster 'involved in some decision-making processes' (staff 16: 3/1994). A majority of staff recognise it is 'important that we have a middle man who is different from the top man' (staff 26: 10/1994). It is suggested by staff 3 (10/1994) that for the Headmaster to function effectively he would need to have:

> ... someone he could trust, an ally, a total debutante. Plus a hatchet man, someone who lived and breathed for this School and does all the dirty work in a sense. Get the lazy bastards working, smarten them up.

Staff 15 (10/1994) sees a distinct delineation in the senior roles with the Headmaster as the chief decision-maker and leader and others responsible for:

> ... the day-to-day management of the School, a Deputy [who] has a lot to do with the disciplining of the boys, the disciplinarian.

Likewise the classroom teachers have their roles and one senior member of staff (staff 27: 4/1995) sees this function as being defined by the Headmaster's perception of that position:

> ... same with the teachers ... his judgement of a classroom teacher is based on what he sees are his skills. He is big on the idea that you [the teacher] do not lose kids unless you have done something wrong. If your kids are mucking up, what are you doing wrong? That [it being the teachers' failure to play their role] upsets the staff.

The importance of staff roles within the School is that the organisational culture defines one's position and duties. The teachers teach, the senior staff manage and the Headmaster provides the leadership and vision to bind the community together. Any failure to achieve the respective roles results in conflict and uncertainty as to how to operate. Young staff might voice their opinions in an open forum but there are prescribed ways of communication and discussing ideas and the expectation is that staff should understand these processes. Maverick behaviour threatens this stability and is not encouraged. Power and precedent are used to provide the checks and balances within the operational structure. They provide the buffers against change and paradoxically the very mechanisms by which change can be accomplished. Traditional roles prevent radical change but at the same time a knowledge of how people operate would facilitate any planned change. Roles define, exemplify and perpetuate hidden power but these roles are not passive or stagnant and can be redefined by any empowered individual or at the Headmaster's behest.

CONCLUSION

As with traditional structural power, power in action is not perceived by the staff to be in itself Machiavellian. Even though three teachers refer to this form of strategic power (staff 1, 5 and 14) in relation to the actions of some of the senior staff the use of power to control actions and directions is expected and desired by the staff in general.

The issue here, therefore, is not the legitimacy of the use of power but how it is used. Staff have expectations that they could and should be trusted and that even though some staff are, to some staff's outlook, disloyal in their voicing of concerns to the wider community, the teachers see no valid reason that some senior staff use political expediency to limit communication of sensitive material which relates to their professional concerns. The variety of tactics that are employed to buffer the traditional status-quo from radical views and organisational turbulence and to monitor adjustments to the internal mechanisms of procedural change and the demands of the staff often have undesired and debilitating effects.

With respect to the implementation of the curriculum-based change a distinctive and critical aspect of an understanding of its success or failure is an appreciation of the normative culture of the School. Learning how to 'play the game' is an important feature of the organisational dynamics of this School. Any contemplation of the educational validity of any change to the existing structure comes secondary to the process of the staff surviving the rigours of daily life. Who exercises power, how is it wielded and what events precipitate sanctions are the main concerns of the staff outside their own classrooms and change agents ignore this aspect of the normative culture at their peril.

The actions of power whilst maintaining these checks and balances, if used to block or stultify the voicing of differing opinion, new ideas or change, results in harm to the professional fabric of the institution and the integrity and perceived worth of staff. This has profound implications for the processes of change and the operation of the School. The effects on the change process of both traditional, active or passive power will be discussed in the next chapter and will centre on the topics of leadership communication and conflict. As discussed earlier, the degree to which conflict enters the organisational reality depends on the disparity of enunciated respective goals, perceived roles and values and the use power. Conflict will be seen to evolve when there is a schism between expedient and professional actions, conflict between Hobbessian and Machiavellian visions of organisational reality and perceptions.

The following chapter is the last one which deals with the concept of power and political manoeuvring within this School and focuses on the future aspect of temporal power. The chapter will discuss the role of leadership, organisational conflict and the importance of teacher perception when considering the likely success of the new curriculum initiatives.