TOWARDS A UNIONIZED PROFESSORIAT:
THE DILEMMA OF THE PROFESSION
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No development since the Morrill Act is likely to produce more dramatic changes in higher education than the current trend towards collective bargaining in the professoriat. In 1966 only eleven institutions beyond the secondary level operated under faculty master contracts; by mid-1975 some 430 colleges and universities found themselves in this situation. Nor is the trend restricted to any one type of institution - only the elite private universities have, thus far, remained largely exempt. State and city systems (SUNY, CUNY, the New Jersey State Colleges), large public universities (Rutgers, Wayne State University), medium-size universities (Oakland University, Central Michigan University), private colleges (Bard College, Ashland College), plus a plethora of community colleges are bargaining collectively with their faculties. This trend, as will be seen, places faculties in something of a dilemma. What is more, the issues are sufficiently complex to make simplistic analyses extremely hazardous. To obtain some grasp of the matter, this paper will deal with major causal forces behind the movement (II), suggest some likely consequences (III), and pose the questions in light of their anticipated impact on higher education.

One need not be an economic determinist to concede that economics was crucial in the emergence of faculty unions. In the 1950's and 60's the major industrial unions succeeded in their efforts to provide safeguards against the inflationary spiral and managed to produce net gains in purchasing power and fringe benefits for their members. During those same years many wage earners and salaried employees not covered by collective bargaining not only failed to improve their relative standing on the economic ladder,

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but only too often saw their pay and benefits fall behind the rising cost of living. Public employees, among them school teachers and university professors, were especially hard hit. By the middle 1960's, school teachers across the nation — especially in such traditionally "union states" as Michigan and New York — drew the obvious conclusion and adopted collective bargaining as a way of life. At first, college faculties (even at the lower ranks) saw little reason to emulate the teachers, since a shortage of (most) Ph.D.'s, coupled with the enormous expansion of higher education and research, created a market in which young faculty commanded attractive base salaries and, as often as not, parlayed summer teaching, contract research, and overload compensation into handsome annual incomes. Midway through the decade the benign climate began to deteriorate. What is more, in the years leading to the 70's, higher education fell out of favor with the public. Predictably, state legislatures, quick to sense vulnerable targets, became tight-fisted when it came time to vote appropriations for colleges and universities.* With no powerful pressure groups working for them and with inflation continuing unabated, professors found themselves in a substantially less favored position than they enjoyed at any time since World War II. It was (and is) not uncommon for an assistant professor of English, History, or Political Science with the doctorate and with years of experience to earn thousands of dollars less than a public school teacher holding a master's degree in the same discipline. To make the comparison even more odious, the teacher had three or four years at full salary behind him when the college professor was still a struggling graduate assistant! With unionization so financially rewarding for school teachers, it is not surprising that college faculties see in collective bargaining their best chance for financial salvation.

Since about 1970, professors also became fearful about job security. All but a handful of those now active entered the profession in the period of unparalleled expansion. They took for granted that a moderately competent junior faculty member had little to fear from tenure decisions. In the unlikely event that the home institution

* Through out these pages I speak in the context of public higher education — not only because most professors work in such institutions, but also because I am convinced that the pattern for the profession will be determined by what happens in the public sector.
did not grant him tenure, there would be other colleges only too anxious to bid for his services -- and once on tenure he had, barring some heinous crime, iron-clad job security! This too has changed. Rapid growth in higher education is a thing of the past, faculty mobility is low and junior faculty are further disheartened by the relative youth of their senior colleagues. Since the explosive growth of higher education happened within the last twenty-five years, the majority of tenured faculty has one or two decades of active service before it. Thus, death and retirement will open up but a few secure positions in the near future. For that matter, as recurring articles in the Chronicle of Higher Education remind us, even tenure is not the safe haven it once was! As in industry, so in academia, the spectre of unemployment proved to be a powerful impetus towards unionization.

A change in the socio-economic composition of the student body is a further source of anxiety. So long as most college students came from the middle-class or above, brought with them academic preparation and curricular expectations in line with established (particularly Liberal Arts) programs, professors had a secure clientele for their wares. Now that students come from far more varied social and economic backgrounds, colleges are under constant pressure to abandon or modify older curricula and modes of instruction. At the very least, institutions must offer new alternatives even if they (quite properly) retain the traditional bill of fare for sub-sets of students. In any case, scarce positions must be allocated to individuals with talents different from those on the existing faculty. Not only does this reduce available jobs in traditional areas -- one source of anxiety -- but the new student body is restive about programs and even calls into question the value system from which many professors operate -- a second source of anxiety. Small wonder that in a psychologically threatening situation faculty seek reassurance through group action.

Concern over working conditions is the third critical force which traditionally propels workers towards collective bargaining. Here too, the professor finds the

* Need I say that the masculine also implies to the feminine?!
world closing in on him. One historical difference between public schools and universities has been the degree of autonomy with which the latter determined working conditions for faculty. To be sure, legislatures have long established parameters for public higher education simply by controlling the purse strings. Within these broad limits, however, each institution could develop its own setting for teaching and research. In theory, the governing boards, in practice, faculty and administrators set the calendar and determined work assignments. It would be foolish to pretend that abuses did not creep, or even gallop, into the system, but on the whole it was an effective process, one which allowed for differences in disciplines, local needs, curricular experimentation, and just plain personal idiosyncracies. This practice reassured faculty that they were professionals in control of their working conditions and personally responsible for their performance. In ways which I believe to be inimical to educational values, state governments now try to encroach on institutional autonomy. In Florida, Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania -- to mention but a few -- the executive, but particularly the legislative, branches have injected themselves into curriculum design (by assigning to or withholding from institutions degree programs), calendar (mandatory trimesters), faculty workload (expressed in credit or contact hours) and the like. To add insult to injury, such incursions, particularly by legislators, are often accompanied by attacks on academics for alleged lack of productivity, laziness, as well as political and moral unreliability. The professoriat sees its way of life in jeopardy and seeks to protect itself in the way which proved effective for other groups.

In addition to pressures from without, faculties are unhappy about what they see happening within their institutions. Surely the picture of the academic community (faculty, students, administration) as one happy family always was rather too idyllic. Nevertheless, the lines of democratic (in those institutions which set the tone, at any rate) tended to be blurred. Conflicts, more often than not, arose among ad hoc coalitions based on curricular, political, or social preferences rather than between fixed contending caps based on legal status within the university. This too is changing.
The new student body, mentioned earlier, is a source of discomfort. Certainly the memory of campus disturbances in the 60's is sufficiently vivid to contribute to professional malaise. I do not suggest that a yawning chasm exists between students and faculty, but I believe that more and more professors view students collectively as potentially dangerous. They see "the student body" -- as distinct from individual students with whom they maintain warm relationships -- as an economic threat and a potentially hostile center of power which needs to be countered through organized strength.

The "we-they" syndrome between faculty and administration is nothing new on campus. Historically, however, in Liberal Arts colleges and universities the differences were smoothed (some would say masked) by the concept of collegiality. Professors could and did determine much that happened in their institutions. Academic administrators, themselves originating in the professoriat, generally shared the goals and to a large measure the operational preferences of the faculty. Perhaps some of the stress on collegiality was myth; certainly there was wide variation in practice. Still and all, the power of myth, if such it was, should not be belittled. The structure gave faculty a sense of importance, a feeling of effectiveness in determining the institution's, hence their own, fate. This too is changing and one reason again is economic. It is the president and his staff who are responsible to the governing board and to the public (i.e., the state) for the fiscal policies of the institution. When the costs of academic programs and the funds available are somewhere nearly in balance, administrators can accede to reasonable demands for program improvement without jeopardizing faculty promotions, raises, and job security; but when, as today, the monies available will not stretch to cover both existing needs and faculty desires, it is the administrators who at some point must say "no". Even so, the faculty might only grumble but not reject painful decisions. When, however, the administration reduces support for ongoing programs, terminates (or does not promote) existing faculty, at the same time that it starts new undertakings and hires new staff, then the fat is in the fire. Today this is precisely what must and does happen in college after college and so administrators have not choice but to render decisions that are highly unpopular among professors. Faculties
are aware of the forces pressing in on boards and administrators and feel that in the shifting power equation their own share is on the wane. Again they see collective bargaining as the way to exert counterpressures to redress the balance.

There is still another factor which hastens unionization and this factor is particularly strong in academic settings. I refer here to what one might term ideology. It is well-known that college faculties are politically somewhat to the left of center and that Liberal Arts faculties (particularly in the humanities and social sciences as Ladd and Lipsett show) represent the left wing in the professoriat. Ideological kinsmanship with organized labor by itself did not collectivise professors in the days of the New Deal, but once pocketbook issues started professors towards unionism, the tradition of a liberal ideology made it psychologically impossible for many individuals to oppose the trend. Concerns with wages, job security, and working conditions are at the root of faculty unionism, but ideology does much to give the movement its righteous missionary flavor.

I have tried to offer a quick overview of conditions which prompted academics to form or join unions. In each institution the weight of contributing factors varies, but there can be little doubt that, in the main, the causes cited are decisive. We are, as it were, on terra firma as long as we seek to do no more than understand why faculties, after all this time, move towards collective bargaining. When we ask, however, what impact this will have on the future of the professoriat and on institutions of higher learning, we enter the realm of speculation. Union contracts in four-year (or graduate) institutions are still too recent, the fraction of the profession covered is still not large enough to permit more than tentative hypotheses. What follows is no more than an attempt to make sense out of shadows in a clouded crystal ball.

The first question is, of course, whether the whole faculty union phenomenon is more than a momentary aberration which will not persist, much less spread to the academic world as a whole. I am convinced that such is not the case. The size of the

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population approaching college age, the forecasts of demographers concerning future family size, the flattening of the curve depicting increased college attendance within the relevant age group, vociferous denigration of the value of a college education in the media all suggest that there will be no sudden rise in college enrollments. In other words, I doubt that there will be a dramatic upsurge on the demand side of the market equation. Of course, the picture could change drastically (and many of us wish that it would!) if new social values and patterns of living were to make higher education an accepted part of life for men and women beyond the post-adolescent age group. This, however, would require that society allocate a larger proportion of the GNP to education and correspondingly reduce individually disposable income. To do so, the American public would have to modify long-standing habits of thought and behavior. Surely this is not likely. Unless all indicators prove deceptive, during the next decade the number of positions available for college professors may shrivel, or at best, grow quite slowly. Inflation, with fluctuations in the rate, will continue. The clamor for public monies for welfare, for transportation, for environmental protection will continue to rise and there is even a projected increase in military expenditures. Every economic, every societal force which prompted professors to unionize promises to continue. Likewise, I see no sign that students and the public will suddenly re-discover the virtues of traditional offerings and thus enable colleges to channel available funds into existing programs. On the contrary, competition from profit-oriented proprietary schools will force colleges and universities to accelerate the re-allocation process just to keep their heads above water. Nor do I see any sign that vocal elements in the nation will suddenly abandon their hostility to values near and dear to academicians -- hence, the sense of insecurity, the fear that other groups will "push them around" will not lessen for college faculties. The combination of psychological and economic forces will continue to press professors in the direction in which they are now moving: unionization.

If collective bargaining will be the dominant pattern of relations between colleges and their faculties, all concerned best prepare themselves to live in a different world.
This requires that the parties learn new modes of behavior and bid farewell to many a cherished myth of academia. Take one striking example: Collective bargaining is by its nature an adversary relationship. When the teams for the trustees and the union hammer out a contract, when the administration (representing the trustees) enforces management rights and when the union (representing the bargaining unit) seeks to enforce agreed-upon working conditions, both sides must function as adversaries. This is indeed discomfiting. Nothing in the past has taught either group to distinguish between bargaining adversaries and vicious enemies. As indicated earlier in a different context, there exists a centuries-old tradition, at any rate a myth, that students, faculty and administration are a single integrated group, a collegium (hence, the word college), that factionalism in the community is antithetical to the nature of education -- the sign of institutional sickness or personal ill-will -- and that the only way to restore the organism to health is to banish those individuals who through incompetence or malice jeopardize the collegial atmosphere. Some years ago similar myths existed in the public schools and created traumatic experiences when collective bargaining for teachers first came on the scene. I once heard the late Walter Reuther comment ruefully about the painful progress of negotiations in Michigan public schools, saying that neither side knew how to make the process work and that, alas, only experience would teach them how to do it better. The same is true in college faculty negotiations today. Everyone seems to forget that adversaries need not be enemies and that the interaction of divergent views may be a constructive way to resolve common problems.

After all, the American and British legal systems (for that matter, academic debates!) rest on adversary relationships. Even without compulsory arbitration (the equivalent of a judicial decision) collective bargaining presupposes an analogous process and failure to distinguish it from a state of war is bound to produce poorly functioning institutions. This means that trustees, administrators and faculties will have to surrender the (real or mythical) collegial model and see themselves more nearly in the image of Pareto's corporate state.

Facility unionization also brings with it necessary changes in operating procedures. Today, governing boards have the legal right to name administrators, but as a matter of
practice respectable universities guarantee the faculty a decisive voice in naming
deans, department chairmen, the provost -- and even provide for significant input in
the selection of the president. It will be difficult for both professors and administra-
tors to realize that a faculty represented by a union and serving under a master
contract cannot effectively choose its administration -- though many will deny this
fact! You cannot have genuine bargaining when the union selects or can veto, the bar-
gaining team for management. Nor can an administration enforce contract provisions when
those who make up the administration owe their jobs to, or can be recalled by, the
bargaining unit. The quasi-judicial bodies of the NLRB have recognized this anomaly
and in the case of department chairmen, have ruled accordingly. In those institutions
where chairmen function primarily as senior representatives of their disciplines, as
leaders in an intellectual sense, NLRB classifies them as part of the teaching staff,
but where chairmen exercise management functions, particularly in the areas of personnel
and finance, NLRB excludes them from faculty bargaining units. This does not mean that
academic administrators can become petty potentates and tyrannize the faculty! Deans
or provosts who try this are useless to their employers and will have to be replaced.
But assessment of their performance and de facto as well as de jure power to appoint,
continue, or remove them will rest with university management.

Another problem which unionized institutions face early in the process is a dupli-
cation or outright inconsistency between two sets of policies governing job security.
For the past half century diligent efforts by the AAUP resulted in well-understood and
widely accepted methods by which professors progressed towards academic tenure; simul-
taneously, a broad consensus developed on what constitutes due process in cases re-
quiring disciplinary action. Now we find that faculties operate under two sets of
rules which control career development and job security: One stems from the tenure
system, the other from the financial and grievance clauses in master contracts. This
duality breeds untold confusion in the salary vs. rank progression and makes it twice
as difficult to rectify poor appointments or to cope with neglect of duties. Such
unreasonable conditions will not continue indefinitely. If collective bargaining is
the wave of the future, then tenure as we know it, will disappear.
Similarly, the cumbersome machinery which now governs disciplining and termination of staff, will give way to appropriate provisions in master contracts. Abolishing tenure and its corollaries, for which so many fought so hard, will prove upsetting. It may well happen that contracts will define job security in ways directly derived from hallowed traditions. Allowing for appropriate changes of language and procedural details, there is nothing wrong with this. But it is important to create a single set of regulations and a single equitable process for adjudicating differences. Sooner or later contractual provisions are bound to preempt this territory.

When professors first joined the union movement they gave little thought to the possibility that academic decisions would be affected by their action. The national leadership of AAUP made it a point to stress that local chapters restrict collective bargaining to economic issues and working conditions in the narrow sense. Academic matters were to remain under the jurisdiction of the approved faculty governance structure. Academicians found this injunction congenial. Not only did it permit them to think in terms of respectable Aristotelean categories, but it enabled them to cling to familiar organizational patterns and processes for dealing with the "real business" of a university. At the same time, it legitimized the power of collective bargaining in the sordid areas of wages and working conditions. Alas, the hope of keeping these two worlds apart proves illusory. Whenever a faculty legislates on academic matters (curriculum, methods of instruction, organization, admissions policies, etc.) its decisions have monetary consequences and impact on working conditions. When a senate loosens the graduation requirements it jeopardizes faculty positions in a host of departments; when a policy committee establishes an Evening College, working conditions for professors change; when the Graduate Council approves a new Master's degree, funding affects the budgets of existing programs. It simply is not true that academic decisions can be hermetically sealed off from the mundane concerns which are supposed to be the exclusive domain of union action. AAUP sensed only too well that the techniques of collective bargaining are poor tools for academic decision making, but it erred grievously in

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3 cf. April, 1973, resolution of the Council of American Association of University Professors adopting the statement of Committee N.
suggesting that such matters in a real sense could be kept separate from the concerns of the bargaining table. Still, old habits die hard. In days gone by, professors had next to no say-so in the economic life of the university. They could and did make programatic decisions and let the administration worry about the costs of implementation. In turn, the administration could and did withhold raises and otherwise juggle the monies available without having to deal with the collective power of the faculty. Within limits, a certain cavalierness on matters economic was reasonable for academics when they had nothing to say about the fiscal policies of the university. A unionized faculty, however, differs from its predecessors as it differs also from unionized workers in industry. The assembly line worker does not prescribe costly model changes or optional equipment and so his union can negotiate without any obligation to worry about ways to pay for such changes. In a university, however, the faculties make key decisions which affect the cost of operation and cannot ignore (morally or functionally) in bargaining the consequences of their actions. Neither traditional university practice nor the experience of industrial unions offer precedents to cover this situation. So far no good solutions have emerged in unionized settings -- though the University of Michigan did develop what may be an interesting substitute for unionization. Since neither bankruptcy nor constant work stoppages are acceptable alternatives for an institution, the faculty's share in governance (as this affects academic decisions with financial consequences) is likely to erode. Thus, David Riesman states that "commonly, presidents find that a union tends eventually to weaken the role of the Faculty Senate..."

Likewise, Belle Zeller, commenting on the situation a CUNY, doubts that traditional governance procedures can long survive the impact of the union contract. This is likely to contribute to the deprofessionalization of faculty and conjures up the specter of a whole new superstructure of administrators to take over academic legislation.

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Hardly a palatable prospect, but one well within the realm of possibility.

Collective bargaining will also affect the life style in academia. The freedom of the academic to determine his hours and working conditions has been surpassed in trend-setting institutions only by that of the self-employed professional. The conscientious professor worked hard, but he had to do few specific things at prescribed times and places; except for classes, he could schedule his duties largely at his own discretion. Student advising, committee meetings, research kept him busy for more than a respectable work week, but it was his own judgment which determined what he must do when. This feature of academic life never ceased to surprise those who moved to colleges from public schools or industry. Academic administrators recognized the need for a great measure of freedom and (when competent) did their best not to cramp the style of the faculty. In this respect, the desires of the teaching faculty and the goals of the good administrator coincided. Strong institutions had few regulations governing academics and almost no regulation was enforced literally. Under the impact of unionism all this is changing. Already master contracts spell out matters which in the past were left to the professional judgment and conscience of the professor. Office hours, attendance at ceremonial functions, student/teacher ratios, and the academic calendar now appear as explicit contract provisions or are implied in other clauses. Master contracts and supplementary letters of agreement spell out secretarial support, travel monies, and even the "provision of adequate convenient parking." Already professors can be disciplined for rule violations to an extent never before thought possible; in turn, administrators have less and less leeway to deal with faculty on an individual basis. Experience in other organizations suggests that this is but the beginning. As contract follows contract, each side will try to pin down in ever greater detail its rights and prerogatives while the other will seek to prescribe with equal specificity concomitant duties and obligations. Let us hope that university faculties will never punch time-clocks, but I see something perilously close to that looming on the horizon. Professors will work under conditions similar to those in business or in the public schools and university administrators will have to operate "by the book" to avoid costly grievances.
There are several other consequences of unionization which may also prove problematic for colleges and universities. One that is frequently not anticipated stems from the common phenomenon that in a unionized industry wages tend to regress towards the mean. Though the mean keeps rising, it does so through raising of minima, compression of the range, plus a gradual upward movement of the entire scale. In colleges, but particularly complex universities, this creates difficulties because professors in different disciplines show a wide spread in what one may inelegantly term "marketability." A professor of American Literature commands a much lower salary in the academic marketplace than his counterpart in Special Education -- while a professor of Medicine is in a class by himself. Since in faculties, hence in the union, most members are in the less highly paid specialties, union leaders will find it politically disastrous to negotiate successive contracts in which a disproportionate share of the finite salary budget goes to a few highly paid disciplines. Early on, a unionized institution will have a distinct edge in building strong departments in disciplines where the market is soft but it will find that recruiting and retention will suffer substantially in fields where the academic market is strong. If and when higher education as a whole adopts collective bargaining, the initially advantaged departments will lose their edge while the difficult areas will not gain correspondingly. Why? Because strong market areas have to compete with agencies outside higher education (with industry for engineers, private agencies for clinical psychologists, hospitals and private practice for physicians, business and law firms for legal talent, etc.), with the result that eventually the top people in these fields will not be available to the universities. How this can have anything but negative effects on higher education is hard to envision.

Along with regression towards the mean by disciplines will come a steady reduction of differences based on individual excellence. Here again experience in industry, but particularly in the public schools, suggests that master contracts, understandably, discourage or prohibit salary differences based on administrative judgments. Less justifiably, they also discourage or subvert merit differentials based on peer evaluation. This conflicts strongly with what has been the effective way of improving quality in
academic departments. Unionized faculties will almost certainly move towards a form of step or level arrangement -- if not in the first contract, then soon thereafter. The leveling effect will make it ever more difficult to reward outstanding performance or to penalize any but glaring weaknesses. Thus, the trend of scales may in itself encourage mediocrity, while the diminution of administrative, but particularly peer impact on individual salaries will probably further exacerbate this tendency. Quite possibly the net effect may prove beneficial for genuinely poor departments where mediocrity constitutes improvement -- it is bound to handicap stronger organizations seeking excellence.

When a campus first becomes unionized, conflicts concerning money, authority, and power are so dramatic that less spectacular but equally important changes are crowded into the background. I think here especially of the quality and quantity of communication which flows among the various segments of the university. Each side views with suspicion statements on enrollments, curriculum, costs made by the other and each side jealously guards its own information from the prying eyes of adversaries. Neither faculty nor administration feel free to speak candidly on vital matters. "Frank and informal administrative-faculty communications are placed under heavy strain. Formal, bureaucratic procedures combined with cautious, frequently written communication engender an uncomfortable climate..." The credibility of the two groups to each other and to the campus community at large deteriorates, so that for months neither side can make academic decisions untainted by suspicion -- and by that time the next round of negotiations is under way. Whatever may happen when collective bargaining has become the accepted way of life in academe, communication and credibility are at an all time low in colleges which still work their way through the painful transition towards a mature union-management relationship. I need hardly point out what this does to the educational effectiveness of faculty and administrators, nor yet dwell on the impact on students and the community.

Looking past the turmoil which seems inescapable when institutions undergo drastic structural revisions, one can speculate what colleges and universities will be like once higher education has become fully unionized. I feel reasonably confident that the

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intense tensions, the great emotionalism, and the attendant disruption of the educational atmosphere will diminish. This is already happening in those elementary and secondary schools where all parties had a chance to acquire experience in dealing with collective bargaining. Over the years, faculties, administrations, governing boards -- yes, even legislatures -- will find a modus vivendi with unionized academics. Further, I suspect that eventually the day-to-day life of colleges will be reasonably smooth and that many of the routine operations will actually become more efficient. It is as certain as any prediction can be that, in at least one sense, collective bargaining will prove economically advantageous for professors. Whether the profession will move up the economic scale in comparison to other occupational groups, or whether faculty unions will merely place an effective shield between the professor and those forces which would disadvantage him is hard to foresee. In either case, the union movement will have proven its economic worth to those engaged in college teaching. There are, however, two developments -- one possible, the other probable -- which should not be disregarded by those who see a rosy future for the unionized professoriat.

It is quite possible for unwise union tactics to turn higher education from a growth industry into one that is moribund. The experience of coal miners and railroad workers hoists several caution flags which faculty unions ignore only at their peril. Those coal miners who still enjoy steady employment do so at wage rates (even in real dollar terms) which three or four decades ago would have seemed utopian, but the number of miners for whom jobs are available is not what it was in earlier years. The fate of America's railroads, and especially of passenger service, is an even more telling case. Spiraling labor costs, brought on by unrealistic wage settlements and featherbedding, are major contributory (though by no means exclusive) causes of the desperate state of the industry. Society loses as it is deprived of a sufficiently varied transportation system, the industry finds itself in an evermore precarious position while the railroad workers see their employment opportunities dwindle away. The lesson to the professoriat should be obvious. The enlightened self-interest of academics demands that their unions not price colleges and universities into bankruptcy and the professors out of jobs -- especially today when proprietary schools stand ready to step into the gap. In no way do I suggest
that unions in academia give up their fight to improve salaries and working conditions, nor do I suggest that the (national) average compensation for the profession is adequate, but I am concerned that the new-found power of faculty unions not destroy higher education! I fervently hope that the professoriat eventually will produce wise leadership, one which can strike a balance between the short-term and the long-term interests of the profession, but what I see today makes me a touch uneasy about the future.

I mentioned earlier that when master contracts become common in higher education, professors and administrators alike will find their lives governed by more and more rigid regulations. I believe it not only possible but probable that this new lifestyle will attract quite different personality types than we find today in college teaching and administration. Men and women who feel comfortable in a rather free-wheeling atmosphere will have second thoughts about entering the profession; conversely, those who are troubled by lax rules and loose definitions of responsibilities may now find faculty roles far more congenial. As a result, I would expect faculties to become perceptibly less idiosyncratic and more routine-oriented than today. Among administrators there will be far fewer "academicians gone wrong," and many more "middle management types" who would feel quite at home in big corporations or the federal bureaucracy. As Kemerer and Bladridge put it:

In order to negotiate and administer contracts successfully, traditional faculty-related administrators are likely to be replaced by specialists such as lawyers, labor relation experts, and institutional researchers -- a situation that will further widen the gap between administrators and faculty members.\footnote{Frank R. Kemerer, J. Victor Baldridge, Op. Cit., p. 10}

It would not surprise me if in some ways students, particularly undergraduates, might actually experience certain benefits as a result -- posted office hours will be observed religiously, academic advising will at long last emerge from a state of chaos, bibliographies and syllabi will appear promptly on the first day of class, tests will be marked and returned on time, and the registrar will rejoice as accurate grade reports flutter into his office on precisely the right days. Both faculty and administration will become more punctual, more predictable, and more reliable, but universities will be a lot less exciting for all that. Whether this change in ambience is for good or for ill is,
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Here then is the dilemma of the professoriat: Economic gains, job security for a (limited?) cadre firmly established in positions, power to improve certain working conditions unequivocally favor unionization. To pretend otherwise, both by analogy with other groups and based on the experience of those faculties which already operate under collective bargaining, is unrealistic. It is, however, equally unrealistic to hope that collegiality, traditional academic governance, institutional quality, the traditional academic lifestyle, and the characterological makeup of both faculty and administrators can remain unaffected. There is no escape from painful choices, no chance to embrace the best of both worlds.

In some institutions the dilemma is more apparent than real. Where collegiality, academic governance, faculty professionalism exist, if at all, as pious platitudes (as has been the case in too many community colleges) the faculty has little to lose and a great deal to gain by unionizing. Where the situation is the reverse, the decision becomes far more difficult. Still, viewing the picture in this light, the professoriat still retains the freedom to choose, to act out of conviction, to exercise control over its future.

Once faculty unionism reaches critical mass -- whatever proportion of the profession that might be -- the time for choosing will have run out. The remaining institutions, with the possible exception of a handful of extremely well-endowed private universities, will have no option but to adopt the prevailing pattern. At that point, individual institutions, local faculty groups, and individuals will find that without a collective bargaining contract their ability to compete for good staff is hopeless. Merely to survive they will have to fall in line. If this is so and if the point where the balance tilts is indeed close, then the future of the professoriat and of higher education is about to be decided. Whatever the outcome, colleges and universities will not disappear. Whether they will be led by financially struggling, perhaps even exploited teacher-scholars working in pluralistic often turbulent but vibrant settings, or whether professors will exist in a safe, somewhat colorless, financially rewarding milieu as employees of
bureaucratized institutions, will become apparent soon. One can speculate which way
decisions will go, but only ideologs will state categorically which choice will most
benefit academics, higher education, and society as a whole.