

Report of the Joint Committee  
on Mutual Problems of Society and Institute  
September 15, 1966

This introduction to the report will be kept brief since the basic substance resides in the reorganization proposals to follow, which latter are meaty, warranting careful consideration. To put these proposals into appropriate context we wish quickly to review the work of the Committee. More detailed discussions are available in the several reports from the Committee in 1965 and 1966, which may be obtained at the office.

Two years ago the Joint Committee on Mutual Problems of Society and Institute was appointed and given the broad charge to study the organization of the Institute and Society, their functions and areas of redundancy and conflict, the nature and sources of dysfunction, and to submit recommendations and proposals directed toward relieving these problems. In the course of its lengthy and detailed work, this Committee has of necessity expanded its study into certain related areas, seeking to identify the underlying causes of difficulty, such as the problems of complex functional groups like ours, historical influences, the special stresses of psychoanalytic training and practice, and so on.

The following members have variously served on this Committee: Drs. Norman Atkins, Bernard Brandchaft, David Brunswick, Hanna Fenichel; Mr. Marvin Freeman; Drs. Samuel Futterman, William Horowitz, Maimon Leavitt, George Leventhal, Ernst Lewy, Arthur Ourieff, Leonard Rosengarten, Michael Rosow, Samuel Sperling, Carel Van der Heide, Maurice Walsh, and as consultants, Dr. Leo Rangell; Messrs. Louis Licht and John Pigott. I wish to take the prerogative as Chairman to interject some personal remarks. I wish to express my profound appreciation and heartfelt thanks to these members for their dedication, effort, and good nature. The Committee's experience itself portends the promise of our larger body. They were not diverted from their task over a period of two years. The full Committee met an average of almost twice a month during this time with an average attendance of about three-quarters. In addition there have been scores of sub-committee meetings. In total, well over 4000 hours of work have been devoted to this study. Special thanks for a true labor of love are due the three legal counselors, devoted members of the Board of Trustees of the Institute, whose clear vision, counsel, and drafting efforts have brought order, clarity, and succinctness to our general ideas. I also wish to take note of the cheerful and efficient secretaries of the latter, who worked late hours with persistent skill in our drafting sessions until the eighth and final draft.

During the Committee's deliberations other members attended to observe and participate, and also many communications were received dealing with the matters at hand so that about thirty such members made their views formally known, while at least an equal number did so informally. The Committee studied the organization and by-laws of five other psychoanalytic organizations and the pertinent reports of various other committees and authorities.

The roots of this Committee derive from various sources including the following: a prior informal study group, the Committee on Psychoanalytic Practice, the reorganization proposals of Dr. Lawrence Friedman, the study and report of the Committee on Institutes, proposals of Dr. Ernst Lewy, and the concern and efforts of many other members. As you will note, all these efforts derived from within our own organizations, even that of the Committee on Institutes.

Various problem areas engendering difficulty were defined including the following: overlapping, as well as artificially divided, functions of the two organizations. This has lent to confusion, poor communication, encouragement of rivalry, and divisive political power orientations. The effective disenfranchisement of the Institute membership in Institute affairs. The ineffective organization and use of faculty. The autonomous, self-perpetuating function of the Education Committee in running the Training School and to some considerable extent the Institute. The personal and political power structures and confrontations fostered by the above, rather than dissipated. The inhibition and stultification in controlling structures which had not adapted to changing needs of a developing group. The dual role of the training analyst and its consequent effects particularly in regard to the analysis of candidates, teaching in general, and the attendant constriction in the curiosity and creativity of candidates and graduates. The broad problems of an infant science and revolutionary movement come upon premature middle-age. The need to maintain flexibility yet avoid expedience. The growing awareness of social change and social need in individuals who are clinicians but who also are, or feel they ought to be, scientists. Such were a few of the many areas identified.

From the above, certain general functional principals devolved, and from a consideration of the functions that needed to be served, an organizational structure was devised. Our present organizations are not necessarily bad, but they are bad for us at this particular time. The proposed reorganization is no panacea, but it appears to offer a prospect for

an effective change and alters several traditional modes in a significant way. It may be that the spirit engendered in such change may be much the most effective part of it; but if so, this only underscores the need.

The recommendations incorporate the following: a single organization with clearly delineated subdivisions; since we cannot presently have a clearly independent school and independent professional society, the relationship between them must have defined points of contact and separate areas of function. Authority and responsibility will derive from the membership and be exercised through their elected officers, but candidate training will be the responsibility of the school. The school will be operated independently by its faculty; the psychoanalysis of candidates will be separated from the general teaching functions and administrative necessities of a training school. As far as possible analysts will be enabled to analyze, teachers to teach, and administrators to administer. Responsible participation of all is to be encouraged; communication and openness is to be encouraged; standards and criteria should be openly arrived at, stated, and employed. An optimum balance of democratic participation and functional efficiency is sought; a streamlining of administrative functions is desirable.

Taking these and still more recommendations as an ideal, an attempt was made to incorporate them into a new instrument--a proposed By-Laws--which would establish a reorganized Society/Institute embodying these ideas. Because of certain legal aspects it was most efficacious to work this out as a revision of the By-Laws of the existing Institute, of which a new Society/Institute would be the heir. The present Society, by appropriate action, might then join in this action by the Institute, giving over to the new organization its assets, prerogatives, etc. The mechanics of this are effectively nominal, although it may seem confusing at first glance.

Below is to be found this proposed By-Laws revision. Also included are two organizational charts to clarify the structure and functions. Despite a possible initial impression, the By-Laws are not over-long nor complex. Included in this is material presently included in the By-Laws of both the Society and Institute as well as some of the material presently in the Manual for Training Analysts and some simply missing from our present instruments and sorely so. It is not longer than the By-Laws of comparable society/institutes. Also it must be kept in mind that certain new concepts are included, and so these must be spelled out in some detail since there is less common custom to draw upon.

Please study this material carefully. It warrants it. Much serious thought has gone into its construction, and it will reward careful study. It is not perfect; but hopefully, if the basic principles involved are considered of value, it incorporates the possibility of dynamic change so that errors may be corrected, lacunae filled, and outgrown modes changed. You may take exception to certain elements, but be assured they were not arrived at capriciously. A proposal such as this demands reflection, explication, and discussion. The Committee is eager to join in this.

Maimon Leavitt, M. D.  
Chairman