

decisions that are practically ready made before he exercises the momentary step which is called an authoritative act.

I have observed in large corporations, with considerable concern, the retarding effect of failure to definitely define functions, in order that responsibility for each function may be laid upon a specific individual, and while I believe, as Miss Follett indicates, that there must be more definite and more conscious interweaving of functions, I cannot visualize a composite general manager. I believe that the slow progress of many of our large corporations can be directly laid to the fact that our legal minded friends have injected too much of the "checks and balances" idea through the use of the committee system.

I believe that the close contact, which Miss Follett speaks of, through committees is important, but I doubt whether committees, as such, should have specific authority. The committee meeting is merely a step in the process which enables those attending the meeting to more intelligently perform their specific function when they return to their place of authority in the organization.

Such statements as Miss Follett approvingly quotes from Franklin Lane's report, that there should be "more opportunity for planning, engineering, and statesmanship above, and more fixed authority and responsibility below," indicates that she is not opposed to the views that I have been presenting. However, I wish she had been more specific in her definition of what she considers to be an answer to the tremendous amount of unrest in our ranks of men engaged in productive work because of a feeling that responsibility is being taken from them.

In conclusion, I would like to suggest that perhaps much of our difficulty is due to the fact that we have attempted to create functions by arbitrary definition, rather than allowing them to arise naturally out of the nature of the work to be accomplished. I know that I was never able to get the best results until I succeeded in developing an individual who was conscious of his responsibility, not only for quantity, but also for quality and cost of operation. The feeling of responsibility for the quality and cost aspects of a function was stimulated in the minds of superintendents, department heads, and foremen, and, in many instances, in the minds of individual workmen.

If, however, we create an arbitrary division of function, holding one individual responsible for quantity of output throughout the entire plant, another for quality of work, and still another individual for economy of operations, have we not departed from the true meaning of function, and attached authority to something which is frequently an artificial concept devoid of any real sanction attaching to the nature of the activity it is designed to control? Inevitably, the effect is a weakening of the feeling of personal responsibility.

Perhaps scientific management has, too often, attempted to replace personality by a system. At any rate, my plea is that the development of personality be given first place; for it is my experience that neither systematic purpose nor the other legitimate purposes of industry can best be served unless we recognize the fact that, in any correlated group of activities there exists a natural functional hierarchy, and that the foci of these functions are always individual men.

Richard A. Feiss.* I had the good fortune of looking at this paper in a more or less intimate way before it was presented and made copious notes about things that I could say in comment, but I have just decided to tear up those notes and limit my remarks to some of the things that were suggested by the foregoing discussions.

I think that the chief thing that Miss Follett has made clear is that after all the things that we are dealing with in business and in organization are relationships, not concrete things.

I can say, in partial answer to Mr. Wolf, that I think Miss Follett means in speaking of functions those clearly defined relationships which have been brought out either in the up and down or the cross section of an organization. When we are speaking and thinking of things in these terms we find that we have not in our relationships the thing that was meant by authority in the past.

It is true that Mr. Kendall in his discussion used authority, I believe in the same way that Miss Follett used responsibility and I was asked by my neighbor what the difference was. I believe that is a question very pertinent to this paper. I think the answer is that there is no difference except in the attitude one has, or the reaction of a person or a group of persons in an organization

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to certain relationships in terms of authority or in terms of responsibility. These words do mean a different attitude rather than a different thing, and that after all is what we are getting at.

We are trying to get at that attitude which looks at business and the business organization as merely a partnership undertaking in clearly defined spheres—that is, we are speaking in terms of function—where all share in responsibility toward a common objective.

The great difficulty that underlies this thing, as I see it, is to keep the common objective in mind in a practical way throughout the organization. You cannot keep such an objective in mind on the theory that Miss Follett has attacked; namely, that of authority and the ability to delegate authority, which involves giving or loaning to somebody something which you have.

So far as a definition of various positions in an organization is concerned, such as the president and others, I do not believe they are at all material. I believe that the material thing is the attempt that Miss Follett has made to define the relationships which must be carried on by groups of people and not by an individual in an organization. Otherwise there cannot be any relationship between groups of people with varied responsibility.

I think we have missed another point and that is that the definition of those relationships is the important thing. In the administration of business or in the organization of business the important thing is the constant analysis of function, the constant clarifying of relationships. I do not believe that the mechanism used is of the greatest importance. Miss Follett, I think rather unfortunately, mentioned the so called interlocking committee and I am glad that she stopped long enough to correct herself, or rather to explain that it was not the only means of coordinating or integrating these various relationships. In fact it is one of the mechanisms that to my mind is rather doubtful. I do not believe that a committee can be successful unless membership in that committee is composed distinctly of responsible functionaries; in other words, of people who are responsible for functions that are well defined.

There cannot be control unless this is true. The field of control, however, is a very much broader thing and I hope Miss Follett will enlarge upon it in the future. We are all inclined to express ourselves in terms aptly found or handed to us by Miss Follett.

Control, not in the sense of one man's power to do things, but in the sense of our ability to make the facts, an expression which I have also borrowed from Miss Follett, is the thing that we are after.

I believe that scientific management is more interested in making facts, in creating conditions that are controllable and that contribute to the main purpose of an organization than in a mere analysis of conditions that happen to exist.

If I have contributed anything to the discussion, I hope it is some clarification of what is meant by the type of control that I believe Miss Follett has in mind. I could speak at great length on many other phases of the paper but I do not wish to take any more time.

I think that those of us who have been struggling along with management as a science, as an art or as a profession in the past years have learned at least to substitute the word responsibility for authority. I am glad to say that in twenty years of active work the word authority was not once used in our organization, at least not in my presence or in the presence of the managing group. I believe that Miss Follett's contribution is a clearer and more definite expression of the thing that we are grasping at in our attempt to express what real leadership is today.

N. I. Stone.* I appreciate the thought provoking suggestions in Miss Follett's brilliant paper but her disagreement with the generally accepted thesis that a president delegates his authority inclines me to agree with the points made by Mr. Kendall and Mr. Wolf. I think this is more than a matter of difference in terms, definition of terms or words.

It seems to me that we cannot really speak of that function without looking into the underlying forces that determine the president's position. In every business a man is a president of the company either by virtue of the fact that he owns it or is a dominating factor among the owners, or has been given the authority of president and the responsibility for the fate and conduct of the business by the owners represented in the board of directors. The whole weight of the responsibility for the success of the business rests upon his shoulders. The board of directors look to him, or if he is, the owner he has to look to himself, to find the right people and to develop the proper organization to do all the things necessary to make the business a

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