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Watt, John (1989) *The introduction and development of the comprehensive school in the West of Scotland 1965-80*. PhD thesis

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THE INTRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE
COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL IN THE WEST OF SCOTLAND 1965-80

Volume 1 of a Thesis submitted by

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in fulfilment of the requirements for the

Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of Glasgow.

Faculty of Social Sciences

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September 1989

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The research undertaken in the preparation of this thesis was facilitated by help and co-operation from many people, and it is proper that my debt to them be formally acknowledged.

The following readily granted me access to relevant unpublished files, and arranged temporary accommodation in which to consult the material: Ian Flett and W.D. Semple (Association of Directors of Education in Scotland); John Pollock and Isobel McKendrick (Educational Institute of Scotland); Percy Quinn (Headteachers' Association of Scotland); John O'Neill (National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers); Pauline Bruce, Rae Grant, Chris McLean (Research Officers of the Scottish Conservative, Liberal and National Parties respectively); Dr. J.H. Walker and David Elliot (Scottish Examination Board); the Secretaries of the Local Associations of the Educational Institute of Scotland for Glasgow, Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire; Alan Lamont (Scottish Secondary Schoolteachers' Association); Veronica McDonald (Scottish Trades Union Congress). I should particularly like to acknowledge the generous assistance of the Scottish Education Department, which allowed me to consult files normally closed to the public. Departmental staff instrumental in making the necessary arrangements were A.D. Chirnside, Leslie Clark, Moira Macfarlane and W.A. Elwood. I should also like to thank W.R. Ritchie for granting permission to interview members of the Inspectorate still in post.

The following kindly lent me files of personal papers which were a valuable source of information: Richard, Buchanan, James Carson, James

Christie, James Cranston, Joseph Dunning, John Havard, W.J. McKechin, Alan Mill, A.B. Niven, Richard Orr, John Robertson, Harry Wylie, Lachlan Young.

Thanks are also due to the editors and library staff of 'The Daily Record', 'The Evening Times', 'The Glasgow Herald' and the 'Times Scottish Education Supplement', who laboriously tracked down a mountain of articles from their files.

A variety of experienced and knowledgeable people from the worlds of education and politics freely consented to be interviewed in connection with this research. I shall be permanently grateful to them for allowing me into their homes and answering my many questions. I appreciate very much the time they put at my disposal, and the willingness with which they shared their professional experiences. Their contribution in the form of oral history has enriched the documentation of an eventful period in Scottish education. Considerable thanks must go to: J. Murray Allan; John Anderson; Archibald Armour; David Arthur; Harry Ashmall; Baroness Bacon; J.T. Bain; Ronald Barclay; Tom Barclay; W. Bargh; Sam Barnard; John Bell; Peter Bell; John Bennett; Hugh Black; Dr. T.R. Bone; Stephen Boshell; James Breen; Dr. Sally Brown, Hugh D. Brown; Matthew Brown; Andrew Bruce; R. Buchanan; Dan Burns; A.B. Cameron; James Carmichael; James R. Carson; Andrew D. Chirnside; J.R.B. Christie; J.R. Clark; Dr. D.L. Cook; Robert Crampsie; James P. Cranston; Ian Cunningham; Nicol Currie; Donald Dickson; James Docherty; Dr. W. Bryan Dockrell; Prof. David Donnison; Robert Douglas; Dr. Joseph Dunning; Hugh Fairlie; A.H. Ferguson; John Ferguson; W. Ferguson; Ian Flett; P.A. Flisch; George Foulkes; Valerie Friel; Neville Fullwood; Sister Maire

Gallagher; Lord Galpern; Hamish Gardner; Dr. W.A. Gatherer; Frank Gillespie; Sir Norman Graham; Dr. Malcolm Green; Dr. John Griffin; Ian G. Halliday; William Harley; Dame Judith Hart; Herbert F. Hayes; Thomas Henderson; W. Herbison; Leslie S. Hunter; James Inglis; Helen Jamieson; R.S. Johnston; R. Kennedy; Gordon Kirk; Robert Lamont; T.E.M. Landsborough; Dr. David Lees; Robin Lloyd-Jones; Norman Macaulay; Prof. M.E. Macdonald; Dr. Farquhar Macintosh; R.F. Mackenzie; Dr. H.S. Mackintosh; Colin Maclean; Norman MacLeod; Edwin Macnaughton; Malcolm MacSween; W.B. Marker; W.B. Marshall; Bernard Martin; James S. McCaul; Robert McClement; Tom McCool; Dr. J.A. McEwan; James McGrath; Dr Douglas McIntosh; W.J. McKechin; David McNicoll; Tom Meenagh; David Menzies; Alan Mill; Bruce Millan; Donald Miller; Edward Miller; James Miller; Charles Mitchell; John Moncrieff; Ian Morris; Jenny Morrison; John Morrison; W.K. Morrison; Neil Mundy; Sir James Munn; George Murdoch; Jack Murray; James Murray; Alex Neil; Alistair Nicolson; Prof. Stanley Nisbet; A.B. Niven; Walter Paterson; Henry Philip; John Pirie; John Pollock; Grainne Quinn; Percy Quinn; Jean Reid; John T. Robertson; Robert Robertson; T.K. Robinson; Margaret Roddan; Prof. Baillie T. Ruthven; James K. Scobbie; David Smart; George Smith; Sydney Smyth; James Stewart; Lord Stewart of Fulham; Richard Stewart; Alex Stirling; George Sutherland; Raymond Thomasson; Neil Toppin; Leonard Turpie; Alex Wallace; Ian Watson; Ian Watt; J. Lockhart Whiteford; Stewart Wilson; Sir Henry P. Wood; Bill Wright; Harry Wylie; Alex Young; Ian Young; Lachlan B. Young; George Yuill.

Thanks are also due to the following: Ronald Barclay, formerly Principal Lecturer in Modern Languages, for facilitating the borrowing of countless books from Jordanhill College Library over several years;

Frank Bechhofer, Department of Sociology, Edinburgh University for allowing me to read a S.S.R.C. report on education and social mobility in Scotland; Caroline Benn, for documentation on the activities of the Campaign for Comprehensive Education; Jim Ewing, Principal Lecturer in Education, Dundee College of Education, for reports of the annual conferences of Tayside headteachers and depute headteachers; Professor Lewis Gunn, Strathclyde University, for an informative insight into implementation; Joan Hughes, Centre for Educational Sociology, Edinburgh University, for extracts of the C.E.S. Bibliography, and copies of selected items from it; John Lowe, O.E.C.D., for copies of two unpublished reports; Malcolm MacIntyre, Divisional Educational Officer (Lanark) for allowing me to consult unpublished filed material on comprehensive reorganisation in the County; Dr. J.A. Mangan, Principal Lecturer in Education, Jordanhill College of Education for the use of teaching materials on the comprehensive school prepared by members of his department; Rev. Alasdair Morton, Secretary to the Church of Scotland Education Committee, for photocopies of relevant minutes; Hamish Paterson, Lecturer in education, Glasgow University, for material on Godfrey Thomson; and Gerard Pollock, formerly Depute Director, Scottish Council for Research in Education, for granting access to research reports not normally open to the public.

The research benefited from the generous efforts of library staff at Glasgow University, Jordanhill College of Education, Aberdeen College of Education, The National Union of Teachers and the Scottish Education Department. A special word of thanks is due to Andrew Jackson, Strathclyde Regional Archivist, who over several weeks, re-arranged his own work schedule to enable me to consult files and minutes in the Mitchell Library at times of the day when the Archive Section was

normally closed. His understanding of the problems of conducting research, and his help in solving some of them are much appreciated.

On a more personal note, I am indebted to a number of friends and colleagues who have taken an interest in the research, and provided valued encouragement to see the task through to completion. In this respect, my thanks go to Christine Alison, Ina Clark, Eleanor Crawford, Lorna Hanning, John Mattock, Isabel McArthur Isobel McGregor, Isobel McNaughton, Bill and Carol Primrose, James Pryde, Linda Rees, John A. Robertson and Ian Thompson. Special mention must be made of David Fergus, John May and Sheila McLean who, having already completed doctoral theses, were able to offer encouragement, sympathy and support based on personal experience.

For the considerable effort involved in typing the thesis and the interview transcripts, I am grateful to Betty Johnstone and Tilly Wright. They accomplished a formidable task with a conscientious attention to detail and a professional approach to matters of presentation. The accuracy of their work and the speed with which they completed it were invaluable as the time for submission approached.

Several members of the Education Department of Glasgow University deserve my sincere thanks. Professor Nigel Grant first suggested that I should consider undertaking advanced study, and I should like to thank him for having confidence in me, and never missing an opportunity to ascertain how the work was progressing. William Dunn, David Hamilton, Leslie Hunter, and Hamish Paterson took a keen interest throughout, and frequently gave words of encouragement, for which I thank them. My greatest debt, however, is to Walter Humes and Malcolm MacKenzie, who

jointly supervised the research. Notwithstanding their sometimes differing views, it was extremely stimulating to benefit from their excellent guidance and advice. Always readily accessible, they provided invaluable criticism of draft chapters and, by asking penetrating questions, caused me to develop my thinking on numerous issues arising from the study. Their incisive comments have greatly contributed to the overall shape of the thesis, and to matters of detail within it. It is a measure of the excellence of their supervision that they were a constant source of support and inspiration, always succeeding in conducting our many meetings with courtesy and good humour. That the work progressed as far as it did is in no small measure due to the professionalism with which they discharged their responsibilities. My debt to them is enormous.

Last, but far from least, I shall be eternally grateful to the members of my family, whose tolerance has made the undertaking more bearable. They gave unstinting encouragement throughout the period during which the thesis has been in preparation, and were a source of reassurance and support in ways too numerous to mention. Particular thanks are due to my sisters: Sandra offered welcome assistance with the compilation of the bibliography, while Elizabeth shared her ideas on the intricacies of management, and engaged in discussion as the chapters began to take shape. To have had such an understanding family has been of immeasurable value in sustaining my resolve to complete the study.

SUMMARY

This study investigates the emergence of the comprehensive school following the issue of Scottish Education Department Circular 600 in 1965, and its focus is the area of West Central Scotland covered by Dunbartonshire, the City of Glasgow, Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire. A major concern of the research is to examine how the secondary sector was affected by the transition from a bi-partite to a comprehensive system.

The introduction gives a short account of the purpose of the research, its organisation and the methodology chosen. The thesis falls into six chapters. After a short examination of the comprehensive lobby in the post war period, Chapter One presents a literature survey in four sections: definitions of the comprehensive school, and some conceptual models; the cultural context, which highlights the characteristic features of the Scottish educational tradition; the political context, dealing with issues of central control, central-local government relations and the roles of local politicians and education officials; policy implementation and the management of innovation. These four themes form a conceptual framework against which to examine the data presented in the following chapters. Data for the thesis was gathered from two sources: a wide range of documentary material, and the transcripts of one hundred and fifty-two interviews conducted by the author with educationists and politicians.

Data presented in Chapter Two leads to the following propositions: the comprehensive school was perceived as an English imposition on the Scottish system; official opinion in the Scottish Education Department was unfavourable to its introduction; optimistic claims for its

educational and social potential were made in an ambiance of confusion about its definition; the Scottish Education Department conceived of the changeover principally in structural terms, and adopted a laissez-faire attitude to its philosophical implications; the advent of the comprehensive school caused widespread apprehension among educationists.

Chapter Three argues that the comprehensive school, in reality a new educational concept in Scotland, encountered a powerful tradition of secondary education, the features of which caused it to be viewed as a threat to established schools. The adoption of the omnibus school as a paradigm for the new concept suited vested interests, and did not conflict with prevailing educational values. The predilection for a meritocratic concept of education supported by a continuing academic tradition were found to militate against the comprehensive principle and its implications. The result for many teachers was professional insecurity, so that initially comprehensive 'reform' remained largely nominal.

Chapter Four suggests that Circular 600, albeit directive, was an act of faith to establish a new model for the secondary school. The Scottish Education Department retained control over the administrative/financial aspects of comprehensive policy, but took no clear official line on its educational dimensions, preferring to adhere to a reactive policy model. The problems associated with the decision to raise the school leaving age in 1972 are taken as an example. The Inspectorate guided developments gently in a comprehensive direction, and the ideas in the publications of the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum appeared to have little impact on school practice. In local government, Directors of Education and local politicians responded to Circular 600 in a

predominantly administrative and pragmatic way. An exception to this interpretation is provided by the selective schools controversy in Glasgow which is examined in some detail. It is finally argued that the reorganisation of local government in 1975 created new difficulties for the Directorate which left schools to deal with the implications of comprehensive policy.

In Chapter Five, after an examination of practical difficulties and problematic factors encountered by comprehensive policy in West Central Scotland, it is contended that progress towards its implementation was slow. Strategies employed to innovate within schools were found to have been gradualistic, and the impact on teachers of the advisory service and in-service training patchy. It is further suggested that organisational developments related to comprehensivisation called for substantial modifications to existing practices, and schools received variable support in devising coping strategies for change. The malaise in secondary education in the mid 1970s is examined, and the proposition is advanced that, notwithstanding the reform proposals by three national working parties, the comprehensive school in 1980 still faced unresolved problems.

In the final chapter an attempt is made to draw the main strands of the argument together into an overall statement of the author's interpretation of developments in comprehensive education in the area under study for 1965-1980. The study reveals interesting contrasts in management style at Directorate level in the four areas examined. While acknowledging the timescale required to effect major educational change, the work challenges the received wisdom that the change to a comprehensive system went smoothly in Scotland. The argument is

advanced that the implications of comprehensivisation were not addressed in any coherent or co-ordinated way, with considerable responsibility for implementation devolved to people at all levels in the education service.

The Conclusions are set in the context of the three organising concepts - culture, ideology and management - which emerge as central to the argument. After acknowledging the changed ideological climate of the late 1980s, the chapter ends with some possible lines of development for the comprehensive school in the foreseeable future.

INTRODUCTION

... research is ... concerned with the extension of knowledge.

(Sally Brown in 'The Promotion of Educational Research and Development Scottish Style' in the 1985 World Yearbook of Education, eds. J. Nisbet, S. Nisbet, J. Megarry, Kogan Page p.170)

Research - in education at least - may have relied too much on the force of rationality, neglecting the pervasive influence of values.

(John Nisbet and Patricia Broadfoot in The Impact of Research on Policy and Practice A.U.P. 1980) quoted in 1985 World Yearbook of Education p.15

... the enlightenment function of research in the social sciences is concerned with changing people's perceptions, influencing their aspirations, questioning assumptions and offering new insights.

(John Nisbet in 'The Contribution of Research to Education' in Education in Transition eds. S. Brown and R. Wake, S.C.R.E. 1988, p.17)

(Educational research is) the systematic, empirical and critical enquiry into matters which directly or indirectly concern the learning and teaching of children and adults.

(J. Powney and M. Watts in Interviewing in Educational Research RKP 1987, p.3)

This research was undertaken to examine the introduction and development of the comprehensive school in the West of Scotland in the period 1965-80. The principal aim was to attempt an appraisal of the consequences for schools of Scottish Education Department Circular 600 issued in October 1965, which officially marked the end of the former system of secondary provision, under which pupils were sent to separate junior and senior secondary schools. The subject was chosen partly because of the author's professional involvement and interest in comprehensive education, and partly because of his feeling that previous studies¹ in the field had neglected to include the West of Scotland in any significant way. The neglect of the West of Scotland seems all the more regrettable since it has been convincingly argued that it constitutes a significant entity in terms of recent educational history and policy-making in Scotland.² For the purpose of the research, the 'West of Scotland' is taken to mean the area covered by the former counties of Dumbarton, Lanark and Renfrew and the City of Glasgow (and the corresponding divisions of Strathclyde Region, post-1975). The intention was to explore how these different areas in the densely populated and predominantly industrial west had tackled the issues involved in the comprehensivisation of their secondary provision. One of the most difficult decisions was to delimit the period under review. While all date setting is to some extent arbitrary, 1980 was chosen as the end point, in view of the fact that it was at that time that a commitment was made at government level to embark on a development programme based on the proposals contained in the Munn and Dunning Reports. This initiative was to lead ultimately to the introduction of the Standard grade courses for the entire ability range, arguably the next major event in Scottish secondary education after the advent of comprehensive schools.

The issue of Circular 600 can be seen as the culmination of progressive educational ideas first broached in the early years of the century, but only given serious emphasis in the years after the end of the Second World War. Inasmuch as the Circular enshrined what might be labelled a swing to progressivism,³ it can be seen as heralding a new educational order by means of political fiat. On this view, the Circular marked a dramatic change of direction for the old educational order, in which the 'best' secondary schools were perceived as the senior secondaries, which took as pupils those who had performed successfully in the qualifying tests taken in the latter stages of the primary school, and provided for them an essentially academic education leading to presentation in national examinations. (Those pupils who had been unsuccessful were placed in junior secondary schools). Traditional histories of Scottish education have presented a picture of change through the centuries as essentially a steady process of natural evolution in response to changing social and historical circumstances.⁴ The predominance of this conception, coupled with the received wisdom about the democratic and egalitarian nature of Scottish education has contributed to a widely-held view that the introduction of comprehensive education in the Scottish context was managed more smoothly and with less upset than in England. It was hoped that this study might shed some light on the veracity of this view at least as far as the West of Scotland was concerned. An additional aim was to explore the effects of an imposed change of structure on the existing educational system and its practices.

METHODOLOGY

Any researcher has to address at an early stage of his work the thorny problem of devising an appropriate research methodology, a problem made even more difficult in the field of the social sciences in general, and education in particular, beset as it is by a complex of issues. In this case, the strategy was chosen both for epistemological and practical reasons in an attempt to keep the enterprise manageable. There is an extent to which any strategy is of necessity a compromise between the best method available and the exigencies of the situation in which the researcher is operating. In this study it was decided to opt for a qualitative approach given the subject under study. It was felt that the issues involved and questions which would require to be addressed necessitated a research design which would throw light on the social world of the principal actors in the process of comprehensivisation, and draw on their insights and accounts of what happened.

As Powney and Watts have argued,⁵ researchers should adopt whichever research method suits his/her purpose, and in so doing add to the growth of educational research, since there is no one best model. The authors' caveat is that the method used must be consistent with the philosophy of the research itself.

For these reasons, and taking into account the purpose of the research in question, it was decided to opt for a more flexible design, to allow a picture to emerge of what happened in secondary education during the period under examination, and to include the perceptions, reactions and opinions of those whose function was to make the new comprehensive system operate. Irrespective, however, of the particular methods adopted to gather data, it is wise to be alert to the fact that any

researcher brings to his work bias, value judgements and preconceptions which must invariably influence the picture he presents and the interpretation he places on the information gathered. Decisions have to be taken about what to include and exclude from the final account. Nevertheless, it is hoped that the methodology on which this study is based is valid and legitimate, with its limitations openly acknowledged. Only then may any conclusions drawn from it be deemed worthwhile. Research has enhanced standing when its methods and findings are open to public scrutiny. As Glenn Tuner has stated:

What is important about a piece of research is not so much its scope, or extrapolations from it to the macro-level of sociological theory, but its validity. If research has validity then it can be used as the basis for further work, and its scope is thereby increased. However, if a piece of research is invalid, then it has little value, no matter how great its scope.⁶

The research data for this thesis was assembled from two main sources:

a) Published and Unpublished Documentary Evidence

At an early stage in the research, as extensive a list of published sources as possible was drawn up which potentially would contain references to the introduction of comprehensive education and to subsequent developments. Several suggested themselves automatically: Annual Reports of the Scottish Education Department 1965-80; Reports of the Scottish Certificate of Education Examination Board 1965-80; Education Committee Minutes (1965-80) for the four areas being studied; references in newspapers (quality and popular) and educational publications ('The Times Educational Supplement (Scotland)'; 'Forum'; 'The Scottish Educational Journal'); two research reports conducted in the 1970s into aspects of comprehensive education (SED, SCRE); a research report on a study commissioned by Strathclyde Regional Council into the curriculum and organisation of secondary 1/2; the published

output of the Centre for the Study of Comprehensive Schools, University of York; the published output of the Centre for Educational Sociology, University of Edinburgh; bulletins, periodicals and papers produced by working groups of teachers in the West of Scotland 1965-80.

In addition, several prominent educational bodies gave access to their unpublished files: The Association of Directors of Education in Scotland; The Headteachers' Association; The Scottish Examination Board; The Scottish Trades Union Congress; the principal teaching unions (EIS; SSTA; NAS/UWT). The Scottish Education Department waived the '30 year rule', and allowed consultation of certain filed material held in The Scottish Record Office and Her Majesty's Inspectors Divisional Headquarters in Glasgow, as well as of some OECD reports relevant to the subject under investigation. Jordanhill College of Education, Edinburgh University and the Scottish Centre for Studies in School Administration all made relevant unpublished material available, and the Lanark and Renfrew Divisions of Strathclyde Regional Council granted permission to examine papers in their archive sections. (The Dumbarton Division policy was to jettison all files over five years old, and Glasgow Division was reluctant to permit access to files held in its offices.) Most of the political parties in Scotland willingly enabled the author to consult whatever material he wanted in their reference/library departments.⁷ All the local associations of the Educational Institute of Scotland in the four areas of West Central Scotland readily gave the author permission to consult their Minute Books and other relevant unpublished papers. Unpublished theses were consulted where appropriate and, finally, much of value was gleaned from all manner of personal documents and papers kindly lent by individuals involved in developments in a variety of capacities, in an attempt to

provide additional material otherwise unavailable.

It is realised, of course, that documentary evidence, by itself, can only contribute a partial account of developments and, with the exception of quotations from newspapers or speeches, is devoid of the contribution made by individuals at various levels in the education service. Moreover, what has been recorded for posterity in print has inevitably been subject to selection, editing, omission, and is influenced by the whim of the recorder. Consequently, much printed material tends to the factual and dull, and often neglects the personal views, motives, reactions and perceptions of the individuals involved. Nonetheless, it is contended that, at the very least, material drawn from a wide range of sources provides much that is useful on the background to developments and conveys a flavour of the period in which they occurred. Moreover, it is worth making the point that a comparison of documentary material from a wide range of sources can give a fuller and more balanced picture of events over a period of time.

b) Semi-Structured Personal Interviews

In order to supplement data culled from the documentary sources outlined, and for the reasons alluded to in the previous paragraph, the decision was taken to make use of the interview as a research instrument.⁸ Indeed, in a recent book, it is argued that 'oral evidence' now plays a major part in data collection in research in the social sciences.⁹ The increasing and successful use of this technique in recent years¹⁰ reflects a move away from the narrow scientific approach to research, and an attempt to establish the value of a more interpretative model. The interview is thus an important tool in qualitative research methods. Though problematic, it is a technique

which enables the researcher to probe into the 'assumptive worlds'¹¹ of the individuals involved in a social system, and has the advantage that it can help to explicate their modus operandi in terms of concepts such as ideology, values and perceptions. In that sense, interviewees give a description of the culture which they use to explain, define and interpret their professional experience.

An opportunity sample was drawn up¹² of individuals in various sectors in the education service - inspectors, advisers, headteachers (in both denominational and non-denominational schools), union officials, directorate staff, academics, curriculum development centre directors, educational journalists - and in the world of politics. Some were still in active service, others had already retired by the time the interviewing began. Many had held senior educational or administrative posts and could thus be called 'principal actors' in the events. Their views, at the very least, were deserving of respect and serious consideration. Simultaneously, a set of open-ended and, hopefully, unbiased questions on comprehensive education was devised. These covered a wide range of aspects deriving from the subject under study, but were not intended to be exhaustive. Rather, it was hoped that they would act as a stimulus to discussion which would reveal not only facts which could be compared with information gleaned from documentary sources, but also more about the attitudes, opinions and reactions of the speakers. The intention was quite deliberately exploratory. One principal set of questions was used for the majority of the interviewees: those given to the Directors of Education in the four areas of West Central Scotland under study, the Curriculum Centre Directors, Advisers and representatives of the world of politics were devised to take account of the particular nature of their contribution.

(Examples of all the interview schedules used are contained in an Appendix.) Potential interviewees were sent a letter which explained briefly the purpose of the research, testified to the bona fide status of the researcher, and invited them to participate in the work. One hundred and sixty people were contacted and only eight either declined the invitation, or did not reply. Of the one hundred and fifty two positive responses, a small number sent written replies because it proved impossible to meet face to face. Each personal interview lasted one to one and a half hours, the majority being conducted in the home of the interviewee. The interview schedule had been enclosed with the letter of invitation, so that the subject had time to consult and reflect on it beforehand, rather than face the questions 'cold'. Answers were recorded in detail by the author in note form as the interviewees spoke. It was considered that they would find this method more congenial and less inhibiting and intrusive than having their responses recorded on tape. In every case, the notes taken during the interview were meticulously transcribed into a full written record the same day, to minimise the vagaries of memory and maximise the faithfulness of the account. Notwithstanding the genuine efforts made by the author accurately to record what was said, it is acknowledged that there is a difference between the spoken and the written word, and that the latter cannot transmit to the reader the characteristics of normal speech - hesitation, emphasis, pauses - nor indeed facial expressions and gestures, which contribute to the tone of the discourse. All interviewees were made aware that the interviews were being conducted to provide data for a doctoral thesis, and guaranteed anonymity by the researcher's assurance that any quotations used in the text would be attributed by the use of a general term (e.g. 'headteacher', 'adviser').¹³ It was hoped that such foreknowledge of

confidentiality would encourage interviewees to be candid in their replies. All were offered open access to the author's final interview transcript with a view to enhancing the validity and reliability of what was said, but in the event, none availed themselves of the opportunity, giving as a reason that they were satisfied by the researcher's proof of integrity, and happy to entrust their utterances to his use. The outcome was that one hundred and fifty two individuals provided an account of their experiences of and reactions to the introduction of comprehensive education, and thus provided the researcher with a substantial body of information on which to draw in addition to the documentary material. All interviewees were thanked formally in a letter in which the value of their contribution to the research was acknowledged.

Several authors have recently drawn attention to the complex issues involved in the process of conducting interviews for the purpose of academic research and point out its inherent dangers.¹⁴ Seldon and Pappworth (op cit) highlight the following problematic aspects: the credibility and competence of interviewees; the potential for distortion in responses due to a variety of factors (fallibility of human memory, self-aggrandisement, simplification or rationalisation of facts, misunderstanding of actual role in the developments described); the motives influencing the interviewees' agreement to participate in the research; the completeness of interviewee accounts; the possibility of discrepant accounts of the same reality; interviewer bias in questioning; the extent to which the interviewer has mastered the skills of interviewing; the status and credibility of the interviewer; the social skills involved in establishing a satisfactory interviewer-interviewee relationship; interviewer objectivity in

analysing the data yielded by the interviewee. Moreover, as Powney and Watts (op cit) point out, researchers need to be aware of certain theoretical issues which are involved in interviewing. Of those listed by the authors, the following seem particularly relevant: congruence, which is achieved if the reader is convinced that the interview sessions have been managed properly; confidentiality, advisable since interviewing gives access to information which is sensitive and can be potentially powerful; negotiation, the process of reaching an amicable agreement on the eventual ownership of the information provided in interview; an awareness that interviews nearly always constitute an intrusion of privacy, so that the trust of the interviewee should not be abused; a realisation that interviews provide theory-laden data, which is thus not neutral but generated by the particular methodology for a particular purpose; given the fact that any sample cannot be representative of a whole group, the generalisability of interview responses becomes problematic. McPherson and Raab have succinctly summarised these complexities of interviewing thus:

We have suggested that there are inter-dependencies between methodological problems, ethical problems and problems of substantive interpretation.¹⁵

The question which naturally arises in such circumstances is this: what credibility as research evidence can be attached to the information yielded by the interview as an investigative technique? How objective are the accounts rendered in the interview transcripts? What, indeed constitutes the truth?

Obviously there is the philosophical question of how one person (the researcher) reaches decisions on the meanings of others, given that any such analysis is to some extent coloured by his theoretical perspective,

implicitly or explicitly stated. In addition, given his research interests, the interviewer must have already made some personal, if provisional judgements on the matters on which he has invited interviewees to speak. These issues notwithstanding, the following points are advanced in defence of the information yielded by the interviews conducted in connection with this research exercise:

- all the interviewees spoke in good faith and reacted in the spirit of the enterprise. To that extent, and to the best of the author's knowledge, the interviews were 'informant',¹⁶ i.e. issues emerged which were relevant to the speakers, or, in other words, they 'told it as they saw it'
- the opportunity sample could not be claimed to be representative. Nevertheless, an attempt was made by the researcher to consult a substantial number of individuals whose perspectives derived from their professional involvement in different spheres of the educational and political world. Although the inevitable differences of opinion and emphasis emerged, it was remarkable, as the interviewing proceeded, and transcripts were analysed, that common themes emerged from the retrospective testimony offered by the interviewees. This is akin to the phenomenon called by McPherson and Raab 'triangulation'¹⁷, the suggestion of 'truth' appearing from the intersection of a variety of perspectives on the same topic
- to the best of the researcher's knowledge the interviews were conducted in a professional manner, and in an ambience of trust and good rapport. Although some interviewees were more guarded than others, all spoke easily, directly and in relaxed fashion
- the researcher was meticulous in recording the information during the interview and expeditious in its transcription to final form, with the explicit purpose of trying to ensure that no-one was wittingly

misrepresented

- the researcher had a high degree of personal commitment to the investigation
- the researcher's technique of interviewing developed through the repeated experience of conducting the interviews
- the researcher endeavoured by his approach to give the impression of being aware of the issues involved in the subject under study
- the results of the interviews can be claimed to be reasonable in the circumstances, and discussion of them may contribute to professional debate
- giving key participants the opportunity to comment on their experiences of the education system is both a respectable research undertaking, and a valuable aid in reaching a better understanding of the system's workings and problems.

As the interviewing came to an end after a two year period, the researcher had formed the view that essentially a similar story was being told, and that there would have been little point in interviewing anyone else. To that extent, it is doubtful if substantially different information would have been yielded by a different hundred and fifty two individuals drawn from the same professional groupings. Accordingly, it can be claimed with some justification that the interview transcripts, pertaining to this research, make some contribution to the collected knowledge on the subject, representing as they do a collective account of the experiences of those involved. They may usefully serve as a source for future work in the field. Clearly, in evaluating the use to which interview material is to be put, the researcher's judgement comes into play and, as an almost inevitable consequence, his treatment of the information and the conclusions he draws from it must involve an element

of selection. However, it is salutary to bear in mind a point made by McPherson and Raab in discussing the status of interview data as evidence:

All this is relevant to the meaning that the reader is invited to take from the transcript evidence. But it may also help with the problem of disengaging the validity of our method from the validity of our conclusions, so that the former may contribute to, and not just derive from the latter. We are suggesting that, in a very limited way, procedural aspects of the interviews give us a further, and partially independent, perspective on the historic events; independent insofar as we, as interviewers, could form our own judgements of character and personality, of competencies and of where allegiances lay, basing these judgements not only on the interviewees careers and statements but also on our own observations of their behaviour.¹⁸

ORGANISATION OF THE RESEARCH

This thesis is organised in six chapters. Chapter 1 contains a review of the literature pertinent to the subject of comprehensive education. The literature provides reference points from the work of other researchers in the field, and highlights central issues which can be used to examine the data and make sense of the information gathered from the research. In a field as vast as this, it is especially difficult to devise a context for a particular study. Rather than make the chapter comprise an exhaustive account of all that has been written on comprehensive education, it was decided to examine the literature under four headings: (a) the historical emergence and definitions of the comprehensive school, with reference to the ideological assumptions it embraced about the relationship between school and society; (b) the cultural context into which the comprehensive school was introduced, so that works dealing with the Scottish educational tradition are reviewed in the belief that the present can only adequately be explained by reference to the past; (c) the political context, concentrating on policy process and the influence exerted on it by central government, local government,

and individuals in the worlds of education and politics, with some reference to the effects of the reorganisation of local government in 1975; (d) the translation of policy into practice and the issues involved in policy implementation. The literature review covering these four central strands was used to give some shape to the data gathered, and to act as a theoretical backdrop to its examination. Accordingly, Chapters Two, Three, Four and Five contain an analysis under these headings of data culled from both documentary sources and interview material. References are made in these four chapters to theoretical considerations raised in the appropriate section of Chapter One, and provisional suggestions are made on the findings. Liberal use is made of illustrative quotations from both documentary and interview data. Periodically, the salient points from interviews are summarised for reason of brevity. It was hoped that this research design would allow the blend of documentary evidence and individuals' perceptions of their experiences to provide a reliable account of a major educational change in one geographical area of the Scottish education system. One of the principal decisions to be taken in the writing of these chapters was what data to select for inclusion, since all theses are by definition a condensation of a much wider range of material than that reported. In Chapter Six, after a brief summary of the main arguments from the preceding four chapters, the findings are discussed in terms of the central concepts which are found to emerge from the data, in an attempt to arrive at a structured understanding of developments in the period under review. The inter-relationship of the three concepts is examined, and the chapter ends with some suggestions for the possible future development of the comprehensive school, taking account of the changed political ambiance of the late 1980s and of recent published work in the field. Any conclusions drawn, therefore, are kept within the limits of

the research carried out, and are set in the context of subsequent knowledge gained by other commentators about the period and subject under review. Thus, 'conclusions' are better expressed as tentative indications of possible interpretations of the findings. Nevertheless, however provisional the conclusions, it is hoped that the endeavour will have made a useful contribution to the accumulated knowledge of developments in an important and eventful period of recent educational history in Scotland. If it has helped to increase awareness and understanding of central issues in the continuing professional dialogue on secondary education in the post-war period, the effort expended will have been worthwhile. As one commentator with long practical experience of educational research has asserted:

The primary function of educational research is to sensitise, to make people aware of problems ... investigation into teaching and learning sharpens thinking, directs attention to important issues, clarifies views and thus deepens understanding ... research of this kind aims to increase the problem-solving capacity of the educational system, rather than to provide final answers to questions, or objective evidence to settle controversies. On this view, educational research is a mode of thinking, rather than a shortcut to answers.¹⁹

FOOTNOTES

1. Half Way There Benn and Simon (1970), Reconstructions of Secondary Education, Gray, McPherson and Raffe (1983) and Governing Education, McPherson and Raab (1988) are examples of scholarly studies which deal with comprehensive developments in Scotland on a national scale. A great deal of the published work on comprehensive education refers almost exclusively to England and Wales, and very few M.Ed. /Ph.D. research exercises on the subject held in Scottish Universities take the West of Scotland as their focus.
2. See 'An Angle on the Geist', A. McPherson in Scottish Culture and Scottish Education (eds) W.M. Humes and HM Paterson, John Donald 1983, and Governing Education A. McPherson and C. Raab, E.U.P. 1988, Chapter 17.
3. This phrase is used to describe the notions which underpinned comprehensive ideology: the mixing of a wide range of pupils of different abilities and social classes; the encouraging of each pupil to attain his/her highest potential; a concern for all children, irrespective of academic ability; tailoring the curriculum to the individual pupil's needs; a concern for the whole child and for abilities other than academic.
4. Recent examples are Mackintosh (1962), Scotland (1969). Earlier works in a similar vein are Strong (1909), Morgan (1927, 1929).
5. Interviewing in Educational Research J. Powney and M. Watts, RKP p.168.
6. The Social World of the Comprehensive School, G. Turner, Croom Helm 1983, p.5.
The concept of 'validity' is used in research to denote the degree of relevance of concepts, data or research techniques to the research objectives for which they have been developed.
7. It is unfortunate to have to record - with some irony, given that the study was dealing with comprehensive education - that repeated attempts by the author over several years proved unsuccessful in gaining access to filed material held by the Labour Party at its Scottish Headquarters.
8. The term 'interviewer' is here understood as an 'informant interview', described by Powney and Watts (op cit p.18) as one in which the interviewer's intention is to gain an insight into the interviewee's beliefs and perceptions by means of a series of loosely structured questions. The authors define an interview as 'a conversational encounter to a purpose' (p.vii).
9. By Word of Mouth, A. Seldon and J. Pappworth, Methuen 1983.
10. A notable exponent of the interview as a research technique is Maurice Kogan. A major Scottish contribution is the interview research conducted by McPherson and Raab in the preparation of Governing Education (op cit).

11. This is a phrase used by McPherson and Raab (op cit) p.55, quoting K Young and L Mills in their report to SSRC (Bristol) (1978).
12. Individuals approached for interview were chosen with the help and advice of many of the author's professional colleagues. Lists of members of SCEEB, Committeess of the CCC and groups/working parties which had produced most major national reports on education in the period 1965-80 were scrutinised, and those names with a strong link with the West of Scotland abstracted. In addition, some national figures who had achieved prominence were included to leaven the 'local' input. In the case of directorate staff, headteachers and advisers, an attempt was made to contact as many as possible who had been professionally active in the four areas under study.
13. But see Chapter Four, Footnote 150.
14. The approach to interviewing adopted in this research exercise owed much to the considerable advice offered in Seldon and Pappworth (op cit), and Powney and Watts (op cit). Other useful manuals on interviewing include:
Educational Research: An Introduction W.R. Borg, Longmans 1963
The Research Process in Education D.J. Fox, New York 1969
Understanding Research in Education, K Lovell and K S Lawson, ULP 1970
Conducting and Analysing Interviews, E.C. Wragg, T.C.R. Rediguide No. 11, Maidenhead, No date.
15. McPherson and Raab (op cit) p.69.
16. In the sense used by Powney and Watts (op cit).
17. McPherson and Raab (op cit) p.63.
18. McPherson and Raab (op cit) p.67.
19. 'Educational Research: The State of the Art', John Nisbet in Rethinking Educational Research B. Dockrell and D. Hamilton, Hodden and Stoughton 1980, pp.9-10.

CHAPTER ONE

SOME EXPLANATORY CONTEXTS AND RELATED THEORETICAL ISSUES

It just happened, but the fact remains that the principles of comprehensive education were hardly examined. Much was left to assumption. There was no genuine attempt to grasp and define the concept, or think through its implications in general terms ... there was no sense of critical detachment.

(Interview/MS/1)

Comprehensive schools were resented because they created an obstacle on the academic route, so people in positions of power erected all sorts of subtle barriers, so that, as a concept, comprehensive education was never taken seriously nor given a fair crack of the whip. The general view, I would say, was that efforts should be directed to mitigating its worst effects, when it was realised it would not go away.

(Interview/HT/10)

Politicians stumbled into comprehensive education as much in the dark as those on whom they forced the change.

(Interview/PL/3)

Perhaps the major problem was that academics were put in charge of a good theory.

(Interview/MS/4)

It is fair to say that in the years immediately after the Second World War education became a veritable growth industry. The gradual achievement of economic stability and expansion, and a concomitant increase in the general standard of living under the Tory government (1951-59), symbolised in the slogan 'YOU'VE NEVER HAD IT SO GOOD', created feelings of optimism in society. The influence of liberal-progressive philosophy began to be felt, and education came increasingly to be seen as a vital component of public policy. Spurred on by an increase in industrial production and national wealth, parents developed increased aspirations for their children in the gathering momentum of the race for jobs and money in a period of affluence. A 'good' education came to be seen more than ever before as a passport for success and social status later in life. During these years too, sociologists and educationists began to put the school system and its achievements since the passing of the 1944 Act under the microscope. They produced results¹ which showed conclusively that the ideals of previous well-intentioned education acts had not been attained. This was all the more disturbing as advances in science and technology world-wide caused people to question the appropriateness and relevance of the school system and the education it was providing. Essentially, the country had a divided educational system in which results in tests of intelligence and social class background were powerful determinants of pupils' success. A mounting tide of incontrovertible evidence was gradually amassed, and voices calling for reform became louder. More and more members of the comprehensive school lobby, (chiefly members of the Labour Party, supported by liberal academics), who had begun to agitate for the abandonment of selective education as early as the 1940s, gained public credibility, and their advocacy of the comprehensive school as a solution to the country's educational ills

gained ground. Gradually it came to be accepted that government, by implementing liberal educational policies, could ameliorate life chances and counter the worst effects of social class by widening access to secondary education for all children. Equality of educational opportunity and investment in the country's human capital became the key concepts guiding educational policy making, and the comprehensive school gradually rose to prominence as the favoured instrument for their realisation. Although some pioneering education authorities in England had established comprehensive schools in the 1950s, and the so-called 'omnibus school' had long been in existence in small towns and burghs in Scotland, it was not until the Labour victory in the general election in October 1964 that the reorganisation of secondary education on comprehensive lines became a matter of national policy.² Since then comprehensive education has become a complex emotional issue, clouded by extremist rhetoric and biased party political dogma. It seems pertinent to ask: what was understood by the terms 'comprehensive education' and a comprehensive school?

DEFINITIONS

An important point to make at the outset is that, perusing the extensive literature on the subject, the reader cannot fail to be struck by how frequently the terms are used without any attempt to define their precise meaning or identify the basic assumptions which underlie them.³ Indeed it is easier to talk of a comprehensive policy than it is to discern the principles on which it was based. Eggleston, writing in 1979, has this to say:

'It is to say the least very difficult to identify the category 'comprehensive school' in most of the many countries which have adopted them ... it is virtually impossible to isolate the term 'comprehensive' as a single significant variable'.⁴

The comprehensive debate, for all that it was a social, educational and political issue at both national and local levels, was obfuscated by much idealism, abstraction and theoretical pronouncements, with few writers attempting to translate ambiguous and often ideological concepts into more accurate terminology capable of providing a practical strategy which could be put into operation. This confusion and lack of clarity is alluded to by Ball (1981):

'As a descriptive category, the term 'comprehensive school' remains essentially without analytical meaning ... an examination of the literature of comprehensive education makes it clear that there is no agreement either in government policy or educational theory about the goals and purposes of comprehensive education. There is no generally accepted notion of what comprehensive schools are intended to achieve'.⁵

Nevertheless, four recurrent themes feature prominently in theoretical statements about comprehensive schools:

1. A comprehensive school admits all children of secondary school age from a defined catchment area and provides a secondary education for them in one establishment.
2. A comprehensive school attempts to integrate children of all social classes and intellectual abilities.
3. A comprehensive school enables resources (human and material) and educational facilities to be concentrated in a central location.
4. A comprehensive school provides an educational resource which is an integral part of the community in which it is situated.

Quite apart from these general distinguishing features, it is also possible to identify in the literature three basic conceptual models for the comprehensive school, each varying in the extent to which it

represents an alternative vision of schooling to the one which prevailed in the segregated system.

THE MERITOCRATIC MODEL

In this view, a comprehensive school seeks to maintain academic achievement in a disciplined atmosphere as a primary aim, teaching pupils in homogeneous ability groups and permitting flexibility and movement between them to remedy 'misplacements'. A school's 'success' is determined by its performance in national examinations. This model adopts a predominantly orthodox view of schooling, and sees the comprehensive school as essentially a fairer and more efficient means of ensuring equality of educational opportunity for educational success. The classic exponent of this approach is Dr. Rhodes Boyson⁶ supported by Mary Warnock.⁷ The statement made by Michael Stewart in the House of Commons in January 1965 announcing the Labour Government's intention to reorganise secondary education on comprehensive lines adopted an analogous stance:⁸

'This House, conscious of the need to raise educational standards at all levels, and regretting that the realisation of this objective is impeded by the segregation of children into different types of secondary school, notes with approval the efforts of local education authorities to reorganise secondary education on comprehensive lines, which will preserve all that is valuable in grammar school education for those children who receive it and make it available to more children'.

For its part, the Scottish Education Department, when pressed by the Educational Institute of Scotland in 1969 for a definition of the term 'comprehensive education' replied evasively in a letter to the Executive:

'It would be out of place for the Department to attempt to set out rigid definitions in a field where a great deal of experiment is going on and is to be welcomed ... There are, however, one or two fundamental characteristics of comprehensive education. One is that at the point of transfer from primary school, children should not be

preselected for different types of secondary school or for different types of secondary education; this was the point on which Circular 600 concentrated. Another characteristic is that pupils should be progressively guided into courses which suit their interests and aptitudes as they develop, and that this process should largely take place for all pupils in the same environment. This implies a genuinely uncommitted start to secondary education in which all or most pupils initially take the same range of subjects ... it does not mean that all pupils taking a common course must proceed at the same pace and have their progress assessed on a common standard of attainment'.⁹

THE EGALITARIAN MODEL

This model emphasises the integrative potential of the comprehensive school in terms of mixing different social classes to obtain a less divided society, but espouses the concept of appropriate educational provision in order to realise each pupil's potential. Miller (1961), Cole (1964), Miles (1968), Jenkins (1966), Pedley (1969), Gardner (1968), Benn and Simon (1970) and Crosland (1956, 1974)¹⁰ all subscribe to this definition:

'A comprehensive school gathers all children of all abilities and social classes in one school, and provides an appropriate variety of courses ... it seeks to provide for all children in a given locality a secondary education suited to their diverse aims, interests, abilities and aptitudes'.¹¹

Implicit in this view is internal selection according to ability as this is progressively revealed, but done in such a way as to make distinctions between pupils less invidious. Discussing experiments with comprehensive schools in 1956, Crosland states:

'There is no sign of any levelling down of standards, and some evidence even of the reverse. The main reason is that the comprehensive schools have not, as many feared (and some hoped) mixed children of different abilities in the same class, but have adopted a system of testing and differentiation designed to produce homogeneous classes of more or less similar standards of attainment ... division into streams, according to ability, remains essential ... the object of having comprehensive schools is not to abolish all competition and envy ... but to avoid the extreme social

division caused by physical segregation into schools of widely divergent status, and the extreme social resentment caused by failure to win a grammar school place, when this is thought to be the only avenue to a middle class occupation'.¹²

Scottish Education Department Circular 600, in which Scottish local authorities were 'asked' by the Secretary of State to reorganise secondary education on comprehensive lines provides a similar rationale:

'(the organisation of secondary education) should avoid the segregation of pupils into separate schools at the transfer stage ... it is his view that young people will greatly benefit in their personal and social development by spending the formative years of early adolescence in schools which represent a fuller cross-section of the community'. (Para 5)

'Arrangements on the lines suggested above will make it possible for the course a pupil takes in each subject to be determined by his personal needs ... (and) ... will minimise social divisions'.¹³ (Para 7)

THE RADICAL MODEL

On this interpretation of the implications of comprehensivisation, a more innovative stance is adopted. Reorganisation of the educational system is taken as being the signal for a change in educational philosophy which will impinge on the whole ethos of the secondary school, and will affect the content of the curriculum, methodology, assessment and teacher-pupil relationships. As early as 1965, Young and Armstrong, arguing that the administrative structural changeover was but a first step, declared:

'Comprehensive reform cannot be completed except by internal reorganisation within each school. The initiative passes from the politician and administrator to the teacher. Our thesis is that, without a new look at curriculum, comprehensive reform cannot be rounded off'.¹⁴

Albert Rowe (1971) and more recently Watts (1977, 1980)¹⁵ both stress the dangers in stopping short at organisational reform without effecting

a fundamental change of approach within the school itself. Rowe, for example, gives a flavour of his outlook by enumerating what he sees as the essential features of a comprehensive school. A brief selection will suffice as an illustration: school as a humane experience; a democratic internal framework; attention to pupil dignity irrespective of ability; no predetermination of achievement levels; the role of praise; the centrality of pastoral care; an emphasis on co-operation rather than competition. Daunt (1975) and Watts (1977)¹⁶ are also exponents of a more radical view of the comprehensive school. The former writer takes an extreme view, claiming that true comprehensive education must be based on the principle of equal value, a purely educational principle whereby the education of all pupils is held to be intrinsically of equal value. He acknowledges that translation of the principle into practice will bring conflict and opposition in the school setting. The translation inevitably entails concepts like innovation, participation, co-operation, autonomy and individual excellence. An even more exhaustive list of principles upon which comprehensive education should be based has recently been drawn up by members of CSCS at York University:

- access and entitlement to a worthwhile and appropriate education
- emphasis on non-selective grouping of pupils
- equal valuing of all pupils shown in an emphasis on personal achievement
- school as a humanistic community based on a broad intake of pupils
- positive teacher attitudes towards all pupils and their educational development
- the active involvement of pupils in their education, negotiating the curriculum and discussing their attainments
- educational experiences designed to foster pupil self-esteem

- education offering opportunities for success
- education caring for all pupils equally by meeting their diverse needs
- education providing a challenge to all pupils to enable them to give of their best.¹⁷

The intention is that these principles should act as a guide to practice in a truly comprehensive school and contribute to its essential ethos. The account of attempts to embrace a radical interpretation of comprehensive education would be incomplete without reference to the work of R.F. Mackenzie who, in schools in Fife and Aberdeen, endeavoured to implement a child-centred educational philosophy, but encountered innumerable obstacles. His experiences led him to engage in a sustained and polemical attack on the state education system, and to regard the 'new' comprehensive schools as no more than modern versions of the selective schools which they replaced.¹⁸

The identification and use of conceptual models are well-known analytical devices in the social sciences. Equally, their inherent dangers must be recognised. Reality, especially the complex reality that is a secondary school, rarely matches up to one model, and indeed one school can exhibit features of several models simultaneously. The point should also be made that a school may match a particular model at a theoretical level only, and closer examination of its actual processes and practices can reveal a wide divergence. Moreover, the whole area of the aims and objectives of secondary education is a potential minefield, and one which is rarely addressed in any serious fashion. Nevertheless, the models will prove useful in determining the form that comprehensive education took in the West of Scotland over the period under review.

At this point it is well to introduce a note of caution. The ideal descriptions of school types in the models are neat, clear-cut and easy to envisage. They do, however, overlook some essential facts which require constantly to be borne in mind:

- they exist at the level of rhetoric only, and it is arguable that much of the comprehensive debate has been conducted at that level to the virtual exclusion of the realities of secondary school education
- schools are not autonomous units existing in a vacuum and dispensing a generally perceived 'good' called education
- the motives for introducing comprehensive education, therefore, may not have been entirely benign
- a central issue is the role of the school in society, and society's expectation of its function, both value-laden questions intimately bound up with what kind of society politicians and policy-makers wish to create. Writers of the Marxist school of thought argue that in capitalist societies the central function of the school is to ensure that control of the means of production is retained by the dominant groups, who thus use the education system as a means of social control. In this view, schools inculcate deference and acceptance in pupils, and education is perceived as exploitative, incapable of being radically changed by social democratic policies like comprehensive education¹⁹
- there is no evidence of unanimity about the aims and objectives of schooling, our understanding of the processes of teaching and learning are not yet at an advanced stage, and we are still far from being able to measure the outcomes of the educational process other than by the crude criteria of examination success
- the geographical location of a school has a powerful effect on the potential educability of its intake

- the cumulative findings of sociologists over the past thirty years return the same verdict: the power of the school to counteract the central determinants of educational success is circumscribed. Writers have offered varying explanations for the failure of the school to effect social change. Halsey et al, for example, argue that class lies at the root of social inequality, while the French sociologist Bourdieu, using the concept of 'cultural capital', contends that the relative lack of educational success and social mobility of working class children is attributable to the fact that society is stratified and that schools reflect in their curricula the 'cultural capital' of those who control the economy. Fletcher, too, has recently claimed that the intransigent facts of society militate against the concept of equality as a principle of social justice²⁰
- cognisance must be taken of the political, social, economic and cultural forces which operate in society and perforce impinge on schools and schooling.

THE CULTURAL CONTEXT

Since the aim of this thesis is to study the introduction and development of comprehensive education in the West of Scotland, it seems essential to refer to some aspects of the Scottish educational system and its tradition. Writers of the classic studies of this subject²¹ stress the great Scottish tradition of education which they trace back to the publication in 1560 of John Knox's First Book of Discipline, and which, they say, accounts for the system's distinctiveness, and has moulded the Scottish character and contributed to the national identity. This tradition is characterised, they claim, by the following features: a high conception of the value of education; openness to members of all social classes; the provision of an educational highway from the

elementary school to the university; promotion to successive stages on that highway dependent on effort and discernible intellectual capacity.

McClelland (1935) provides this apt summary:

'... the reader will have the key to the understanding of most of the features of our system if he bears in mind that the Scottish people value education, and that the central and unbroken strand in our long tradition is the recognition of the right of the clever child, from whatever social class he may come, to the highest and best education the country has to offer'.²²

Hutchison (1973),²³ in his study of educational documents covering four centuries, argues that it is necessary to have a historical perspective in order the better to understand and appreciate the educational system as it is today. If, as he asserts 'the past has powerfully helped to shape the present', it may be helpful to consider the characteristic features of the Scottish educational system which have their origin in its historical development.

Education in Scotland has long been recognised for its ideology of separation and differential provision for pupils of differing abilities. Even as early as The First Book of Discipline, attention was to be concentrated on those pupils 'apt for letters'. This led to the powerful image of the 'lad o'pairts' in the democratic tradition, and to a particularly Scottish conception of the concept of equality of opportunity, namely, after initial access for all pupils to education, meritocratic selection would identify those destined for the highest academic honours. Mitchison et al (1944), lamenting the fact that the democratic ideals enshrined in the 1918 (Scotland) Act had been largely ignored by educational administrators, have this to say:

'Dominated as they were by their country's academic tradition, they preferred to spend their money and energies in providing secondary schools in which the vast majority of

their country 's future citizens were to be sacrificed on an altar of scholasticism'.²⁴

It is not an exaggeration to say that the history of Scottish education from the 18th century onwards is the story of the translation of an elitist, academic conception of education into a reality in the school system. The development of secondary education in the late 19th century in particular, with the gradual emergence of burgh and grammar schools, the birth of the qualifying examination in 1903, the influence of Craik and Struthers of the Scottish Education Department in the early years of the present century, and the Education (Scotland) Acts of 1936 and 1945 - all contributed to the creation of a graded system based on academic ability. The research of academics like McClelland, Thomson and McIntosh, by refining methods of selection in the interests of identifying an intellectual elite, led to a further entrenchment of the Scottish obsession with academic ability, and the consequential neglect of the children thought not to possess it, as Boyd and Roxburgh show.²⁵ In their survey of comprehensive development in the late 1960s Benn and Simon make the point that the internal organisation of Scottish 'comprehensive' schools was marked by rigid segregation and what they term 'inflexible parallelism'.²⁶

Both Cruikshank (1970) and Mitchison (1978)²⁷ focus on another facet of the Scottish educational system. In their view, the predominance of the traditions of Calvinism and Protestantism has had a powerful impact on Scottish culture. As a result, the social fabric has been imbued with a rigid moral framework of which authoritarian discipline and regular work are the salient features. Hence respect accrues to those who subscribe to the ethic of individual achievement gained through academic competition. As Young (1979) and Anderson (1983)²⁸ have shown, the

educational system was greatly affected by the growth in population and spread of industrialisation in the 19th century, both of which caused its cherished democracy to take a severe knock. The rise of a wealthy middle class led to increased class and status consciousness, and the educational system began to be marked by differentiation according to social origin. It was explicitly exploited by the ruling middle class as a form of social control, by allowing a limited amount of social mobility within the developing class structure. 'Democracy' gradually came to be interpreted as providing access to educational opportunities in order to identify and select the ablest for educational (and therefore social) promotion. The related creation and development of national certificate examinations, and their effect on the practice of education in Scotland is well documented by Osborne (1966, 1968)²⁹, and the historical antecedents of the comprehensive school - the omnibus school in rural areas, and the senior secondary/junior secondary schools in urban areas - became the principal institutions in which secondary education was dispensed. Forbes Macgregor (1970) has provided a vivid and down-to-earth assessment of the impact of these developments on the Scottish educational system:

'This was the nature of Scotland during its belated renaissance and it demonstrates the immanence of intellectual fervour, at least from the beginning of the Christian era ... this has been the eternal ideal of all lovers of Minerva, goddess of intellectual activity of all kinds ... in every age we find the lust for learning divorced from reality developing into a mania ... all pupils tended to be regarded as conscripts ... schoolmasters were traditionally tyrants ... the effect of all this mixture of morality, military discipline, dry-as-dust arithmetic, chopped grammar and inert fact was to make us hate school ... holders of academic distinction were the object of undue adulation ... (a) passage (from Robinson Crusoe) describes not only my educational experiences but our perilous educational and political condition: 'no sooner had I found myself making headway towards a state conducive to the play of free intelligence and wide education than the old forces of reaction, seeming almost spiteful at seeing me escape, tried to drown me'. It has

applied to Scottish education for centuries and still applies'.³⁰

That such characteristics have proved impervious to the passage of time is demonstrated by the findings of a recent piece of research conducted in Dundee schools.³¹ Concentrating on the introduction of the house system, the researchers discovered that the following points tended to militate against attempts to innovate:

- the system's structure and the attitudes of its teachers
- aims and objectives in line with the Scottish tradition
- the legitimacy of tradition as a guide to behaviour
- a marked emphasis on the intellect and its corollary - a disregard for the 'less able' and practical/aesthetic studies
- a formal, expository teaching style
- the importance attached to sound discipline
- the power of the individual subjects and subject departments
- a pronounced conservatism and unwillingness to depart from well-tried and familiar ways of working.

It seems reasonable to argue, therefore, that the comprehensive school, as it was envisaged in government policy in 1965, was introduced to a country where the social structure and climate of opinion had forged a particular philosophy and practice of education. As Cruikshank, puts it:

'The ethos of the nation was reflected in its schools'.³²

It has been suggested by several writers³³ that Scottish educationalists have been over-fond of blindly and uncritically adopting traditions of the past as guides to present practice, and this has led to a complacency and lack of educational vision. As Humes and Paterson³⁴

state:

'Taken in total, the standard histories of Scottish education indicate a continued fascination with the country's educational tradition, a wish to preserve what is valuable in that tradition and a desire to promulgate these virtues by reminding others (often English legislators but also Scots themselves) of the reflection in Scottish educational practices of a unique Scottish culture and identity which it would be unwise to ignore and fatal to forget'.

Conservativeness and an unwillingness to experiment are not new in Scottish education (Smout, 1977).³⁵ One only has to consider the fate of the 1947 Advisory Council Report. Its advocacy of a liberal, general and democratic education proved too progressive a break with tradition, and its radical recommendations were shelved in favour of a continuation of the status quo. It is not, therefore, overstating the case to say, with Bone (1971),³⁶ that for all her 'democratic' tradition, Scotland was imbued with a fairly strong predisposition against the common school, which can be accounted for by historico - cultural reasons. One suspects that the following description of education in the 1960s veils the reality in rhetoric:

'In the system of education, especially in the sixties, the amazing, the far-fetched and the impossible came into serious contemplation; the Utopian visions of four centuries were adopted as political programmes, even as practical policy.. The effect was to erode the traditional conservatism. Men in authority, who had once regarded sweeping changes as unthinkable, now undertook to tackle them, timidly at first, then boldly, and finally with a decisive attack which seemed very close to rashness. The climate of the sixties was one of constant change, theoretical and material ... one emergency followed another'.³⁷

Indeed, the dislocation between rhetoric and reality in Scottish education is important in the context of the introduction of comprehensive education. In recent years, several writers have

challenged the more conventional accounts which purport to glorify the openness and democracy of education in Scotland. It will be useful, therefore, to take account of some of the debunking of the Scottish educational tradition in these critical accounts, as a corrective counterbalance to the received wisdom. Brown (1975)³⁸ argues that the democratic tradition in fact ensures inequality of provision, with attention and resources always devoted in the first instance to a minority in the system. Houston (1986)³⁹, critical of the power of the democratic tradition, upward social mobility through education and the assumption of Scottish classlessness, argues that in Scotland there was no fundamental egalitarian consensus, and thus no genuine commitment to equality of opportunity, so that the 'lad o'pairts' syndrome in fact preserved the existing social structure, and contributed to social harmony by maintaining an illusion of fairness. Cuddihy et al (1970)⁴⁰ and Harvie (1981)⁴¹ both comment on the lack of critical thought in Scotland about fundamental educational principles caused by the predominance of the political and social functions of the educational system. Campbell (1981)⁴² avers that stasis and immobility are central to Scottishness and the Scottish identity, a crucial feature of which is the preservation of the values of yesteryear. Cuddihy (1970)⁴³ believes that the dominant societal and cultural values which impinge on education reinforce an elitist ethic which attributes inferiority or superiority to people on the strength of their performance in the school system. This leads to 'complacent narcissism and cultural provincialism'⁴⁴, which in turn casts doubt on the potential of the comprehensive school to provide a modern and relevant education for all its pupils. Several writers⁴⁵ refer to the power of myth in Scottish education. Myth is defined as an assertive account which serves to explain the world as it is, but which, on closer examination, may be

only tenuously connected to reality. Nairn offers this blunt description of the position:

'Scotland is a land where ideal has never, even for an instant, coincided with fact'.⁴⁶

According to the writers of this school, the power of myth creates a cosy, consensual view of the functioning of the educational system, and hence radical questioning or contrary views are unwelcome. In consequence, change is usually cosmetic, and leaves the basic structure and underlying value system unaltered. The existence of mythical accounts of the educational system leads to a perception of the philosophical or theoretical dimensions of education as threatening, and thus people prefer to take refuge in the alleged glories of the past, rather than face an unpalatable present. Broadfoot (1979)⁴⁷ suggests that the difficulties encountered in trying to implement the comprehensive system of education in Scotland testify to the need to formulate different questions and re-define the basic issues in education. Paterson (1983)⁴⁸ lays particular stress on the importance of wider forces in Scottish culture which have shaped the values which predominate in the country's educational system. Scotland's inherent poverty, he contends, has resulted in a desire to 'get on', and exacerbated the cult of materialism and a craving for status in the social hierarchy. The contradiction between a national democracy and actual elitism creates a conflict in the education system which, as a consequence, is marked by a formal openness which masks informal selectivity. Secondary education for all in a Scottish context, therefore, becomes shrouded in rhetoric which veils the continuance of traditional practices - an academic education for the future leaders of society, while the majority, adjudged 'non-academic', are fobbed off with an inferior and inappropriate educational pabulum, which acts both

as a palliative and as a form of social control. In this view, the comprehensive school represents nothing more than a change of name which retains the former divisions by type of course under one roof.

THE POLITICAL CONTEXT

Powerful though historical and cultural forces have been in shaping Scotland's educational system, account must also be taken of its political context. It has become a cliché to say that education and politics are inextricably intertwined. To take cognisance of some aspects of the political ambience in which the Scottish educational system operates seems, therefore, apposite to this study, not least, because the subject of comprehensive education is one which particularly highlights the interconnection between education and politics. It must be made clear at the outset that the term 'politics' is used here in two senses: the ideological, which encompasses the value and belief system of a nation and its leaders, and the elective, which refers to the negotiation and sometimes struggle between different interest groups in society to take decisions which concern priorities.

Many commentators⁴⁹ on the subject have drawn attention to the fact that the Scottish educational system is characterised by strong central administrative control. A former Secretary of the Scottish Education Department has put it thus:

'Historically the Central Department has always been conceived not only with the necessary processes of administration, but also with educational policy, with teaching methods and with the content of education ... thus the Department has made a very substantial contribution to the shaping of educational policy in schools ... some measure of regulation must remain when standards have to be national and public opinion is concerned to see them raised. But, we would hope to move steadily from negative and particular control to positive and general guidance ... (but) as things are there is still a disquieting tendency in

the Scottish educational world to look to the Department to take the initiative in far too many things'.⁵⁰

James Kellas (1968, 1975)⁵¹ has also commented on how closely schools are controlled by the Scottish Education Department which he calls a 'directive agency'. He argues that the Scottish Office has created a bureaucracy which is recruited from the Scottish people, and is thus knowledgeable about it, but adds that the price paid for its autonomous policy process is a narrow parochialism and restricted educational vision which reinforces its insularity from the English educational system. More recently, Keating and Midwinter (1983) have pointed out that the fragmentation and departmentalism in the Scottish Office have resulted in substantial policy autonomy in its constituent departments:

'In the case of education, the degree of responsibility is almost total for the policy process'.⁵²

Agreeing that Scottish educational policy making is largely self-contained, Raab⁵³ alludes to an interesting paradox: the high degree of centralisation and consensus in the Scottish educational world would seem to indicate a considerable potential for making policy that was not ad-hoc and responsive to immediate pressure, whereas in reality there appears to be little incentive to do so. Thus, existing practices are reinforced, with decision-making in the Scottish Education Department remaining within professional and administrative circles, despite the ostensible attempts to devolve some of its power in the mid 1960s when the General Teaching Council and the Scottish Examination Board were set up.⁵⁴

In addition, the ethos of policy making in the early years of this century appears to have had a marked effect. Osborne (1966) and

Anderson (1983)⁵⁵ have highlighted the fact that a preoccupation with the social/selective function of education, dating from the late 19th century has led to the type of policy making which ensures its continuance and a permanent legacy of a segregationist ethic. Labelling Scottish Education Department policy 'utilitarian vocationalism', Anderson states:

'By the 1900s, the emphasis was less on the individual, more on the state and its need to recruit the best brains from all classes for the sake of national efficiency; the lad o'pairts aspect of the democratic tradition had been transmuted into a meritocratic elitism which satisfied contemporary notions of equality of opportunity, but which may strike the democrat of today as particularly narrow. From the point of view of the schools, the new structure of scholarship, the leaving certificate and university entrance examinations meant that the pupil who was to succeed had to be ruthlessly drive over a series of hurdles, and it is perhaps to this period ... that one may ascribe the examination consciousness and fact-grinding often seen as characteristic of the Scottish secondary school'.⁵⁶

Alluding to the centrality to and overpowering influence of the University on the Scottish educational system, McPherson (1973)⁵⁷ argues that it has been affected by two dominant values: collectivism (or the assertion of nationality and distinctiveness through education) and individualism (or competitiveness to succeed) of which there has been a marked strain. Policy making has been based on these twin criteria, which have become fused in the Scottish notion that pupils should all get a formal first chance in the education stakes, but subsequently sink or swim according to their proven academic ability. McPherson asserts:

'it is beyond question that the aim, but only to a lesser extent the achievement, of those concerned with the national system, was to make education accessible in three senses: geographically, numerically and socially in terms of availability to different social classes'.⁵⁸

Notwithstanding policy trends in the Scottish Education Department earlier in the century, the issue of Circular 600 marked a new policy initiative - the reorganisation of secondary education on comprehensive

lines. By the mid 1960s the comprehensive issue had achieved political salience, and indeed was a central plank in the Labour Party manifesto for the 1964 General Election. Despite the tradition of separate English and Scottish educational provision alluded to earlier, educational issues which have a party political nature tend to lead to policy uniformity north and south of the Border. Given that comprehensive education had become a major question of national importance, why did the Labour Government opt to launch its new policy by means of a Circular rather than legislation? Writers on the subject have advanced several opinions. Keith-Lucas and Richards (1978)⁵⁹ claim that governments prefer to rule by circular on issues of potential conflict, while Regan (1977)⁶⁰ sees the Circular as an indication of a strong lead from central government and having the function of being a catalyst to action.⁶¹ Published political autobiographies of Labour politicians in the Cabinet at the time⁶² suggest that while some members preferred legislation, this course of action was ultimately rejected because of the party's small overall majority and the long tradition of local authority autonomy in education with which legislation would have conflicted. Buxton (1973)⁶³ sees the circulars on comprehensive education as being disruptive of relations between central and local government, given that the issue had party political overtones and thus infringed vested interests. Contributions to the Open University Course (1974)⁶⁴ argue that educational policy arises from an amalgam of ministerial views and those of civil servants, and that choices have to be made in deciding what kind of political sanction to give to major changes. In their view, the Circular was the preferred instrument because the government assumed that local authorities would co-operate willingly in the change. Higginson in Broadfoot (1981)⁶⁵ claims that, given a century of efforts to define secondary education, the decision

to proceed by Circular was either audacious or naive in the extreme, chosen probably because it was not underpinned by a coherent policy based on defined objectives and priorities, and was thus not seriously viewed as a means of fundamentally changing the structure of society. Rather, it spoke the rhetoric of educational reform to avoid social and political reform. Thus, as Bilski (1971)⁶⁶ states, Labour tried to create the impression that the national policy enshrined in the Circular was the result of development all over the country, and it was thus perceived by the government as a means of providing central guidance to local authorities whose co-operation in the new initiatives was fully expected and relied on. In Scotland in particular, with its long tradition of omnibus schools and attachment to the myth of the democratic tradition, the issue of Circular 600 was based on the assumption that its proposals amounted to nothing more than a rationalisation of existing practice and was thus a non-directive document.⁶⁷

The subject of the reorganisation of secondary education on comprehensive lines is illuminating about the much-debated question of central-local relations in the education service. Official statements make reference to the concept of 'partnership', and to the fact that the nationally determined but locally administered education service operates on mutual co-operation, understanding and consensus. This influential if hackneyed picture, with its connotations of harmony, has been challenged by writers who study the public policy process. Jackson (1965)⁶⁸ claims that central government, although it has much statutory power, tends to prefer not to use it and to exercise control through persuasion. Shipman (1984)⁶⁹ states that the only real control used by central government is financial. He says that all major decisions are

taken at the centre but thereafter local authorities are left very much to their own devices in interpreting policy in the light of local circumstances. Shipman conceptualises the relationship on policy matters as one of central push with local development. His diffused power centres model is, however, challenged by Dearlove (1973), Regan (1977) and James (1980).⁷⁰ They take the view that the notion of central government control is much exaggerated, and that in reality central government proceeds diplomatically, in the knowledge that it will use force only if compelled to. Hence these writers see local authorities as significant political entities with a great deal of scope to act at their own discretion. Far from being passive respondents to central direction, they have wide freedom to interpret national initiatives in their own way. Anyone doubting the reality of local authority power need only consider the outcomes of the famous Enfield and Tameside court cases on the subject of centrally directed comprehensive education. Other commentators (O.U. 1974; Pratt et al 1973; Fenwick and McBride 1981)⁷¹ claim that the partnership model may conceal more than it reveals. In this view, policy emerges from a complex, interlocking set of formal and informal relationships, so that the education system is a broad national framework with local variations. In the specifically Scottish context, Kellas (1975)⁷² states that both central and local government play an authoritarian role in all aspects of education, with the Scottish Education Department and local education committees exercising direct control.

Many writers allude to the influence both of the Inspectorate and of permanent civil servants on the policy making process. Regan (1977)⁷³ states that the Inspectorate act as the eyes and ears of the central authority, to which they give professional advice. Kellas (1975)⁷⁴

argues that Scotland has a powerful national Inspectorate, and the effects of this have been to create a tendency to conserve rather than experiment and to look to the centre for direction. Graham has this to say about Her Majesty's Inspectors:

'A distinctive feature of our organisation and methods is the Inspectorate ... from the beginning, Her Majesty's Inspector of schools did more than just inspect ... out of experience and authority he gave advice and sought constructively to improve. He became and remains a link man, furnishing an informal commentary on the state of play in his area, bringing to notice the practical difficulties of applying policy, and, in the other direction, interpreting the Government's intentions, doing locally and personally those parts of the Department's business that are more readily done in that way ... they are in one sense our legates and in another our early warning system'.⁷⁵

Kogan (1975), Fenwick and McBride (1981) and Lodge and Blackstone (1982)⁷⁶ all allude to the power and influence of permanent civil servants. Kogan claims they are a major source of policy continuity, exercising a strong influence on the evolution of policy by virtue of their authority and prestige. Both Kogan and Raab (1977)⁷⁷ subscribe to the view that policy making in the education service is characterised by incrementalism (i.e. change within the limits of the feasible to avoid major conflict), and this perforce ensures continuity. Raab's account of educational government in Scotland sees it as a cluster of administrative, regulatory and advisory bodies which overlap within a shared educational philosophy. The predominant model is one of disjointed incrementalism, operating in a cohesive and centripetal system. Even attempts to change the Inspectorate into an innovatory force to foster initiative among practising teachers by the use of working parties, still function within broad lines of policy laid down by the central authority, with Her Majesty's Inspectors exercising a formative influence on party membership by recommending only those

teachers who hold orthodox views. An ostensibly dispersed and pluralist model therefore, works within the parameters of a tight central grip. A recent major study of educational policy making in Scotland offers an authoritative account of the exercise of power in education. Using the explanatory concepts of 'pluralism' and 'corporatism' as a central part of their argument, the authors contend from their evidence that it is misleading to interpret Scottish education as being the victim of strong central control, since the decision making process in the post war period contained elements of both pluralism and corporatism.⁷⁸

Some comments on educational government at a purely local level are in order. Many recent studies have been conducted of policy making at local level, and most authors alert readers to the dangers of generalisation. Saran and Hill (1973, 1974)⁷⁹ think that the roles of various participants at local level change over time and with the issue. Saran feels that the key councillors are committee chairmen, and that great power is vested in the majority party, the caucus of which takes all the key decisions. In her view many councillors are earnest and hardworking individuals who, however, remain largely ignorant of the workings of the education system. James (1980)⁸⁰ too feels that the power of the committee in the structure of local government is great, but real control even decision-making is in the hands of a group of relatively few councillors. Local parties are inevitably influenced by national party ideology which they reflect locally, especially on major issues like comprehensive reorganisation. Batley et al (1970)⁸¹ have argued that the role of political will in a local authority is important, and that an unenthusiastic local authority can engender much inertia, even in the face of national policy statements. They point to two popular myths: the Director of Education does not manipulate his

political masters like puppets; and the officials do not merely carry out committee policy in a routine fashion. In reality, each makes a contribution in a collaborative enterprise where personalities play an important part, a point emphasised by Kogan and Van der Eyken (1973)⁸² who assert that the issue of comprehensive education illustrates the influence of strong individuals who possess authority in a pluralistic and incremental system of education. With particular reference to the Director of Education, Kogan and Van der Eyken (1973)⁸³ argue that he has real power and tangible authority, and can mould the nature of educational provision at local level. Much depends on his personal perception and interpretation of his role, but he has great potential for being an agent of change within nationally suggested guidelines. According to James (1980)⁸⁴, while the Director cannot obstruct local authority decisions or run counter to national policy, he can influence the way decisions are put into practice. He styles the Director as the information gatekeeper and a major power source, though it is pointed out that much depends upon the strength, organisation and length of tenure of office of the majority party.

It should be stated that, since the introduction of comprehensive education in the 1960s, local government has itself been reorganised, and that this event has had implications for central - local government relations in general, and relationships between officials and elected members in particular services like education. Although in the Scottish context the major part of the changeover to comprehensive education was complete by 1974 - at least structurally - it will be opportune to take account of what has been written on the subject of local government reorganisation, not least because the period covered by this thesis extends to 1980. Although Bush (1982)⁸⁵ states that the relationship

between central and local government is in reality ambiguous, confused and complex, much rhetoric and a cultural assumption of local authority independence disguises the reality. Regan (1977)⁸⁶ claims that, given the increase in size and reduction in the number of local authorities, they have become more powerful, and now the correct way to describe education is to say that it is a local service nationally supervised. Keith-Lucas and Richards (1978)⁸⁷ argue that the advent of corporate management as the overarching principle in local government has led in fact to a marked increase in party political influence, so that council meetings take decisions on party lines to ratify what the ruling group has already agreed in advance. In addition, the reduction in the number of local authorities has given scope for increased central control. James (1980)⁸⁸, in his study of comprehensivisation in England, remarks on the more policy-oriented party politics and greater party solidarity that have emerged since regionalisation. The Policy and Resources Committee is a powerful mechanism for party control, and the caucus of the ruling group is the real centre of power. Given much overt control, it is interesting to speculate on the role of the Directorate staff in the education service, and the extent to which regionalisation has affected their dealings with local councillors. Commenting on the education service since reorganisation in a specifically Scottish context, McLellan (1976)⁸⁹ claims that relations between officers and elected members have become more formal as the ambiance has become more markedly political. The differentiation of function between region and division has resulted in negative attitudes and role confusion. The Director of Education has become a civil servant who has a political rather than personal relationship with the Chairperson of the Education Committee, and although he administers policy, he is not its principal determining agent. Thus McLellan sees reorganisation as having

challenged, if not overturned the values which previously characterised the administration of the education service at local level. A recent study of the interplay of politics and education since regionalisation concluded that increasing awareness of the weaknesses and limitations of comprehensive provision heightened political interest in education in the late 1970s. The corollary of continuing inequalities coupled with a period of economic recession was enhanced questioning by politicians of the work of schools and a deepening suspicion of education officials.⁹⁰

THE IMPLEMENTATION CONTEXT

Having considered some central aspects of the political context in which the education service operates, and in which the policy process occurs, attention must inevitably focus on how policy is implemented and translated into practice. The subject of educational policy implementation has attracted a number of students who have endeavoured to elicit the principal factors which impinge on implementation. An important one is policy origin. Pointing up policy's historical heritage, Evetts (1973)⁹¹ draws attention to the fact that much of twentieth century education policy has its roots in the Victorian era, when education was seen in two lights: as a means of social control, and as an aid to the nation's efficiency. Carelli and Morris (1979)⁹² and Lodge and Blackstone (1982)⁹³ argue that in the post-war period in particular, education policy has originated from a desire to maximise the nation's ability and reduce the wastage of potential talent to a minimum. These authors, together with Lawson and Silver (1973), CERI/OECD (1977) and Watts (1980)⁹⁴ all stress that comprehensive policy was essentially politically motivated, arising from a growing social trend of increased demand for education because of its perceived beneficial value, and that this has had the result of affecting the

scale of educational provision without a corresponding questioning of the nature of the education that was to be provided to meet the increased demand. Hence, they argue, the status quo has merely been revamped rather than radically altered by the switch to a comprehensive system.

Another important factor relating to policy origin is the manner in which it is presented to those who have subsequently to implement it. Middleton and Weitzman (1976) and McPherson and Neave (1976)⁹⁵ have both highlighted the dangers in a policy which is presented as a 'fait accompli', having been decided upon by administrators who have agreed without prior consultation what the consumers want.

The final crucial factor is the nature of the policy itself, and the features it displays. With regard to the policy on comprehensive education, a number of critics⁹⁶ are unanimous that comprehensive policy was characterised by the following traits: it lacked central leadership and strong advocacy; it was based on ill-thought-out aims and unclear theoretical objectives; it had no stated goals or clearly formulated strategy to back it up; no criteria to judge the success of a comprehensive school were announced, so that operationalising the policy was rendered more difficult; no prior research was conducted as to its feasibility, nor was a systematic evaluation carried out of its actual outcomes. In these circumstances, which are ascribed to a failure of national will and commitment, there was an increased likelihood that the implementation of comprehensive policy would lead to unintended outcomes.

Related to issues of policy origin, presentation and nature is the

question of how innovations are managed, and although there are differing views as to how much of an innovation comprehensive education was in Scotland, it at least falls within the category of innovation inasmuch as it marked a break with the tradition of separate junior and senior secondary schools. Fantini and Weinstein (1968) and Bell, Fowler and Little (1973)⁹⁷, commenting on the fact that very few reforms in education are actually implemented to any appreciable degree, particularly those targeted at the underlying status quo, attribute the failure to the fact that often the administrators who launch a reform have different or conflicting interests and aims from the implementers. These writers, supported by Pressman and Wildavsky (1973)⁹⁸ point out that attempts to implement a change in a top-down fashion, especially in rigid bureaucratic organisations, are highly likely to evoke a defensive response in those pressured with 'demands' to change. Another factor which must be taken into account is the almost legendary autonomy which schools in this country enjoy in devising curricula and internal school organisation, having often been given merely the broadest of general guidelines on which to work. Hence, the variety of practice encountered in schools, partly accounted for by the fact that those who devise innovative policies rely on strong leadership and advocacy by local authorities and headteachers (Burrows, 1974).⁹⁹ In recent studies of the implementation process¹⁰⁰ certain factors emerge as being prerequisites of successful policy adoption. The existence of multiple decision-points over decentralised sub-units militates against this, as does the mood of the environment into which the new policy is introduced. It is folly to assume, as administrators often do, that the environment is a mere passive recipient, and to underestimate the complexity and magnitude of co-ordinating all the tasks and agencies involved in the programme. Equally crucial is the power of the ideology

and value system of those required to implement a policy which can impede or compromise its acceptance. Evetts (1973) and Burrows (1974)¹⁰¹ allude to the potential for ignoring new policy when it affects people who have not grasped its implications for their everyday lives, or whose underlying values and beliefs about the system in which they operate are left intact by it. Dealing with the implementation of the comprehensive education policy, some writers have mentioned facets which did not appear to receive adequate attention¹⁰². All take the view that it was a major change in the education system, but that it was introduced without adequate consultation and support for those affected by it; the existing arrangements within the system were taken as given, and the implications of comprehensivisation were expected to be grafted on; there was a widely-held assumption that the change would not arouse controversy, and indeed be widely accepted by teachers at the grassroots; it was principally envisaged at the organisation/management level, with little or no thought given to the corresponding changes that would be required in curriculum, pedagogy and methodology. In short, as several recent commentators have suggested¹⁰³, comprehensive education, introduced for political objectives, encountered urban and social realities, as well as the system imperatives of the existing education service, both of which demonstrated remarkable stability, with the result that those who had to implement the policy adopted an essentially pragmatic response.

Focusing on the act of policy implementation in its own right, the major theorists¹⁰⁴ have indicated that the mere adoption of a policy as official is no guarantee of its successful implementation, and that there is a danger of considering the latter after the former, when it is chiefly concerned with means rather than ends. Moreover, they suggest,

implementation, if it is to maximise the chances of success, must take account of the context in which it is to be conducted, and not operate at a purely bureaucratic or semantic level. The ideological stance of dominant individuals who are charged with the implementation inevitably affects their capacity to implement the policy-makers intentions to the letter. Jenkins (1966)¹⁰⁵ suggests that the history of educational policy implementation in the past few decades shows that it has tended to be conducted within the limits of the feasible, and to be governed by a mentality which is concerned not to jettison the best of the old in the rush to adopt untested theories which challenge established and revered procedures. The result has been that lines of development have remained within the confines of the existing system, and have rarely offered a radical alternative to it. Looking at the management of educational innovation in a specifically Scottish context, McPherson and Neave (1976)¹⁰⁶ suggest that implementation depends as much on the existence of an informal consensus as it does on explicit control, which is then exercised by mobilising consensual views. The Scottish administrative style produces change with relative speed, but the gains are often achieved at the cost of considerable passivity in schools, a situation which tends to neutralise the impact of policy drives emanating from the Scottish Education Department. McPherson (1973), in an article on the Scottish educational system and Scottish society, summarises the position in these terms:

'This balance between action and inaction is the key to an understanding of how the educational system has accommodated to external changes during the last hundred years'.¹⁰⁷

The foregoing discussion is intended to provide a conceptual framework as a background against which to discuss the introduction and development of the comprehensive school in the West of Scotland in the

period 1965-80. It is hoped to use the four contexts discussed in this chapter, and the issues arising from them, as a focus to examine the data collected in the course of the study. The findings will be measured against the conceptual framework, and the discussion and analysis undertaken in subsequent chapters will seek to determine the extent to which the evidence collected substantiates or is at variance with the main points raised in the literature reviewed.

CHAPTER ONE

FOOTNOTES

1. The best known of these studies include: Social Mobility in Britain, D.V. Glass, Routledge 1954; Social Class and Educational Opportunity, J. Floud, A.H. Halsey, F.M. Martin, Heinemann, 1957; The Home and the School, J.W.B. Douglas, McGibbon and Kee 1964; Secondary School Selection, P.E. Vernon, 1957; Intelligence Testing and the Comprehensive School B. Simon London 1953; Home Environment and the School, Elizabeth Fraser ULP 1959; Education and the Working Class, B. Jackson and D. Marsden RKP 1962. The sociological evidence of inequality and the social class explanations of it gained further support in two major reports commissioned by the Conservative Government: 15-18. The Crowther Report, HMSO 1959 and Half our Future, The Newson Report, HMSO 1963.
2. Accounts of the gradual emergence of the comprehensive school in the 1940s and 1950s are contained in the standard works: The Comprehensive School I.G.K. Fenwick, Methuen 1976; Education and Politics: A Study of the Labour Party R. Barker Oxford 1972; The Evolution of the Comprehensive School D. Rubenstein and B. Simon RKP 1969; The Comprehensive School, R. Pedley Penguin 1978; Half Way There, C. Benn and B. Simon McGraw Hill 1970; The Labour Party and the Organisation of Secondary Education, M. Parkinson, RKP 1970.
3. Benn and Simon (op cit) have argued that such imprecision can be ascribed to a failure of national commitment to comprehensive education and an evasion of responsibility for what was allegedly national policy.
4. 'Comparing and Contrasting Comprehensive and Selective Systems of Schooling' in Equality of Opportunity Reconsidered. eds. M. Carelli and I. Morris Swets and Zeitlinger Hamburg 1979.
5. Beachside Comprehensive : A Case Study of Secondary Schooling. S. Ball C.U.P. 1981.
6. In 'Essential Conditions for the Success of a Comprehensive School' in Education in Great Britain and Ireland (eds) Bell, Fowler and Little. Open University 1973.
7. Education : A Way Ahead. M. Warnock. Oxford 1979.
8. Quoted in Educational Policy and Educational Inequality P. Lodge and T. Blackstone. p.134, Martin Robertson 1982.
9. Quoted in Scottish Educational Journal 26/1/69.
10. Values in the Comprehensive School T.W.G. Miller, Oliver and Boyd

1961; Comprehensive Schools in Action, R. Cole, Oldbourne 1964; Comprehensive Schooling : Problems and Perspectives M. Miles Longmans 1968; The Comprehensive School, R. Pedley Penguin 1978; 'Glenwood Secondary School' James Gardner in New Era Vol 49 1968; Half Way There, C. Benn and B. Simon McGraw Hill 1970; The Future of Socialism, C.A.R. Crosland, Jonathan Cape 1956; Socialism Now C.A.R. Crosland, Jonathan Cape 1974; The Educated Society. D. Jenkins, Faber and Faber 1966.

11. Miller op cit.
12. The Future of Socialism. C.A.R. Crosland. p.272, Jonathan Cape 1956.
13. Circular 600. The Reorganisation of Secondary Education on Comprehensive Lines SED. 27/10/65.
14. 'Where'. Supplement 5. Autumn 1965.
15. The School as a Guidance Community. A. Rowe. Pearson Press 1971; The Countesthorpe Experience. John Watts (ed). Allen and Unwin 1977, Towards an Open School. John Watts. Longman 1980.
16. Comprehensive Values P.E. Daunt. Heinemann 1975; The Countesthorpe Experience. John Watts (ed). Allen and Unwin 1977.
17. Draft Positional Paper C.S.C.S. University of York. January 1987 (unpublished).
18. An excellent account of Mackenzie's ideas and his criticisms of state education is contained in The Unbowed Head, R.F. Mackenzie. E.U.S.P.B. 1976.
19. This view has been outlined in Schooling in Capitalist America S. Bowles and H. Gintis RKP. 1976.
20. Origins and Destinations, A.H. Halsey, A.F. Heath, J.M. Ridge. Oxford 1980; Outline of a Theory of Practice. P. Bourdieu. C.U.P. 1977; Education in Society. R. Fletcher, Penguin 1984.
21. A History of Education in Scotland. J. Strong; Oxford 1909 The Rise and Progress of Scottish Education. A. Morgan, Oliver and Boyd 1927; The Makers of Scottish Education, A. Morgan. Longmans 1929; 'The Distinctive Features of Scottish Education' W. McClelland in New Era August 1935; Education in Scotland Yesterday and Today, M. Mackintosh, Gibson 1962; Scottish and English Schools. G.S. Osborne, Longmans 1966; Change in Scottish Education G.S. Osborne, Longmans 1968; A History of Scottish Education, J. Scotland U.L.P. 1969; Education in Scotland. I. Findlay. David and Charles 1973.
22. McClelland (op cit).
23. Scottish Public Educational Documents, H. Hutchison S.C.R.E. 1973.
24. Re-educating Scotland. N. Mitchison et al. Scoop Books 1944.

25. Education in Ayrshire through Seven Centuries. W. Boyd. ULP 1961; The School Board of Glasgow. J. Roxburgh. ULP 1971.
26. Benn and Simon (op cit).
27. A History of the Training of Teachers in Scotland. M. Cruikshank. ULP 1970; Life in Scotland. R. Mitchison. Batsford 1978.
28. 'Belt, Book and Blackboard', James Young. Scottish International Sept. 1972; Education and Opportunity in Victorian Scotland. R.D. Anderson. Oxford, Clarendon Press (1983).
29. Osborne (op cit).
30. What is Education in Scotland? F. Macgregor Akros Preston 1970 pp18 et seq.
31. Educational Priority : A Scottish Study. HMSO. 1974.
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CHAPTER TWO

THE COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL IN THE WEST OF SCOTLAND: GESTATION, INCEPTION AND RESPONSES

Comprehensive schools started as a fetish imported from England. It was imported from there and forced on Scotland for national political reasons. Our own system was damned good.

(Interview/PL/9)

It is true to say that if you kept your school running quietly, and did not provoke complaints to head office from parents or councillors, you were left to do as you pleased.

(Interview/TU/2)

There was a massive lack of conviction about the whole idea and no real staff development attempted for years. ... the comprehensive school was received as the creation of idealism and theorising by the Inspectorate and politicians. It was seen as being externally imposed, and it created a new situation in schools into which many teachers were dragged, reluctant and screaming ... there was an enormous lack of faith.

(Interview/AD/10)

After several decades of doubt, controversy argument and counter-argument within the Labour Party¹ and elsewhere, the decision that its official policy for secondary education was reorganisation on comprehensive lines was announced by the Secretary of State for Education and Science in the House of Commons on 21 January 1965. Since this was a major political initiative, the education systems of the whole United Kingdom were to be affected, irrespective of their differing traditions and features. The aim of this chapter, in the context of remarks made in the opening section of Chapter One, will be to assess the ambiance into which the notion of the comprehensive school was launched in Scotland; examine its reception and the reactions it engendered; consider official statements and interpretations; explore its effect on the teaching profession and its coverage in the national and educational press; and finally present professional perceptions of the concept as revealed in the interviews with educationists and politicians undertaken in connection with this research.

OFFICIAL OPINION

In order to put official opinion in the Scottish Education Department into context, it is necessary to explain the Labour Party position of comprehensive education in the post war period. It had endorsed the comprehensive principle in a Report of 1950, after which the National Executive called upon the Annual Conference to implement a policy of comprehensive education. The then Scottish Secretary of State, Hector McNeil replied to the Party in these terms:

I am glad to say that the comprehensive school or omnibus school as we call it in Scotland, is well-established, and I can assure you that ... no obstacles will be placed in the way of any authority wh propose to set up a school of this kind for which the need can be demonstrated. This question is exhaustively dealt with by the Advisory Council in Chapter 7 of its 1947 Report. In a Circular, I am intending to intimate my agreement with their general recommendation

in favour of the omnibus school.²

In a letter to Morgan Phillips the following year, McNeil wrote

The question of whether secondary education should be provided in different types of school (known in the past as junior secondary and senior secondary) or in a single school, general known as a comprehensive or omnibus school ... is not one which admits of easy answer, involving as it does a number of conflicting considerations, some of a relatively imponderable nature; and in many instances, the determining factor will no doubt be found in local circumstances ... the (Advisory Council) recommendation relates to a school providing a four year course, but I consider that it should be adopted in relation to the existing organisation of secondary education in which a fully secondary course extends to five years.³

Further evidence of official attachment to the thinking of the Advisory Council can be found in the following letter from the Secretary of the Scottish Education Department to Mr Grainger-Stewart:

In relation to comprehensive education in Scotland, the points we wish to make are:

- 1) secondary education in Scotland is not organised on comprehensive lines
- 2) the distribution of population in Scotland is such as to make it the natural arrangement to organise secondary education in comprehensive schools. The only exception is in the four cities where the numbers of secondary pupils are sufficient to enable separate senior and junior secondary schools specialising on different lines to be established.
- 3) the whole question of the organisation has been exhaustively dealt with by the Advisory Council, whose general conclusions are in favour of the omnibus school ...⁴

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Such caution was paralleled at a national level, as this communication from George Tomlinson to Morgan Phillips shows:

I have felt it wiser to proceed on the present basis of encouraging experiments under sound and suitable circumstances, rather than to adopt a root and branch policy. Existing plant cannot be changed overnight, and such a policy would take years to implement. Comprehensive schools are still the subject of violent controversy in educational circles, and any drastic enforcement of a policy in their favour would alienate a large, vocal and

influential section of opinion.⁵

It seems clear that official opinion in the Scottish Education Department in the 1950s was satisfied with the way in which secondary education was organised in Scotland, and as such appeared reluctant to adopt the comprehensive principle as the basis of the system.

Commenting on the Labour Party Report⁶ already mentioned, John Brunton adopted the following stance, again revealing a cautious, bureaucratic response:

The Report is, to my mind, both a depressing and somewhat alarming document. It is full of muddled thinking and it contains many assertions which are undoubtedly not supported by real experience. It makes a number of recommendations which are just not practicable at the present time, if indeed they are desirable at any time. It is rather alarming to the extent that it may be accepted as the basis of a policy which may in turn become official policy. I certainly do not think that we should accept the invitation to comment on the Report. ... I myself would under no circumstances be willing to accept an organisation of the type outlined on page six of the Report.⁷ Such an organisation would in my view be quite disastrous, designed to level everything down and to ensure that the best never came to the top, and never receive the treatment they deserve or which the country requires.⁸

The Secretary's reply to Mr Brunton leaves little room for doubt on the official view:

Much of the fog generated in discussion of this question arises from the various current interpretations of the words 'omnibus', 'multilateral' and 'comprehensive' ... the two terms 'multilateral' and 'omnibus' seem to cover all our Scottish secondary schools, and it is a pity that the third term, 'comprehensive' should have been introduced by the Advisory Council. It is clear that, in Scotland, the dispute is whether our present system of junior and senior secondaries, all of them multilateral and providing a variety of courses, should continue, or whether the splitting of promoted pupils into two streams should be ended, and all pupils sent to senior secondary schools.⁹

In a communication from Mr Arbuckle to Mr Henderson Stewart in 1953, we read:

Those who champion the comprehensive school without any reservations are generally influenced by doctrinaire considerations - social equality, parity of esteem among schools etc - often of doubtful educational validity. Any attempt to force on the schools a rigid organisation in large comprehensive units would be disastrous. The decision about the type of organisation to be adopted must be left to individual authorities, who know best the needs of their areas.¹⁰

It can thus be claimed that the Scottish Education Department in the 1950s was extremely diffident towards the comprehensive school, which it saw as a politically rather than educationally inspired notion, and showed no desire to interfere with local authority autonomy with regard to secondary provision. Indeed, around the mid-fifties, it is clear that the comprehensive school as an educational concept was not regarded as being worthy of much attention; and that solutions to the problems besetting Scottish education were best sought elsewhere:

The real weakness of secondary education lies in the failure to provide the less able pupils whether in a junior or senior secondary school with an education genuinely adapted to their needs. To suggest that all will be well if only all pupils are sent to comprehensive schools is to ignore the fact that this fundamental weakness is independent of the form of school organisation ... the out-and-out champions of the comprehensive school are generally influenced not so much by purely educational criteria as by social and political considerations.¹¹

Even where the comprehensive form is considered, it is quite clear that it is not seen as a radical departure from current practice:

Now that all pupils, whatever their ability, receive secondary education, it is necessary to classify them according to their ability in order that they may be allocated to courses ... suited to their widely varying capacities ... the allocation would be the same whether courses were provided in junior secondary or comprehensive schools. The only difference is that any transfers later found necessary are generally more easily effected in a comprehensive school, where all courses are provided in the

same buildings.¹²

Ten years or so later, by the time the Labour Government's policy intentions had been made public, official Scottish thinking - and practice - had not altered noticeably. The following was the reaction to a draft version of Circular 10/65:

I have now read the DES draft quickly and it seems to me that it goes into far greater detail than is necessary for our purposes ...

Assuming that the statement in paragraph four represents Government policy for Scotland as well as for England, it would seem that the kind of arrangements which Fife and Renfrew are adopting are only acceptable as an interim stage in the development towards a fully comprehensive organisation. This seems to mean a system in which all pupils from a given area are in the same school until age 16, whereas the system which is developing in Scotland involves the removal of the 'H' grade pupils to a senior high school at age 14 ... I think our line ought to be that in the cities and industrial areas the 12-16 comprehensive system is practicable, but that outside these it would involve an unacceptable degree of centralisation, if 'H' pupils are going to get their due.¹³

Some days later, a meeting was held in the Scottish Education Department Secretary's room to consider the Department's position in the light of the impending change to a comprehensive system of education. Once again, the Scottish Education Department position is made clear:

The terms 'comprehensive school' and 'comprehensive education' are being used without any accepted definition or understanding of their meaning. The Government's basic principle of comprehensive organisation appears to be that selection at a particular age should not be used as the means of allocating children to particular schools. ... under a comprehensive system, all children from given primary schools would go to the same secondary school at 12, although classification within the schools by means of streams or sets would take account of academic ability, of other aptitudes and of interests and needs as these emerged.¹⁴

Discussing the possible forms of comprehensive organisation, it was stated that:

A two-tier system with a break at 14, with some pupils transferring from a junior high school to a senior high school ... was felt to be in some ways best suited to the circumstances in many Scottish areas, but there was room for experiment on the effectiveness of a middle school (10-14) arrangement.¹⁵

The feeling of the meeting was that, in the Scottish context, account had to be taken of the fact that Scottish Certificate of Education Higher grade exams were taken at 17. Accordingly, it was opined, there were sound educational grounds for favouring a split at 14:

If pupils were divided at 14 into 'H' and 'non-H' groups, it would allow teachers to specialise in the type of teaching appropriate to one of these two groups, instead of having to cover the whole intellectual range.¹⁶

It was concluded at this meeting that the Secretary would prepare a submission to Ministers on the form comprehensive education might take in Scotland. A further indication of the Scottish Education Department view of the reorganisation of secondary education on comprehensive lines can be gleaned from a letter written in 1966 by the Secretary of the Scottish Education Department to Bruce Millan, the Under-Secretary of State. The bulk of the letter outlines the progress made by Scottish local authorities in response to the issue of Circular 600. The Secretary says.

All the replies to C600 have shown a basic acceptance of the comprehensive principle and a willingness to plan towards a comprehensive system. ... At the same time there is a well-established tradition in rural areas of central schools providing a full range of courses.¹⁷

Noting the reasons for the variability of progress towards a completely comprehensive system, the Secretary concludes in these terms:

It can fairly be said that C600 has hastened the process of gradual centralisation of secondary education which has been taking place in Scotland since the last war. Authorities

are taking a close look at geographical and social circumstances, population, housing and industrial trends, and trying to reconcile these with a pattern of schools which can provide all children with a modern education on comprehensive lines.¹⁸

On the matter of the internal organisation of comprehensive schools, the Secretary, while apparently tentative, nevertheless again gives an indication of the official view.

Much more, however, requires to be done to create conditions in which the comprehensive principle can be put to work. At present, there is only very limited knowledge and experience of running purely comprehensive schools with an unselected entry. As Ministers know, we envisage a period of orientation lasting up to two years depending upon the individual pupils concerned, during which teachers will use grouping and setting to enable pupils to find their level in each subject before embarking on more specialised courses leading to 'O' grade or Brunton-type courses, or a mixture of both.¹⁹

CIRCULAR 600 AND ITS BACKGROUND

In the Scottish context, the official notification of the changeover to comprehensive education is contained in Scottish Education Circular 600 of October 1965 and the consequential Circular 614 of June 1966, which deals with aspects of the internal organisation of comprehensive schools. Before examining these documents in detail, it seems appropriate to comment briefly with the political thinking which gave rise to them. A key figure in shaping the thought of senior party members was C.A.R. Crosland. Arguing for much greater equality of educational opportunity and against segregation into separate types of secondary school at 11, he recognised that 'revolutionary connotations' were involved:

The achievement of truly equal opportunity would carry us a distinctly long way towards equality and a socialist society! In fact, a high degree of equality is a precondition of equal opportunity.²⁰

His case for integrated secondary education, apart from its emphasis on increasing educational opportunity, is predicated on strongly social motives:

The school system is the greatest divisive influence in society ... a school system can either increase or diminish social disparities²¹.

There is, moreover, an economic consideration:

Education is, of course, highly relevant to our national efficiency. As an investment it yields a generous return, and we badly need more of it in Great Britain ... our greatest need and our largest untapped resource now lie well below the level of the cleverest few per cent ... from the viewpoint of efficiency and equality, we need less concentration on an educational élite and more on the average standard of attainment.²²

Several years later, in an important speech, Crosland summed up the thinking which had generated Circular 10/65 (and, of course, Circular 600 in Scotland):

It was, I think, these various considerations - of equity, efficiency, avoidance of waste and social cohesion - which produced over the last decade an increasing revolution against the 11+ and a gathering movement towards comprehensive schools. And it was they which caused this Government to set the seal of national approval on this movement by issuing Circular 10/65.²³

It is worth making the point that the social cohesion argument seems slightly over-optimistic, since it would require to extend to such aspects of the educational system as the private sector, denominational provision and single-sex schools.

Final evidence that such an outlook had captured the thinking of the party leadership is furnished from a speech made by Harold Wilson at the Annual Conference at Scarborough in October 1963:

To train the scientists we are going to need will mean a revolution in our attitude to education ... it means that as a nation we cannot afford to force segregation on our children at the 11+ stage. As Socialists, as Democrats, we oppose this system of educational apartheid ... we simply cannot afford as a nation to neglect the educational development of a single boy or girl. We cannot afford to cut off three quarters or more of our children from virtually any chance of higher education ... we must use all the resources of democratic planning, all the latent and under-developed energies and skills of our people, to ensure Britain's standing in the world.²⁴

It seems, therefore, reasonable to argue that the acceptance of the movement towards the comprehensive school arose from the particular form of social democratic thinking which was current in the upper echelons of the party: that is, the comprehensive school was conceptualised as the instrument by which the educational system would be used to eliminate wastage, promote greater social equality and justice, and promote economic and technological development for the country. Hardly anything appears to have been said about how the new schools were to be organised internally. Allegations that the comprehensive school arose from commitment to a deep-seated educational philosophy of egalitarianism are mitigated by Harold Wilson's famous statement in a television interview in 1964:

The grammar school will be abolished over my dead body.²⁵

Essentially, therefore, the two Scottish circulars must be seen as embodying a particular ideology current in the Labour Party in the early 1960s, and one which, it believed, would have wide electoral appeal in the run-up to the General Election in October 1964. However, the justification for comprehensive reorganisation was presented in these terms:

The Secretary of State believes that if the organisation of secondary education is to take proper account of the recent developments in the secondary curriculum, it should avoid

the segregation of pupils into separate schools at the transfer stage. Quite apart from educational considerations in the narrow sense, he believes that a system which segregates children into separate schools at the age of 12 is wrong. It is his view that young people will greatly benefit in their personal and social development by spending the formative years of early adolescence in schools where pupils represent a fuller cross section of the community.²⁶

However, the Secretary of State, after this assertive value-judgement, is less bold about what should happen inside the comprehensive school, in which:

there must be flexible arrangements which avoid rigid divisions and are based on an understanding not only of the great variation in children's individual abilities and aptitudes, but also of the achievements which recent experience has shown average pupils to be capable of.²⁷

Conceding the heavy demands avoidance of allocation to 'certificate' and 'non-certificate' courses in the early stages make upon the skill of teaching staff, the Secretary of State goes on to state that:

arrangements can be made to enable pupils to progress at a rate which suits their capacity. The arrangements should take full account of the needs both of those who have exceptionally high ability and those whose best rate of progress is below average.²⁸

The expected result of the shift was that it would be possible:

for the course a pupil takes in each subject to be determined by his personal needs. (The arrangements) will ensure that the development of pupils is not held back, nor the pupils discouraged, by failure to relate their rate of progress in each subject to their individual capacities. They will enable all children to develop a pride in their own achievements, and avoid the sense of inadequacy which causes frustration and boredom. They will minimise social divisions.²⁹

Although conceding (in paras 9-12) that various forms of organisation would be necessary as a result of local contingencies, the Secretary of State, in another value-judgement, clearly expresses his own preference:

In the Secretary of State's view, the most effective and most desirable form of organisation will be the secondary school providing a full range of courses for all pupils from a particular district who would attend it throughout their secondary career.³⁰

Local authorities are asked to:

aim at achieving whatever further measures of reorganisation are necessary to enable all pupils from a particular primary school to proceed to the same secondary school for at least the first two years of secondary education. All schools providing the first years of secondary education should have a wide variety of courses for pupils of all aptitudes and interests...³¹

By the 31 March 1966, local authorities were 'asked' to review their existing schemes and inform the Secretary of State of their proposals for reorganising their secondary education provision on comprehensive lines.

For a document which was to have a considerable impact on Scottish secondary schools, it is remarkably tentative, and even permissive in its language, and at no time goes into specifics about the internal workings of a comprehensive school which would indicate a radical change from established practice. It may be that the tentativeness can be ascribed to the fact that official opinion in the Scottish Education Department had not significantly altered since the 1950s, and still demonstrated a lingering attachment to the status quo. Nonetheless, it manages to convey a strong impression that the question of a changeover was not open to debate. That had been decreed; it was now up to local authorities to make the necessary physical arrangements.

Even Circular 614, which announced the logical next step of abolishing existing transfer arrangements between primary and secondary schools,

offers few concrete proposals for schools. As a consequence of the discontinuation of allocating pupils to particular courses at the outset of their secondary schooling, it was the Secretary of State's view that

decisions about the secondary courses which individual pupils should follow ... can best be made after they have had some experience of secondary education.³²

Stating the case for a less-directive role in the transfer process for the primary school, and urging closer contact between the primary and secondary sectors, the Circular argues that ultimate decisions about a pupil's future should be based both on his primary school record and on the experiences of the secondary staff. As a result, the early years of secondary school should be regarded as:

a period of orientation during which the pupils, who will cover a wide range of ability, will be able to acquire a firm foundation for the later years of their education, and, at the same time, to explore a variety of subjects to find out for themselves where their particular aptitudes, interests and abilities lie.³³

Such an arrangement would, it was felt, enable an accurate picture of each pupils to 'emerge', but:

The length of the period (of orientation) may vary for different pupils since some will reveal their potentialities in various respects much earlier than others. Gradually, however, it will be possible to guide pupils towards particular courses in particular subjects that suit their abilities and aptitudes and their own inclinations.³⁴

The vagueness which characterises the above is replicated in the section of the Circular which deals with internal arrangements in comprehensive schools, which will henceforward call for:

a greater degree of flexibility in the internal school organisation than has been normal in most Scottish secondary schools, and the Secretary of State will welcome experiments with different forms of organisations.³⁵

Clearly, though a comprehensive structure was mandatory, schools had substantial room for manoeuvre in determining its detailed operation.

In summary, it can fairly be said that the two Circulars, to the extent that they were prescriptive, advocated the following as national policy:

- the end of separate junior and senior secondary schools
- all post-primary pupils were to attend the same local secondary school
- pupils were not to be labelled with respect to the course of study to be undertaken in secondary school
- final decisions were to be based on pupils' emergent capacities and interests.

It is not an exaggeration to claim that the overriding interest in the Scottish Education Department was the physical provision of integrated units to provide secondary education in accordance with government policy. The implications that the changeover would have for such matters as curriculum, methodology and assessment procedures do not appear to have figured prominently on the agenda for discussion.

REACTIONS OF PROFESSIONAL BODIES

Given that reorganisation on comprehensive lines was government policy, how did the Scottish educational world react? To formulate a response to this question, it is revealing to examine the records of the main 'interested bodies'. The teaching unions demonstrated a varied response. The SSTA was guarded:

The Executive welcomed the basic principle underlying the draft Circular (600) but thought that the difficulties had been underestimated.³⁶

At the Annual Congress in Dundee two years later, the President made comprehensive reorganisation the subject of his address. Enthusiasm for C600 was lacking:

Mr Low referred to the apprehension felt by many teachers at recent changes ... and especially at the introduction of comprehensive education. This apprehension arose because they were not convinced that these changes were to the advantage of their pupils ... he doubted the possibility of teaching any subject successfully unless pupils were streamed according to ability. He felt that the great danger in comprehensive education lay in the likelihood of pupils being forced by parental pressure to study at a higher level than their abilities warranted. He doubted also whether the introduction of comprehensive education would remove class barriers and remove the distinction between good and bad schools.³⁷

A Council discussion of the SSTA submission to the Public Schools Commission made this point:

The remit (of the PSC) begs some questions, most notably the implications that comprehensive education is necessarily the best system and that grant-aided schools should be integrated into the public system - questions about which teachers, parents and the general public are far from agreed.³⁸

The SSTA set up a committee to 'consider the desirability or otherwise of the comprehensive system of secondary education' in October 1969, and its report was presented to the Annual Congress in 1971. This report contains a 'definition' of a comprehensive school.

We have defined a comprehensive school as being one which admits all pupils from an area and which provides a common course for a period of time.³⁹

Vagueness was clearly not confined to the Scottish Education Department! After rehearsing the arguments for and against the comprehensive school, and examining the various organisational forms, the report presents its major conclusions.

We are broadly in favour of a comprehensive form of secondary school organisation, although we do not

necessarily accept as valid all the arguments advanced in support of this form ... we recognise that our conclusion in favour of a comprehensive form of secondary school education can only be an interim judgement and that a more mature assessment cannot be attempted until after an adequate period of trial.⁴⁰

Such a period, the Report estimates, would be ten years.

For its part, the Educational Institute of Scotland began to confront the issue of comprehensive education earlier even than the issue of Circular 600:

The AGM requests Council to prepare for the next AGM a report on the problems which would arise from the general introduction of comprehensive secondary schools and give suggestions showing how these might be overcome.⁴¹

The notion being carried by a large majority of delegates, the above mentioned task was remitted to the Education Committee. As a result of its deliberations, a memorandum entitled 'The Comprehensive School' was prepared by April 1965 for submission to the AGM of that year. Problems of the definition of terms, however, had clearly begun to emerge:

It was agreed, on the recommendation of the Education Committee, that because of the apparent need for clarification regarding the Scottish Education Department's final interpretation of Circular 600, a meeting with the Department be sought at the earliest opportunity ... to seek clarification of its policy and detailed intentions.⁴²

In the retiring President's address at the Annual General Meeting in 1966, attention was drawn to how the whole topic was being received by the profession:

Let me turn to comprehensive education, a topic which has been hotly debated in the press of late ... in sharp contrast to the practice prescribed for local authorities, the Government has had little if any consultation with the profession on the advisability or otherwise of introducing a comprehensive system of education. It is a fact that at no point in time has this Institute had discussions with

representatives of the Government as to whether or not comprehensive education is a good thing.

The fact is that there exists a pronounced cleavage of opinion in the profession on this subject ... the very fact of its existence suggests that the transition from the present system to a fully comprehensive one may not be unattended with difficulty.

The situation is not made easier by the lack of precision surrounding a definition of 'comprehensive education'. It is to say the least extremely doubtful if a wholly comprehensive system in its 'purest' form (i.e. without some form of streaming) could be organised ... with such an aura of imprecision surrounding the details ... it is little wonder that teachers are not a little uneasy about the prospect that lies ahead.⁴³

It seems clear that the Educational Institute of Scotland was in general agreement with the contents of Circular 600, but the following comment from its observations on it to the Scottish Education Department is revealing:

The Institute is confident that the advantages of a comprehensive system will be felt particularly by pupils who would be directed to junior secondary schools under a dual system: special care will require to be taken, however, to ensure that the present high standards in senior secondary schools are not in any way endangered by reorganisation on comprehensive lines.⁴⁴

The key Educational Institute of Scotland document THE COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL, sees the problem of the comprehensive school in rural areas as 'entirely one of internal organisation', and devotes most of its space to the situation in urban areas. The definition of a comprehensive school is given:

a secondary school which accepts all children from every primary school in the neighbourhood and educates them without recourse to streaming.⁴⁵

Doubting the organisation feasibility of such a school, the following compromise is settled on:

most comprehensive schools have ... a common course in the

first year for all except those pupils who require a modified course. This is followed by a three-stream organisation in the secondary year, followed by a combination of streaming and setting. In this way the upper half of the school, i.e. those following certificate courses and the abler of the non-certificate pupils can be mingled in sets for academic subjects, and taught in mixed-ability groups for aesthetic and practical subjects. The integration with the rest of the school of those pupils who do not intend to stay beyond leaving age is less easily achieved.⁴⁶

Recognising that to preserve comprehensive education over the whole ability range and meet the variety of abilities is 'a task of enormous complexity', the document asserts:

In the interests of standards, it will be necessary to divide the timetable into two aspects in the first two years. First one must preserve the social motif, and see to it that the register class, which is also the basic social unit, puts children together for all those subjects which are not segregated by examination differentials. Secondly, the timetables created will have to show a common core so that transfer between study and set is adequately maintained.⁴⁷

But the Institute set itself firmly against any argument that the curriculum in secondary 1/2 should be common to all pupils:

To defer for so long any form of selection would make it difficult to achieve that measure of study in depth which modern academic standards demand of class VI.⁴⁸

Revealing as these extracts are, it is difficult to accept that the Educational Institute had a 'policy' on comprehensive education. Indeed, as late as 1978, an information leaflet entitled 'Comprehensive Education' was published (in response to a request from a local association for advice on arguments to be used against the continuation of 4 year schools) which opened with these words:

Institute policy on the organisation of comprehensive education is implicit in its acceptance, without qualification, of the basic principles of reorganisation of secondary education which were set out by the SED in

Circular 600. ... Thus the Circular is a statement of Institute Policy as well as of government policy.⁴⁹

Writing in 1982, Robert McClement, retired general secretary of the SSA (later NAS/UWT) said of the union's organ 'THE SCOTTISH SCHOOLMASTER':

... it was for many years the brightest and most outspoken teachers' association magazine in the UK ... and was not slow to point out and condemn wrongheadedness in local or central government or in their departments.⁵⁰

A fitting statement, to judge by an article entitled 'YOU CAN'T ABOLISH SELECTION', which contains the following passage:

What (Willie Ross) in fact means is this: I have been told by Big Brother to abolish those schools in Scotland which resemble grammar schools in England ... hence the rubbish put out in C600, compiled by the dutiful Civil Servants of St Andrew's House, who have no choice in the matter but who, I bet, are hoping that they will not be ordered to close down certain Edinburgh schools before their offspring have gone through them. The fallacy in all the talk about abolishing selection is that you have simply got to select.⁵¹

The SSA view was made abundantly clear the following month

... the Government is trying to force a complete reorganisation of secondary education with little regard to the availability of suitable buildings, and even less to the wishes of parents. Thousands of these are well aware that the motives behind the changes are doctrinaire rather than educational.. this unwanted dictation is a long way from the spirit of the post-war Butler Act and the Scottish Acts dependent on it ... the whole machinery of bureaucracy has been employed to deprive parents of their freedom of choice, while the specious arguments of some politicians have clouded the facts.⁵²

One indication of a positive reception for Circular 600 is found, perhaps not surprisingly, in the Scottish Trades Union Congress. Prior to a meeting with the Under-Secretary of State for Education in January 1965, a statement was prepared in which we read:

A nation cannot afford to train only those of Olympic

educational ability; it must cater for all its young people. Those who argue that the educational attainment of the few will be inhibited by comprehensive school are thinking only in terms of present difficulties.⁵³

Notwithstanding such enthusiasm, however, an inkling of how 'comprehensive schooling' was construed is to be found in a speech James Milne made to the 1965 Annual Conference at Rothesay, which ended with this motion:

A changeover to a comprehensive system of education was one which required to be made at the earliest opportunity despite all the difficulties such a change presented ... a scheme of national comprehensive education required to be introduced on as wide a scale as possible, and the duty of the Scottish Education Department should be to ensure a nation-wide standardisation of educational facilities throughout Scotland ... an increase in the number of children embarking on senior secondary courses was not itself enough if it did not also ensure that all education authorities provided comparable high quality schooling for the same age group. This would only be achieved within a framework of a comprehensive system.⁵⁴

The motion was carried unanimously.

Another important body on the Scottish educational scene - the Directorate - can hardly have been unaware of the fact that change was in the air in the years leading up to 1965. The Report of the Working Party on the Curriculum of the Senior Secondary School (1959) and the Report From School to Further Education (1963) in various ways indicated the emergence of an altered outlook. A study of the records of the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES) shows how the spirit of the age was presented to the Directorate. At the October 1964 conference, HMSCI Brunton addressed the Association on his recently published report, and strongly advocated a change of emphasis in education in Scotland:

Talent is much too precious to waste, and a system which is unreliable in detecting and nurturing even a small moiety of it cannot be fully efficient or remain unchanged ... we must

now extend to all our young people the excellences we have provided for the abler pupils for many years.⁵⁵

Brunton's colleague, HMDSCI Dickson, considering the implications of the Report for schools, gave the assembled directors a foretaste of what was to come:

We are getting away from compartmentalism in education. There is a blurring of lines, and much of this is relevant to what we are doing in third and fourth years. Youngsters who started off in non-certificate courses are achieving 'O' grade passes. Perhaps this implies that more pupils should be in schools where it is possible for them to have 'O' grade courses, such as comprehensive schools.⁵⁶

This telling view from a high-ranking Scottish Education Department official was followed almost exactly a year later by the issue of Circular 600. It is very revealing to note the reception accorded to this and its sister document Circular 614 by ADES. Both were:

noted without discussion.⁵⁷

Such a remarkably cursory treatment of two circulars which were going to have far-reaching effects on Scottish education conceals the feelings of the Directors on the subject of comprehensive education. Arguably, the reaction of directors of education would not be enthusiastic, and some interviewed in connection with this research alluded to marked differences of personal opinion on the subject of comprehensive education at ADES meetings. It is probable that a sense of enforced conformity to government policy prevailed. However, some entries in the Minutes of ADES give a better indication of directorate sentiments. Some letters sent to T. Henderson, Director of Education for Midlothian are informative indicators of opinion:

(i) I find myself out of tune with much of the draft circular we are to discuss ... it raises more questions than it solves. What on earth are 'personal needs'? Have we to abandon the conception of 'age, aptitude and ability' for something more vague?

(ii) ... existing transfer machinery has been a great deal more effective than the Circular admits it to be. I suppose it is good policy to decry the old in favour of the new.

(iii) The Circular should make clear beyond any shadow of a doubt what exactly is meant by 'comprehensive education'. ... Is a percentage of the very bright pupils and the poorer pupils to be exempted from the general arrangements? Are pupils in the four broad groups referred to to be in some way separated at the beginning or in the same class? It would appear that in the new set up the role of Director of Education is to more or less disappear while the already overburdened secondary headmaster will have even more to cope with.⁵⁸

As Directors were beginning to come to terms with the implications of Circular 600, Sir J J Robertson, speaking at the Winter Conference in 1965, lamented the fact that the impact of the 1947 Report had been so negligible and, by implication, foresaw problems for the comprehensive school:

The essential spirit of the Report has never prevailed ... the 11+ and all that has been vanquished. We are moving to a comprehensive system, but the all-through school that many advocate is not the only solution. the advance in methods is still too slight and patchy ... a pretty rigid timetable and the specialist teacher still tend to be in possession of the field ... what we have to emphasise is that for the average child the price we have to pay for examinations is too high.⁵⁹

At the same conference, in the discussion which followed a talk given by the successful English headmaster of a Coventry comprehensive school on how he had made comprehensive education work by questioning and challenging his formerly-held notions on education, a member of Dunbartonshire's directorate staff struck a note of reservation:

Mr Rumble has shown us ... the real progress that has been made in English schools. Are our schools too proud to follow their lead? Will they remain hamstrung by the myth of Scotland's former excellence?⁶⁰

Perhaps the mood of the Scottish Directors is best caught in an address delivered to the Winter 1966 Conference by the Director of Education for

Ayrshire. A major point he made was that the upsurge in increased opportunities for secondary pupils had resulted in even more of them going to University, a trend he obviously did not welcome:

There is a danger of opportunity opening the door too wide ... some still 'GANG IN STIRKS AND COME OOT ASSES'. There is more than a grain of truth in Amis's observation that 'MORE MEANS WORSE' ... I have deliberately refrained from mentioning the phrase some of you might expect to be the central theme: COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION. At the risk of appearing complacent, I end with the confession that, doing my homework, I have come to the conclusion that, in spite of all our faults and frustrations, we are doing not too badly in giving the young people of this country opportunities undreamt of in former times.⁶¹

In discussion, the Director of Clackmannanshire argued for a more radical concept of education, in which every pupil in a school was brought to the highest level of which he was capable, and had his particular talents developed. The speaker gave this telling reply:

I hope I shall not be thought of as other than compassionate, yet I have to admit that I am impressed by the French economy. France is producing an elite which is giving leadership ... it is important to find the right place for pupils.⁶²

For its part, the Headteachers' Association of Scotland adopted a diffident stance towards the winds of change which were beginning to blow across the Scottish educational landscape. At their Dunblane Conference in May 1959, John S Maclay, Secretary of State for Scotland expressed his view thus:

After the war, when secondary education for all became a reality, it was natural that we should have devoted most of our attention to the problem of devising suitable curricula for the seventy per cent of our pupils who enter junior secondary courses. Now we must tackle the different but not less difficult problem of adapting the education of the top thirty per cent to the needs of our time. ... I am in full sympathy with the aim of fitting the senior secondary curriculum to the needs of the individual pupil and of introducing a greater measure of flexibility into the curriculum⁶³

Notwithstanding the hint of change, the following entry is noted in the account of an HAS Autumn Meeting held in Glasgow:

There was overwhelming support for the proposal that any promotion exam should include a test in English composition. Opinion was divided as to the merits of the 'common first year', and there was also a marked division of opinion regarding the value of the comprehensive school.⁶⁴

At the 1963 Annual Conference in Dunblane, Mr W McL Dewar gave an indication of the extent to which the changes being mooted in Scottish education had altered HAS thinking:

The old pattern of senior secondary schools has gone and greater freedom has been given to headmasters and administrators. Typical of the new arrangements were setting of subjects, group teaching, supplementary classes for those with 'free' periods and study periods. In spite of these changes, however, the basis of the secondary school is still the five year course leading to Higher in fifth year.⁶⁵

One year later, the HAS President prefaced his address on change in education with these words:

With a change in Government we might expect a quickening of the pace of change in education, and, as faithful stewards, we must examine all proposals very carefully.⁶⁶

During this conference, there was a session on the comprehensive school.

One headteacher described how he ran his 'comprehensive' school:

The ideals of the post-war period prepared the ground for the growth of comprehensive schools ... my allocation to courses is 30% to senior secondary, 50% to general courses and 20% to modified courses ... but there are many problems. Where does one draw the line between SCE and general courses? Different methods and facilities are required for the majority of pupils. ... how is it possible to get one ethos into a school of this kind? ...⁶⁷

It is revealing to note the following comment:

Thanks were expressed to Mr Henderson for his provocative remarks.⁶⁸

Further proof of the 'welcome' extended to the notion of comprehensive education is provided by the following paragraph:

The HAS is divided in its opinion regarding the introduction of comprehensive education. It is interested to know upon what evidence the Secretary of State has based his statement that young people will greatly benefit in their personal and social development from this type of education.⁶⁹

The subject was raised at the 1965 Conference in Dunblane at which W McL Dewar made three points, which betray a traditionally Scottish perception of secondary education:

- 1) The characteristic unit in Scotland is the small town which already has the comprehensive school
- 2) Even within the comprehensive school, differentiation must be made as soon as possible
- 3) The able must be identified sooner rather than later, if we are going to provide the numbers going on to higher education.⁷⁰

It is, of course, misleading to argue that the views of several people are representative of an entire organisation. Nevertheless, it seems a fair point to assert that in the HAS a body of opinion existed which was not in favour of a switch to a comprehensive system, which was seen to be a threat to a selective system which had served its people well.

THE COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL: THE VIEW FROM THE TOP

How was the comprehensive school portrayed in public by officialdom? At a residential conference organised by the Scottish Education Department in 1966, HMDSCI Dr Dickson, stressing that its purpose was not to discuss the merits or otherwise of comprehensive education, but to provide an opportunity for the exchange of views and experiences, had this to say:

A school can be termed comprehensive if:

- 1) it receives all the secondary pupils from the area it serves
- 2) there has been no prior allocation of pupils to courses before they join it
- 3) within the school itself there is no rigid system of streams which are so far apart as to meet nowhere.

This does not mean that there should be no differentiation among pupils; sensible and appropriate differentiation will be necessary. ... the comprehensive school should give the pupils the experience of living together as a community, regardless of differences of ability or environment.⁷¹

Interviewed in a Scottish newspaper, Mrs Judith Hart, Joint Under-Secretary of State at the time of the issue of Circular 600, was at pains to allay the fears of the readership and answer their 'vital' questions. The comprehensive school was going, she said, to offer increased opportunities to pupils, more parental choice and a challenge to the teaching profession:

There is no streaming in bands of ability; the child simply moves from primary into a comprehensive ... as many certificate courses as possible will be given to many more children ... the needs of both the academic (pupil) and non-academic (pupil) are being realised ... a lot of the organisation will be up to the individual headmaster. ... teachers, I find, welcome comprehensive education as the only means of achieving the kind of educational opportunity they themselves want ... comprehensive schooling is a traditional part of the pattern of Scottish education. Here we think of education as education rather than as a means to an end in itself.⁷²

A less bland but equally optimistic justification for the changeover to a comprehensive system was given by Mrs Hart's colleague in the Scottish Office, Bruce Millan, speaking at an Educational Institute of Scotland Congress in Aberdeen later that year. Echoing Crosland, he stressed that the comprehensive school was soundly based on educational considerations, but social and economic factors were also involved:

The most compelling reason for the adoption of the comprehensive system is the failure of the selection

process. Rigid selection, however, carefully done involves wastage, not only in junior secondary schools but among those who find themselves misfits in senior secondary schools ... the selective system is socially divisive and implies that only a minority of children should be educated to the highest standards. ... this is not only socially damaging but economically at odds with the need for more highly educated people at all levels in society.⁷³

Mr Millan went into more detail about the educational aspects of comprehensive education in another speech:

The comprehensive system is merely an extension of a type of organisation traditional in many parts of Scotland ... children's potential cannot be finally pre-told at the age of 12, before they have experience of secondary education. At present we are not tapping all available ability ... the first stage of secondary education should be regarded as a period of orientation after which pupils can be grouped and set according to their abilities in different subjects, but able to move between groupings as their interests develop. ... it is clear that teachers will be concerned to a greater extent than has been customary in many Scottish schools with the social education of pupils as with their academic education ... it is important to pay equal attention to all pupils, including those who will achieve neither highers nor O grade passes.⁷⁴

In the interview with Mrs Hart quoted above, she was eager to emphasise that the Government would rely on the Inspectorate to introduce the new ideas to practitioners. These new ideas were outlined at an official conference on comprehensive education organised by Renfrewshire Education Authority, by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector Charles Forbes, who listed his five prerequisites for a successful comprehensive system:

The (comprehensive) school should be based on the area; pupils should not be pre-selected; there should be time for assessment before they commit themselves to courses; different pupils should get different treatment; the aims should include the aesthetic and the social as well as the strictly academic.⁷⁵

Challenged in discussion that Circular 600 was an act of faith, unsupported by research but nevertheless imposing its own orthodoxy, Mr

Forbes refuted any idea of bureaucratic uniformity:

He pointed out that the SED had allowed a variety of interpretations of the Circular. He emphasised the importance of the headmaster in the development of the school's ethos and pattern - more and more responsibility was devolving on him. How pupils should be grouped, how long assessment should last were decisions for the individual school. But, if pupils were taken in without labels, they had to be given a taste of secondary education before being allocated to courses.⁷⁶

A final indication of the apparently laissez-faire line adopted by the Scottish Education Department is furnished by remarks made by HMSCI Dickson at a conference on comprehensive education a year later held in Bathgate Academy. Stressing the need for some experimentation as a result of unfamiliarity with the comprehensive concept, Dr Dickson said:

We believe in all modesty that we do not know all about comprehensive education. We think that there may well be something to be learned from types of education not based on the all-through school. ... we have encouraged a large number of authorities to experiment. ... we believe very strongly that nobody knows enough yet about comprehensive education to be writing Bibles about it. Too many people have been writing what they appear to think is canonical about comprehensive education.⁷⁷

Dr Dickson said the Department's definition of a comprehensive school was simple:

a school taking all the children of a neighbourhood with no pre-selection at the primary stage ... the neighbourhood secondary school has the advantage of being an extension of the primary school system ... in the end, comprehensive education, all education in school, will stand or fall by the efforts of the teachers. They must be quite clear what they and their schools are trying to do.⁷⁸

Exactly how teachers were to be clear when the Scottish Education Department by its own admission was not is neatly evaded.

THE TEACHERS' VIEW

It is instructive to examine also the reception accorded to the notion of comprehensive education among the Scottish teaching profession. Although at first sight lying outwith the official period covered by this thesis, the late fifties and early sixties give an excellent indication of the concerns which exercised teachers and, by extension, the prevailing ambiance into which comprehensive education was born. The Scottish Educational Journal for the years 1955-64 is a particularly rich source of such evidence, and it seems important to take some time to examine major trends. Scrutiny of the journal over these years makes it clear that certain themes recur in its columns with unfailing regularity. It is proposed to enumerate these with supporting illustrative quotations in an attempt to portray the prevailing professional mood.⁷⁹

THEME 1 AN OBVIOUS COMPLACENCY WITH THE STATUS QUO IN THE WORLD OF SCOTTISH SECONDARY EDUCATION

The HMCI North Eastern Division is quoted as saying at an Educational Institute of Scotland Congress that

When he looked back over the post war years, he could not help feeling that, all things considered, education throughout Scotland was in good hands ... difficulties were being faced with resolution.

Scottish education was as good if not better than that of any other country.

Secondary education is undergoing considerable changes and there is no royal road to the successful organisation of secondary schools ... the state schools of Scotland continue to provide a first class secondary education for the great majority of our children.⁸⁰

THEME 2 A GRADUAL RECOGNITION OF WASTAGE IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

... everyone agreed that one of the biggest tasks schools had to face was to keep the clever children at school and prevent them going to dead end jobs.

The main object of the revised arrangements was to reduce

wastage.

The new fourth year certificate will be an act of belated justice to Scottish boys and girls ... and stop talent running to waste by making it worthwhile for pupils of practical rather than academic ability to stay on for one more year.⁸¹

THEME 3 THE UNSATISFACTORY STATE OF MANY JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

A great deal of time, money and energy is spent with little result. This is true of some aspects of the junior secondary school. A great deal of concern is felt in many quarters at their lack of prestige ... we take far too academic a view of them. ... Is the name wrong? Is it not time to drop the 'junior'? ...

The SED is not satisfied with the junior secondary school as it is today ... there is a place for the academic, but in these modern times, it is not everything.

Junior secondary schools are the stepbairns of the education department in the matter of buildings, equipment and staffing.⁸²

THEME 4 PARENTAL DISCONTENT WITH SEGREGATED SECONDARY EDUCATION

Recent social changes have brought many families up to middle-class status. Parents are faced with the dilemma of wishing their children to go to senior secondary schools, but finding them placed in a junior secondary school because of their intelligence quotients. Three out of every four children go to such schools.

If the senior secondary and junior secondary courses are provided in separate schools and one school is inferior to the other, then, of course, parents have a grievance ... the fault lies with social attitudes to different types of school, and even more perhaps with the failure of ... local authorities to ensure that all schools are equally well equipped and staffed.

Segregation of pupils into junior and senior secondary courses was causing great bitterness ... the problem seems to be more a social than an education one. Some form of comprehensive schooling would help to obviate much of the parental discontent.⁸³

THEME 5 SUBSTANTIAL RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE CONCEPT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL

Our visit to Kidbrooke raised as many questions as it

answered ... is the London plan one for indiscriminating export?

The (comprehensive) scheme must be judged on its merits. Would it improve the educational prospects of the young? ... a dogmatic answer for or against is scarcely possible ... such far-reaching proposals for educational reconstruction would demand much informed reflection before they could be confidently adopted as the panacea for our present ills...

Perhaps it is well to remember that 'secondary education for all' is a relatively new conception; to think in terms of educating everyone is revolutionary. It is essential not to forget that the essence of democracy in education is not to provide the same things for all but to provide the right thing for each.⁸⁴

While it would be erroneous to give the impression that the Scottish teaching profession had no other concerns - indeed, superannuation, salaries, shortage and uncertificated teachers occupied their thoughts as well - it seems pertinent to highlight these five as being particularly germane to the subject under study. While acknowledging that the Educational Institute of Scotland journal was not representative of all Scottish teachers, the frequency with which these themes appeared in the period 1955-60 indicates they were matters of professional concern. A curious ambivalence, however, emerges: on the one hand grave problems are recognised - wastage in senior secondary schools, the mounting parental concern at the branding of large numbers of children as 'failures' at 12, and the massive and unresolved problems of the junior secondary schools to which they were sent; at the same time, such a recognition did not impute any blame to senior secondary schools, which were seen to be guarding the best traditions of Scottish secondary education. Not surprisingly, therefore, the notion of the comprehensive school, despite successful examples well established in some English local authorities was scarcely welcomed with enthusiasm as the panacea for the perceived difficulties being faced.

Even after the issue of Circular 600, it is possible to detect confusion among the teaching profession, and the S.E.J. again provides an ample repository of evidence. A senior member of the Inspectorate, for example, described its effect thus:

Scotland is in the midst of an educational revolution ... many changes have taken place in secondary education ... there seem to be two inevitable trends - more centralisation and less segregation.⁸⁵

A Lanarkshire headteacher expressed his scepticism of the new development in these terms:

I am not at all convinced that comprehensive education is the answer to Scotland's educational problem. The junior secondary problem is simply going to be buried in the senior secondary schools; it is not going to be solved. Everyone is simply jumping on the bandwagon.⁸⁶

John Pollock, then an Ayrshire headteacher, highlighted the fact that much confusion had been generated by imprecision:

Many people are so vague about the meaning of comprehensive education that it would be as well to quote the definition given in Parliament in 1964: AN EDUCATION INTENDED TO PROVIDE ALL THE SECONDARY EDUCATION FACILITIES NEEDED BY THE CHILDREN OF A GIVEN AREA, BUT WITHOUT BEING ORGANISED IN CLEARLY DEFINED SIDES. By this definition the majority of schools offer the antithesis of comprehensive education ... it is ... the SED which needs to clarify its thoughts on this matter.⁸⁷

Later that year, an editorial commented:

There would appear to be some confusion about the Government's policy regarding the reorganisation of secondary education on comprehensive lines. Part of the trouble seems to arise from the lack of definition of a comprehensive school ... further there is no real clarity on how such a school is to be organised.⁸⁸

At a Glasgow local Educational Institute of Scotland meeting, a prominent Fife headteacher described the comprehensive problem using a

medical metaphor:

Comprehensive education is being spread in Scotland like a vast poultice; very soothing of course, but it covers a multitude of sores.⁸⁹

An article by 'DOMINIE' was critical of the lack of direction offered to schools:

The definition of what constitutes a comprehensive school within the present system has been one of the problems in all discussions regarding comprehensive education. Each area has more or less made its own definition. Not only do school organisations differ, but the kind of education the comprehensive school is supposed to produce is also a matter for argument.⁹⁰

Drawing a powerful comparison between the comprehensive school and the primary school, a later article drew attention to the reason for the difficulties being experienced by schools grappling with the changeover:

The primary school has developed a philosophy which considers the child an individual. The secondary school has not yet got round to thinking about this. This is because the primary school has developed organically over a number of years, whereas the secondary school is having the situation of comprehensive education wished upon it as a political decision.⁹¹

PRESS ACCOUNTS

An important source of information on the subject of comprehensive education is, arguably, the press, since the manner in which the subject was presented to the general public in the West of Scotland can be taken to be an influence on how it perceived the whole question. While acknowledging some obvious caveats - the political bias of the newspaper; the prime objective of selling newspapers; the values and perceptions of journalists - a survey of the major newspapers around the mid to late sixties reveals how the notion of comprehensive education was portrayed to the public. In the 'Daily Record', a series of

articles by the education correspondent John Pirie argued for comprehensive education on two grounds: the injustice of the qualifying exam, and the appalling state of junior secondary schools. In one of many articles he criticises the segregated system:

I accuse Mr Bruce Millan of complacency. I charge him with failing to heed the mounting evidence which clearly shows that the transfer board system of selecting pupils for courses in secondary schools is unfair, unjust and unworkable ... the system does not work except to give many a good Scots parent a sore heart.⁹²

After the issue of Circular 600, Pirie expressed delight that the Government had at last faced up to reality:

Soon parents will no longer have to face the injustice of having their children's education mapped out by invisible judges who, farcically, also rule on appeals ... what the Scottish Secretary foresees in a comprehensive educational system is all primary pupil at the age of 12 being moved into secondary schools without the unfair, unsatisfactory sifting out done at present.⁹³

Earlier, Pirie had offered his own view of what the changeover would mean:

Comprehensive education will give them all a chance of taking certificate courses, even in only one subject.⁹⁴

The same point is emphasised here:

In comprehensive secondary schools, children will be taught in groups according to their ability. Youngsters will develop their own natural talent ... the result will make even the present total of exam entrants look like drop in the bucket.⁹⁵

One of the most scathing attacks on the problems of junior secondary schools dealt with Wishaw Central School:

Pupils, parents and teachers know the school as 'the dump'. It is aptly tagged. It is so old that it has been condemned by councillors and educationists alike. ... a local minister

claimed that the pupils who enter it have no hope of educational advancement. For the local authority deliberately to make more than 400 pupils the innocent victims of its policy of educational segregation is unmercifully thoughtless and cruel.⁹⁶

In a series of articles in 'The Scotsman', John Marshall argued for caution and experiment before changing over to a comprehensive system, and above all for the need for a clear definition of comprehensiveness:

Now that comprehensive schooling is Government policy many discussions of future planning tend to assume that the giant English comprehensives are the only conceivable model. ... the blind assumption that what has been English experience must also be a prescription for Scotland leads many theorists into error. ... is there any possibility that decisions on Scottish school organisation can be based on surer foundations of fact ... than on opinions and imported doctrinal gospels?⁹⁷

For its part, the 'Daily Express' predictably cast all its articles in a political mould, and most return to the same repetitious conclusion:

The Government is letting its belief in socialism run ahead of its belief in democracy in the name of equality.⁹⁸

The move to comprehensive education was invariably presented as destroying something well-tried and good and promoting mediocre uniformity for bigoted, doctrinaire socialist reasons.

In the TESS, which carried a rash of reports of the conferences and meetings which took place locally and nationally, an article appeared which endeavoured to make a realistic assessment of what was actually happening in 'comprehensive schools':

Comprehensive education 'sweeps the dirt under the carpet'. It means that the job of selecting children for certain forms of education has gone on within the school instead of being external to it, but it does not represent a change in our basic educational ideology. ... Comprehensive education challenges single stage selection, but not the fundamental belief that there are appropriate types of education for

appropriate types of individual. All it does is rationalise the system of allocation.⁹⁹

At a meeting in Glasgow, an academic contributor lent weight to this view:

There is much confusion in society at large and in the world of education about the meaning of 'comprehensive education'. In Scotland it means a school which takes all the children from a given area and after six, twelve or twenty-four months sorts them out into academic, less academic and mixed streams.¹⁰⁰

The retiring president of Lanarkshire Educational Institute of Scotland Local Association, after stating that the two conditions vital to a comprehensive school were no streaming on entry and a fair deal for pupils unable to follow Scottish Certificate of Education courses, expressed this reservation:

I hope the fear that, to gain as many certificate passes as possible, some headmasters might be tempted to relegate the concrete methods of the junior secondary school to an inferior place in the curriculum will prove groundless, and every provision will be made to give the non-certificate pupil the best education of which he is capable.¹⁰¹

In a letter to the editor of the TESS, the headteacher of St Augustine's School in Glasgow, one of the two pioneering comprehensive schools opened in the city in 1954, provided this definition:

To call a school 'comprehensive' because it takes all the pupils from a particular area regardless of ability is clearly a misnomer ... a comprehensive school should provide full educational opportunities for all its pupils ... they should embark on the same educational programme but they cannot start on an equal footing, since, for various reasons and in various ways some will be educationally in advance of others.¹⁰²

Finally, a secondary headteacher put the case for a clear and unequivocal definition of the term 'comprehensive education' to be given

to the public, laid bare of emotive overtones, and gave his own view:

The phrase 'comprehensive education' is an import we could well have done without ... some gather that (it) will open the sluice gates of intellectual richness to those who in the past have been deprived of equality of opportunity. This is a false assumption ... what comprehensive education can do is produce a curriculum more interesting and relevant to our era of scientific and technological advance, and to persuade more pupils than ever before to come to enjoy the busy industry advocated by schools. But the onus remains on the recipient of the privilege of education.¹⁰³

SOME DEFINITIONS

Given the number of calls for greater clarity in the use of terms, it is not surprising to discover that, despite an extensive search, it has been extremely difficult to discover many accounts in print of what a comprehensive school should be, or be trying to be, which might act as a guide at the practitioner level. It is interesting, therefore, to examine the one or two instances that have emerged. In a series of staff papers, one Glasgow headteacher, in an attempt to acquaint his staff with the implications of Circular 600 made these remarks:

Govan High is designated a comprehensive school. The first implication is that all pupils of all grades of ability come to us. the problem is how to organise the school so that the pupils will receive the greatest benefit academically, spiritually, socially and physically. ... the solution? Pupils remain in early secondary 1 as far as possible in their primary classes, so that transition is less disturbing. ... the next consideration is to make the best possible provision for pupils who prove to be the most able and the small number who find themselves in the greatest difficulty.¹⁰⁴

Stressing the value of the social education programme in enriching the quality of living of all the pupils, he went on:

I consider that the period of assessment at the beginning of secondary education can be reduced to 5 months ... but setting is not final.¹⁰⁵

In a later lecture to post-graduate students, the same headteacher said:

The comprehensive system is much more humane and much less divisive in society ... in a comprehensive school we attempt to treat all pupils with respect and in a friendly manner ... we try to make the pupils good, but in different ways. ... In a comprehensive school you are a teacher first and a subject specialist second.¹⁰⁶

Another headteacher was given to devoting some lines of his prizegiving speeches to general trends in education during his tenure of the rectorship. Speaking in 1971 of the gradual changeover from a selective to a comprehensives structure, he said:

The name (of our school), with all the tradition of hardwork it is associated with, is known all over Scotland. ... if it were to vanish, the local residents would assume that the future education in the school would be inferior. ... Different the education may be. Inferior it will not be. There will be no levelling down of standards here: levelling up is the process we will set out to accomplish ... one of the pupils who will be presented with prizes today came to us after 3 years in a junior secondary. This is sufficient justification, if any be needed, for the claim I made for our future.¹⁰⁷

The following year, he added a further explanation:

The one fundamental difference from the old multilateral school is that in a comprehensive situation there is no question of being in the bottom class for everything because of weakness in one subject ... pupils will be allowed to find their own level.¹⁰⁸

When the process of comprehensivisation was complete, reacting to outside comments that the school was 'not what it was', the rector rebuked his critics:

We are now comprehensive and take everybody regardless of ability, race, creed, colour or religion ... we have no disguised multilateralism. Anyone who wants to sit 'O' or 'H' and who completes the course gets a chance to sit.¹⁰⁹

One of the most prolific advocates (in print and at conferences) of comprehensive education was a former headteacher of Knightswood Secondary School in Glasgow. In an address to the Annual General

Meeting of Lanarkshire Educational Institute of Scotland, he gave this justification of the change:

The Newson report is the expression of a belated, guilt-laden awareness of our educational and social callousness to those pupils who are ... the majority of our citizens of tomorrow, on whose labours our ... well-being solidly rests.¹¹⁰

Strongly advocating the abolition of the junior secondary school, he pinpointed the source of opposition to the comprehensive principle:

It is begotten out of Ignorance by a fertile sire called Prejudice with a good deal of cross-breeding up the line by horses always first past the winning post: Snobbery, Traditionalism and 'I'm all right, Jack'.¹¹¹

In a staff paper, written in 1966, he argued that there were three principal advantages accruing from the adoption of comprehensive education which could be summarised under three headings - educational, social and economic. Under the first rubric, we find his picture of a comprehensive school:

It will provide a multiplicity of courses at all levels and these will develop the total potential of every pupil, and it will maintain a fluidity within its courses so that transfer from course to course is not only possible, but easy whenever a child's development shows such a change to be desirable.¹¹²

Acknowledging that the introduction of comprehensive education on a national scale would not be problem-free, the paper concludes:

The introduction of a national system of comprehensive education will not solve all our problems, but it will be a major step towards a better society.¹¹³

A former present of HAS offered the following definition as a guide for his staff:

Basically, a comprehensive school is one which caters for

all the pupils of the age group in a given area. Pupils proceed from their primary schools to the same secondary school, irrespective of ability or attainment. To carry the idea further, pupils are not immediately classified but allowed to settle down, given a common course and then allowed to choose different courses as their abilities and career intentions become clear. Thus, the final choice of course may be delayed until the start of S3. Even then, setting permits a pupil to find his proper level in each subject.¹¹⁴

An interesting political perspective is found in a document used by Councillor John Mains at the many meetings he was forced to address at the height of the public outcry over Glasgow Corporation's proposed closure of the former local authority fee-paying schools:

An outstanding feature of the comprehensive school is that children of a high grade of ability can follow a particular line designed for their needs, while those with no clearly marked special abilities can find an appropriate course within the school to meet their needs ... whatever their course, all share the same school life, outside formal lessons ... the grouping of all secondary courses within the same school should help to give equal value and prestige to each in the eyes of the public. ... Comprehensive schools provide the best means of securing parity of prestige among various types of post primary education and provides for fluidity of transfer from one section to another.¹¹⁵

Although emanating from a Labour politician, this view can hardly be said to embrace a new philosophy of education; and in another paper, Councillor Mains reassures doubters that the benefits will be inestimable:

The comprehensive school reflects the open society which is now forming. Pupils will learn to co-operate to succeed with not over others. Children will grow up appreciating the worth of all - a man's a man for a' that ... it is a not a school where to be first in Latin is enough - you must also be socially well-adjusted.¹¹⁶

THE PROFESSIONAL RESPONSE

With regard to the professional reception accorded to comprehensive education in the Scottish educational world, and the manner in which it

was perceived by those who had to cope with its implications, interesting points emerge from the series of interviews conducted in connection with this research. Interviewees were asked what they took to be the sources of initiatives for the introduction of a comprehensive system of education. The strong impression is that the notion of the comprehensive school had not received much serious attention in the Scottish context. As one person put it:

The move to comprehensive education had a political basis and was part of the education policy of the Labour Party which was in power at the time. The notion was imported into Scotland from England, where feelings were much stronger.¹¹⁷

(Directorate Staff)

Several interviewees stressed that it was an idea which owed its origins to the post-war era:

The real background to the initiatives to create comprehensive schools was the general spreading of liberal ideas which gradually gathered momentum and eventually assumed a bandwagon effect. ... I do not think that the Scottish educational world was ready for what happened as a result of the political push.¹¹⁸

(Directorate Staff)

Another root cause of the move to comprehensive schools frequently mentioned was the gradual realisation that all was not well in the junior secondary school:

Junior secondary schools were appallingly badly regarded by most teachers, in effect as an inevitable and much despised endurance, a stage which had to be tolerated to get promotion into a senior secondary and so get a better job. Most junior secondary teachers loathed working or having to work in them. Such an atmosphere meant death to all concerned, staff and pupils alike.¹¹⁹

(Headteacher)

However, it is worth pointing out that several people commented on the fact that, though wrong, the junior secondary-senior secondary system

was nevertheless perceived as fair by many people in Scottish education. It can be argued that such a perception has both historical and cultural origins, given Scotland's pride in its educational system and the power of the democratic tradition. When asked whether they saw the introduction of comprehensive schools as primarily an educational or political movement an overwhelming majority opted for the latter. These comments are typical of many:

There is not the slightest doubt that the impetus was almost wholly political. Very little would have happened from within the teaching profession had it not been for C600 and C614. These were almost bulldozed through, and there certainly was no feeling for comprehensive education in the profession.¹²⁰

(Headteacher)

The moves were entirely political, inspired by that old left-wing radical idealism - get rid of social inequality and give the bairns a chance, education is the way to get on.¹²¹

(Headteacher)

The moves were without a shadow of a doubt political ... The opponents (teachers) didn't have the push or muscle of the proponents (politicians). So that was it! It was decreed that schools were to become comprehensive.¹²²

(Headteacher)

Asked why they thought the comprehensive school became an attractive proposition in the 1960s, a very common response, albeit acknowledging the accession to power of the Labour Party in 1964, ascribed its popularity to the prevailing Zeitgeist, an idea, as it were, whose time had come, and which was in tune with prevailing societal feelings of egalitarianism and expansionism. The comprehensive school, it was believed, would change society as a result of its educational philosophy and approach. One respondent itemised the reasons thus:

- idealism was rife in education
- the working class was changing its lifestyle to one of

- relative affluence
- money was plentiful in society
 - people increasingly had consumer goods and wanted opportunities for their children
 - the whole youth culture movement burst on the world
 - education was seen as being able to give all children the prospect of a better future than their parents had had. It was seen as an instrument to change society for the better.¹²³

(Academic)

Another individual, however, hinted at an ulterior motive:

Comprehensive policy became attractive in the 1960s because there was a recognition that the economy needed a labour force with professional and technical expertise. The management/mass of workers model was obsolete and inappropriate ... Production industries were in decline, whereas white collar work was booming.¹²⁴

(Academic)

It is hardly surprising, in the circumstances outlined above, to discover that a widespread conception of the comprehensive school did not embrace an integrated educational unit, but rather a junior and senior secondary school under one roof:

The merging of junior and senior secondaries was not handled at all well, and was militated against by buildings, staff and pupils. there was resentment. Schools operated on old criteria ... the ground rules did not change. Junior secondary schools were stuck on to senior secondary schools and left to get on with it. Deep down there was a reluctance to consider the integration of pupils of all abilities, and no questioning of the underlying purposes of comprehensive education.¹²⁵

(Adviser)

Another respondent put his view thus:

The concept of a school as an integrated community was never realised. Old traditions continued ... no one knew what a comprehensive policy was. Harold Wilson's phrase 'GRAMMAR SCHOOLS FOR ALL' with all its vagueness and in-built rejection of the majority reinforced what headteachers actually did. ... the senior secondary school had opened its doors to 6/6 instead of 1/6 of the local population.¹²⁶

(Adviser)

These opinions were supported by this pointed remark:

I have always asserted that painters and signwriters have done more for comprehensive education than educationists ever did. To a great extent, it was a name change and not much else.¹²⁷

(HM Inspector)

When interviewees were asked to offer their own personal definition of a comprehensive school, it was noticeable that most gave an answer which could at best be described as slogan-like, at worst vague. The main points to emerge were that a comprehensive school took all the pupils from a defined area, regardless of class or ability, and then devised a variety of courses to cater for the needs and aptitudes of the intake.

This description typifies many given:

A comprehensive school is one in which a group of pupils of widely varying abilities is given the best possible chance of achieving tangible success in terms of whatever abilities they may have. Ideally, it should enable every child to show that it can achieve something. Ability of whatever kind should receive recognition. However, we have failed to create attainable goals for all.¹²⁸

(Headteacher)

However, other responses reveal how far from the ideal referred to above the reality was:

Comprehensive education in Scotland, as envisaged in C600, was not interpreted as a new concept: all it did was make academic education to senior levels available to more working class kids than before.¹²⁹

(Headteacher)

Indeed, as one interviewee put it:

The attempt to cater for and motivate all children is at variance with the experience of many schools, where the idealism and theory comes up against the reality of real teachers, real attitudes, human failings, tiredness, lack of resources etc.¹³⁰

(HM Inspector)

Occasionally bolder perspectives emerged, but descriptions like the following occurred relatively rarely among responses:

A comprehensive school is one which is institutionally and professionally organised and designed to give every pupil the best possible education suited to his individual abilities. It takes all-comers irrespective of their mental capabilities and tries to bring these out without imposing prior ceilings of expectation. ... the key target of a comprehensive school is to awaken motivation in all pupils as a prerequisite of successful leaving. It should also have a wide conception of education.¹³¹

(Adviser)

The school management needs a conscious policy to provide and review opportunities for all pupils and develop a positive attitude towards them. ... It is a school which does not just espouse equality of opportunity, but matches its aims to its practice. Staff need to be aware of the process and management of learning. There has to be a professional consensus and a feeling of corporate response in the staff.¹³²

(Adviser)

That such a philosophy was rarely encountered is amply attested by this statement:

There are examples of successful and radical comprehensive schools in most authorities in Scotland, but they are usually found in deprived or disadvantaged areas, or sparsely populated areas. The senior secondary and multilateral schools have served as models, so that many schools are a variation on the junior/senior secondary pattern which existed before.¹³³

(HM Inspector)

Towards the end of the interview, people were asked if they thought that the potential of the comprehensive school had been tapped in the years since its introduction. Every single one answered emphatically in the negative. Many cited obvious extraneous factors like under-financing, the state of the economy, and changes of government, but other reasons proffered help towards an understanding of how the comprehensive school was conceived. A number of people felt that it was chiefly viewed in

structural rather than educational terms, being merely grafted on to the existing system:

... perhaps most of all because the educational thinking to match the structural changes was very slow to develop ... by the time serious thought was given to what it actually meant to be operating a comprehensive system, a great deal of damage had been done.¹³⁴

(Union Official)

Hence, a narrow definition prevailed for many years:

I cannot think of a single instance in which the potential of the comprehensive school has been tapped. No school has managed to engage, let alone galvanise all of its pupils. The emphasis, even in those with comprehensive ambitions, has remained locked on to certificate pupils.¹³⁵

(Adviser)

It was mentioned several times that only a minority of committed enthusiasts had ever asked fundamental educational questions, and actively sought ways of putting them into practice in their schools. In addition, several people asserted that there was a lack of an accepted philosophical basis to the comprehensive system:

Various people have struggled along the road in an attempt to tap its potential only to be thwarted by economic barriers or starved of any real educational philosophy to serve as a basis for action.¹³⁶

(HM Inspector)

As a result, people were left to make an ad-hoc response which often acted as an expedient:

Practice has not followed theory. Parents and teachers have not asked the basic question: WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS? Competitiveness has been encouraged at the expense of co-operation, and people in key positions have not had enough educational vision. ... children have not been valued for what they are, but measured by academic criteria and compared to other kids in consequence.¹³⁷

(Adviser)

An overwhelming number of people referred to the persistence of entrenched attitudes and the under-estimation of the scale and complexity of the change to a comprehensive system. As a consequence, educationists fell back on the familiar, and much tokenism ensued:

The potential of the comprehensive school has not been tapped. It has been a long, slow process which has met with quiet resistance. The level of guidance, given the enormity of the change, was dreadful, and the succession of Governments we have had have merely paid lipservice to the ideal, both ideologically and in terms of finance. Teachers - or most of them - just conducted business as before.¹³⁸

(Headteacher)

A fitting summary is provided by one interviewee:

All that the comprehensive did was create more education for more people, in the belief that society's problems would thereby be cured. ... but it did not result in a fundamental questioning of the principles on which the education service was based. The confusion its birth caused was tackled by pragmatic solutions for survival rather than by long-term strategies of a serious educational nature.¹³⁹

(Educational Journalist)

It is difficult not to take the view that, whatever the ideological justification for the move to comprehensive education, its origin owed much to pragmatism. The centralisation of provision which would ensue was seen as an expedient solution to contemporary problems. Indeed, a recent OECD position paper states that the factors which influenced official thinking at the time (the mid sixties) were:

- 1) selection was socially divisive and therefore undesirable
- 2) the unsatisfactory way in which the selective system worked
- 3) the need to provide new schools for a rising population
- 4) the imminent raising of the school leaving age by another year, further increasing the school population.¹⁴⁰

According to the paper, which was compiled by members of Her Majesty's Inspectorate, the principal reasons for the change to a more

comprehensive form of education were:

- 1) to have all pupils from a neighbourhood under one roof
- 2) to provide equal opportunity for all
- 3) to see ability rewarded irrespective of the social status of the family¹⁴¹

In essence, official exhortations to go comprehensive in Scotland stopped at outlawing selection tests in primary schools for differentiated secondary schooling and stating a decided preference for the all-through type of comprehensive unit:

Whilst Government policy clearly expected local authorities to organise secondary education on the basis of all-through comprehensive schools to age 18, it neither prescribed nor detailed the curriculum or the organisation with comprehensive schools. On the other hand, the Government made it clear that transfer examinations with their verbal reasoning tests, standardised tests in English and Arithmetic and teachers' estimates should be discontinued, and pupils assessed for secondary courses after a period of orientation in the secondary school. Local authorities were thus free to introduce their own concepts of comprehensive education within the confines of Government policy.¹⁴²

CHAPTER TWO

FOOTNOTES

1. These developments have been chronicled by Barker (op cit); Fenwick (op cit); Rubenstein and Simon (op cit); see also 'The Road to the Circulars' M.L.M. MacKenzie in Scottish Educational Studies Vol. 1, No. 1 1967.
2. Letter dated December 1950, replying to one from Morgan Phillips of 24/11/50 in S.E.D. File ED 48/2 (my underlining).
3. Letter dated 11/5/51 (Ibid) (my underlining).
4. Letter dated 13/12/50 (Ibid).
5. Letter dated 4/12/50 (Ibid).
6. The Labour Party had set up an ad-hoc committee to examine and report on comprehensive schools in 1950. Among its Scottish members were Margaret Herbison and William Ross.
7. The organisation alluded to is one in which the first two years of secondary education are envisaged as a diagnostic period during which a picture of a pupil's aptitudes and capacities would gradually emerge.
8. Letter from John Brunton to the Secretary of the S.E.D. dated 1/3/51 (Ibid) (my underlining).
9. Letter from the Secretary of the S.E.D. to John Brunton dated 5/3/51 (Ibid) (my underlining).
10. Note dated March 1951 (Ibid).
11. Letter from W.S. Murrie to Mr Henderson Stewart dated 8/1/54 (Ibid).
12. (Ibid).
13. Note from J. Kydd (S.E.D.) to John Brunton dated 15/4/65 in S.E.D. File ED 13/124.
14. Comprehensive Secondary Education: Notes of a Meeting in the Secretary's room dated 27/4/65 (Ibid) (my underlining).
15. (Ibid).
16. (Ibid).
17. Letter from Norman Graham to Bruce Millan dated 16/6/66 (Ibid).
18. (Ibid) (my underlining).

19. (Ibid).
20. The Conservative Enemy, C.A.R. Crosland, Cape 1962, p.174.
21. (Ibid) pp.174-5.
22. (Ibid) pp.177-8.
23. Speech to the North of England Education Conference 7/1/66 quoted in Socialism Now Cape 1974, p.206.
24. Quoted in British Election Manifestos, F.W.S. Craig, P.R.P. 1970, pp.192-4.
25. Quoted in The Comprehensive School: the Impossible Dream? B. Shaw, Blackwell 1983, p.40.
26. The Reorganisation of Secondary Education on Comprehensive Lines, S.E.D. Circular 600, 27/10/65, para. 5.
27. (Ibid) para. 6.
28. (Ibid) para. 6.
29. (Ibid) para. 7.
30. (Ibid) para. 9.
31. (Ibid) para. 13.
32. The Transfer of Pupils from Primary to Secondary Education S.E.D. Circular 614 19/6/66, para. 5.
33. (Ibid) para. 11.
34. (Ibid) para. 11.
35. (Ibid) para. 14.
36. S.S.T.A. Yearbook for 1964-65. Executive Committee Minute of 3/9/65.
37. S.S.T.A. Yearbook 1966-67. Annual Conference Report, April 1967.
38. S.S.T.A. Yearbook 1967-68. Council Minute of 7/12/68.
39. Report on Comprehensive Education, S.S.T.A. 1971, p.4.
40. (Ibid) pp.8-9.
41. E.I.S. Annual Proceedings 1963-64. Minute No. 108, dated 17/6/64.
42. E.I.S. Annual Proceedings 1965-66. Executive Minute, dated 27/4/66.
43. E.I.S. Annual Proceedings 1965-66. A.G.M. Conference Report.

44. E.I.S. Annual Proceedings 1965-66. Comments on Draft C600 submitted to Executive in August 1965.
45. The Comprehensive School E.I.S. March 1965, p.1.
46. (Ibid) p.1.
47. (Ibid) p.3.
48. (Ibid) p.4.
49. E.I.S. Information Leaflet, Vol. 5, No. 17, 1978.
50. A Short History of the S.S.A. and N.A.S./UWT 1933-81 R. McClement 1982, p.65 (unpublished).
51. 'The Scottish Schoolmaster', Vol. 24, No.11, Nov. 1966.
52. 'The Scottish Schoolmaster', Vol. 24, No. 12, Dec. 1966.
53. S.T.U.C. Proceedings 1965. Account of a meeting between a S.T.U.C. delegation and Mrs Judith Hart 29/1/65.
54. (Ibid) Transcript of Debates at the Annual Conference
55. A.D.E.S. Annual Conference Reports 1964.
56. (Ibid).
57. A.D.E.S. Council and Executive Minutes Books 17/12/65 and 19/6/66 respectively.
58. Letters sent by i) B.B. Smith (Kincardine); ii) T.G. Henderson (Argyll), iii) W.F. Lindsay (Moray and Nairn) prior to a meeting of the Liaison Committee on Educational Matters held in May 1966 to discuss C600 and C614, in A.D.E.S. File marked 'Liaison Committee'.
59. A.D.E.S. Annual Conference Reports 1965. J.J. Robertson's talk was entitled '20 Years On'.
60. R.M. Inglis (Ibid).
61. W.T.H. Inglis in a talk entitled 'Opportunities in the Academic Field' in A.D.E.S Annual Conference Reports 1966.
62. W.T.H. Inglis (Ibid).
63. H.A.S. Minutes Book 1958-63: Report of a Conference in 1959.
64. (Ibid) Notes on an Autumn Meeting held in Glasgow 17/10/59.
65. H.A.S. Minutes Book 1963-69 Report of a Conference in 1963.
66. (Ibid) J.L. Chadwin's Presidential Address to the 1964 Conference.

67. (Ibid) Talk given by Mr Henderson entitled 'The Comprehensive School' at the 1964 Conference.
68. (Ibid).
69. (Ibid). Minute of Council Meeting held in Glasgow 9/9/65. The statement was the H.A.S. response to Draft C600.
70. (Ibid) Report of discussion on the comprehensive school at the 1965 Conference.
71. A.D.E.S. file 'Liaison with S.E.D.' Report of a conference held at Dunblane Hydro 13/9-15/9/66.
72. Judith Hart, quoted in an interview with John Pirie in 'The Daily Record' 31/3/66.
73. Bruce Millan's address to the E.I.S. Congress at Aberdeen in December 1966, quoted in Scottish Educational Journal 6/1/67.
74. Bruce Millan's speech to the S.S.T.A. Annual Congress in Dunblane, April 1966, quoted in 'Timed Educational Supplement (Scotland)' 6/5/66.
75. HMCI Charles Forbes, speaking at the Renfrewshire Conference on comprehensive education held in Eastwood High School, April 1968, quoted in 'Times Educational Supplement (Scotland)' 12/4/68.
76. (Ibid).
77. Dr Dickson's address quoted in Scottish Educational Journal 13/6/69.
78. Copy of full text of Dr Dickson's address lent to the author by John D. Pollock.
79. These quotations are drawn from leader articles, conference reports, accounts of speeches and debates and letters to the editor.
80. Quoted in Scottish Educational Journal 7/1/55; 20/1/56; 8/2/63; respectively.
81. Quoted in Scottish Educational Journal 11/11/55; 18/5/56; 22/11/57 respectively.
82. Quoted in Scottish Educational Journal 18/3/55; 11/11/55; 29/1/60 respectively.
83. Quoted in Scottish Educational Journal 1/6/56; 3/3/61; 22/2/63 respectively.
84. Quoted in Scottish Educational Journal 13/5/55; 2/11/56; 27/9.57; 6/6/58 respectively.
85. H.M.C.I. J.P. Forsyth quoted in Scottish Educational Journal 29/10/65.

86. James Breen speaking at a E.I.S. Ayrshire weekend conference. Quoted in Scottish Educational Journal 26/11/65.
87. John Pollock quoted in Scottish Educational Journal 11/3/66
88. Scottish Educational Journal 1/7/66.
89. James Carmichael quoted in Scottish Educational Journal 28/10/66.
90. Dominie article in Scottish Educational Journal 16/5/69.
91. Report of a conference on Primary/Secondary Liaison held at Craigie College of Education quoted in Scottish Educational Journal 16/1/70.
92. Article entitled 'Speak up McMillan!' in 'The Daily Record' 4/8/66.
93. 'The Daily Record' 19/4/67.
94. Article entitled 'Changes taking place in education' in 'The Daily Record' 23/8/66.
95. Article entitled 'A New Deal Ahead' in 'The Daily Record' 20/4/67.
96. Article entitled 'Forgotten 400 must study in the dump' in 'The Daily Record' 29/8/66.
97. Article entitled 'What Suits Scotland' in 'The Scotsman' 19/11/67.
98. Article entitled 'Out of Control' in 'The Daily Express' 6/12/67.
99. D.J. Oldman quoted in 'Times Educational Supplement (Scotland)' 7/6/68.
100. Professor Stanley Nisbet addressing a S.S.T.A. meeting in Glasgow, quoted in 'Times Educational Supplement (Scotland)' 10/5/68.
101. J.R. Haugh quoted in 'Times Educational Supplement (Scotland)' 25/2/66.
102. John Forrester in letter to the editor in 'The Times Educational Supplement (Scotland)' 30/3/73.
103. Article entitled 'Meaningless Phrases' by J. Hunter Cran, in 'Times Educational Supplement (Scotland)' 5/9/69.
104. Personal papers of Harry Wylie, Headteacher at Govan High School, lent to author. This document was dated 19/1/70.
105. (Ibid) dated 3/11/70.
106. (Ibid) The lecture was delivered at Jordanhill College in 1974.

107. Personal papers of John T. Robertson, Headteacher at Clydebank High School lent to the author.
108. (Ibid).
109. (Ibid) Prizegiving speech 1977.
110. Personal papers of J.R.B. Christie, Headteacher of Knightswood Secondary School lent to the author. The extract is from an address he gave to the local E.I.S. 17/2/65.
111. (Ibid).
112. (Ibid) Extract from 'Towards the Comprehensive' (1966).
113. (Ibid).
114. Personal papers of A.B. Niven, Headteacher of Armadale Academy lent to the author. The extract appeared in the Staff Handbook (1971).
115. 'Arguments for the Comprehensive School' J. Mains in G.C.E.D. File 11/1/49 held in The Mitchell Library.
116. 'Virtues of the Comprehensive School', J. Mains (Ibid).
117. Interview DS/15.
118. Interview DS/16.
119. Interview HT/22.
120. Interview HT/62.
121. Interview HT/61.
122. Interview HT/49.
123. Interview AC/2.
124. Interview AC/5.
125. Interview AD/4.
126. Interview AD/7.
127. Interview HM/8.
128. Interview HT/25.
129. Interview HT/58.
130. Interview HM/4.
131. Interview AD/15.
132. Interview AD/10.

133. Interview HM/2.
134. Interview TU/4.
135. Interview AD/7.
136. Interview HM/8.
137. Interview AD/3.
138. Interview HT/29/30.
139. Interview MS/1.
140. The State of Education - Frame of Reference (Scotland) O.E.C.D. 1985, p.5.
141. (Ibid) p.6.
142. 'Levels of Decision Making in Education'. Paper 6 of a series prepared for the Franco-Scottish Seminar on Comprehensive Education held at Sèvres (France) November 1980. (Personal papers lent to the author by James P. Cranston).

CHAPTER THREE

THE COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL AND THE SCOTTISH EDUCATIONAL TRADITION

Scottish secondary education has been at once peculiarly academic in type and utilitarian in intention. We have no large class of monied people in a position to indulge a preference for a vital and enlightened schooling of their children as against one that ensures examination success and a passport to the professions.

Secondary Education: a Report of the Advisory Council on Education in Scotland (1947) para 110.

Many people in the system at the time of Circular 600 had perceptions about education which have to be explained in historical terms. They were suddenly surrounded by intense pressure to do an about-turn.

(Interview/MS/1)

I should say at the outset that in all my involvement in Scottish education, there have never been questions about the basis of the educational system. This was a given. Many people also spoke as if there was a general assumption that modern events were simply manifestations of a comprehensive system of education which has existed for centuries.

(Interview/CD/2)

All pupils going to the local school had a long heritage in Scottish education, so that principle articulated with tradition. I am not so sure whether comprehensive education was seen by many people in education as a means of integrating pupils of different intellectual capacities and social backgrounds. This was difficult in Scotland with its long and proud tradition of identifying and developing academic excellence with an eye on the university.

(Interview/TU/3)

If the premise is accepted that no period in educational history exists in a vacuum but is by definition shaped by the ideas and practices of previous years, then the examination of the introduction and development of the comprehensive school in the West of Scotland during the years 1965-80 is no exception. The problem for the researcher becomes one of deciding at what historical point to locate 'the past'. It could be argued that any date in such an exercise is arbitrary, but, from points made in the introduction to the previous chapter, it seems a reasonable proposition to go no further back than the period immediately after the Second World War.

In the previous chapter, consideration of the reactions to and definitions of the comprehensive school revealed that no precise model was suggested by officialdom, which adopted a somewhat laissez-faire attitude to its introduction, resulting in a variety of feelings, at best confused, at worst hostile, amongst those charged with converting the wishes of Circulars 600 and C614 into educational reality. It will be argued in this chapter, that, partly as a consequence of this state of affairs, a quite precise construction was in fact put on the term 'comprehensive school' by many individuals in positions of influence in the Scottish education system. This construction derived from traditional ways of thinking about secondary education in Scotland, and also from the fact that a ready-made, home-grown paradigm was already in existence which accorded with such thinking. The widespread recourse to the features of this model explains why it has often been claimed, particularly in official circles, that the changeover to a system of comprehensive education in Scotland was effected with relative ease.¹ Equally, it helps to account for the fact that the comprehensive school was seen as a threat to the best Scottish traditions in education; that

reorganised secondary schools found it hard to dislodge the attachment to a predominantly academic view of the educational process; that the colossal influence of external examinations remained unthreatened for many years; and that a particularly Scottish interpretation was put on the term 'equality of opportunity'. It can thus be postulated that, in the world of Scottish education in the mid-sixties (and for some years later) the practice of comprehensive education took on quite identifiable characteristics which were designed to mitigate what were perceived to be the 'worst' aspects of the political decision to go comprehensive, and which brought in their wake certain, almost inevitable circumstances.

THE 1947 ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORT AND THE OMNIBUS SCHOOL PARADIGM

The 1947 Advisory Council Report on Secondary Education is absolutely crucial to an understanding of official thinking on secondary education in post-war Scotland. In the section on the organisation of secondary education, the Council laments the fact that, in urban areas, the tradition had grown up of separate junior and senior secondary schools since the issue of Circular 44 in 1921, and extols the virtues of the 'omnibus' secondary school found in small burghs and rural areas. Such a school is described in these terms:

a comprehensive centre of post-primary education designed to meet the needs of a whole community.²

One advantage claimed for this type of organisation is that it provides '*organic unity*'³ and thus mitigates the worst effects of selection at 12. Not only that, it is asserted that such a school:

best embodies the ideals of the new age⁴

and is recommended warmly as:

the natural way for a democracy to order the post primary education of a given area.⁵

It would be erroneous, however, to infer from such pronouncements that Tom Johnston's distinguished educationists were, in some embryonic way, hinting at the comprehensive school. Indeed, all that is proposed is that all children from a given area should attend the same secondary school to avoid the resentment engendered by segregation, but that they should be allocated to appropriate courses once admitted (Para 166). A final 'plus point' would be that changes to accommodate late developers would be purely an internal matter (Para 167). Further proof of the true nature of the Council's thinking is afforded by the glorification of fee-paying secondary schools existing in Scottish cities as almost quintessential omnibus schools, which are skilled in:

the wise handling of assorted humanity.⁶

That the Council, despite its denunciation of separate schools, still strongly favoured segregation by ability within one school is attested by its repudiation of the possibility of the 'common course' in first year:

Equality of opportunity can never mean forcing markedly unequal abilities to do the same or equal things, even for one year, nor can we atone for a past, in which the weak had to pant after the strong, by a future in which the strong are made to crawl along beside the weak. Surely, too, it would be a strange irony, if, at the very time when we are trying to urge the freedom and diversity of individual groupwork at every stage, we should try to force the hapless first year on to the Procrustean bed of a uniform course.⁷

A senior member of the Inspectorate said of the 1947 Report in interview:

Comprehensive education in Scotland is all about a physical reorganisation which remained without the support of an educational theory to match. The 1947 Report has as its main legacy the establishment of a particularly powerful ethos of learning and of a learning environment. It classified the secondary population in psychological terms, and laid down a curriculum to match the classifications ... it is a historical document which had a powerful influence in shaping ideas about schooling ... it advocates the classic division and segregation so noteworthy in Scottish educational practice.⁸

Notwithstanding this judgement, a large number of people interviewed in connection with this research claimed that the Report had no impact on teachers, indeed was hardly discussed at training college or in staffrooms. It was generally perceived to be a document ahead of its time, albeit well-written and oft-quoted, but imbued with post-war idealism, and a vision of a new world in which education would play a central part. Many opined that any influence it had would have been restricted to members of the Inspectorate and senior officials at the Scottish Education Department. Be that as it may, however, the official silence which greeted its publication is well documented.⁹ Apart from a few nodding references in a Circular issued in 1951, hardly any of the recommendations were taken up. One can only speculate as to the reasons, but it does not seem too fanciful to suggest, that despite its professed segregationist ethic, the Report's findings were considered idealistic or unconventional in Scottish Education Department circles, and possibly even a challenge to the authoritarianism and autonomy the Department had wielded over Scottish education for several decades, especially since no Scottish Education Department or Her Majesty's Inspectorate personnel sat on the Advisory Council. While the curriculum/assessment proposals advanced by the Council may have been considered radical, its advocacy of the omnibus school only disturbed the status quo in urban areas, and was in any case posited on the notion

of differentiation of course according to pupil ability. Thus, the model advanced in the Report was theoretically consonant with received ideas in the Scottish educational world of the time.

It seems clear that this model served the planners well. When Glasgow's first 'pioneering' comprehensive schools - Crookston Castle and St. Augustine's - were opened in 1954, the headmaster of the former had this to say in his first prize-giving speech:

... we accept all pupils of secondary age resident in the area irrespective of their attainment and ability. The promotion tests do not operate, but pupils are tentatively graded on the basis of the primary headmaster's report. A modified scheme of promotion is in operation after exams and teachers' reports, but actually very few children have been moved from their original class. Pupils at all levels will be given instruction at least equal to the best given in other schools.¹⁰

Indeed, in an article in the Evening Citizen on the occasion of the opening, the convener of the Education Committee was quoted as saying:

There is some misconception in the public mind as to what the comprehensive school stands for and what its aim is. Traditionally, schools in Scotland have been of the omnibus type, admitting children irrespective of ability. That is the foundation on which the Glasgow Authority proposed to build St. Augustine's and Crookston Castle ... it cannot be overemphasised that we are out to support the education of children who have the Leaving Certificate in mind, or that one of the main functions of such a school is to provide facilities leading to the Leaving Certificate. Indeed, one of the main aims is to encourage young people to stay on at school so that they can fulfil their academic promise.¹¹

The same philosophy was clearly enunciated in an article on the subject of Glasgow's comprehensive schools. A spokesman for the Education Department, describing the courses on offer said:

In making provision for the fullest possible range of course, we take the view that pupils should be divided into groups, not only in respect of subjects of the courses, but also in respect of the treatment of those subjects in the light of the final objective and the capacity of the pupils:

class groups should have regard to homogeneity if any real educational advantage is to ensue ... whereas in England the comprehensive school is an importation, in Scotland it is in the nature of an organic growth.¹²

A further indication of the pervasiveness of the omnibus model is provided by the head of Inverurie Academy, writing a decade or so later about comprehensive education in a small burgh school. After discussing the efforts made to integrate the school population he says:

Despite all this, however, a barrier-valve continues to separate Scottish Certificate of Education and JSC classes in Secondary 1 - Secondary 3. Movement of pupils from Scottish Certificate of Education to JSC streams is possible at any point in the intermediate school, but movement in the reverse direction proves well-nigh possible.¹³

The writer reveals towards the end of his article where his emphasis in reorganisation lies:

A reorganisation of the kind suggested has been called an attempt at social equality by sweeping junior secondary pupils under the comprehensive carpet, yet if in the sweeping some of the 'dust' becomes part of the senior secondary 'pile', the sweeping process would indeed be justified.¹⁴

More recently, the head of Brechin High School, writing on the same theme said:

Reorganisation was an entirely internal one ... which constituted a vast improvement, especially for the less able pupils who now found themselves getting a fairer selection of teaching staff and a better share of the equipment. Gradually for them, any possible sense of inferiority wore off, with academic and non-academic lining up in the same hockey team or holiday abroad. Nor did the brighter brethren suffer. What seemed a sensible amount of streaming was retained, and the school's academic performance, as measured by external examinations was unimpaired.¹⁵

The critical reader must surely be less sanguine about the extent of integration and the real diminution in feelings of inferiority. Nothing

said here indicates a fundamental shift in educational thinking, encompassing notions like a common curriculum and greater integration of pupils of varying abilities. If such elitist thinking was as ingrained in the Scottish educational psyche as is being suggested, it comes as no surprise to note Professor Brian Simon's statement in an address to Glasgow Educational Institute of Scotland members to mark the 1972 Centenary celebrations:

If the main task of education is to provide all with a secondary education as a necessity of a scientific and technical age, room for the realisation of that end must be made by firmly ditching the very special provision made for the lad o'pairts. This may seem a heresy in Scotland, but the lad does very well in the comprehensive school, and is surely the least of the teachers' worries.¹⁶

The irony is, according to the argument advanced here, that the lad o'pairts occupied a predominant place in teachers' thinking, long after schools were officially reorganised.

The existence of the omnibus model also accounts for the much quoted mythical point of view that the comprehensive school was not a new concept in Scotland. It is probably nearer the truth to state that while the comprehensive principle of educating all children in one school sat easily with Scottish notions of democracy and equality, dealing with the harsh realities of its implications was rather less welcomed. It is worthy of note how many of the people interviewed for the investigation alluded to the long-established tradition of comprehensive (sic) schools in Scotland. The following extracts are typical of many:

Circular 600 articulated very easily with the Scottish tradition, much more easily than in England, given the tradition of one secondary school for all children in most areas outside the major cities. There was a very large base

of existing schools which met the requirements of Circular 600.¹⁷

(Politician)

In omnibus schools there was enshrined the best of the old Scottish dominie traditions. The seeds and possibilities of comprehensive education were there ...¹⁸

(Adviser)

The traditional Scottish secondary school was multilateral, so the basic idea of all pupils going to the same secondary school was far from revolutionary ... so that comprehensive schools were really going back to our roots, - a reincarnation of burgh schools.¹⁹

(Directorate Staff)

So, we had 'comprehensive' schools only in so far as all pupils went to one school ... the introduction of comprehensive education actually sustained the idea of longstanding Scottish democracy and the myth of Scottish education being excellent. Hence, the idea that with comprehensive schools it was being made available to more children was very acceptable to all in Scotland.²⁰

(Headteacher)

It is possible to say, therefore, that a particular version of the comprehensive principle lay at the base of traditional Scottish secondary education (i.e. all children going to the same secondary school but rigidly separated into different types of course on ability after entry). Thus, 'going comprehensive', at least organisationally, did not conflict with the predominant value system. The high national standing of the omnibus secondary school and widely-shared assumptions about the excellence of the education it had provided for decades, coloured thinking and perceptions to an extent which enabled those involved in education to interpret the reality of the change to a comprehensive system in terms which made it appear more palatable, and obviated the necessity to address its real implications, central among which was the challenge of devising an appropriate curriculum and pedagogy now that full secondary education was the right of all children

regardless of ability.

THE INVOCATION OF TRADITION

A striking feature in the documentation of the introduction of comprehensive education is the frequency with which Scottish traditions in education are invoked as if to provide support for a long-established system perceived to be threatened by change. Of many such references, a few will suffice to serve as examples. At an occasion organised to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of one of Glasgow's pioneering comprehensive schools, the then headteacher said in his address:

The Scottish system of schooling today is still a bit traditional, a bit old fashioned, a bit slow to change, and because of this, a bit of all right. In educational terms, the question 'WHA'S LIKE US'? has few answers. The nicest thing about Scottish parents is the way they leave the schools to get on with it, so long as they think that the school is doing its best with a difficult job.²¹

A telling extract, not only for its self-congratulatory complacency, but for its illustration of how many inroads comprehensive education had made in the years 1965-79! The reference to the non-interference of parents is equally revealing. An excellent example of the pervasive power of tradition is to be found in an article written by Dr. Stewart Mackintosh, Director of Education for Glasgow on the occasion of his retirement in 1968. After reflecting on the many changes in the 'teaching revolution', the author considers external examinations and proposed changes in them:

I cannot but feel that in this development our Scottish education has been blown off course ... for generations we have preserved a recognisably distinctive Scottish educational system which stressed the importance of a broad curriculum ... (the proposal to introduce Certificate of Sixth Year Studies) is an attitude which offends against the idea of the democratic intellect, our distinctive Scottish inheritance which, after all, did not do too badly by the lad o'pairts.²²

The former Director seems to be suggesting, from his comfortable vantage point in the Scottish educational world, that changes must be evaluated and rejected if they pose a threat to traditional practices. One headteacher echoed such sentiments in a speech on prize-giving day. Alluding to the changeover to comprehensive education he said:

The staff continue to give an excellent academic education ... our pupils' academic achievements continue to be considerable ... I have always said that comprehensive education should never mean inferior education. Here at --- we are keeping our standards up.²³

Two years later, he returned to the same theme:

Surely society does not want an equality that means a sameness for everything. Schools are not an educational sardine-tin. They are places with traditions and a life and outlook of their own ... at a time when all the old ways are under threat of change, some aspects of tradition have become important ... we still cling to traditional ways (assembly, sports, prize-giving). My aim in ----- has been to implement real comprehensive education. I will continue, however, to fight monotony, monochromatic education, the levelling down of the school to drab patterns of conforming mediocrity.²⁴

An almost identical refusal to let comprehensive education and its implications impair tradition is found in Glasgow. An editorial in its local teachers' magazine, after tracing tradition from the parish school of Knox down to the 1970s, strongly refuted any allegations of decay or decline:

In Glasgow, at any rate, one only has to look around ... an educational complex which will be able to take a son or daughter of the city all the way from the nursery to the capping and gowning ... we make bold to say that the overall quality of education in Glasgow as a microcosm of Scotland compares today with that of any other authority in the U.K., indeed, in what is a more stringent parallel, with the reputation of a system which had George Buchanan for godfather.²⁵

The President of the Educational Institute of Scotland in her address to

the Annual General Meeting in 1968 acknowledged the changes that had taken place in recent years in these terms:

... the focus of Scottish education has shifted from the high fliers to the children of middling attainments ... equal attention is now being given to the others who constitute more than half our future, and we have entered upon a new era in the development of Scottish education - the emancipation of the average child.²⁶

Notwithstanding this alleged change of emphasis, the President reassured any of her audience who might have construed it as a radical departure from established practices:

While recognising the need for change to keep Scottish education abreast of the times, we can still take sober pride not only in the progress we have already made but in the basic soundness of our educational system. As a custodian of the Scottish educational tradition, the Institute constantly seeks to preserve what is best in it and to keep reform within the bounds of the established framework. This we do not out of any narrow conceit of ourselves, or vain regard for past glories, but because we firmly believe that the distinctive quality of Scottish education is worth preserving.²⁷

Two years later, a newspaper report of the opening of two new purpose-built comprehensive schools at Airdrie and East Kilbride carried the following reassuring comment on the official speeches:

At both ceremonies, however, speakers were quick to point out that traditional values would not be neglected ... it was welcomed that education would now be for everyone, but respect would still be retained for the traditional disciplines of the Scottish school, geared to helping bright youngsters make their way in a hostile world ... throughout it was obvious that some pride was still to be taken in academic success.²⁸

As an interpretation of these illustrations, it can fairly be said that the prevailing ethos seemed to be that schools, while required by government circular to be comprehensive in intake, were under no such requirement to make significant alterations to their internal

organisation in order to accommodate the novel heterogenous population. It is not an exaggeration to claim that the physical change left hallowed concepts of education unaltered: an imposed change was tacitly confronted by stretching a system designed for a few to meet the needs of the many, and hence its worst effects were mitigated; or at least made more palatable.

It has to be said, of course, that it would have been somewhat unrealistic to expect any other outcome. Despite the widespread recognition of the inadequacy of junior secondary schools, which could have acted as a stimulus for genuine reform, the power of traditional values and assumptions remained strong. As a report on comprehensive education presented to the Lanarkshire Education Committee concluded:

it looks as if the ancient virtues of Scottish education have hardened our arteries.²⁹

Hardly surprising, therefore, is the conclusion of a working party of Lanarkshire headteachers, appointed in October 1964, to consider the introduction of comprehensive education:

Several members of the working party felt that the most satisfactory and efficient part of the secondary structure was the senior secondary school and it should therefore be left intact by whatever changes were recommended ... there is a strong loyalty to our own schools as we have inherited and helped to shape them; this is natural and commendable.³⁰

Nonetheless, it has to be said that some headteachers did try to confront the challenge of the comprehensive school in a spirit of professional honesty. Even here, however, it is possible to note some contradictions which suggest that innovative ideas encountered the brick walls of tradition. One Glasgow headteacher issued a memorandum on guidance to staff which contains this extract:

comprehensive education means more than an uncommitted start to secondary school. It means education on a much wider front. It means a genuine attempt to create good personal relationships ... the building up of a friendly working atmosphere...³¹

Such encouraging sentiments are put into perspective by an extract from a later document on the same subject. Talking about tutor groups in social education, the headteacher notes:

Some tutors have great difficulty in talking to pupils about social or moral issues. Some consider it is not part of the work of a secondary teachers to deal with these matters.³²

Speaking some years earlier on curricular policy in the comprehensive school, he said:

There is one way in which my thinking differs from that of some headmasters. I consider that the period of assessment and orientation at the beginning of secondary education can be reduced to five months.³³

The central dilemma was well documented by a researcher at Glasgow University who had undertaken an analysis of the Scottish Education Department Secondary Staffing Survey of 1970. Outlining his findings, he said

While we appear to be offering our pupils a very general education, the criticism is that we still put a heaving emphasis on the theoretical and academic sides of the subjects while teaching mixed-ability groups in the common course. The result is that many pupils are alienated at an early stage of their school career ... the survey indicates that there is still an underlying philosophy which relates Technical and Home Economics with the lower abilities and Latin with those pupils of highest ability ... many of the present school timetables are the result of educational thinking which took place in another age.³⁴

Not only, then, had new ideas met resistance; a traditional outlook was causing the comprehensive principle to be compromised, if not sabotaged

in practice. To redress the balance slightly, reference must be made to the fact that some educationists not only were cognisant of the effects of the Scottish educational tradition, but also encouraged colleagues to escape its less desirable influences. A presidential address at a local association of the Educational Institute of Scotland contains these words:

For too long we have been sustained in self-deception by the shibboleth that Scottish education because of some intrinsic quality is the best in the world. Let us recognise that in most aspects of education we are at least one step behind other educational nations.³⁵

A successor in office two years later reiterated a similar line:

For far too long Scotland boasted of the achievements of the lad o'pairts. We are now breaking away from the training of the elite and paying more attention to the education of the masses.³⁶

Despite these pleas to discard an inappropriate conception of secondary education, it seems to have been the case that many of their colleagues either could or would not. Notwithstanding the rhetoric to the contrary, the comprehensive school, and the vision of education it enshrined were novel in Scotland, and jarred with inherited values. But the rhetoric about 'comprehensive' schools having a long lineage north of the Border probably served to sweeten the imposition of an English idea and interpret and make sense of a changed educational reality. The effect of the Scottish educational tradition is akin to Raymond Williams's view:

What we have to see is not just a 'tradition', but a selective tradition; an internationally selective version of a shaping past and a pre-shaped present, which is then powerfully operative in the process of social and cultural identification ... it is a version of the past which is intended to connect with and ratify the present. What it offers in practice is a sense of predisposed continuity.³⁷

THE ACADEMIC TRADITION

A central well-attested component of that educational tradition was an exaltation of the academic deriving from an ideology of separation according to ability. Reference has already been made to Circular 44 issued in 1921, and during the decades which followed academics like McClelland, Thomson and their disciple McIntosh expended great efforts in an attempt to winnow out the able child in order that he could be set on the ladder of opportunity leading ultimately to higher education.³⁸ In 1967, the recently constituted Consultative Committee on the Curriculum published its second paper dealing with the organisation of the curriculum in the secondary school. An early paragraph opens thus:

Traditionally, Scottish schools have been concerned primarily, though not exclusively with the intellectual development of their pupils. Over the years, however, it has become clear that the scope of education is widening to include such matters as health, social behaviour ... at the same time ... the pressure on young people to obtain the necessary qualifications has markedly increased and this has helped to perpetuate the over-emphasis on the intellectual, or at least the examinable parts of the curriculum.³⁹

This document, which contains the first official acknowledgement of the common course as the vehicle for the orientation and assessment mentioned in Circular 614, has as a central recommendation the notion of 'minority time'. The idea was that pupils should spend no more than three quarters of the week on examination subjects, so that 'essential elements are not crushed out of the curriculum'. (p.24) Leaving aside the fact that a large number of the working group came from a senior secondary background, and that no allusion is made in the paper to the existence of 'comprehensive schools', scrutiny of public statements shows that the reception accorded to the proposals was cool. An illustrative example, is provided by the Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association:

... if it were adopted without modification, it would involve the application of all pupils at this stage to a Procrustean Bed, on which the able would be cut down to the size of the less able and the least able would suffer distress by being stretched beyond their capacity to endure ... any attempt to reduce the weekly timetable to seventy-five per cent examinable work would be to reduce the time available for certificate work of any value to disastrous proportions.⁴⁰

Despite the official existence of comprehensive schools it remains highly doubtful if a parallel shift in the education on offer had occurred. Indeed, it would appear as if the expectation was 'business as usual':

... the immediate and definite rewards of examination passes have obscured the less obvious but equally important considerations of social and moral development. For the large mass of pupils and apparently for most parents, the school is simply an academic forcing house, producing 'O' and 'H' passes like so many stalks of rhubarb ... the attitude to Music, Art or Drama is that it is distraction from the serious business of gathering qualifications.⁴¹

Such expectations were not, however, limited to parents and pupils, but chimed in well with the outlook of many teachers. A report written in 1972 for the Glasgow Educational Committee by a senior member of the Directorate refers to recent changes in secondary provision occasioned by the introduction of comprehensive schools, but indicates caution:

it must be remembered that established teachers will take time to adjust their attitudes and methods and that conditions vary from school to school in regard to staffing and the proportions of able and less able pupils on the roll. ... the staffing of schools with well qualified specialist teachers interested in promoting their own subject at certificate level has reinforced the tendency of organising pupils in separate streams.⁴²

Support for the view that pupils continued to be separated according to ability within 'comprehensive' schools is found by examining the minutes of the local associations of the Educational Institute of Scotland in

Glasgow, Dumbarton, Lanark and Renfrew. In Dumbarton, for example, the Primary School Transfer Board, which allocated pupils to Course 1, Course 2, Course 3 on the basis of V.R.Q. tests and teachers' estimates continued to operate until 1969.⁴³ (In passing, it should be noted that comprehensive education as a substantive issue hardly figures at all in Educational Institute of Scotland local association minutes). Even noted proponents of the comprehensive principle found it difficult totally to abandon selection. At a meeting called by Her Majesty's Inspectorate to probe the attitude of senior directorate staff in Glasgow to the integration of fee-paying schools into the authority's network of comprehensive schools, the Director Dr. Mackintosh made his position clear:

Early in the meeting it became clear that the Director held the view that the Education Committee wished to retain the status quo and would not initiate and bring forward a plan to the Secretary of State. Likewise, despite his own sympathy for the comprehensive system, it was obvious that he did not feel impelled to take any initiative in the matter⁴⁴.

It is also noteworthy that the established Churches in Scotland favoured some form of selective education in the interests of these pupils of an academic bent. The Church of Scotland position is summed up in an account of its Education Committee Meeting in 1973:

We do not accept the view that all selective schools should disappear, provided always that selection is not final or damning. We do not believe, though many will disagree with us, that the retention of a small number of selective schools will necessarily affect the comprehensive character of the schools attended by a large proportion of our children ... we accept the logic of the fact that for a few specially gifted children in arts, special provision is made. By extension of this we accept that for a small proportion special academic provision is made.⁴⁵

The Roman Catholic Church also had an overt attachment to selective secondary education. The Scottish Committee of the Public Schools'

Commission had the Glasgow position explained in the following terms, revealing an attitude which can be attributed to the sociology of the Roman Catholic Community in the West of Scotland.⁴⁶

The Catholic Community has until now depended on three main selective schools for its recruits to higher education and the main professions. Evidence was put to the committee that if the present selective character of these schools were changed, the Roman Catholic Community would regard its educational position as seriously prejudiced ... many parents had difficulty in finding a local school which they regarded as academically and socially acceptable.⁴⁷

It almost seems as if 'academic' education was widely regarded as 'general' education, and all pupils had to adapt to that model, with no others being entertained as possibilities. Given that commonly subscribed - to conception of 'worthwhile' knowledge, it is hardly surprising that any hint of an alternative curriculum or pedagogy was treated as a threat to the scholastic progress of the able. To judge from the evidence, comprehensive education came into that category. The H.A.S. for example, at the very thought of the introduction of comprehensive education nailed its colours to the mast:

Discussion took place of the SED Circular on the extension of comprehensive education ... Mr. Dewar made three points: the comprehensive school already was the characteristic unit in the Scottish small town; differentiation must be made as soon as possible; differentiation must come sooner rather than later if we are going to provide the number going on to higher education.⁴⁸

A similar plea was made the same year:

... if academic excellence is to be recognised in the process of schooling there is a clear need for selectivity ... impatience for progress is no excuse for levelling down and imposing a system where the able boy and girl will be held back and discouraged.⁴⁹

Several years later, when schools had had some experience of the common

course and mixed-ability classes, the Scottish Schoolmaster carried these statements:

all pupils entering S1 ... must do the same work, must take the same subjects ... must take the same examinations ... the situation becomes a nightmare for pupils and teachers, especially in academic subjects ... any attempt (to introduce) selection is frowned on by authority.

what is the object of public education? It is ... to educate pupils according to age, aptitude and ability ... the fashion ... is to ignore the differences between pupils ... this is the basis of the comprehensive system ... in Scotland the tradition was that pupils would be educated in accordance with their aptitude and ability ... one thinks of the past glories of schools like Govan High School or Bellahouston Academy, reduced to the level of Clapham Comprehensive.⁵⁰

The student of this period of Scottish education cannot, in perusing records and journalistic sources, but be forcibly struck by the frequency with which the term 'comprehensive education' is used alongside expressions like: 'levelling down in the name of parity', 'able held back', 'the destruction of Scottish education'. Not only is such terminology indicative of the hostility to innovation characteristic of bureaucratic organisations; in the Scottish context, there is another, parochial dimension: the change was seen as potentially damaging to a hallowed aspect of Scottish culture, namely the senior secondary school. If such a view is accepted, it is easy to understand the continued prominence of the academic ethic in the day-to-day life of the new 'comprehensive' schools, and to envisage its likely, deleterious effects. In its comments on the Munn and Dunning Committee proposals, the Scottish Council of the Labour Party had this to say by way of explanation for the remits having been considered necessary:

Establishing comprehensive schools did not ipso facto establish comprehensive education. The secondary school curriculum is distorted by a narrow academic operation, competitive examinations and the streaming of students into certificate and non-certificate categories. As a result there is considerable over-presentation of students for 'O'

grade, serious inadequacy and inappropriateness of educational provision for 'non 0-grade' students, alienation and apathy among a great many students in S3 and S4 and truancy and indiscipline in a small but significant minority.⁵¹

Even if all the blame for the state of affairs which brought these two committees into being in 1974 cannot be laid at the schools' door, this extract highlights the significance and persistence of the academic tradition. Press reports of the mid-1970s abound with views that the comprehensive school is partially, if not totally to blame. An account of research done with a sample of 3000 pupils in Strathclyde schools was reported thus:

Comprehensive schools have failed to produce equality of opportunity and are alienating 25% of their pupils ... this subculture, which we had when schools were selective, has been simply thrown under the same roof as the others. The old inequalities are being reinforced by comprehensive education ... the pressures are still there, so that the bright conforming children latch on to the system and identify with it. We still have what to some extent is an elitist school system ... the ideology (of comprehensive education) is not being translated into practice.⁵²

It is a strange contradiction that, for a country which prided itself on a centuries-old tradition of the common school, and education for all, its solution to developing an organisational framework consonant with the comprehensive principle appeared to depend on fairly rigorous discrimination between the able sheep and the less able goats. A telling profile of the latter was provided by the Scottish Education Department in a pamphlet of suggestions for the teaching profession as to how they might devise courses for the impending raising of the school leaving age:

It is worthwhile to consider briefly the type of pupil whose education is under discussion and the stage he has reached in it. By the end of his second year - and perhaps in many cases long before that - it will be clear that education of an academic sort has neither appeal nor much prospect of profit for him ... his future will be in the workaday world ... this is not to say that he is devoid of intelligence or

sensibility but rather that these ... will be seen, applied and developed only in practical pursuits and real situations.⁵³

Appearing as it did after the official launch of comprehensive schools, this extract tempts one to conclude that official thinking on less able pupils had not substantially shifted since the publication of the memorandum Junior Secondary Education in 1955. Many people who participated in this research bore eloquent testimony in interview sessions to the pre-eminence of an attachment to the academic. Speaking of the implications of Circular 600 and 614 allusion was frequently made to the perception that comprehensive schools 'destroyed good schools', that is long-established senior secondary schools which had built up sound reputations deriving principally from their pupils' academic success. The fact, too, that interviewees variously described the feelings experienced by the notion of comprehensive schools as 'panic', 'despair', 'horror' reveals how much they 'disturbed' the educational peace thus highlighting contradictions in the 'received wisdom', and accounts for the often-expressed statement that former 'junior secondary' pupils and staff were sucked into the senior secondary mould, and were obliged to adapt to its dominant ideology and practices. Moreover, when asked to comment on how the comprehensive school articulated with the Scottish educational tradition the more discerning (or honest?) respondents stated that ideas underlying the comprehensive principle were fundamentally opposed to traditional Scottish ideas on education: elitist preconceptions received a damaging jolt from mention of radical concepts like equal regard for all pupils, all pupils studying the same curriculum, and the possibility that they might possess abilities other than academic.

THE PRE-EMINENCE OF NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS

The heavily academic diet provided by the Scottish secondary school, and its concomitant didactic and authoritarian teaching style articulated very well with another feature of the Scottish educational tradition - the reverence for and subservience to the worth of national examinations. No one can deny the importance of such examinations in terms of the maintenance of national standards, entry to higher education and employment prospects, so that the view promulgated by, for example, R.F. Mackenzie that they should be abolished (on account of their crippling effect on the curriculum and pedagogy) seems naive and unrealistic. Nonetheless, it can be argued that the pedestal-like position national examinations held - and still hold? - blended well with the Scottish tradition, and for years provided a formidable obstacle to the realisation of the aims of comprehensive education. Shortly before the publication of Circular 600, the Council of the Headteachers' Association of Scotland was debating the proposed introduction of an Advanced Grade examination. Their position is made very clear in this minute:

It was decided to write to the S.E.D. asking for their assurance that they intended to retain the Highers as the measure of achievement in the Scottish senior secondary school.⁵⁴

Sir James Robertson, addressing the Association of Directors of Education two years later described how an inability to break the stranglehold of examinations had prevented the spirit of the 1947 Report from prevailing in Scottish schools:

Either you have a set up without examinations or an examined one; we have chosen the latter ... graduation is the worst sacred cow we have ever worshipped ... in class pupils are potential examinees; only on the playing field are they persons. In the last resort one has to ask whether a school is a glorified Skerry's College or a real community ... if there is an obsession with exams it is because we as a

nation have not got our values right, rather than because of any failings on the part of individual teachers or parents. What we have to emphasise is that for the average child the price we have to pay for examinations is too high.⁵⁵

Two years later the Ruthven Report, while stressing that what was important was the all-round development of the individual pupil (para 29), alluded nevertheless to the effects of a powerful adherence to certificate examinations:

It is regrettable that once this decision (about examination subjects) has been made, so many teachers parents and pupils consider only the examination subjects to be of any importance. In their desire to secure as many passes as possible, pupils tend either cut out other subjects altogether or at best to give them scant attention ... a school must not become a cramming institution: its function is much wider.⁵⁶

Despite the plea contained in the last sentence of this extract, scrutiny of Scottish Certification of Education Examination Board Annual Reports reveals that for many teachers the wider function of school did not impinge on their consciousness:

It is disappointing, however, to find the recurrence of comments that appeared with regular frequency in the past: presentation of substantial numbers of candidates so inadequately prepared that they had no possible hope of success; undue reliance on prepared notes and rote learning; questions calling for an intelligent application of knowledge too frequently evoked irrelevant answers.⁵⁷

In a considerable number of subjects, particularly on the Ordinary Grade, attention has been drawn to the presentation of significant numbers of candidates who clearly do not possess the ability that is necessary for worthwhile presentation at the existing levels of examining.⁵⁸

The response to the introduction of comprehensive schools seems to have excluded any serious attempt to provide a variety of curricula. Rather it appears that the vast majority of pupils were made to digest Scottish Certificate of Education syllabuses. A possible explanation for this

unmistakable trend was provided in an Scottish Education Department publication in 1970:

It is still a widely held opinion among parents, pupils, teachers - and employees - that passes in fewer than three or four subjects on the Ordinary Grade are of little use educationally or vocationally.⁵⁹

The publication, in its discussion of methods of assessment offered little in the way of encouragement:

Traditional methods are still extensively used in schools in assessing the performance of pupils following courses for early leavers. There are, however, indications that much less emphasis is being placed in some areas on regular formal examinations, and that teachers are thinking more of continuous assessment in some form. So far, ideas about this tend to be still somewhat vague.⁶⁰

The pamphlet also acknowledges the widespread practice of rigidly dividing pupils in Secondary 3 into certificate/non-certificate groups, and the consequent under-development of 'bridge' courses:

it is to be hoped that, as the ideals of comprehensive education penetrate further up the schools and as the effects on morale of even minimal certificate presentation come to be more widely acknowledged, such courses will become commoner.⁶¹

However, it would be misleading to suggest that no-one recognised a need for change in the examination structure. No less an authority than the Chairman of Scottish Certificate of Education Examination Board acknowledged changing circumstances in an address to the Association of Directors of Education in 1971. After outlining developments in national examining since its inception in 1888, he referred to problems of the day:

We have to ask whether there have been changes in the structure, form of requirements of our educational provision, or in the social and cultural patterns influencing these changes in recent years that demand corresponding changes in the nature, design or standards of

our examinations now or in the foreseeable future ... the Higher, the sacred cow of Scottish exams, is regarded as the linch pin of secondary education holding together all that is best in the broad-based Scottish tradition; but it may be that this is another of the many myths of education.⁶²

He made reference to the introduction of comprehensive education in these terms:

Indeed, selection which at one time, no doubt, foolishly was regarded as one of the functions of the educational process, is now a pejorative word. All ability classes, the common course and integrated studies are now the current trend, and what we had to put up with as a hard necessity in our little Highland school some 50 years ago is now held up as the apogee of educational progress everywhere. Comprehensive schools have achieved a similar pre-eminence.⁶³

Mr. Urquhart was not the only voice to question the relevance of the existing examination pattern after the introduction of comprehensive education. At a conference on examinations called by Scottish Certificate of Education Examination Board, a Glasgow headteacher delivered an impassioned plea for a revamped examination system:

The fact is that the 'O' grade examination is the biggest single influence in Scottish education, even more than the strap.⁶⁴

Arguing that the Ordinary grade examination was a major factor when considering the efficacy of comprehensive schooling and the common course, Mr. Currie laid his cards on the table:

the syllabuses and the standards which the examinations require are the basis for most value judgements throughout the educational spectrum, and when we discuss the SCE exam structure we are in fact discussing the fibre from which the whole fabric of Scottish education is woven.⁶⁵

He proceeded to state his case for an urgently needed reform, a modified Ordinary grade examination which would be in his view:

a comprehensive examination for the comprehensive school.⁶⁶

Although with hindsight it is now clear that the views promulgated by Nicol Currie ultimately led to the setting up of the Dunning Committee in 1974, it has to be recorded that his outspoken views did not meet with approval. Two years earlier, at a similar examination conference, called to discuss problems with national examinations, Dr. Douglas McIntosh replied thus to a question which suggested that to consider exam reform after such major innovations as comprehensive schooling and the raising of the school leaving age was in a sense to put the cart before the horse:

We must recognise this political fact, but we must also make our voices heard when political decisions are unacceptable or do not fit the educational facts of life. We can accept the principle of comprehensive schooling if we can also accept the wide range of individual ability ... we must not let things go too far ahead of us. Today there is too great a tendency to scamper ahead on decisions based largely on opinion, prejudice and emotion.⁶⁷

To a suggestion that there should be a greater say for schools in assessment, Dr. McIntosh replied:

There is no doubt that the school knows the child better than an external examination on a single day can place him, but you have to maintain national standards. Such examinations by the school are much better for children following Brunton courses: such children find difficulty with national examinations, and do better with the local kind, but you must assess on a national standard.⁶⁸

Such tentativeness about the possibility of changes in the national system of examining was echoed at the 1970 Conference by HMCI Neville Fullwood who opened the discussion after Nicol Currie's 'revolutionary' talk. In a short address prior to a general discussion he asserted:

There still remains to me what is the fundamental question - how desirable educationally is it that large numbers of additional pupils should deliberately and as an act of

policy be involved in work for examinations? ... as I see it we are not ready yet, either in practice or temperamentally, to contemplate jettisoning any part of our examination system ... if the speaker is expecting me to say that the SED is in favour of drastically modifying the examination and introducing a new one by 1972, let me first of all make the point that this is a matter for the Board and not the Department, and secondly that I have already in the course of this discussion made considerable reservations about it happening in this way.⁶⁹

Leaving aside for the moment the issue of the relative power of the Scottish Education Department and Scottish Certificate of Education Examination Board, the Senior Chief Inspector made the party line clear in a talk to the Association of Directors of Education at their 1971 Summer Conference:

The general policy of the Department and indeed of the Board might be summed up as opposition to a radical reconstruction of the examinations at this stage. The long term solution might lie in the adoption of some kind of profile, but there seems little prospect of any general acceptance of this idea in the near future.⁷⁰

The hostility to change in official circles is evidenced not only by the threat of the convener of the Board's Examinations Committee to resign at the proposal in 1972 to have a banded ordinary grade⁷¹, which he saw as a betrayal of standards, but also by another Board minute dealing with a conference on examinations at the post-fourth year stage held at Jordanhill College as late as 1978:

There was no consensus in favour of major structural changes at this stage in the system of certificate examinations.⁷²

A year earlier a major article in a Sunday newspaper purported to investigate the crisis in Scottish education. Raymond Thomasson, depute general secretary of the Educational Institute of Scotland was quoted as saying:

We should be producing more rounded pupils. The emphasis on

exams is quite wrong ... the system is directed to an academic level and not a practical one for the minority.⁷³

A university lecturer in the same article said:

... our system is geared to the academically-minded. Remember a lot of kids in the 14-16 age group would prefer to be out of school. Teachers ought to be allowed to test children over a period because 'O' grades are irrelevant in many cases.⁷⁴

Nonetheless, the journalist concluded on a realistic note when he urged readers 'not to expect anything radical' from the Dunning Committee which was due to produce its Report on examinations later that month.

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY: THE SCOTTISH PERSPECTIVE

Closely related to the place occupied in the Scottish educational scheme of things by national examinations is the concept of equality of opportunity. Political proponents of the comprehensive school based their campaign on the alleged fact that reorganisation would increase opportunities for all children, and remove artificial or irrelevant barriers to educational success. Such an assertion assumes particular significance in the context of Scotland, a country which has long prided itself in its inherent egalitarianism and democratic ethos (see Chapter One). Nowhere are these virtues claimed to reside more than in the educational system, which, since the days of John Knox, has boasted its facility for sending children with academic ability off on the road to higher education and upward social mobility. However, it is worth examining exactly how equality of opportunity was construed in the eyes of Scottish educationists. Nicol Currie provided this apt cameo of a system he argued was outdated and in need of drastic overhaul:

Traditionally, the lad o'pairts, if he ever existed, had to sacrifice his early learning years if he sought the passport which a national certificate represented. The less gifted pupil was compensated by an earlier release from a system which had less to offer him. There was a kind of rough justice, socially acceptable to pupil and parent, and educationally philistine only to the purist.⁷⁵

It could be argued that a distinct absence of 'purists' prevented political initiatives like comprehensive education and the raising of the school leaving age from making any substantial inroads into established practices. Indeed, an Inspectorate report on the progress of the latter had this to say as one of its conclusions:

Visits to schools made it quite clear that the majority of headteachers thought it right to afford as many pupils as possible the opportunity of taking SCE courses. This practice was in accord with the general move towards equality of opportunity in the comprehensive system ... (teachers) considered that an examination course with the possibility of tangible recognition at the end of it was more likely to provide motivation than non-certificate courses. ... SCE courses were based on a prepared set of syllabuses with which teachers were relatively familiar and which ... allowed them to contain their teaching within traditional subject boundaries.⁷⁶

The Inspectorate verdict contains this statement:

To a large extent, the original purposes of RSLA were forgotten by the time it was implemented, and there was little evidence that either schools or their headteachers had chosen to restate them in the planning of their own courses. What had survived was the notion of equality of opportunity, though this was most commonly interpreted in terms of the opportunity to take SCE examinations.⁷⁷

It would be a mistake to think that the ideological standpoint of teachers described in these extracts was confined to the middle years of the comprehensive school. Rather, it appears that it made its presence felt at a much earlier stage. One of the most controversial aspects of the comprehensive principle was the notion that children need not - indeed, ideally, should not - be grouped in classes of homogeneous ability. Educationists who participated in this research were asked to comment on their experiences of approaches to pupil grouping, to determine the extent to which comprehensive reorganisation affected previous practices. Responses reveal a remarkable unanimity, the salient features of which are these:

- mixed-ability classes and the common course were generally unpopular and unsuccessful
- classes of mixed-ability lasted for varying lengths of time, with some form of re-allocation according to ability emerging later in Secondary 1 and certainly by Secondary 2
- good practice based on a genuine commitment to the comprehensive principle was the exception rather than the rule
- by the Secondary 3/4 stage classes had been re-arranged into 'certificate' and 'non-certificate' groups.

The prevailing ethos appears to have been to restrict experimentation to the less able, and take care to protect the able in the maelstrom of educational change.

Additionally, interviewees were asked to consider the concept of equality of opportunity and comment on how it had been perceived in the comprehensive schools of which they had knowledge. The following representative extracts give a flavour of the opinions expressed:

(it was) the old lad o'pairts view - if you were able in an academic sense you had to have the opportunity to get an education, irrespective of the personal or family sacrifice involved. The notion of developing a painter, musician, joiner or technician to their potential was an alien concept to the traditional Scottish teacher in senior secondary schools.⁷⁸

(Headteacher)

Equality of opportunity has long been associated in Scotland with the lad o'pairts concept. It was a slogan which was accepted as long as it did not involve harmful effects on the able. There's a feeling in Scotland that we've always had equality of opportunity. This myth is used to glorify our alleged greatness in the past.⁷⁹

(Headteacher)

Equality of opportunity was largely seen as allowing more children to do SCE exams. Formal teaching from 'THE BOOK' dominated. Traditionalists secretly waved two fingers at HMI and advisers. People were afraid to stray from accepted ways for fear of harming SCE results and the school's

reputation.⁸⁰

(Adviser)

The lad o'pairts ensured that all kids of academic ability had the opportunity to go to university irrespective of their background. In Scotland there is no doubt that equality of opportunity was seen in strictly meritocratic terms ... what was revolutionary, and even seen as a threat, was that the comprehensive school aimed to cater for the whole ability range and treat the pupil as an individual. This notion was seen as the death-knell of academic excellence, especially in a country which had traditionally written off the less able in schools.⁸¹

(Educational Journalist)

The concept of equality of opportunity remains insufficiently addressed, even in 1985. An enormous error was made by those who equated equality of opportunity with an equal and uniform circular diet and course provision. The concept was never really translated into action as it should have been. Many felt that as long as all kids got in and thus had the chance to sit 'O' grades if they wished, we had a comprehensive system.⁸²

(H.M. Inspector)

Such a conception of equality of opportunity helps to explain the following somewhat ironic letter to a newspaper editor, alleging that the arrival of comprehensive education had knocked Scottish education seriously off course:

... the results of the all-through comprehensive system are now being felt. There has been no change in the intelligence of pupils ... the only change has been in secondary school organisation which used to give every pupil his or her chance to shine regardless of social background but which now lumps them together, gives them the common course, denies them any kind of selection and, in short, refuses to regard them as individuals ...
The Scottish system, formerly as democratic as any has gone lop-sided. It must get back in balance.⁸³

There is an argument then for claiming that, far from being egalitarian and democratic, the practices of Scottish comprehensive schools were in fact quite elitist, and served to perpetuate a conservative educational

ideology which favoured a retention of the status quo. As long as all children had formal access to secondary education and were given the opportunity to be equal, mythical feelings of fair treatment were satisfied, and the unpalatable facts of actual inequalities in treatment were evaded.

Again, there is evidence that a mythical reputation for the openness and justice of educational institutions was used as a psychological prop both to legitimate existing educational practice and put an acceptable construction on the effects of a changing educational world. A political interpretation of equality of opportunity appears to have collided with an entrenched educational one, to the former's detriment.

THE CLIMATE OF OPINION AND ITS EFFECTS

It is hardly surprising that the implications of Circulars 600 and 614 were not faced up to with eagerness, when one considers that the aspects of the Scottish educational tradition considered so far in this chapter can be said to have reached the zenith of their expression in the years immediately preceding their issue. Indeed, their contents were strikingly at variance with most of the educational advice proffered to the Secretary of State in a series of Reports since 1959. It was consequently unrealistic, if not naive to expect an immediate volte-face at the stroke of political whim. The 1959 Working Party Report on the Curriculum of the Senior Secondary School, the harbinger of the Scottish Certificate of Education Ordinary Grade Examination did not entertain the prospect of comprehensive reorganisation. Indeed, its pages bear the mark of the segregationist ethic, acknowledging separate junior and senior secondary schools, and advocating setting to provide differentiated curricula for differing pupil abilities. It sought to

seek out and foster the talented to take their place in a competitive world, and thus its predominant message was to fit the child to the school, thereby officially endorsing the 'certificate'/'non-certificate' divide in and between schools. It can be argued that similar thinking permeates another official Scottish Education Department publication two years later, even perhaps that this one encapsulates the quintessential Scottish view on education. In the section dealing with secondary education it states:

The prime object of secondary school organisation should be to provide enlightened and effective schooling for the mass of ordinary children. Nothing can be of greater national importance. Transfer schemes have a necessary function to discharge in discovering the ability and aptitudes of all children, irrespective of their place on the intellectual scale.⁸⁴

It goes on to make plain its preference for grouping children by ability:

Just as in the physical spectrum it is possible to distinguish between red and blue, so also in the intellectual one is it possible to distinguish between the widely separated categories of the academically dull and the very able.⁸⁵

Like its 1959 predecessor, it strongly endorses provision of a wide range of different secondary courses to match differing pupil abilities, but it is revealing to note the context in which the comprehensive school receives a mention:

Many more parents than in the past are anxious that their children should receive a higher education, but some parents are conscious of what they feel amounts to social stigma when their children are not allocated to senior secondary schools or courses ... undoubtedly, where pupils are transferred to comprehensive schools there is less criticism of and less reaction to transfer schemes ... The traditional academic courses leading to professional qualifications enjoy great prestige with Scottish parents and, whatever the organisation of secondary education, many feel hostile to any scheme which debars their children from at least attempting such courses.⁸⁶

Nevertheless, the report was cautious in its attitude to the comprehensive school, despite its alleged benefits:

We have not found it necessary to proceed to a detailed survey of the development of comprehensive schools in England, or to review the problem of those Scottish schools which have long had something of a comprehensive character. We believe that Scottish education authorities, in considering their future policies, will take serious and careful notice of what is to be learned from experience in those two connections.⁸⁷

Preferring to favour variety and experiment in forms of secondary provision, the Report adopts a tentative posture:

Our plea is that education authorities should carefully consider any reorganisation of secondary education for their area which will provide a wide variety of courses and yet avoid the stresses and strains which transfer schemes tend to create.⁸⁸

This Report, written by an informed body of individuals representative of Scottish educational thinking, is redolent of and imbued with the philosophy of the McClelland school, so it comes as no surprise to find the following statement:

Lack of attention to the intellectually able is quite contrary to the Scottish educational tradition ... it should therefore be the endeavour of teachers and education authorities alike to modify any aspects of our educational policy which are tending to limit the development of our rich sources of human talent. No effort should be spared to discover the specially gifted pupils in order to ensure that they are given an education suited to their ability.⁸⁹

Even the Brunton Report of 1963 was underpinned by a similar ideology of separatism. Notwithstanding its original advocacy of the 'vocational impulse' in curriculum construction, it was still intended to be a curriculum for the 70% of pupils who were allocated to junior secondary schools, and so the authors displayed the same assumptions which had created the Junior Secondary Memorandum in 1955, and hence make no

reference whatever to comprehensive education.

None of these reports which appeared in the run-up to the official introduction of comprehensive education in Scotland provides any rationale or argument for it. Indeed, they seem to have been produced by bodies set up in an ad-hoc manner to deal with unconnected remits rather than out of a serious desire to survey secondary education as a whole in the 1960s. It is a telling comment on the wider issue of the relations between politicians and officials that the elitist thinking they embody was jettisoned - officially at least - almost immediately following a change of government and the entry to positions of power of people responsive to a more egalitarian outlook.

A sudden change of political complexion in New St. Andrew's House, however, was not enough to dislodge the educational ideology of decades, and to judge from the accounts given of actual practices in the comprehensive schools known to the interviewees who contributes to this study, it can be contended that the Scottish perception of the government directive assumed a quite identifiable configuration. In 1968, John Buist conducted a survey in Glasgow schools to assess the progress of comprehensive education. In a series of articles in The Scottish Educational Journal the nature of the interpretation put on terms like 'comprehensive school' and 'common course' is made apparent:

The common course offers the same subjects to all but with different content and a different bias according to the group being taught ... otherwise the common course does not make sense. A child can move up, we can change his class if need be. With children finding their own level, we have the best of both worlds ... we exclude from the common course the backward readers and the innumerates ... the high fliers are away on their own on a fast course, while those of average ability are on a slower presentation course.⁹⁰

The headteacher went on to say that the common course was the 'logical extension of the comprehensive system', and that the school's success in Scottish Certificate of Education exams and that of former pupils at university was attracting attention. In an article in the same series, the Senior Depute Director of Education for the City gave an indication why it was almost inevitable that former practices should continue unhindered:

Most comprehensive schools are making some attempt to introduce the common course and the education department has given them freedom to develop these courses as they see fit ... some schools operate mixed-ability, others have introduced a form of setting. This is quite a sensible development for it is not a very good thing to carry on with mixed groups for too long. ... after all schools in Scotland are very free to do as they choose.⁹¹

It would appear from what this official said that Directorate staff actually endorsed a continuation of grouping by ability in the early years of the comprehensive school. In the final article in the series, another Glasgow headteacher was fairly blunt:

I prefer to call it the common opportunity course ... if the ability is there, the opportunity now exists for the pupil ... I don't know that it fires any of the less ambitious, but I presume it was instituted to prevent people with SCE potential from being misdirected into the wrong course.⁹²

Several years later 'The Glasgow Herald' published a similar series to alert its readers to the problems being encountered in four areas in Scotland trying to grapple with a changeover to a comprehensive system. One headteacher reassured his readers in these terms:

The comprehensive school is no overgrown sausage machine. If there is a potential professor in S2 we shall find him and encourage him, just as we have encouraged him in the past.⁹³

Some of the individuals interviewed in connection with this research,

asked to give a personal definition of the term 'comprehensive school', included in their answers phrases like: 'a school with a variety of courses to develop potential'; 'a school which avoids early labelling'; 'a school which seeks to develop all sides of its pupils'. Assuming their honesty, the evidence presented here strongly suggests that, in the Scottish context, such ideals remained at the level of rhetoric, noble aims which encountered a hard educational reality. In fact, a narrow form of educational thinking prevailed, so that to a large extent pupils in reorganised schools had to sink or swim in the academic deep-end of the comprehensive swimming pool. The comprehensive school may have been welcomed by and have raised false expectations among some parents, but it stretched the capacity for adaptability among great numbers of those obliged to teach within its walls.

When the objective facts are considered, it is revealing to note the confident assertions of progress with comprehensivisation in Scotland frequently made by officials. Two examples will suffice. A recent OECD document states:

Education authorities accepted willingly the directives of C600 in 1965 ... they were in general agreement that secondary schools should be reorganised on a comprehensive basis.⁹⁴

In 1968 the Secretary of the Scottish Education Department was equally sanguine:

We have been engaged on this task over the last three years. We have got a very long way indeed with it. The District Inspectors have been very closely involved in this, both informally and on consultation with the Directors of Education, and then advising us on the authorities' proposals as they came forward.⁹⁵

This was his response to this statement by Professor Esmond Wright, a

member of the Select Committee on Education and Science:

There is a contentious issue in terms of comprehensive education these days, and it is especially contentious in Scotland because in large measure Scotland is already comprehensive in ways that England is not.⁹⁶

The OECD document already cited acknowledges this contentiousness, albeit obliquely, by referring to the wider ability spectrum confronting teachers than had been customary, and the frantic attempts to devise suitable teaching materials appropriate to the new pupil population. This situation was bound to affect prevailing attitudes to comprehensive reorganisation and colour teacher commitment at least to some extent. The writers summarise the current (1983) position thus:

There would appear to be little overt opposition to the comprehensive school: 97-98% of all pupils of secondary age attend them.⁹⁷

Be that as it may, one noted Scottish educationalist who was represented on many important bodies and whose educational opinions were clearly valued expressed in the mid 1970s an alternative, possibly more accurate, statement of the position:

Comprehensivisation is an ugly word. Some would say that it is an ugly conception in any case. It probably comes closest to reality to describe it as a process which is resulting in a conglomerate of educational developments, many of them untried and possibly irrelevant, attached to the central core of the comprehensive principle. The bane of all education is the lack of clear thinking, and the situation is not improved by dragging in doctrinal irrelevancies.⁹⁸

Dr. Dewar went on to say that in the Scottish context comprehensivisation had raised more issues than it had resolved, and was critical of officials who claimed how successful it all had been. He may well have been speaking for many fellow Scottish educationists when he concluded:

Scottish MP's had better learn that for them the road to the

new Jerusalem is by way of Damascus. They must resolutely turn their backs on the problems for which they have learned English excuses and the solutions for which they have accepted English justifications, and make themselves familiar with the advances Scottish education has made despite rather than because of Westminster. They will doubtless find it surprising, but equally certainly also refreshing, that Scotland's real problems in education have no dependence on comprehensivisation for their solution.⁹⁹

COPING WITH THE CHANGEOVER

Nonetheless, despite the resolute stance indicated by Dr. Dewar's sentiments, people in education were obliged to confront change. As early as 1963, the President of the Educational Institute of Scotland pointed the way in her address to the Annual Congress:

The spirit of change is simply sweeping through our Scottish schools today ... methods are changing, curricula are becoming more elastic, new subjects are being introduced, the whole attitude to education is being radically altered ... gradually people are coming to the point of admitting that education of all children to the limit of their potentialities is vital for the future of the nation. This is a time of burgeoning hope and exciting new possibilities in Scottish education.¹⁰⁰

But how down-to-earth was this view? No doubt, change was in the air, but perhaps the Educational Institute of Scotland President's valedictory euphoria led her to present an exaggerated picture of the reality. The Under-Secretary of State at the Scottish Office in the mid sixties would almost certainly not have shared the President's optimism:

The Scottish teaching profession is often tentative about doing new things ... but the government is quite clear that by guidance and gentle pressure they will achieve the comprehensive reorganisation of education.¹⁰¹

The deputation to whom the Minister delivered this view reminded her, in a submission on the progress made to date with comprehensive reorganisation, that obstacles to change were formidable:

Council feels impelled to call for new thinking in Scottish education ... there was a time when the academic approach

was justified, but the complexity of modern life demands of all pupils an ability to adapt and respond to a changing environment. The danger in Scottish education today is the closed-circuit thinking which exists regarding the curriculum ... schools have been left behind for decades in a cocoon of early century thinking ...¹⁰²

One of the pioneering comprehensive headteachers in Glasgow went further, and enumerated what he saw to be the main reasons for opposition to comprehensive schools among his colleagues:

- 1) A deep respect for the traditional system which has served the needs of our intellectually gifted pupils.
- 2) A conservative distrust of that which is comparatively new and which some educationalists feel has not yet proved itself.
- 3) Stark ignorance of what the ideals of the comprehensive school are.
- 4) A fear that this type of 'all-in' education will level downwards the intellectual effort of the 'lad o'pairts'.
- 5) An inexcusable ignorance of the fact that comprehensive education is the sole pattern in so many foreign countries.
- 6) Undiluted snobbery ... which results in a fierce determination that we shall continue to operate a system of educational apartheid ... an unchristian, undemocratic callous disregard for the basic human needs of the majority.¹⁰³

Nor was the opposition to the introduction of comprehensive schools limited to the teaching profession. An examination of parental reactions to some reorganisation proposals in Lanarkshire gives an indication of how high parental feelings ran:

Suggested provision would damage the schools involved and their traditions, weaken their influence, and lower the standard of education in Coatbridge ... teaching staff tend to wish to work under conditions where their work is found to be most satisfactory.

St. Patrick's H.S. would be downgraded ... what it has achieved should be retained until it is certain that the education of pupils will not suffer because of the change. ... St. Patrick's has built up an excellent reputation and tradition and it is well disciplined and successful.

Hamilton Academy is an outstanding school. With the change, so many good teachers are too impatient to be able to tackle the slower element in a comprehensive school, and will

naturally want to move elsewhere in order to make full use of their abilities.

The introduction of a comprehensive system of education in the County of Lanark is not in the best interests of the children. The present system caters for all levels of ability with a wide range of courses. It is unwise to abolish a well-tried and successful system for another which is purely experimental.¹⁰⁴

The parental concern for the perceived drop in standards made likely by the changeover to a comprehensive system was echoed in public by a teacher prominent in the Glasgow Local Association of the Educational Institute of Scotland:

Since the introduction of compulsory education, less able pupils over 12 have been taught progressively in supplementary courses, advanced divisions and junior secondary schools. Now that they have fallen into disfavour with parents and teachers alike, we are in favour of comprehensive primary schools feeding comprehensive secondary schools. This break with tradition is causing much concern. Those who know the value of the teaching being given in the established secondary schools are a bit apprehensive of the new comprehensives.¹⁰⁵

He added, in a significant, if not prophetic statement:

It is interesting to note that when we held a conference last October to discuss comprehensive education the main doubt expressed by many teachers was that the less able pupils might suffer.¹⁰⁶

A reliable guide to the extent to which the introduction of comprehensive education wrought change (and the reactions it provoked) is an examination of the Annual Reports of the Scottish Education Department which were published during the period under study. Although generally bland and somewhat self-congratulatory in tone, it is possible to detect references to changes which were occurring:

The past year has seen steady development in educational thinking and a good deal of promising experiment in many schools. ... There have been few major innovations ... while the schools have adopted the content of the (science)

syllabus with considerable zeal, it will be some time yet before the spirit that lies behind it and the general approach and methods it recommends are fully appreciated. (1965)¹⁰⁷

The following year the Report was cautious:

Development and innovation - these are the obvious features of the educational scene; yet any one change may take years to implement, and in some respects a year is too short a period for which to offer an adequate assessment of trends and movements. (1966)¹⁰⁸

In the same Report, it was stated that the ideas of the Brunton Report had 'won general acceptance', but:

It is all the more regrettable, therefore, that in some cases experiment in the schools has been held up through undue delay over decisions locally on the range and type of courses to be provided.¹⁰⁹

A slightly more encouraging note was struck the following year, but again, there were problems:

... at a time when so much that is traditional is being called into question, it is perhaps not surprising that teachers are, more than ever before, ready and eager to come together for courses conferences and discussion ... slower to gain acceptance is the idea that, in order to ensure that all pupils receive their full share of such opportunities, activities designed as a preparation for leisure must form part of the school curriculum.¹¹⁰

The tentative approach to change and experimentation is caught by this comment from the 1968 Report:

Some comprehensive schools still retain the division of pupils in certificate, non-certificate and backward classes. Nevertheless there is a substantial increase in the number of schools experimenting with new types of organisation. In some areas a common policy has been evolved; in others headteachers have been encouraged or left free to devise arrangements which they consider appropriate to their particular circumstances.¹¹¹

Four years after the issue of Circular 600, three key elements of the

comprehensive system received the following verdict:

While some schools of the traditional neighbourhood type are slow to abandon long-established practices of streaming, the mixed-ability organisation has been adopted by several schools whose intake is still selective. Division of pupils into broad bands of ability is preferred in some cases ...

Steady progress is being made with the modification of transfer arrangements and the abolition of rigid selection procedures. But while the need to establish clear liaison with primary schools is more generally recognised, much still remains to be done to render this liaison fully effective ...

Some cautious moves have been made in the direction of reducing the number of formal exams in the early years of secondary schools ... although the concept of continuous assessment is now familiar to most teachers, and is sometimes discussed at courses and conferences, there are few signs so far of significant original experiment.¹¹²

Notwithstanding the obvious conclusion from these Reports that, in terms of its impact on what actually happened in classroom, comprehensive education and its implications were hardly welcomed with open arms, the extent of the change that did occur caused some alarm. A year after the last extract was published an after-dinner speaker lamented the fact that the traditional aims and methods of education seemed to be disappearing:

Thirty years ago the matter was simple: teachers were there to teach and pupils to learn ... the child is now King and you have become obsequious attendants about his throne ... teachers are no longer imparters of information but people privileged 'to supervise the chrysalis stage of psychic birth'. This tendency to regard the pupil in the nature of a flower about to open rather than a more or less empty vessel waiting to be filled has cast deep roots in our educational system.¹¹³

It can be said, therefore, that the theoretical claims made for, and the stark implications of the changeover to a comprehensive system evoked a substantial, if often silent, antipathy in schools in the West of Scotland. Either because it is in the nature of bureaucratically

.organised institutions like schools to undermine attempts at change, or because teachers adopted a pragmatic and ad-hoc approach to the realities of comprehensive education, cosmetic rather than fundamental change occurred. Changes in curriculum and methodology were in various ways subverted, with the result that the workings of the educational system were to a large extent left intact.

Finally, in an attempt to make a brief assessment of the impact of Circulars 600 and 614, it is pertinent to ask: what were the perceived consequences in the Scottish context of the introduction of a comprehensive system of education? A key factor in the success or otherwise of developments was identified in an official publication already mentioned:

The success of particular courses clearly depends in large measure on the degree of enthusiasm, involvement and conviction brought to them by those most directly concerned, namely headteachers and their staffs. Where there has been a comparative lack of success, reasons are not difficult to find.¹¹⁴

It has been suggested in this chapter that the enthusiasm and involvement of Scottish teachers were compromised by factors existing in the general approach to and conception of secondary education. A motion presented at the 1974 S.T.U.C. Annual Conference in Rothesay puts the point well:

We have the right to insist on a system of education which is comprehensive both in intake and curriculum. This must mean an improvement in the programme of schools, facilities, a reduction of pupil-teacher ratios and the abolition of streaming. Streaming is inconsistent with the comprehensive principle, and in fact it is the means whereby selection is reintroduced.¹¹⁵

A year later, the existing state of affairs received Ministerial recognition, when a STUC delegation pointed out that a review of

comprehensive education was urgently required to ensure that it met the demands of society and was developed to its fullest potential:

The Minister conceded that, though 90% of Scottish children went to comprehensive schools, this did not mean that comprehensive education had been universally adopted ... he agreed that many of the comprehensive schools were not organised as such ... he was prepared to accept streaming which was geared towards the special interests and aptitudes of the pupils, but it was important that the process was carried out carefully and that the courses were meaningful for the pupils.¹¹⁶

As well as indicating Government awareness of the continuation of selection by ability, years after comprehensive school had been introduced, the extract hardly encourages one to believe that there was any serious intention to take remedial action. James Scotland, around the same time, considered achievements in the period 1965 - 75 in these terms:

The nineteen-fifties and sixties saw the end of such a distinction (between senior and junior secondaries) and the victory of comprehensive education. The question now of course, is whether any battle has indeed been won, or whether the same old problems remain inside individual schools ... in the curriculum the egalitarian process has unseated the academic element from its primacy, and gave comparable status to subjects practical and aesthetic. At least that was the theory. Whether it has always happened in practice, whether all the die-hards have been converted, whether they ought to be converted, these are still live questions.¹¹⁷

It was in fact about the mid-seventies that answers started to appear to these 'live questions'. Often, they were far from encouraging:

I would like to support the statement 'THE SHAM OF COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION'. I abhor the entire system and defy anyone who, while meandering through shady groves when not floating on the ethereal cloud nine, can find much to cite in its favour. It would be superfluous to reiterate the cliched remarks apropos the idealism of the misinformed.¹¹⁸

So what has gone wrong? Simple. Too many people in education act as if the comprehensive school is the old

senior secondary with a new name. We still offer the same kind of subjects. Most of our teachers still remember their own days in the selective schools. Our examinations are still the kinds of exams senior secondary pupils used to sit. As a result, half our pupils leave the secondary and never have any further contact with education.¹¹⁹

One Glasgow assistant headteacher, in the thick of the comprehensive battle, gave a somewhat jaded account of his experiences in a large comprehensive school in the local teachers' magazine:

Curriculum development it seems to me has proceeded at too fast a rate and not enough regard has been paid to what this development is achieving in educational terms. If the pupils are interested, that seems to be justification enough ... at the start of S2 all classes are streamed. No apology is made for this since ... to carry mixed-ability groups beyond S1 is to deprive that element in the school who wish to study subjects to an advanced level of achieving success in SCE exams ... very little has been done to establish an integrated approach to teaching those on non-certificate courses. The rigid stratification of the curriculum still persists ... many so-called RSLA classes are in fact 'ghost classes' ... the problem of achieving some recognisable uniformity within a comprehensive school is still a long way from being solved.¹²⁰

Even as late as 1980, the last year covered by this study, the Director of Education for Strathclyde indicated that solutions had still not been found to the professional challenges of the comprehensive school in the foreword to a commissioned study of the internal organisation of comprehensive secondary schools in the region:

The first two years of secondary education, bridging as they do the close-knit curriculum of the primary school and the increased subject specialisation of the later stages, present teachers with some of their most difficult professional tasks. The reconciliation of the various aims of this orientation period, and the formation of a suitable organisation structure in which to further these aims and the development of the appropriate pedagogic skills continue to be pressing concerns in our schools.¹²¹

CHAPTER THREE

FOOTNOTES

1. During informal discussion with a retired senior member of the Inspectorate, the author asked for his views on what had happened in schools 'after the dust of C600 had settled'. He replied: 'In Scotland, there was no dust to settle'. (The conversation took place in Western Division H.Q. Glasgow in April 1983).
2. Secondary Education: A Report of the Advisory Council on Education in Scotland. HMSO 1947 para. 136.
3. (ibid) para. 139.
4. (ibid) para. 139.
5. (ibid) para. 143.
6. (ibid) para. 173.
7. (ibid) para. 189.
8. Interview HM2.
9. J. Lloyd, for example, asserts that the Report was greeted with 'official silence'. Scottish Educational Review. Vol 16 No 2 Nov 1984.
10. Personal papers lent to the author by the present headteacher of Crookston Castle Secondary School (my underlining).
11. (ibid) Copy of E.C. article dated April 1954.
12. 'The Comprehensive School in Glasgow', in 'The Times Educational Supplement' 7/1/55.
13. 'Comprehensive Education and the Small Burgh School', N. Dixon in Education in the North Vol 1. 1965.
14. (ibid).
15. 'All Aboard the Omnibus', K.W. Dron in Forum Vol 26 No 1 1983.
16. Report of address by B. Simon in Scottish Educational Journal 17/3/72 (my underlining).
17. Interview PL8.
18. Interview AD11.
19. Interview DS6.
20. Interview HT58.

21. Personal papers lent to the author by the headteacher of Crookston Castle Secondary School.
22. 'The Teaching Revolution', H.S. Mackintosh in Scottish Educational Journal 12/1/68.
23. Personal papers lent to the author by J.T. Robertson, headteacher of Clydebank High School. 1974 Prizegiving Speech.
24. (ibid) 1976.
25. Editorial in GLEAM (magazine produced 1966-75 by G.C.E.D. for local teachers) Summer 1971.
26. EIS Annual Proceedings 1967-68. Presidential Address by Helen Dewar (my underlining).
27. (ibid) my underlining.
28. Report of official openings of Caldervale H.S. Airdrie and Claremont H.S. East Kilbride in 'Times Educational Supplement (Scotland)' 11/2/70.
29. Report drawn up by Lanarkshire Local Association of EIS undated, but probably 1964 in Lanark Division File marked 'Secondary Reorganisation'.
30. Headteachers' Working Party Report (ibid).
31. Personal papers lent to the author by Harry Wylie, headteacher of Govan High School. Memo to staff issued 19/5/71.
32. Staff memo 15/5/72 (ibid).
33. Staff memo 3/11/70 (ibid).
34. 'Headteacher or Education Manager', J.K. Cassidy in Scottish Educational Journal 26/1/73.
35. Address by Nicol Currie - to Glasgow Local Association of the EIS 23/3/65 in Local Association Files.
36. Address by John McCrossan to Glasgow Local Association of the EIS 21/3/67 (ibid).
37. Marxism and Literature, R. Williams O.U.P. 1977 p.115.
38. For an account of the Mental testing movement see The Meritocratic Intellect: Studies in the History of Educational Research, (eds) J. Smith and D. Hamilton A.U.P. 1980, in particular 'Godfrey Thomson and the Concept of Intelligence' by S.A. Sharp.
39. The Organisation of Courses leading to the Scottish Certificate of Education. (Curriculum Paper 2). CCC 1967 para 2.
40. SSTA Yearbook 1966-7. Report of the Education Committee on Curriculum Paper 2.

41. Personal papers lent to the author by J.T. Robertson, headteacher of Clydebank High School. Prizegiving speech 1970.
42. Comprehensive Secondary Education in Glasgow. Report to Education Committee by Edward Miller, Depute Director 7/4/72 in GCED file D/ED/11/1/119 held in the Mitchell Library.
43. A local EIS Minute of 13/11/70 states that Mr. Dickson, the Convener, finally dissolved the Board, its function having been rendered superfluous 'with the spread of comprehensive organisation' (Dumbarton Local EIS Files).
44. Minute of meeting held 8/5/67 in GCED File D/ED/11/1/119 held in Mitchell Library. The case of Dr. Stewart Mackintosh in Glasgow is interesting. Without exception, interviewees spoke in glowing terms of the Director as a man with a humane educational vision and totally committed to the comprehensive principle. Yet even he felt reluctant to take steps (as he could have) to interfere with a respected part of the city's educational tradition.
45. Church of Scotland Education Committee Minute May 1973 in Education Committee Files.
46. The place of selective education in the Catholic Community has recently been discussed in Catholic Secondary Education in the South-West before 1972, T.A. Fitzpatrick AUP. 1986 (The book is an abridged version of the author's unpublished Ph.D. thesis (Glasgow University (1982) of the same title).
47. Quoted in 'The Daily Express' 25/3/70.
48. H.A.S. Minutes of 1965 Annual Conference at Dunblane. Session 6 of the conference was devoted to 'Comprehensive Reorganisation'. (my underlining).
49. Alec Humes speaking at an EIS Lunch in Perth. Quoted in Scottish Educational Journal 9/4/65.
50. 'The Curse of the Common Course', W.H. Meiklejohn in Scottish Schoolmaster Vol 27 No 2 1972; 'I've had enough of R.F. Mackenzie', W.S. Brownlie, in Scottish Schoolmaster Vol 19 No 2 1974.
51. Scottish Council of the Labour Party: Evidence to SED on Munn and Dunning Reports. para 1.3 (Personal papers lent to the author by Dr. J. Dunning).
52. 'Comprehensives have failed' in 'The Scotsman' 2/10/76. Report of a talk given to the S.E.R.A. Annual Conference based on research conducted by Dr. Leo Hendry of Aberdeen University.
53. Raising the School Leaving Age: Suggestions for Courses. SED 1966.
54. Minute of H.A.S. Council Meeting in Glasgow 11/5/63 in HAS File 'Minutes 1963-69'.

55. A.D.E.S. Annual Conference Reports 1965-66. J.J. Robertson's talk entitled '20 years on'.
56. C.C.C. Curriculum Paper 2 (op cit) para 31.
57. S.C.E.E.B. Annual Report 1966 p. 8.
58. S.C.E.E.B. Annual Report 1974 p. 10.
59. Raising of the School Leaving Age: Organisation and Development of Courses. SED 1970. p. 8.
60. (ibid) p. 15.
61. (ibid) p. 9.
62. A.D.E.S. Annual Conference Reports 1971-72. Address by J.M. Urquhart entitled 'Examinations'. (my underlining).
63. (ibid).
64. 'Examination Requirements for the 16 year old: impact on the Ordinary Grade of RSLA', talk given by Nicol Currie at the 1970 Conference on Examinations held in Edinburgh by SCEEB p. 6.
65. (ibid) p. 7.
66. (ibid) p. 11.
67. 'Examinations at the Crossroads', talk given by Dr. Douglas McIntosh, at the 1968 Conference on Examinations held in Edinburgh by SCEEB p. 13.
68. (ibid) p. 15.
69. Neville Fullwood's (untitled) Address at the 1970 Conference on Examinations held by SCEEB. pp 16, 19 (my underlining).
70. A.D.E.S. Annual Conference Reports 1970-71. Talk entitled 'The 'O' grade examination' given by John Bennett H.M.S.C.I.
71. Dr. W. McL. Dewar's possible resignation is recorded in S.C.E.E.B. Minute 15/6/72.
72. SCEEB Minute 1/3/79.
73. 'Where do we go from here?' in 'The Sunday Mail' 7/8/77.
74. Malcolm L. Mackenzie (ibid).
75. Nicol Currie in his talk to the 1970 Conference on Examinations (op cit) p. 8.
76. Raising the School Leaving Age in Scotland: A Report by H.M. Inspectors of Schools. SED 1976. Para 6.3.
77. (ibid) Para 6.7.

78. Interview HT26.
79. Interview HT4.
80. Interview AD12.
81. Interview MS6.
82. Interview HM6.
83. Letter to the Editor by W.S. Brownlie in 'The Glasgow Herald' 3/6/76.
84. Transfer from Primary to Secondary Education (Report of a special sub-committee of the Advisory Council, on Education in Scotland) S.E.D. 1961 para 77.
85. (ibid) para 79.
86. (ibid) para 83.
87. (ibid) para 89.
88. (ibid) para 91.
89. (ibid) paras 67-68.
90. Peter Poli, Headteacher of St. Augustine's Secondary School Glasgow interviewed in The Scottish Educational Journal. 29/11/68.
91. Ian Cunningham, Senior Depute Director of Education for Glasgow interviewed in The Scottish Educational Journal. 22/11/68.
92. Andrew Cameron, Headteacher of Riverside Secondary Glasgow, interviewed in The Scottish Educational Journal. 6/12/68.
93. W. Reid, Headteacher of Ayr Academy quoted in 'Going Comprehensive - 2', 'The Glasgow Herald'. 15/12/70.
94. Frame of Reference (Scotland): The State of Education. OECD 1983 (unpublished) Para 6.
95. Norman Graham, evidence to The Select Committee on Education and Science (Vol 2): The Inspectorate in Scotland. HMSO 1968 p 21.
96. Professor Esmond Wright (ibid) p 21.
97. Frame of Reference (op cit) para 7.
98. 'The Irrelevancy of Comprehensivisation', W. McL Dewar in 'The Times Educational Supplement (Scotland)' 11/4/75.
99. (ibid).
100. E.I.S. Annual Proceedings 1962-63. Katherine Young's Presidential address.

101. S.T.U.C. Proceedings 1965. Report of a meeting between a STUC deligation from its General Council and Mrs. Judith Hart held on 29/1/65.
102. S.T.U.C. Proceedings 1966. Copy of a submission sent by STUC prior to a meeting held on 21/1/66.
103. 'Towards the Comprehensive' J.R.B. Christie (op cit).
104. Observations on reorganisation proposals in Coatbridge and Hamilton respectively, in Lanark Division file marked 'Secondary Reorganisation'.
105. John McCrossin's address to Glasgow EIS (op cit).
106. (ibid).
107. Education in Scotland HMSO (1965) p 24; p 28.
108. Education in Scotland HMSO (1966) p 1.
109. (ibid) p 23.
110. Education in Scotland HMSO (1967) p 23; p 27.
111. Education in Scotland HMSO (1968) p 14.
112. Education in Scotland HMSO (1969) p 15; p 16.
113. Personal papers lent to the author by Richard Buchanan, M.P. for Glasgow (Springburn). Extract from speech he gave to S.S.T.A. Annual Congress, May 1970.
114. Raising of the School Leaving Age SED. 1970 (op cit) p 25.
115. S.T.U.C. Proceedings 1973-74. Motion presented by J. Thomas, A.U.E.W. at the Annual Conference 1974.
116. S.T.U.C. Proceedings 1974-75. Report of a meeting between a S.T.U.C. delegation and R. Hughes, Under-Secretary of State on 31/5/75.
117. 'A Century of Educational Change' J. Scotland in The Scottish Educational Journal. 9/1/76.
118. Evelyn Dick, letter to the editor, in 'The Glasgow Herald' 21/1/74.
119. 'An expert looks at Scotland's classrooms', Douglas Weir in 'The Daily Record', 16/11/76.
120. 'Education for ALL', John McGonigal, in G.L.E.A.M. Spring 1975.
121. Edward Miller in a foreword to Organisation and Learning in S1/S2 (S.C.R.E.D.) 1980. A school based study conducted by J. Ford and D. Gibson of Jordanhill College of Education.

CHAPTER FOUR

COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION: POLICY, PERSONNEL AND CONTROL

The Department guides the development of education in Scotland in all its forms, although in the past twenty years it has devolved some of its administrative functions to other bodies or individuals ... those accustomed to the more highly centralised system of most European countries are surprised by the looseness of the whole arrangement, and that it seems to work ... the outstanding merit of the present situation appears to be in the absence of central control, with the consequent advantages of local control by people who are in touch with local needs, and freedom for headteachers to develop and innovate without being restrained by the dead hand of centralised bureaucracy. However, within these apparent advantages lie the very weaknesses and disadvantages of the Scottish educational system of today.

(Extract from 'Educational Administration', a chapter (author unnamed) in Contemporary Scottish Education H.A.S. (1980))¹

Any new system has to be made to work, not just allowed to develop, and all parties involved must play their part, especially the politicians who, in my view, have progressively killed off the opportunities inherent in the comprehensive principle. They who started the ball rolling, turned their backs on their creation, and chose not to examine it too closely to see if it was working out as they had thought.

(Interview/HT/54)

Regrettably, many people defined the term as simply getting them into one building and then put them into ability groups at the earliest opportunity. There was a failure on the part of politicians and the powers that be to be content with that, to adopt a laissez-faire approach to the implementation of a nationwide comprehensive policy. There was no follow-up, which would have discovered that the professionals had failed to respond to the challenge of the comprehensive school.

(Interview/TU/4)

There was a lack of direction on content and approach. No one sounded any alarm bells on this fact, so there was no interference. So the new regime was not understood by the troops. We probably did schools a disservice by not being more emphatic and directive.

(Interview/HM/3)

The intention in this chapter is to examine the part played by the key personnel in the political arena during the introduction and evolution of the comprehensive school in the West of Scotland and to determine the extent to which their interventions influenced policy intentions. After a discussion of Circular 600 as a policy statement, the role of the Scottish Education Department will be considered, in an effort to determine the extent of its control of comprehensive developments after the Circular's publication. Consideration will then be given to the policy process over the period under review, focusing on the raising of the school leaving age in 1972 as a specific instance. The role of Her Majesty's Inspectorate and the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum will be explored in relation to the comprehensive issue and the contribution of local authority personnel to the policy process will be evaluated. Particular attention will be paid to the developments in Dunbartonshire, Glasgow, Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire (the areas of West Central Scotland with which this thesis is principally concerned) using the furore over fee-paying and selective schools in Glasgow as a short case study. An examination will also be made of the part played by local politicians. Finally, to take account of historical events during the period (1965-80), regard will be had to the effects of the reorganisation of local government which took effect from 1975, and to Conservative Party Education Policy which was introduced in the late 1970s.

CIRCULAR 600

Comment has already been passed (Chapter Two) on the enigmatic nature of Circular 600, with its mixture of tentative statements and assertive value judgements. Yet the observant reader can detect a leitmotif that local authorities had little option but to implement the 'requests' it

contained. The authors describe it thus:

This Circular indicates ways in which authorities may implement the Government's policy in the light of local circumstances, and asks them to review the position in their areas and to report on their future plans.²

The same seemingly reticent approach is in evidence later:

The Secretary of State asks authorities to organise their secondary provision on comprehensive lines and to introduce this form of organisation as circumstances permit.³

Recognising that problems of staff and accommodation would ensue, the Circular makes clear that reorganisation has to proceed within existing capital spending parameters:

... by careful planning, much can be achieved with existing accommodation and staff and within the present building programme ... it would not be realistic for authorities to plan on the basis that their individual programmes will be increased solely to take account of the need to adapt or remodel existing buildings on a scale which would not have been necessary but for reorganisation.⁴

The choice of circular (as opposed to legislation) and the tone in which it was cast has been explained in these terms:

(A circular was chosen) to avoid unnecessary conflict with local authorities. In 1964, the Labour Government had a majority of only three and had to proceed cautiously.⁵

A former Under-Secretary of State at the Scottish Office was more emphatic:

It is worth noting that there was never any intention of introducing legislation to introduce comprehensive education in Scotland.⁶

A previous incumbent of the same post agreed:

It was never even mooted that new legislation might be considered ... there was a very large base of existing

schools which met the requirements of Circular 600.⁷

Be that as it may, there is no mistaking the Circular's directive tone, evident in expressions like 'authorities will wish to consider', 'authorities will wish to ensure', 'authorities should now reconsider', and in this extract:

The Secretary of State, therefore, asks authorities to review their existing arrangements, and to inform him by 31st March, 1966, of their general intentions for reorganising their provision for secondary education on comprehensive lines ... Authorities will subsequently be asked to submit, by the end of 1966, a fuller statement of their proposals ... the progress they expect to achieve by 1970 ... and an indication of any special difficulties with which they expect to be faced.⁸

Nevertheless, it can be argued that Circular 600 as a policy statement, stopped short at requesting plans of physical provision, and did not concern itself with the detailed implications. This is evident in the text of the Circular itself:

It is for the authorities to take the initiative in arranging consultations with teachers and discussions with parents, in order that their plans might be fully understood by all those affected by them.⁹

This is all the more surprising given evidence which suggests a strong political input. A senior member of the Inspectorate said of the Circular's composition:

The Circular was politically initiated without question. William Ross and Judith Hart sent for the then Secretary of the Department and instructed him to produce it, and what it had to contain.¹⁰

A former Under-Secretary at the Scottish Office offered this interesting comment on the working relationship between Civil Servants and politicians, talking about the Circular's preparation:

(it was produced through) normal civil servant preparation of draft guidance to implement government policy for submission to the Minister for approval and amendment. I myself introduced the no-streaming concept; I was influenced by observation of the methods used in Fife.¹¹

Amongst individuals interviewed in connection with this study, opinion was divided as to the effect of the policy outlined in Circular 600. Some took it at its face value, and described it as an essentially administrative statement:

The main implications of C600 as I see them were: an administrative problem: how do you produce a thing called a comprehensive school.¹²

Circular 600 started a general movement. It was a political decision based on feelings of disquiet in England, and Scotland's legislation (sic) had to follow suit, as usually happens in major educational policy.¹³

Further evidence of central government's lack of involvement once the Circular had appeared was provided by others:

As long as people paid lip service to the comprehensive ideal the SED did not mind ... the point to remember is that the political battle had to be won first, then we can worry about the details of the internal workings.¹⁴

(Local Councillor)

As long as schools looked like comprehensive units everyone was happy. There was no laying down of instructions.¹⁵

(HMCI)

An alternative perception of Circular 600 was again in administrative terms, with the accent on a rationalisation of existing secondary provision:

Circular 600 merely rationalised national provision along the lines of the burgh school. It put a gloss of paint on much of what happened already. Comprehensive education was not put forward as a reasoned case with pros and cons ... politics is rarely carefully thought out. Many decisions are taken on the strength of 'throw away lines'.¹⁶

(HMCI)

It is best to understand the arrival of comprehensive schools as the logical outcome of a process of rationalisation of the system which had already begun ... the Circular has to be understood in the context of a) an increased demand for secondary education in the country as a whole b) an increasing awareness the junior secondary school had not been a success ... like most Departmental Circulars it was an administrative document concerned with organisational matters.¹⁷

(HMDSC)

Some commentators were sceptical of the power of government circulars, preferring to see them as official pointers of the education service in a desired direction:

Government circulars do not have as much of an impact as the SED think they do. Although governments are now much more interventionist, in 1965 they were not. Circulars provide the impetus for change.¹⁸

(Labour MP)

SED Circulars never initiate or lead the way in anything. It is dangerous to credit them with more power than they have ... a SED circular is best seen as a stamp of approval, an act of policy promotion ...¹⁹

(Directorate Staff)

Nevertheless, few seemed to doubt the Circular's impact, or its intended objective:

The immediate effect of Circular 600 in practice was all-through or else ... a political decision had been taken at the highest level and that was that.²⁰

(Directorate Staff)

The political advocacy of the comprehensive school was a radical step in Scotland, even though the politicians did not really understand what they were advocating.²¹

(HMCI)

And yet, it would appear that the Circular was readily taken on board by local authorities, (which in the area under study were predominantly Labour-controlled), despite the structural changes in the system and the organisational complexity it brought in its wake:

Education authorities accepted willingly the directives of Circular No. 600 in 1965.²²

Mr Millan said it was clear that the Government's policy had the general support of the education authorities. But the details of reorganisation must vary according to local circumstances. 'It is not part of this Government's intention to be doctrinaire and attempt to impose a single pattern of organisation throughout the country.'²³

The apparent SED complacency regarding local authority co-operation, and the desire to be accommodating with regard to the type of organisation did not always meet with approval and it is not uncommon to encounter accusations of cavalier railroading:

In what way has it been possible for Scotland's HMI's, Directors of Education, and Headteachers to bring the weight of their experience or integrity to bear upon comprehensive education and RSLA? They are consulted about how policies are to be put into effect, but much less, if at all, about how the policies should be formulated. The exercise of their critical faculties can look rather like perpetually crying over the milk the politicians have spilt.²⁴

My point is to complain that these decisions have been taken without a wide enough consultation of seriously interested parties. It can be granted that in the last resort a political decision must be made, but hasty political decisions can easily be badly mistaken ones ... as each fresh official pronouncement comes out, there is a feeling that obeisance is being done to current fashion and when it changes we will all change ... it is not certain that 'father knows best'.²⁵

An editorial writer several years earlier was much more explicit, claiming that it was a moot point how far the State had the right to dictate a uniform pattern of secondary education based on dubious, if fashionable, tenets of a particular theory of society.

It is an attempt to impose a particular educational and social theory over the whole country, making it even more certain that education will become highly centralised in practice, even though it remains locally controlled in appearance.²⁶

Perhaps, however, the journalist was being over-fearful of central

authoritarianism:

The implementation of the proposals in the Circulars regarding the introduction of comprehensive education was accompanied by a certain amount of double-talk and sheer dishonesty at government and local authority level, as headteachers and authorities sought to prove how comprehensive their schools were, or to conceal how selective they intended to remain.²⁷

What, then, can be drawn from this discussion of Circular 600 as a policy document? Although it was the Scottish equivalent of DES Circular 10/65, and thus reflected a party political viewpoint on an issue of national importance, it must remain open to doubt that its authors intended it as a revolutionary statement of an innovative policy for education. Despite its egalitarian slant, it seems improbable that its objective was to strike at the structural base of society using the comprehensive school as a weapon. Rather, it appears to have skirted round the educational implications of its proposals, leaving these at the level of exhortation, and thus giving implementers considerable scope, through lack of explicit direction, for at worst maintenance of the status quo, at best the application of personal interpretation. The unobtrusive but directive tone suggests an assumption of local authority co-operation with its proposals, but it remains a bureaucratic document aimed primarily at a structural and administrative reorganisation of secondary provision. It could be argued that, for SED officials, the appearance of comprehensive reorganisation mattered more than substance.

THE SED: CONTROL AND POLICY

Underlying this discussion is the fundamental question of Scottish Education Department control, which several commentators (e.g. Kellas) claim exists in large measure in the Scottish educational system. The question is highlighted in a discussion of comprehensive reorganisation,

and it thus seems apposite to give it some attention. Who better to quote as a source than a former Secretary of the SED?:

Those who administer education at the points of consumption are usually struggling with the consequences of the last policy change, while the planners are engaged on the next one ... there are assumptions in arrangements at the SED:

- 1) planning must involve those who administer policy
- 2) planning must keep close to Ministers' views and the political centre

Political considerations go with financial as major constraints.²⁸

As has already been noted, not all administrators would accept that the first assumption is adhered to in practice, at least not as far as comprehensive education was concerned, and the remainder of the Secretary's statement seems to indicate that policy planners have not much room for manoeuvre in any case. Accordingly, it is possible to argue that central government exerted control, even if it was not always overt. An illustration is to be found in items of correspondence by members of the Inspectorate and senior civil servants dealing with local authority plans for reorganisation:

1) On the subject of zoning policies in Lanarkshire:

We have had difficulty in extracting general policy from Strathclyde, and Mr McElhone has become personally involved to the extent that he has written to COSLA's education committee seeing their help ... I am not asking you to intervene in any direct way; if, however, any opportunity should arise where it would be possible for you to mention, informally to Strathclyde officials the Minister's strong personal interest in securing greater flexibility in zoning decisions and a greater degree of public involvement in discussion before decisions are made, I think I should ask you to seize that opportunity.²⁹

2) On the subject of continued selection in Lanarkshire:

The letter (from Lanarkshire) assumes the authority will be meeting the wishes of the present Ministers once they have ensured that every secondary school in the County offers courses leading to at least 'O' level of SCE. What Ministers are also concerned about is the elimination of selection at age 12. (We also know that Ministers do not

like the existence of four year comprehensive schools ... but have been dissuaded from trying to eliminate them only by consideration of the massive amount of capital investment that would be required.) ... they will still be anxious for these schools to have a comprehensive intake in S1 and that selection of those children capable of taking SCE 'H' is postponed till at least the end of S2. ... it seems to me, therefore, that we are bound to report to Ministers that ... Lanarkshire still operates selection without any apparent proposals for its elimination, and get their approval to our writing to the Authority to take this up with them.³⁰

3) On reorganisation of the remaining junior secondary/senior secondary schools in Glasgow:

On educational grounds there is an unanswerable case for the integration of junior and senior secondary schools ... junior secondary schools do not have the resources or accommodation or staff to offer pupils the range of courses best suited to their needs ... re Bridgeton we think the decisions should be deferred ... re Eastbank, we are satisfied that the proposed (merged) provision would be educationally viable ... re Hyndland, there is no doubt that on educational grounds the proposed merger is sound ... on balance we think the proposals should be approved for implementation this year, since the educational arguments are strong and much less controversial than those relating to selective schools, and there is at least a good chance that it would improve relations with Glasgow.³¹

Access to such items of private correspondence between senior Scottish Education Department officials and Government Ministers is revealing. These extracts certainly endorse the Secretary's view that planning must be kept close to the political centre, but do not seem to indicate involvement of the policy implementers to any significant degree: they seem to be on the receiving end of SED decisions. They also indicate that the SED had a very basic definition of comprehensive education (see Chapter Two), effectively one which incorporated the elimination of selection and secondary provision in one unit, and made no reference to curriculum or internal organisation. Above all, they suggest that, in the much vaunted 'partnership' between central and local government, the relative influence of the partners was unequal, with the SED 'calling the shots', and taking final decisions.

Other illustrations of Scottish Education Department direction have also come to light in the course of this investigation. An editorial in the Scottish Schoolmaster described the government's role in these terms:

The government is attempting to force a complete reorganisation of secondary education, with little regard to the availability of suitable buildings and even less to the wishes of parents ... This unwanted dictation is a long way from the spirit of the post-war Butler Education Act. ... the whole machinery of bureaucracy has been employed to deprive parents of their freedom of choice, while the specious arguments of some politicians have clouded the facts.³²

The 'dictation' appears not to have confined itself to events at the outset; as the implications of the changeover to comprehensive education emerged, the Scottish Education Department still occupied an influential position. Its reaction to agitation for a revised system of national examination at secondary 4 to take account of the broader pupil intake was unreceptive. After a meeting between the Examination Board and SED officials this point was made.

In the Secretary of State's view, so far as concerns the stand of the 'O' grade exam, generally no further remit is called for at present.³³

An alternative index of the control exercised by the Scottish Education Department is the frequency in documentary sources of allusions to the nature of the consultative procedures it has established with the principal bodies on the Scottish education scene. As early as 1956, in a personal interview with the Secretary of the Scottish Education Department concerning the HAS contribution to a pamphlet concerning early leaving, the association was put clearly in the picture:

It is not civil service practice to acknowledge assistance ... we cannot regard ourselves in any real sense as partners with the SED and we have no special claim to consideration. ... we will continue to be consulted and no major change will be made without having an opportunity for consultation.

Our recommendations and criticism are welcome but may not be accepted by the SED.³⁴

Almost twenty years later, a cautiously-worded HAS minute suggested that the position had not substantially altered:

The pattern of annual liaison meetings has again been followed. We have met officials of SED, ADES and SCEEB. It is difficult to measure precisely the effect of these meetings but they do give the association an opportunity to present views, and exert pressure upon other sectors of the education system. In the long term, better co-ordinated and more cohesive policies may result.³⁵

Scottish Education Department reaction to some of the HAS pamphlets produced in the 1970s on various topics of interest similarly offered little comfort. Referring to CRISIS AND OPPORTUNITY³⁶, the Secretary noted:

SED reaction was swift ... we were firmly told at meeting with the Secretary that the Department's own statistics revealed no crisis and scarcely even a shortage. Those who have been present at HMI Mr McGarrity's smilingly confident performances on the same theme at various conferences have learnt to adjust their fears about the situation exactly in proportion to the Inspectorate's optimistic nonchalance.³⁷

The Educational Institute of Scotland, too, was critical of the Scottish Education Department consultative process:

Stress has been laid in SED Circulars on the necessity of consultation ... in sharp distinction to the practice prescribed for local authorities, the Government has had little, if any, consultation with the profession on the desirability or otherwise of introducing a comprehensive system of education. It is a fact that at no time has this Institute had discussions with representatives of the Government as to whether comprehensive education is a good thing. ...³⁸

Several years later, the EIS complained about what it construed as exclusion from representation on committees set up by the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum:

The Depute General Secretary reported that he had written to the Department asking for a meeting to discuss the present arrangements for consultation with the Department and the machinery of the CCC as a matter of urgency, and was still awaiting a reply. ... it was decided to recommend that until the present unsatisfactory position was amended, the EIS should refrain from making submissions to working parties.³⁹

In the event, the Secretary of the SED replied later that year in the negative:

Members had before them copies of a reply from the Secretary of State in which he adhered to the view that it would not be appropriate for the EIS to be given direct representation on the CCC.⁴⁰

It can reasonably be inferred from the foregoing illustrations that the SED had its own definition of 'consultation'. It would sometimes listen to views, and consider criticism that all was not well with the education system, but at other times exclude parties from its deliberations, without apparent explanation.⁴¹ The question that naturally poses itself is: how seriously did the SED consider the external representations made to it, and what effect did they have on its policies? It seems difficult to detect any real devolution of power on its part, so that consultation meetings may have been nothing but exercises in public relations.

Indeed, it might even be contended that policy planning and innovation were carried out within the confines of an ideology that did not alter much for a considerable part of the twentieth century, and that the predominantly bureaucratic policy process was reinforced by the SED's apparent remoteness from the system it administered. The following extract (though antedating comprehensive developments by several decades) referring to a meeting between representatives of ADES and the

SED about Circular 44 (see Chapter One) is indicative:

To suggestions that the Department might issue explanations of certain sections of the Circular in the form of a general memorandum or of letters to authorities in response to definite queries, Dr McDonald (SED) replied that the Department never explained. The intention of the Department to adhere to the Circular as it stood, was clear.⁴²

However, when Circular 600 was issued in draft form, a senior political figure claimed that the implementation of comprehensive policy was to be effected in a non-prescriptive way:

Mrs Hart said that 43% of the school population was already studying in comprehensive schools ... and the government was clear that by guidance and gentle pressure they would achieve the comprehensive organisation of education.⁴³

This very concessionary approach was criticised three years later by a headteacher, then EIS President, who claimed that it was sabotaging the government's comprehensive plans:

Mr Carmichael, in a trenchant and witty speech, spoke of the effect of permissive legislation in education. Local authorities had particular views on the question of comprehensive education, for example ... some were not really implementing the idea ... there would be no real progress until central government took a stand.⁴⁴

The Examination Board, for its part, also lamented an alleged lack of commitment from the Government at the time of the implementation of the Dunning proposals, a period of some uncertainty in Scottish education:

The Board assures the Department and Ministers of its willingness to co-operate and assist in any way it can in achieving the best possible solution to the problems facing secondary education in Scotland at this critical time.⁴⁵

Warning of the danger that the negative interpretation put on the Dunning proposals did not fairly represent their inherent possibilities for improving assessment procedures, the Director went on:

The Board takes the view that a definitive indication of policy on curriculum and assessment for secondary education in Scotland is urgently needed ... there is a likelihood of a substantial increase in commitment to CSE Mode 3 examining by Scottish schools in the absence of any commitment in whole or in part to the Dunning proposals ... (this) would reflect badly on this Board and would carry political implications.⁴⁶

One commentator, writing about the same time, also alluded to the Department's seeming aloofness and detachment:

Despite teacher involvement in working parties, there is a strong feeling that the Department is increasingly remote from what really happens in schools. Hence many teachers fail to see the relevance of the SED to what goes on in schools.⁴⁷

This view was endorsed by a Scottish teacher who put pen to paper to express his disgust at the SED handling of policy:

The SED stand condemned in the eyes of the Scottish people for gross inefficiency over the last two decades. Faceless, unhelpful, time-serving, their role has been to prevent political friction and safeguard their own over-protected jobs. And they have been aided and abetted by a succession of Under-Secretaries of State for Education, whose appointments make the Emperor Caligula's decision to make his horse a consul seem by comparison a wise and statesmanlike act.⁴⁸

On balance, then, it can be argued that, during the period under review, career civil servants in the Scottish Education Department retained substantial control over the administrative aspects of comprehensive policy. Other bodies were consulted and listened to, but a question has to be raised over the extent of their involvement in policy administration by SED officials. Equally, however, it has to be said that no firm control was exercised over the interpretation schools put on the concept of 'comprehensive education'. There is a noted absence in official documents of statements pertaining to the implications of comprehensive policy for the day-to-day work of schools. Given career

civil servants' preoccupation with the administrative details of policy, it can be claimed that they did not provide an educational lead for schools trying to adapt to the exigencies of the newly-created comprehensive system. Such lack of attention to the educational ramifications of the policy may have stemmed from an uncertainty about what a comprehensive education policy really was, or from a lingering attachment to the assumptions which had underpinned policy until 1965.

These observations lead to an examination of the manner in which policy was made and perceived over the period under study. The development of the present comprehensive system occurred in four policy stages:

- 1) The issue of Circular 600 in 1965, which was the beginning of the end of segregated secondary provision
- 2) The issue of Circular 614 in 1966, which abolished the use of selection procedures at the primary/secondary interface
- 3) The issue of Circular 760 in 1970 (following a change of government) which introduced permissive legislation, so that local authorities could choose the form of secondary provision which best suited local circumstances
- 4) The issue of Circular 898 in 1974 (following a change of government) which reaffirmed provision on comprehensive lines as the only acceptable form.

An OECD report comments on the developments that occurred in this nine year period thus:

By 1974 the combined effects of such efforts was a national system of secondary education sufficiently comprehensive in nature to satisfy the government of the day.⁴⁹

Effectively, therefore, the system was established by the issue of four Scottish Education Department circulars. Just prior to the changeover

to comprehensive education a Secretary of the SED described policy-making thus:

Parliament lays down a general framework - within which administrators work. The SED functions under the Secretary of State ... who has regulative, financial powers. Much is done in the Department through exhortation and advice in circulars and memoranda, and through the Inspectorate. National policy is put over by means of consultation with all major interested parties before any change is contemplated; considerable agreement is often reached before a change is made.⁵⁰

Considerable doubt has already been cast on the consensual picture painted by the Secretary both in respect of the extent and nature of consultation and of the 'considerable agreement' to which he alludes. Indeed, it is possible to argue that, in fact, considerable problems of a policy nature existed, as one Scottish MP pointed out:

Just now it is hard to say who takes the decisions or provides the leadership. ... Scottish educational policy muddles through, as a result of English decisions, with Scottish variants proposed by the Inspectorate and by the St Andrew's House Civil Servants, with some ideas coming from the Universities, Colleges of Education and certain influential teachers. But it is a confused process without any central point or focus, and with no one person responsible for imposing any pattern or coherence.⁵¹

A headteacher acquiesced in this recognition of policy confusion:

The main demerit of the present system is the difficulty or impossibility of Scottish education to advance towards a common goal. There is no clear discernible pattern among a plethora of ideas, experiments and recommendations, but a desperate seeking after something better than we have. The SED could take a more positive role in promoting the pursuit of new aims⁵²

This criticism suggests a dissatisfaction with official policy which seems to have given little consideration to the effects of comprehensivisation on the work of schools. With specific reference to the uptake of comprehensive policy initiatives, one commentator described the situation in Scotland in these terms:

'The situation has been and remains very fluid.' This quotation could be applied with confidence to the whole process of comprehensive reorganisation in Scotland ... the SED has provided some useful signposts for the development of the curriculum (RSLA Publications 1966, 1970; The Ruthven Report; The Inspectorate Report on S1/2; guidance), but a study of official initiatives has limited value in the assessment of where the Scots are now in comprehensive policy.⁵³

Policy, it seems, did not always accord with practice. The HAS also drew attention to the disparity between policy intention and the reality of the situation in schools in an analysis of returns to questionnaire on secondary school staff it sent out in the late 1960s:

Headmasters are well aware of the tension between the actual exigencies of the situation on the one hand, and the requirements of educational policy on the other ... a more positive approach is surely required if schools are to meet the demands for additional staff which the new ideas are making on them ... we are only too conscious of the danger of educational ideas outrunning staffing resources: indeed we know from experience that the present rapid rate of change and the continual introduction of new policies are in many cases forcing early retirements. Central planning and persuasions seem all too often to have ignored this fact.⁵⁴

It is reasonable to infer from these extracts that no long-term view was taken of educational policy over the period, but that initiatives were taken as and when it was thought appropriate. One such was the creation in 1971 of a new structure of promoted posts for schools, known as the 'Green Paper'⁵⁵. The Director of Education for Renfrewshire addressing his colleagues in the Directorate had this to say of it:

I have no doubt whatever that the needs of the situation require a school structure of responsible posts which will contribute to the management of the school (as a comprehensive organisation ... One thing is certain, however, merely to create these posts will not of itself contribute a great deal. The critics who point this out speak truly. It will be up to us to make use of the machine and make it work to advantage.⁵⁶

A year later the same audience heard from a member of the Inspectorate that a new policy initiative had established a centre for studies in school administration for these reasons:

Management and professional training are a growth area ... schools are bigger and have greater differentiation of function ... schools are more complex, and there is constant flux and change in the educational environment ... innovation is in.⁵⁷

That the establishment of SCSSA was directly related to the comprehensivisation of schools is made clear in its first Occasional Paper:

It has been made abundantly clear by course members that the extent and nature and, in some cases, the urgency of demand for the service which the Centre offers have been affected, if not conditioned, by the changes which secondary schools have had to face up to in the last few years ... secondary school management is having to reckon with an increasing size of school, a greater organisational complexity, a developing specialisation of function with it ... demands for a rescrutiny of objectives and better organised pastoral care ... a rapid rate of curriculum development, changes in teaching methodology.⁵⁸

Policy seems, then, to have been made in response to a developing situation once the decision had been taken to go comprehensive, but not as a result of a previously worked-out overall plan. The dangers of this approach were pointed out by a headteacher:

SED Consultative documents are open to harmful abuse despite their apparent flexibility. Examples are the Green Paper and the Red Book on staffing. The former has led to the promotion of many people to posts for which they were not suited; the latter has led to staffing standards being used as maxima by parsimonious authorities.⁵⁹

The Scottish Education Department response to the issue of Circular 600 was to organise a conference on the internal organisation of the comprehensive school, a theme which was treated under certain headings. It is clear from reading the conference account that the SED hoped a

comprehensive policy would emerge from the deliberations:

HMDSCI Dr Dickson explained that the conference had been called not to discuss the merits and demerits of comprehensive education but to try to determine the questions that should be asked and, ultimately, answered about the organisation of comprehensive schools ... the conference has been arranged to provide an opportunity for the exchange of views and experience.⁶⁰

Given this scenario, it is not surprising to find statements indicating the extremely tentative and experimental feelings expressed in workshop sessions:

- Members agreed that much more thought would have to be given to ...
- One of the main problems to be solved was...
- Various methods of class organisation would have to be tried out
- Clearly positive steps would have to be taken to ensure that ...
- All staff should know what was happening.⁶¹

A short extract from a SED Annual Report confirms that a mainly reactive approach to policy was favoured; after a lengthy discussion of the 'main problems connected with reorganisation', this conclusion was reached:

It is clear that the various problems raised require further investigation and research. There will be a wide scope for headteachers to experiment within their schools, but, as a first step, it seems necessary to enlarge the store of knowledge by organised discussion and exchanges of views and experience.⁶²

This approach did not go unnoticed, and its effects were commented upon adversely, as some snippets from EIS Presidential addresses show clearly:

Where frustration is felt is in the area of provision for change. Every reform has its practical implications, and it is no substitute for educational provision to call endlessly on good intentions, imagination and improvisation.

... areas of concern have become apparent ... there is a growing feeling that change is being initiated for change's sake, and indeed promoted at times with an iconoclastic zeal that would have put our forefathers to shame.

Politicians of all parties will the end and provide only some of the means. This is the endless story of educational reform ... the truth is that education in my time has run on the goodwill of teachers. Goodwill is near exhaustion.⁶³

In passing, it is interesting to note the ambivalent stance adopted by teachers, who both wanted direction and, at the same time resented it:

A feeling was also expressed, in support of the above statements, that many policy decisions seemed to have been taken with insufficient appreciation of their implications and effects on schools:

Paragraphs 34/35 illustrate how economic uncertainty bedevils effective planning, and also how major decisions on educational matters are made by politicians without thought of the consequences. Comprehensive education and RSLA were decreed despite the fact that insufficient money was made available to provide suitable buildings to accommodate these major changes.⁶⁴

Accordingly, it is possible to claim that educational questions were not always to the fore when policy decisions were taken:

While Mr Morris welcomed many of the advances made, he wondered if some of them had not perhaps been motivated by political expediency with cost as the prime concern, rather than by educational considerations ... elected representatives, as guardians of the public purse, tended to be influenced by the costs involved, rather than by the educational advantages to be gained.⁶⁵

Adverse comment of a similar nature frequently appeared in the press over the period, sometimes expressed in stark terms:

The year 1971-72 was a year of drift and blunder in education. It remains to be seen whether intelligence and integrity can overcome irresponsibility and ignorance in 1972-73 and give us fresh forward-looking policies in place of the humdrum, commonplace and unenterprising ones accepted by Ministers because of the inadequacies of their own

policies and the insistence of their Chief Civil Servants.

Our educational system is the victim of hardened ideologies, encrusted bureaucracies and vested interests. Increased truancy is the result of the paucity and unpalatability of current educational policy.⁶⁶

The dissatisfaction with educational policy making in Scotland and its results were vividly if depressingly summed up in these terms:

... tinkering with education, which has now been going on for half a century, can never lead to an effective revamping of educational relevant to the needs of the day ... all the reports and committees have done little to improve education ... adequate accommodation and curricula were not provided for RSLA, and the shambles of post 15 education continued throughout the 70s until Munn and Dunning identified the main problems. Unfortunately, it would seem that the same criticisms are being levelled at the implementation of these reports, and the same result is inevitable.⁶⁷

Perhaps the thoughts contained in this complaint strike at the very heart of the matter: funding. It was stated earlier that the politics of education involves choices based on priorities. Clearly, since resources are not infinite, the education service can only realistically expect a share of the public purse. The question is: does that share reflect a genuine commitment to the policies being followed in terms of creating a reasonable level of provision for their execution? A former Under-Secretary of State for Education at the Scottish Office explained the difficulties faced:

On the question of public expenditure, the Minister emphasised that the Government had to carry out the cuts already announced. These covered the whole field of public expenditure, and education had to take its share, and he was very conscious of the decisions that had to be taken. ... in the circumstances extra resources were going to be limited. It was, therefore, all the more necessary to ensure that resources already available were utilised in the best possible way.⁶⁸

Thus, account has to be taken of the fact that Government-imposed cash

limits correlate with the level of actual provision, a situation made more acute at a time of innovation, when extra calls are made on funds. Undoubtedly, an enormous range of conflicting pressures exist for those who have to make crucial decisions, so that important issues can become blurred or relegated to an inferior place in the financial pecking order. Nonetheless, sight should not be lost of the effect of this state of affairs on practitioners at the sharp end:

Restructuring on expenditure on education was always one element in the great new plan for the brave new world announced by each new government ... what each new government failed to point out was that projected increases in expenditure were never sufficient to provide for inflation, increases in pupil population and, above all, the greater aspirations of pupils, parents, employers and governments. ... the profession, as usual, would somehow or other implement the political decision, despite the failure of the country to provide the necessary resources.⁶⁹

The mismatch between policy intention and the reality of the limitations put on it by availability of resources was alluded to some years earlier by the Senior Chief Inspector of Schools, but he seemed confident that it did not result in too serious consequences:

How I wish someone would find a better way of managing our economy. We never seem to get down to real priorities, we start things, then find we are short of money and stop. Either we must first get our economics right then provide education, or provide education first and let the economics take care of themselves. Instead of philosophising about what is to be done, we go and do it. Perhaps we go wrong at times, but on the whole we don't make many mistakes.⁷⁰

It has to be said that this seems a pretty feeble stance to adopt from someone in such a senior position in the Inspectorate. While openly admitting that this pragmatic outlook did not always bear fruit he went on to explain why it nevertheless worked:

The secret of our success despite our shoestring budget is, of course, that we get people to do development work in their spare time, whether they be teachers, college staffs, directors or HMI.⁷¹

The confident optimism revealed in the Chief Inspector's words was not shared by those who had to cope with the policies which emanated from the Scottish Education Department. Many references were made by those interviewed in connection with this research to the policy process as exemplified by the comprehensive issue. Some comments were quite explicit and direct, others more oblique, but certain common themes emerged with unfailing regularity, and can be summarised by the following statements:

- 1) politicians gave prominence to the 'vote-catching' aspects of comprehensive policy, and were imbued with an optimism that was out of kilter with the reality in schools
- 2) comprehensive policy was announced, with little (if any) prior research, discussion or preparation, which exacerbated the natural reluctance of schools to adapt
- 3) comprehensive policy was not perceived to be part of a strategy which was co-ordinated and directed by its originators. The ensuing lack of accountability meant that people in the educational service had to 'muddle on', as they groped for solutions to the many problems the policy generated
- 4) those in power adopted a laissez-faire approach to the policy once it had become statutory (possibly indicating an unwillingness to contemplate fundamental change), which left ample scope for lip-service to be paid to it
- 5) resources (financial, human, physical) were never provided in a quantity adequate to cope with the policy and its implications.
- 6) Policy makers not only over-estimated the service's potential for adaptability, but also failed to think through the key educational implications of the territorial reorganisation which emerged as the prime concern. As a result, practical answers were a long time

coming

7) the widespread ignorance at all levels in the service of the implications of comprehensive education, (however understandable) coupled with a lack of serious commitment to it resulted in policy statements and exhortations being vitiated by institutional osmosis.

It is suggested that, over the period under review, once the non-negotiable policy decision to reorganise on comprehensive lines had been taken, policy decisions were responsive to the pressure of a developing situation and governed by the exigencies of finance. Career civil servants were perceived to operate at a level detached from the work of schools, and appeared to leave matters of practical policy detail to practitioners, while holding an expectation of co-operation. The belief that there was widespread agreement on comprehensive policy is not supported, with the SED officials appearing to lack clarity and sense of purpose about what the new comprehensive policy entailed in educational terms. A consequence of this was some disparity between policy intention and its application in reality. Above all, as regards comprehensive education, policy tended to concentrate on the administrative/structural dimension and neglect the curricular and organisational implications for schools. Policy does not appear to have had as an aim the creation of a new ethos for secondary education.

THE RAISING OF THE SCHOOL LEAVING AGE: AN EXAMPLE OF A POLICY INITIATIVE

The raising of the school leaving age can be taken as a good example of an initiative which shares many features that have been identified in the handling of comprehensivisation as an educational policy. Moreover, reorganisation on comprehensive lines and RSLA are closely linked at the level of ideology: both were arguably egalitarian measures compulsorily

introduced by the Government to extend secondary education to as many children for as long as possible and in the process, hopefully, contribute to the country's economic strength. To that extent, both policies derived from the expansionist consensus which characterised post-war policy-making in education.

While schools were in the throes of adjusting to the effects of comprehensivisation, it was announced that the decision had finally been taken to raise the school leaving age, a policy first mooted in the post-war years and successively shelved largely for financial reasons. The news came again via SED Circular, number 813 issued in November 1971. Considering the upheaval the decision caused (examined in the next chapter), passages in the Circular, while peremptory and directive in tone, treat the impending consequences with some complacency:

It now seems a distinct possibility, therefore, that there will be enough qualified teachers in secondary schools to enable the additional pupils resulting from RSLA to be absorbed without any general lowering of standards.⁷²

The rationale for the policy is explained in terms of the gradual increase in the number of pupils staying on for voluntary education at 15+ after the introduction of SCE 'O' Grade in 1962:

The Secretary of State believes that RSLA will itself lead to an increase in the number of pupils following courses that will enable them to be presented for the Scottish Certificate of Education.⁷³

The curricular diet to be offered to the new secondary conscripts was alluded to in these terms:

RSLA depends for its success, not only on the availability of staff and accommodation, but on the devising of courses suited to the interests and aspirations of the fifteen year olds ... for those for whom preparation for SCE is not appropriate, suggestions made in 'Junior Secondary

Education', 'From School to Further Education' and 'RSLA: Suggestions for Courses' should form the basis of course planning.⁷⁴

The Circular went on to exhort Scottish teachers to develop suitable curricula in a sentence which is indicative of SED's view of the policy process:

Advice offered at national level will only have a limited effect unless it is supported and followed up locally.⁷⁵

The final sentence, while concessionary is singularly unhelpful and detached:

The changes caused by RSLA are extensive.⁷⁶

The policy proposal was widely criticised by many in the Scottish educational world, not in principle, since it was seen as a logical extension of the thrust towards a comprehensive system. It was the practical implications which dismayed everyone; the Directorate view was plain:

The President said he was in favour of RSLA in theory but appalled at the prospect of it in practice.⁷⁷

The HAS Council reaction is contained in this resolution:

The HAS, while welcoming the increased opportunities for continued education intended by RSLA, are of the opinion that the actual results will turn out to be disastrous in many areas unless there is a substantial improvement in staffing and accommodation ... we wish to voice our very grave fear that the educationally valuable consequences will tend to be nullified. ...⁷⁸

The EIS, in common with the other teaching unions, recommended the postponement of RSLA for similar practical reasons. Earlier, their President rounded on the policy makers:

Every reform has its financial implications, and it is no substitute for educational provision to call endlessly on good intentions and improvisation. ... in such circumstances it is, of course, nonsense to talk of equality of educational opportunity ... many areas show an almost complete indifference to professional views on school planning ... teachers, excluded where they could be of real help, then housed in the results of such foolishness develop attitudes within which cynicism and distrust prevail.⁷⁹

Again, they were berated at the STUC Annual Congress for their failure to finance the policy for raising of the school leaving age to anything like a realistic level:

... the Government must stop indulging in platitudes and see that the best way to support this noble concept is to support it with the cheque book. Without practical support, these ideals remain mere shibboleths.⁸⁰

Notwithstanding this critical climate, the Scottish Education Department organised a symposium on raising of the school leaving age for ADES at Middleton Hall in January 1971. It has already been noted that this was a typical strategy to deal with new policy initiatives. The proceedings were designed to cover the curriculum for pupils affected by RSLA, accommodation and equipment provision and staffing. An extract from the SED Symposium Summary gives a clear indication of the SED position on the policy and its application:

On curricula:

HMCI Mr Fullwood emphasised that action must ultimately take place at local level ... it was important that the remaining pupils had interesting and worthwhile courses. He outlined the type of course that appealed to these pupils - outward-looking, practical, including both man-sized tasks with concrete results and also recreative activities of their own choice.⁸¹

On accommodation and equipment:

Mr Bain referred to the fluctuations in the amounts made available for school building in recent years and to the impossibility of identifying the investment used for RSLA in

published statistics. In practice, building for RSLA was often an integral part of building for other needs such as the replacement of old accommodation and reorganisation on comprehensive lines.⁸²

In the penultimate session of the symposium, entitled 'Where do we go from here?', a member of the Inspectorate outlined the separate roles envisaged for the implementation of raising of the school leaving age policy in the following important statement:

National bodies and central agencies must continue to express the underlying philosophy; the education authority must expand and elaborate the philosophy; the school must have a policy making organisation of its own and devise a structure to facilitate the making and implementation of that policy.⁸³

The summary report of the symposium is replete with optimistic assertions:

On the whole, directors seemed reasonably satisfied with the progress that was being made locally in developing courses on the general lines of the publications issued by the Department. ... the feeling was that with the accommodation programme already in hand the great bulk of the needs would be met in time ... there was no suggestion that accommodation or equipment would be major problems ... even in staffing, it was notable that relatively few directors made much of their own problems, even in the critical areas in the West of Scotland⁸⁴

The Secretary of the Scottish Education Department, in his closing address to the symposium, maintained a sanguine tone:

Mr Graham said he had found encouragement in what had been said about accommodation and courses. He realised that in some areas there would be difficulties, especially where the demands accruing from RSLA and secondary reorganisation coincided, but the overall situation was promising ... he contrasted the rational and informed discussion at the sessions with what one read and heard outside. Most of the wild statements came from lack of understanding ... there was a case for Directors doing locally what the Department had tried to do nationally, and he urged them to take immediate action.⁸⁵

So it would be fair to say that, in the face of strong opposition to its policy on raising of the school leaving age, the Scottish Education Department appeared complacent that developments were in hand and seemed to play down prediction of the difficulties that would be caused by its practical implementation. A draft lobby note prepared for Ministers indicates the political intention underlying raising of the school leaving age:

The fundamental reasons for RSLA are to provide further opportunities for pupils to receive an education which will equip them to deal with life in a changing technological society. It is hoped that RSLA will create greater numbers of young people able to adapt throughout their working lives and able to undertake training at various stages. RSLA will help to eliminate the waste of talent caused by allowing pupils to leave at the earliest opportunity.⁸⁶

This justification for RSLA makes clear the connection, at the level of policy intention, with the comprehensive issue.

The pessimistic predictions made by teachers were given short shrift, and the policy was presented in a confident manner:

The volume of questions on the state of preparedness of education authorities in Scotland for RSLA is increasing, and it will no doubt continue to flow as far as accommodation is concerned. We have been briefing Ministers to say that we have good reason to be confident that, overall, there should be sufficient places for the additional pupils.⁸⁷

An indication of the extent of consultation undertaken by the Scottish Education Department is given in the same letter:

I wonder if we should make enquiries to inform ourselves in more detail about the position generally. I should be glad to know if you think we should ask local authorities to report on their state of preparedness for RSLA.⁸⁸

Difficulties of which the Scottish Education Department had been made

aware were not seen to be insurmountable, and demonstrate that career civil servants again envisaged the policy in predominantly administrative terms (i.e. accommodation and staffing):

Accommodation shortages are confined to a relatively small proportion of secondary schools ...⁸⁹

We are confident that, overall, there will be no shortage of places. This is not to say that there may not be difficulties in some schools, but they should be manageable and of a temporary nature.⁹⁰

I am satisfied that good progress is being made towards meeting the remaining needs ... a great deal of work has been done locally ... our main hope for securing a better distribution of teachers is through the operation of the Inducement Payment Scheme ... we see no reason why RSLA should not operate naturally despite problems which may occur in some areas.⁹¹

Such problem - minimisation was exemplified by Hector Monro, the Under-Secretary at the time. Speaking at a press conference held shortly after the issue of Circular 813, he said that, while appreciating the fears of teachers, he rejected the forecasts about 'a blackboard jungle' that had been made on account of alleged accommodation unavailability and staffing shortages, notably in the West of Scotland:

I really feel at the end of the day things will settle down very smoothly and in three or four years time we will wonder why we approached RSLA with such apprehension.⁹²

As will be seen in the next chapter, it transpired in the event that the apprehension was well-founded, and it can be argued that raising of the school leaving age raised issues of the nature of the curriculum and pedagogical strategies precisely at a time when the system was struggling to cope with the full ability range which had resulted from comprehensivisation. Indeed, those at the sharp-end had not been reticent about issuing warnings. One teacher accused the Scottish Education Department of a serious lack of planning:

Lack of preparation for RSLA has produced a large measure of disillusionment among teachers. What began as a healthy scepticism is now hardening into a deep-seated hostility and a crisis of confidence which will transmit itself to pupils ... RSLA is a major exercise in educational engineering, and as such requires not only the existence of a strategy but one which is seen to exist.⁹³

Another rounded on the Scottish Education Department for its apparent lack of perception of the real-life difficulties caused by its policy:

Even the raising of the school leaving age to 15 caused serious difficulties of which the politicians and administrators appear to be blissfully unaware. Because of these facts, it would be an act of doctrinaire foolishness to proceed with the proposed reform.⁹⁴

Speaking about the origins and effects of political decisions about educational policy like comprehensive reorganisation and RSLA, the General Secretary of the Educational Institute of Scotland asked in whose hands policy making really lay, and suggested that the hard facts of political and economic reality militate against Government initiatives:

Clearly, political decisions are taken in respect of major issues, yet many decisions are taken at a level at which elected representatives are not involved ... civil servants are highly intelligent and gifted individuals, but one is bound to question the extent to which they genuinely represent the views of their political masters and to what extent there exists a civil service view success in education will always be limited until society itself removes the unfairness and injustice that exists in its whole social structure ... in a situation in which many youngsters come from a background of poverty ... to speak of educational opportunity is to make a mockery of the word 'equality' ... most people equate educational achievement with exam success ... whatever politicians say the aims of education should be, parental pressures will tend to impose quite different aims on the system.⁹⁵

From the evidence assembled, it can fairly be maintained that the Scottish Education Department adopted an analogous policy stance on

raising of the school leaving age as it had on comprehensive reorganisation. It was a political decision taken after several postponements with ostensibly egalitarian motives. Little account seems to have been taken of the context into which the policy was to be launched, namely one in which there was low teacher confidence and some disillusionment with the period of instability that had resulted since the issue of Circular 600. Notwithstanding this situation, little specific guidance emerged from the Scottish Education Department in official publications,⁹⁶ and much appears to have been left to teachers at the chalk face. Further, physical problems of accommodation and staffing were disguised by platitudinous assertions that mountains were being made out of molehills. All of this hardly augured favourably for the attitudes teachers would adopt to the policy initiative, especially in view of the traditional method of dealing with the less academically able in Scotland - provision of a watered-down academic course. It could be argued that the lack of Scottish Education Department involvement and absence of consultation reflected a lack of real commitment to the pupil audience at which raising of the school leaving age was aimed. Insufficient resourcing and inadequate curricular provision equally may have been due to the low image of those pupils held by policy makers. Cynics might even suggest that the measure, far from being a genuine attempt to cater for one section of the pupil population in comprehensive schools was, in fact, designed to alleviate youth unemployment. In the circumstances, it would hardly have been surprising if the target pupil group felt more segregated and discriminated against, at least in terms of the curricular diet served up to them. Thus, the reactions of the recipients of raising of the school leaving age, teachers and pupils alike, would be likely to nullify any potential benefits that might have accrued from the

policy.⁹⁷ In short, the posture adopted by the Scottish Education Department may inadvertently have resulted in one policy (raising of the school leaving age) militating against another (comprehensivisation). An OECD Paper written with the co-operation of members of the Inspectorate put it thus:

The raising of the school leaving age from 15 to 16 in the middle of this (comprehensive) reorganisation created many additional problems. Teachers had to find time, not only to devise techniques for dealing with a much wider span of ability than had been their wont, but at the same time had to devise courses and resources for a completely new population. This did not make their acceptance of comprehensivisation any easier to achieve and probably slowed up its realisation.⁹⁸

THE INSPECTORATE

Turning to the role of the Inspectorate in matters of policy, it is noteworthy that official descriptions tend to be bureaucratic and bland and give an impression of cordial co-operation. Referring to the introduction of comprehensive education, an OECD Paper comments thus:

The SED, aware of these problems, issued guidance (through circulars) and maintained dialogue with the education authorities both through formal meetings and through HM Inspectorate offering advice on particular problems.⁹⁹

Addressing headteachers not long after the introduction of comprehensive education the Senior Chief Inspector alluded to the demise of the Inspector's former inquisitorial image and the development of quite specific duties relating to policy:

The main developments up to the present have been the abandonment of regular inspections; the development of national policy through panels, memoranda, conferences and visits; greater involvement with Directors of Education; enlisting the co-operation of all those involved in education to help frame national policy.¹⁰⁰

Some years later a Glasgow headteacher paid tribute to the formative

influence exerted by the Scottish Education Department through the Inspectorate in shaping the development of Scottish education. Reminding readers of Dr Bone's statement that:

The educational changes which followed the administrative upheaval of 1918 were those which suited the Department.¹⁰¹

he alluded to a perceptible change of approach:

Today its power may be less apparent and obtrusive, but its leadership is constant and comprehensive ... today it achieves its purpose more by consultation and persuasion than by fiat and prescription ... HMI took a lead in disseminating new ideas and techniques. It was this leadership in a co-operative effort which was responsible for the general acceptance in the 60s of the changes in methods and curricula ... the chief instrument of advance in Scottish education were the HMI.¹⁰²

While perhaps questioning the phrase 'general acceptance', there is no doubt that HMII indulged in widespread consultation at meetings and conferences called to discuss the implications of comprehensive education. Given their role of explicitly promoting government policy, Inspectors were obliged to guide developments in schools in the spirit of comprehensive reform. A senior member of the Inspectorate gave a hint of the ubiquitousness of his colleagues in these terms:

Visits to schools were still a major part of a HMI's task but his role had changed somewhat, he was more heavily involved than in the past in more general activities such as curriculum development, management and statistical surveys. HMII were nonetheless quick to report on situations and reactions they found at schools.¹⁰³

A reliable repository of official information on the Inspectorate is the evidence given by Scottish Education Department officials to the Select Committee on Education and Science in 1968. A Scottish Education Department note for the meeting reads as follows:

It is in the field of liaison and as consultants and advisers that HMII now increasingly function, and this on a very wide front. They are professional educationists with a

width of view not shared by any other group in the Scottish educational world.¹⁰⁴

Pointing up their role as friendly and constructive 'link-men', the Scottish Education Department note highlights two principal functions of the Inspectorate:

- 1) providing the Scottish Education Department with information about the local conduct of education and ensuring the appropriate implementation of national policy
- 2) advising the Department in the formulation of that policy, and continues:

Inspectors more and more regard themselves, and appear more and more to be accepted by the teachers, as friendly advisers and helpers rather than as official watchdogs. This mutual exchange of attitude allied with the extent to which inspectors work on committees of various kinds has brought a much better atmosphere.¹⁰⁵

In its evidence to the Committee the Scottish Education Department representatives painted a harmonious picture, with the emphasis on partnership:

By and large relations between teachers and HMI are good. The inspector is clearly there to help the teacher, I think 99% of teachers realise and appreciate this.¹⁰⁶

(The Scottish education system) will only work providing there is a genuine real, active partnership between central government, and its department, the local authorities and the teachers, and I see us very much as a sort of catalyst bringing this co-operation into active being.¹⁰⁷

But attention was drawn to restrictions on Inspectorate freedom, which appears substantially qualified:

HMI in Scotland feel themselves completely free to express their opinion whatever it may be, but they cannot - and do not - go around advising contrary to matters of policy, whatever their personal opinion.¹⁰⁸

An academic taking the evidence summed up their role neatly when he said that the Inspector constituted:

The discreet and diplomatic arm of the state, that is they carry out the wishes of central government and see that they are carried out at local level.¹⁰⁹

Supporting the view that the Inspectorate was perhaps over-powerful, a retired college principal said in evidence to the Committee:

What I am submitting is that this is an excessive reliance on this particular group of people for advice on the development of Scottish education. The growing power of the HMI has been accompanied by the decline of the Advisory Council ... we have no independent body that is not influenced deeply and profoundly by our Inspectors looking at Scottish education at the present time, nor had we such a body when we were facing the problems of comprehensive secondary education.¹¹⁰

Hence it is probably more fruitful to penetrate the official gloss which emphasises Inspectorate consultative/advisory strategies, so as to recognise that, simultaneously, inspectors took a lead in directing local initiatives to stimulate curriculum development designed to confront the practicalities of comprehensive education. An illustration is provided in one of their Reports:

HMI play a significant and decisive part in Glasgow's in-service provision. Almost all of the so-called "Director's" working parties in secondary education have been set up at the express suggestion of Inspectors. They are involved in the selection of staff for working party service, in the detailed planning of courses and conferences ... and if an adviser is weak, have to be prepared, for the sake of the teaching body, to initiate and take a leading part in in-service activity, though they do so in the Adviser's name.¹¹¹

It is reasonable to conclude that the Inspectorate had a central part to play in disseminating Scottish Education Department policy and nudging comprehensive developments in the 'proper' direction. This task was

made all the more difficult since, as has already been suggested, career civil servants and politicians had provided no educational strategy to work on. As a former academic consulted in connection with this research put it:

In my own view, the role of HMI in advising the Minister and in implementing and monitoring reforms is of critical significance.¹¹²

Educationists interviewed in connection with this study had a remarkably consistent view of the role of the Inspectorate in relation to the introduction of comprehensive education. The salient points in their responses were:

- Inspectors were apostles of government policy, and set out deliberately to 'sell' the new comprehensive doctrine
- they advised on policy interpretation in local circumstances, and on the feasibility of local authority comprehensive schemes
- they were under explicit directions to encourage practitioners to move in a comprehensive direction
- their brief was to encourage a change of attitude in the spirit of the comprehensive principle
- they acted like bees, picking up ideas on good practice and disseminating them in speeches at conferences or in working parties of teachers
- because very few of them had any direct experience of a comprehensive school their advice tended to be cautious and not radical, partly also because they were reacting to policy initiative for which no strategy had been devised
- many inspectors had personal qualms about, and private views on, the comprehensive issues not helped by an apparent lack of conviction on the subject in senior echelons of the service.

Evidence of dissenting voices within the Inspectorate was provided by several interviewees who had worked as inspectors.¹¹³

THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE ON THE CURRICULUM

Any discussion on the role of the Inspectorate must take cognisance of the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum, set up in 1965, to be the Secretary of State's principal advisory body on curricular matters as successor to the former Advisory Council which did not meet after 1961. It seems reasonable to argue that one of the principal tasks of the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum after reorganisation should have been to devise a curriculum for the wider range of ability and suggest appropriate teaching methods. Two authoritative figures have explained its creation in these terms:

Brunton's personal support of curriculum development was directly responsible for prompting Sir Norman Graham to set up the CCC as the principal advisory voice on curriculum in Scotland. Inspectors 'ran' Development or Central Committees, and the CCC gave the system a popular voice that Sir Norman brought to bear on the committees and led to establishing a kind of national policy.¹¹⁴

The origin was the realisation that everybody felt that particular subjects of the curriculum could stand overhauling in the light of changing developments. ... some of this started with ad hoc working parties of teachers in maths and science. The CCC was set up to hold a balance between subjects, an overall body to moderate developments. I think it has been very useful to the Office. We have hitherto avoided the situation altogether when we had an Advisory Council in that the Committee proposed and the Secretary of State disposed.¹¹⁵

In endeavouring to establish the connection between the CCC and comprehensive developments, it is important to make the point that although its creation signalled an ostensible relaxation of central government control in the mid 60s,¹¹⁶ its structure and functioning remained affected by existing cultural and educational traditions, in that the working party network remained predominant. The move thus

raises issues of central and local control of the curriculum, and the extent to which teacher participation materially affected developments. One source credits the CCC with substantial responsibility in the matter of comprehensive education:

The CCC also administers a Curriculum Development Service established to provide resource materials in support of new curricular initiatives. During the period the Service was particularly active in providing teachers with new course structures, new teaching resources, and advice on new teaching strategies. Curriculum Papers 2, 3 and 7 were of particular importance at the time.¹¹⁷

These papers, and others in the total series of 15, were seen, at least in official circles, as triggers to curriculum development and a stimulus to the many training courses which were mounted in the 60s and 70s. The CCC in official pronouncements always lays emphasis on its advisory function:

The CCC is not a statutory body and has neither power over nor responsibility for the content and management of the school curriculum. What is taught in schools is determined by the local authority and the headteacher in the light of guidance which may be issued by the Secretary of State. The CCC, together with HMI is the Secretary of State's main source of counsel in formulating such advice.¹¹⁸

Yet, from the same source comes an indication of the real status of CCC reports:

Since Curriculum Papers have in most cases been endorsed by the CCC, they have come to be regarded as statements of national policy. In recognising that the Report on Drama should have the status of a 'Discussion Document' the CCC was tacitly recognising ... that the time is not yet ripe for a definitive policy statement on drama.¹¹⁹

The Director of one of Scotland's Curriculum Development Centre's was more explicit about the CCC's role:

I do not think that the Scottish system is decentralised. There is no question that the SED exerts a powerful influence. Bodies like the CCC and SEB have strong

centralising effects ... to promote curriculum development of national significance you must have a top-down movement ... a strong centralist emphasis helps to spread curricular ideas.¹²⁰

Nisbet too (1970) conceptualised the CCC as 'an organ of the central authority in partnership with teachers'. But a major question must be: how effective was this strong, top-down approach in promoting change in the schools grappling with innovations like comprehensive education: According to two interviewees the answer would seem to be: 'not very':

The CCC was a big disappointment in that it never addressed itself to the fundamentals of comprehensive education. Its members lacked insight and experience of the new system and so the overall input was poor.¹²¹

(HMCI)

The early remits to the CCC were not concerned with comprehensive schools. The CCC initially took the secondary curriculum divided into discrete subjects as given and investigated it as such.¹²²

(HMDSCI)

One is prompted to ask why a body charged with offering advice and guidance on curriculum principles, courses and methodology appeared to be so ineffective? John Nisbet hinted at one explanation:

The major achievement of the SED so far has been its success in starting up the process of curriculum development without arousing uneasiness or discontent among teachers.¹²³

One may infer that the predominant plank in CCC thinking has been a gradualistic approach to change, promoting change by discussion and persuasion within a framework in which prevailing definitions of the curriculum and teaching methods have remained unaltered. This view is given added weight when one considers the personnel chosen to man CCC working parties at a time of massive educational change. Two interviewees described working party members thus:

The first two CCC's were really a counterweight to the creation of the SCEEB, and intended to provide a forum for a

discussion and examination of the curriculum. They were very heavily SED appendages with handpicked personalities.¹²⁴

(HMCI)

The CCC is an ineffective body of 'Uncle Toms' which is not very powerful in securing change. Indeed, people are appointed to it precisely because there is no danger they will make waves or cause embarrassment to or unpopularity for central government.¹²⁵

(HMCI)

The net result seems to have been that, until well into the 1970s, the impact of Consultative Committee on the Curriculum publications in promoting change was negligible, and the research done for the Fairlie Report (1972)¹²⁶ put the CCC in the embarrassing position of having to acknowledge that scant attention had been paid to its recommendations. This led in 1976 to a restructuring under a senior member of the Inspectorate:

It was my task under the next Secretary of the SED to co-ordinate the structure into a coherent system for development, give it discipline and direction, and lead the CCC in an executive role in development in addition to its constitutional advisory one.¹²⁷

The resultant shake-up saw the creation of Scottish Curriculum Development Service, Committee on Primary Education and Committee on Secondary Education into a supposedly more integrated and co-ordinated network of committees. The overall result was described in interview by a former Centre Director:

Centre work was firmly related to general educational thinking and policy planning by careful SED scrutiny exercised through its HMI ... there has been a gradual stiffening of the SED attitude to SCDS, a gradual establishment of more control, an end to what James Munn referred to as our 'baronial period'. ... one is aware of obtrusive and objectionable SED/HMI control in order to effect rapid and efficient curriculum development.¹²⁸

Notwithstanding this restructuring process, and given the pre-selected,

handpicked nature of CCC membership over the period under review, one is tempted to conclude that the impact of its reports has not been as great as intended - irrespective of the quality of their contents - and that, at best they have been official endorsements of good practice, which, albeit 'policy', have remained at the level of exhortation, and have not galvanised teachers into a radical scrutiny of their practice. Indeed, given the apparent absence of formal mechanisms to disseminate their recommendations and evaluate the extent of their uptake, it is not surprising to find a comment like this from one assistant headteacher discussing curricular change:

It appears to be the essential tragedy of curriculum papers whether local or national, that they are perused by few. This is perhaps the inevitable result of the fact that their recommendations are nothing more than that - recommendations for headteachers to do with as they will.¹²⁹

The sentiments expressed here accord in large measure with a large majority of the individuals interviewed in connection with this research: CCC documents were generally found to be of variable quality, mouthpieces for the Inspectorate models of recommended practice; the lack of official 'push' on their publication led to a 'take-it-or-leave-it' reaction, with the result that their overall influence was weak, and did not create significant ripples in the waters of Scottish education. Thus, it is suggested that the CCC, although largely a centralist mouthpiece, was paradoxically weak in respect of effecting change in order to assist teachers coping with the changeover to comprehensive education. A slightly different perspective on the role of the CCC has been provided by a senior member of the Inspectorate closely involved in its workings:

So over the years, the CCC has changed from being a filter for SED influence downwards to being a mechanism for reflecting the views of the profession upwards to the

The apparent improvement hinted at in this statement in no way, of course, implies any loosening of central control, indeed, quite the reverse. The Inspector summarised the CCC's effectiveness thus:

How efficient is the CCC in promoting curriculum development? We know that ideas we put out have no guarantee of being read, far less being implemented ... the strategy since 1976 has been to influence subject working parties through the Exam Board and provide materials ... the CCC adopts a permeation strategy, and relies on senior staff in schools to read and disseminate its documents. but everyone knows that things change slowly in education. A humorous illustration of this is the apocryphal story which went round the Department when Bruce Millan was delaying in announcing the implementation of Munn & Dunning. The rumour was he was going to implement the 1947 Report.¹³¹

It might be argued that the humour in the last sentence is somewhat ironic, in the light of the actual implementation which followed. Suffice it, however, to say at the moment that the CCC seems not to have had a dramatic effect on the evolution of comprehensive education. Its recommendations must be seen in a context of strong and increasing central control so that only what appeared acceptable to the educational establishment came out in print. It could be contended that the exercise of central control served to allow a widespread retention of the status quo. Given the added stricture about a fairly conservative Committee membership, it seems reasonable to claim that the CCC was largely unsuccessful in effecting changes in curriculum or methodology in the classroom, and so it paradoxically served to preserve rather than to change the direction of the existing educational process. As one interviewee put it:

The potential of the CCC as a vehicle for curricular reform is very great, but it has to be said that the reality falls short.¹³²

If one accepts the premise that one of the principal tasks after reorganisation on comprehensive lines should have been to find a curriculum for a wider range of ability and devise a new set of aims and objectives for teaching methods, the impact and credibility of the CCC as a vehicle to carry it out must be in some doubt. Curriculum papers seem at best to have created a potential forum for curricular discussion for those interested, but were of dubious value in their capacity to generate change per se. Moreover, they left the conceptual basis of the educational system largely unquestioned, and curricular issues and priorities appear to have been determined by the superordinate echelons of the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum/Her Majesty's Inspectors. Only practitioners who were held to have 'acceptable' educational views were involved in their creation, and these views would be unlikely to include a pioneering and innovative position on comprehensive education.

FOUR LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN WEST CENTRAL SCOTLAND

It has already been noted that official accounts of the Scottish educational system make much of the so-called 'partnership' between central government and local-authorities, and attention must now focus on the latter and the part they played in the changeover to comprehensive system. A useful starting point for this examination is to consider some authoritative accounts of the job of the educational administrator in the local authority context. A few years prior to the issue of Circular 600, one Scottish Director of Education gave this account:

Administration has two functions: to keep the enterprise going, and to adapt and change it; most of what an administrator does relates to the former function, but his importance relates to the latter. ... new ideas and desirable changes take too long to percolate to the roots in our field.¹³³

An analogous description of the dual nature of a Director of Education's work is found in a document produced by Association of Directors of Education in Scotland for internal consumption by its members. Essentially, it amounts to a vade mecum for new recruits to directorate jobs, and this is replete with advice on the day-to-day aspects of educational administration. Nonetheless, it sheds valuable light on how the Association perceives the job:

(A Director of Education should be) an educationist first and an administrator second. He should be an ally of the schools and be seen to be so, and the office staff should be adequate to allow him to visit schools regularly and meet with assistant as well as headteachers. In his relations with the teaching profession, consultation should be the practice.¹³⁴

Recognising that the job of education goes on in schools, the document proceeds to paint this portrait of the Director:

To play his part effectively and secure the co-operation of the headteachers and other staff, he should not only be seen to be familiar with the latest and best in educational theory and practice, but should be careful, as the occasion demands, to temper any idealism he may have with a realistic understanding of what is possible in his own area ... the essential thing is that he should be actively interested, progressive in outlook ...¹³⁵

Great stress is laid on the importance of the personal relationships the Director makes with those with whom he has to deal in his job:

There can be few senior administrative posts where the personality of the holder is as important. No director can afford to forget or belittle the great complex of human interests and emotions against which he has to think and act, and, his efficiency apart, the supreme test of his fitness for the job is the way in which he is regarded by all those with whom he comes in contact.¹³⁶

This short account of the accepted Association of Directors of Education in Scotland view provides an interesting backdrop against which to judge

the part played in comprehensive reorganisation by the Directors of Education in the four areas of West Central Scotland with which this study is concerned - Glasgow, Dunbartonshire, Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire. Reference has already been made (Chapter Two) to the addresses given at ADES Annual Conferences in the mid-60s just prior to the issue of Circular 600, and to the somewhat cursory reception given to it and its sister Circular 614. As Scottish Directors began to grapple with the implications of government policy, it is fair to say that, by education, training and experience, they displayed hesitancy about the effects of a switch to a fully comprehensive system, although they were being pressurised on all sides to change the system with which they were familiar. Scrutiny of the Minutes of the Education Committees in the four areas mentioned above provides an interesting insight into the way in which comprehensive policy arose. In Dunbartonshire, for example, early thought had been given to the matter. The Director submitted a memorandum to the Committee in 1964, in which he outlined the pressures that would ensue from a dramatic increase in the number of pupils staying on to complete secondary education. As a result:

The sub-committee agreed to recommend to the Education Committee that the future policy for secondary education throughout the country will be comprehensive. 'Comprehensive' should be interpreted in such a manner that pupils, when transferred from primary to secondary schools, will not be directed to different schools on the basis of aptitude.¹³⁷

As the 1966 Scottish Education Department Annual Report shows (page 2) the issue of Circular 600 resulted in great deal of consultation between central government and local authorities, as the latter endeavoured to formulate their plans for comprehensive reorganisation for submission to the Secretary of State. It makes clear that progress was governed by the limits of capital investment allocations which

determined the rate of new school building. Other determinants of comprehensive provision were the social economic and geographic circumstances of particular areas, as well as future population trends, present and planned housing developments, and not least the nature and condition of existing school plant. A further difficulty was the need to reconcile the requirements of raising of the school leaving age with the establishment of the final comprehensive pattern. Notwithstanding these formidable obstacles, the Dumbarton policy seems to have been accepted by the Scottish Education Department without demur:

The Secretary of State noted that the Authority shared his view that the all-through comprehensive school was the most desirable and effective form of secondary organisation ... he assumed that the authority would want to progress as rapidly as possible towards an all-through system, and therefore suggested that they might make most economic and effective use of the capital investment available by concentrating as far as possible on major developments which will form part of their long-term plans.¹³⁸

In Glasgow, the Labour Government Circular in 1965 caused little upset, indeed merely confirmed an Education Committee decision of nearly twenty years earlier, so that it was very much a case of policy continuity rather than policy reversal:

The sub-committee agreed that the SED be advised that, as the Corporation had agreed in 1946 that future provision for secondary education in the city should be based on fully comprehensive schools, and all subsequent school planning and building had proceeded on that basis, the circular represented no major changes in policy in the arrangements for the city, but the extent of which reorganisation could proceed depended on the lifting of restrictions on school building programmes.¹³⁹

In general, the Glasgow scheme met with the Secretary of State's approval, but the Education Committee's attention was drawn to a special obstacle peculiar to the city:

In the Secretary of State's view the continuance of these (fee-paying corporation) schools in their present basis was inconsistent with a comprehensive system of education¹⁴⁰

(Reference to subsequent developments will be made in a section of this chapter.) In total contrast, the impetus for comprehensive reorganisation in Lanarkshire appears to have come from the Local Association of the Educational Institute of Scotland, the education committee of which was the chief instigator for change. Not only did it organise a conference on comprehensive education at Peebles, at which the guest speakers were Professor Brian Simon and Hamish Gardiner (a Glasgow headteacher and ardent comprehensivist), but it drew up a series of recommendations on what it saw as the unsatisfactory state of secondary provision in the County:

The following findings were approved:

- a) The Association should urge the Lanarkshire Education Committee to adopt the principle of comprehensive secondary education as the method of organisation in Lanarkshire
- b) It should be made clear that the term 'comprehensive school' is used to mean one which provides secondary education for all pupils in a given area, and which receives its pupils unstreamed by previous test.¹⁴¹

A Minute of a few months later indicates the response to the Educational Institute of Scotland's agitation:

It was proposed that the EIS proposals relating to secondary education in Lanarkshire by means of comprehensive schools be remitted to the Schools and Schemes Sub-Committee for consideration ... the Director informed the meeting that the Education Committee would shortly be giving consideration to the question of the form of organisation of secondary education in the county in the context of the imminent raising of the school leaving age and other factors.¹⁴²

The cautious approach hinted at in this response is echoed by the

opening sentence of a document drawn up by the Director following a meeting he held with headteachers in the Motherwell/Wishaw area on local reorganisation plans:

The general principle should be adopted of effecting change by evolution as far as possible without discarding successful features of existing arrangements.¹⁴³

What is clear, in contrast to Dunbartonshire and Glasgow, is that the Director in Lanarkshire was not sold on the all-through comprehensive school (as advocated in Scottish Education Department policy statements) as the natural form of secondary reorganisation.

These difficulties have helped to promote the view that all pupils should attend a common 'comprehensive' school whatever their abilities and sometimes the even more extreme view that ... all pupils should have the same course, regardless of the difference in their abilities. Some arguments in favour of the comprehensive school are based on the theory that any differences between pupils are the result of differences in environment, or on a pious aspiration to avoid differences in prestige between different schools. These can reasonably be ignored.¹⁴⁴

In Renfrewshire, too, the idea of the all-through comprehensive school did not find favour. As early as September 1964, the Director prepared a memorandum in which he considered various forms of secondary organisation and assessed their suitability with the prospect of the impending raising of the school leaving age. Basing his argument on the criteria underlying the system of education in a democratic society advanced in the 1947 Advisory Council Report,¹⁴⁵ he rejected both the selective and comprehensive forms, and came down in favour of a two-tier system:

There is a strong and growing school of thought which believes that neither the selective pattern nor the comprehensive can meet all three of these criteria, and that the opportunity now exists to experiment with a new pattern of education which in various forms is reputedly meeting with considerable success in certain areas of England and at least one in Scotland.¹⁴⁶

The reference to Scotland is to the County of Fife where the Renfrewshire Director had worked previously in a junior post, and had been much taken with the two-tier system introduced by Fife Director of Education, Douglas McIntosh. Later in the memorandum, he makes his own preference crystal clear:

With this problem comes the opportunity to examine the organisation of secondary education in a way that has not been possible since 1923, opportunity to prepare a plan to take into account the changing needs of education and to meet the needs of the future. Does the Committee wish to expand the present pattern of selective schools? Or do the ideas and ideals of the times demand a system of secondary education based on comprehensive schools? Or is it preferable that our schools be reorganised, expanded and new schools built to conform to the 'two-tier patterns for the organisation of secondary education?'¹⁴⁷

The Director was obviously successful in persuading the Education Committee of the soundness of this compromise solution, as one of its later minutes illustrates:

This has been achieved, through careful study and planning by the Director of Education, accompanied by long and detailed consideration by this Committee. What is called the 'two-tier' method of secondary education has been applied in some parts of the county, in other a combination of 'two-tier' and the all-through comprehensive system. It is felt with confidence that this dual approach is educationally and socially sound and at the same time practical. ... we confidently submit our recommendations to the Secretary of State for, I trust, his unqualified approval.¹⁴⁸

However, the educational, social and practical attractions of the scheme did not cut much ice with officials at St Andrew's House:

It does not seem (to the Secretary of State) that the two-tier system is the only practicable arrangement for all the areas in which the Authority proposes to adopt it or that it will enable the educational needs of these areas to be more adequately catered for than in the all-through system. The Secretary of State thinks, therefore, that ... wherever possible, new schools should be so planned that they can, at a later stage, be expanded to become all-through schools. With these considerations in mind, he would be grateful if

The Scottish Education Department reaction not only indicates its opposition to any alternative form of comprehensive education to the all-through model, but also illustrates how the power of the Director could be undermined by a Government Circular recommending a change in the structure of educational provision. Hence, in the early years of the introduction of comprehensive policy, the West of Scotland presents interesting contrasts: Glasgow had already committed itself to going comprehensive because of previously planned housing developments in the periphery of the city; Dumbarton and Renfrew had begun to reconsider secondary provision in the light of raising of the school leaving age, and the latter had a quite definite scheme in mind. In Lanarkshire, pressure had to be applied to encourage an awareness of alternative provision to the junior secondary/senior secondary pattern.

Interviews were conducted with the Directors of Education in the four areas mentioned with a view to gaining an insight into how they reacted to the issue of Circular 600.¹⁵⁰ The Glasgow decision to build comprehensive schools in peripheral housing estates had this result.

There was literally no dissentient voice when the proposition to introduce comprehensive education came up in the 1960s ... it won immediate acceptance in Glasgow where it was assumed to be the proper way to proceed. Hence its introduction never caused the sort of battles which happened in England.¹⁵¹

The Renfrew Director had begun to advise his Committee in a series of memoranda on the organisation of secondary education with the looming prospect of the post-war bulge on the horizon:

Should we expand the selective system, go over to all-through comprehensive schools, or introduce a two-tier system? These were complex issues to which I took a

pragmatic approach. The buildings and staff you have really dictate policy.¹⁵²

But he insisted the choice was made for educational reasons:

My view was that all pupils should have equality in regard to the best teachers we had in fairness to them¹⁵³

In Dunbartonshire, the Minute referred to earlier indicates an awareness that change was required as a result of increasing pupil numbers, but that not much had actually been done:

In Dumbarton, no one had been thinking seriously about comprehensive education ... it was very much a bi-lateral system of senior secondary/junior secondary schools that operated until the advent of C600.¹⁵⁴

The impression created in Lanarkshire is that the Director was basically satisfied with the status quo and reluctant to be pressurised into a wholesale switch to all-through comprehensives:

In Lanarkshire, we were concentrating on the design of schools much more than the local pattern ... as I cast around for a rationale for secondary education, I was concerned not to go for comprehensive reorganisation hook, line, and sinker, but to examine its later successes or failures. In any case, results from our senior secondaries showed time and time again that our selection procedures at primary 7 were valid ... I was very much impressed by our Scottish system.¹⁵⁵

Equally interesting differences occur in the Directors' perceptions of their role in the changeover when the inevitability of Circular 600 struck home. The picture in Dumbarton was of a good-natured co-operative effort led by the Director:

My job as Director was to create the best conditions for the headteacher and his staff to do their job ... the first priority was to get the buildings ready and then hope you could staff them. ... it was all a question of trust. I wrote reports to explain the changes and a broad consensus view was adopted.¹⁵⁶

The Renfrew Director adopted both an administrative and an educational perspective:

My responsibility was to create change while fulfilling my own educational vision ... my role was to guide the committee towards the changes I thought were the right ones to make ... it was essentially a job of making recommendations and steering the thinking of the committee.¹⁵⁷

The Glasgow picture is one of a Director with a purposeful management approach to effecting change through people:

The Director's most important function is to create the right atmosphere in the education offices and in his professional team, and to be responsive to any requests from schools ... the committee was always behind us and always gave their blessing to what was happening in schools¹⁵⁸

The Director in Lanarkshire saw his responsibility chiefly in terms of provision, especially when his educational proposals found no favour with the committee:

My main job as I saw it was to get good schools designed, with proper facilities and staffing standards ... on the whole, and apart from the comprehensive motion which defeated the ideas in my memorandum, the Committee were satisfied with my suggestions throughout my directorship ... all that mattered was that they were happy with how schools were in Lanarkshire.¹⁵⁹

The Association of Directors of Education in Scotland Manual of Administration made great play of the necessity for Directors to have close contact with schools. Although the amount of contact varied, all four West of Scotland Directors were adamant that the job of managing the implications of the changeover to a comprehensive system was firmly laid at the door of the schools. In Glasgow, meetings were held:

Policy was implemented by convening meetings of headteachers and by office staff visiting schools ... the purpose of the meetings was not to coerce, but to praise and give

encouragement. As a Director, you must count on headteachers to give a lead.¹⁶⁰

The personal touch was also in evidence in Dumbarton:

Educational administration exists to make things happen in schools. Hence, heads had total latitude. Visiting schools enabled me to get to know heads and discuss their problems. You don't implement policy by sitting in an office and issuing Circulars. You get out and talk to those most affected.¹⁶¹

There appear to have been many meetings with Renfrew headteachers in a very organised approach to discussing common problems caused by comprehensivisation:

It was open communication down the line with my issuing memoranda, arranging visiting schools ... I never interfered in the inner running of the schools ... heads dealt with the implications on the spot.¹⁶²

A more austere and detached formality was the order of the day in Lanarkshire:

I didn't call heads to meetings very much ... it didn't really concern me what was happening in schools, so I purposely did not interfere or visit schools much. Heads were there to run the schools in their own way ... that's why they were appointed after all.¹⁶³

Asked what they saw to be the obstacles to introducing the comprehensive policy as contained in Circular 600, it is striking that all four saw them as being of an administrative/financial kind, and that they were not conscious of any overt opposition to its introduction:

There was no much opposition (in Renfrew) ... senior high schools were persuaded they had to go along, while the junior high schools thought they were getting a good deal ... a major problem was money.¹⁶⁴

Geographically, Dumbarton was a natural county for reorganisation, so our plans went through 'on the nod', so to speak. The main obstacles were money and buildings.¹⁶⁵

I found the SED very tight on money matters ... they wanted us to create a system of all-through comprehensive schools but would not let us have enough money to organise it properly.¹⁶⁶

The main obstacles (in Glasgow) were inadequate buildings, chronic and perennial staff shortage ...¹⁶⁷

Although all the Directors acknowledged that Circular 600 also embodied a change of educational outlook for teachers, such philosophical considerations were matters which did not impinge upon them. A typical comment was:

(C600) did not really affect them all. It only would have if I had said that the recommendations contained in it had to be implemented.¹⁶⁸

Only in Glasgow did the Director think that the advent of the comprehensive school presented a new concept in Scottish education:

The immediate implication was a challenge to elitist views and notions of early specialisation and streaming according to ability. It also provided a chance for practical subjects and music and art to make a contribution to the education of all children.¹⁶⁹

His three colleagues saw it as being a natural outgrowth of the long tradition of omnibus schools which they traced back through parish schools to John Knox. They also agreed that the comprehensive school was born into a world of substantial confusion in the minds of most practising teachers, a confusion, be it noted, that the Directors seem not have taken an active part in dispelling:

There were a variety of interpretations according to individual views. I do not think that some people actually sat down and worked out an answer or worked out what it was.¹⁷⁰

An interesting gloss on the Directors' own accounts is obtained by examining the views of other individuals working in the education

service on the role of the Directorate with regard to comprehensive policy. Clearly, in the end, they had no choice but to conform to government policy. However cordial and marked by consensus dealings with the Scottish Education Department are claimed to have been, it is obvious that government officials exercised a powerful control on developments within local authorities. The rejection of the Renfrewshire proposals and the refusal to grant capital sums to schemes which did not receive Department approval are good examples. Nevertheless, a large number of people interviewed took the view that most Directors, while in favour of the change in principle, were in fact cautious about moving and displayed a variation in enthusiasm for it:

I would say that Scottish Directors took benign advantage of their considerable powers—at that time, but there were differences in emphasis: ideas in Glasgow, benevolence in Dumbarton, caution in Renfrew and delay in Lanarkshire.¹⁷¹

(HMDSCI)

Several people commented on the fact that the Director's personal education and background made it almost inevitable that they tended to the elitist end of the academic spectrum, and hence did not welcome the spirit of Circular 600 with overt enthusiasm:

Directorate staff at that time had no, or very little, experience of comprehensive schools. The 'Kirriemuir tradition' was strong among them, and the more able and articulate were able to manipulate their committees round to their way of thinking.¹⁷²

(Headteacher)

Many Directors did a reasonably competent job within the limits imposed on them without necessarily being wholeheartedly behind the comprehensive movement ... most of those who were ideologically opposed to comprehensivisation did not offer active resistance, but rather a passive reluctance to do anything very dramatic.¹⁷³

(Adviser)

A frequently-mentioned criticism is that, at the time of the changeover, the Directorate in general did not exercise a strong leadership role, and failed to offer schools a coherent strategy for dealing with the practicalities of comprehensive education. The following comments are typical of many:

Most authorities hadn't a clue about comprehensive schools ... as long as people paid lip-service to the comprehensive ideal, the SED did not mind.¹⁷⁴

(Councillor)

Directorate staff were in no hurry to move in my experience. They tended to like the status quo ... they thought they had very good senior secondary and/or omnibus schools already in which their staffs did what was expected of them. The feeling was very much that if you had good cooks in charge of good ingredients you had to get a good meal. My impression was that HMII or local politicians had to exert pressure on unwilling Directors.¹⁷⁵

(Headteacher)

In fairness, it should be noted that the Director in Glasgow was an exception to the general rule:

Stewart Mackintosh was in a class by himself ... he had a quite definite educational philosophy. He saw himself as having a personal responsibility for what happened in his schools. That was not so evident in his juniors, and became less evident after he went. Scottish education in general is characterised by narrowness and lack of vision.¹⁷⁶

These views, and others recorded in the interview schedule, reinforce the impression that in general the Directorate played a largely administrative role with regard to Circular 600 and Circular 614, reacting pragmatically and empirically rather than educationally or imaginatively. Such interest as they did evince was limited to questions of structure rather than process in order to be seen to be going comprehensive, but decidedly not out of any genuine interest in or commitment to the changeover. They were obliged to 'make it happen',

but had the scope to exercise power by disguised delaying tactics of various descriptions which had some bearing on the rate of change. The manifest absence of an educational lead is best accounted for by the understandable fact that comprehensive education and its implications probably did not accord with their personal educational views. As one interviewee put it:

Directors were neutral as far as educational matters were concerned. They gave no input of ideas, but were preoccupied with staffing, resources and other day to day routine administrative matters.¹⁷⁷

(Headteacher)

Irrespective of each Director's personal views on comprehensive education, and the role (actual or perceived) he played in relation to the policy, it is interesting to examine the state of readiness in each county, as the consequences of the decision to reorganise were being contemplated. A reliable and objective source of information on this matter are the reports of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Schools in West Central Scotland written about the mid 1960s. In Dumbarton, the Director displayed a sympathetic and imaginative approach and relations between administrators and the teaching force were cordial:

The educational thinking outlined in C600 was generally acceptable to the Director and the Education Committee and it has been decided that, in future, secondary education ... will be provided on a fully comprehensive basis as far as is practicable.¹⁷⁸

Given that the years under review (1961-66) had been characterised by progress and achievement and a willingness to experiment, the report concluded that things augured well:

The county is poised on the brink of the challenges thrown up by C600.¹⁷⁹

Apart from the issue of selective schools, Glasgow had the further, but

apparently not insuperable, problem of linked four and six year schools, some of the latter hidebound by tradition:

The variety which exists in the Glasgow system derives from the Authority's intention (1963) to provide, within certain limits, an overall pattern of comprehensive secondary schools ... the authority are pressing on with their policy of comprehensive schools ... the problems have by no means been wholly solved ... some older schools do not appear to have noticed the changes that are occurring in education at the present time.¹⁸⁰

In Renfrewshire the Inspectorate found a reluctance to depart too quickly from the already established pattern of secondary provision:

The present Director is flirting with the idea of having the senior secondary schools take pupils only from third year onwards and make all pupils attend junior high schools. ... the Director, a product of the Fife stable, and a great admirer of Dr McIntosh, favours the junior/secondary high pattern.¹⁸¹

In Lanarkshire, although the Director had produced a report (already mentioned) formulating a policy for secondary education along comprehensive lines, and a motion to that effect had been passed in Committee, one gains the firm impression that it was very much a case of 'all change' in the mid 1960s.

This sudden activity follows a lengthy period of stagnation ... the willingness now to spend large sums of money contrasts strongly with the former parsimony, and much of the development now take place could easily, and in fact ought to, have been underway many years ago.¹⁸²

Perusal of the interview responses given by the four Directors in question as well as those of colleagues who worked with them enable the following summary accounts to be given of the varied responses made to the introduction of a comprehensive policy:

Dunbartonshire

The Director saw himself as an enabler first and foremost, and adopted a cautious but genuine approach to the issue. He accepted Circular 600 passively but with a co-operative attitude to its implementation. Although broadly in favour of the policy, he had doubts about certain aspects of it (e.g. the merging of pupils of widely differing abilities). While seeing himself to have an important role in decision-making, he had an awareness of a management approach to policy change, seeing the need to discuss issues with colleagues, and create appropriate conditions in schools for them to devise their own version of comprehensive education in the mould of the omnibus school.

Glasgow

The Director in Glasgow had a constructive vision of education, and saw the comprehensive school as a twentieth century manifestation of an evolving Scottish historical tradition. He was committed philosophically and educationally to the comprehensive principle, and had a definitive conception of what it implied. He saw himself as decision-maker and tone-setter, and had a human concern for his colleagues at all levels, actively promoting discussion of new initiatives in a consultative ambiance, with an emphasis on the co-operation and interaction of all parties to the educational process.

Lanarkshire

The Director in Lanarkshire comes across as an independent-minded elitist who had to be pushed in a comprehensive direction because he was essentially satisfied with the status quo, in which children were treated in a manner appropriate to their perceived intellectual ability. Not surprisingly, his policy document on secondary reorganisation contained proposals which were overturned by the Education Committee. He adopted a gradualist approach to comprehensive policy, avoiding where

possible unnecessary upset to the existing system of which he fundamentally approved. Described by one commentator as 'a general in command of the army', he appears to have had at times an abrasive and hostile manner, eschewing contact with schools, and ill-disposed to consultation or discussion on matters of policy. He saw himself principally as the organiser and provider of physical facilities. He did not make haste in implementing a policy which he saw as Labour Party dogma, and in marked contrast to his own educational philosophy and teaching background in the independent sector.

Renfrewshire

The Director in Renfrewshire, inspired by his own firmly-held educational philosophy, skillfully educated his Committee to an acceptance of it, in the absence of a strong political atmosphere. He saw the all-through comprehensive school as an English importation and a solution to an English problem. Accordingly, he favoured what he called the compromise of the two-tier system which he defended on the educational ground that it provided access to the best teachers for all pupils. It is arguable, however, that lurking behind this justification was an elitist concept of education,¹⁸³ reinforced by his pride in the Scottish tradition in general and the omnibus school in particular, of which he himself was a successful product. Notwithstanding the fact that his pragmatic reaction to Circular 600 was unacceptable to the Scottish Education Department, which insisted on the all-through model, it is to his credit that he adopted a positive and constructive attitude to the imposition, and actively encouraged discussion of the policy in schools.

The Directors were all subject to political pressure, and were obliged to activate the administrative machine to implement government policy.

Although the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland manual, referred to earlier, said that the educational dimension of the Director's task should take precedence over the administrative, the evidence from the four areas in the West suggests that with the exception of Glasgow and Renfrew, the administrative was in the ascendant, possibly at the very time when educational leadership and a strong management stance were required. In the event, no policy statements or strategies for the realisation of the aims of Circular 600 were forthcoming. Indeed a very cautious approach to the new ideas was adopted, and its pragmatism, occasioned partly by personal educational philosophy, partly by material constraints, may well have resulted in a slower implementation than might have been possible. In that sense, the Directors had the opportunity to shape the course of events in a way which suited them.¹⁸⁴ It appears that the political fiat to go comprehensive sharply disturbed a rather complacent educational scene in Scotland in the mid-1960s. It is thus possible to argue that the Directors (with the exception of Glasgow's) displayed no deep conviction about comprehensive education, and were reluctant to support its introduction enthusiastically. This posture resulted in their being primarily concerned to create secondary units which could be labelled 'comprehensive', and much less to confront the educational implications of the political decision.

LOCAL POLITICS

Any discussion of the part played by the Directorate in relation to comprehensive education would not be complete without reference to the local political environment in which they operated. A number of the interviews conducted in connection with this research were with politicians at both national and local levels. An attempt was made to

assess the part played by elected members in establishing the comprehensive system. One point emerges quite clearly: the vast majority of local councillors appear to have been neither aware of, nor interested in, the implications of Circular 600:

A major stumbling block in this case was the lack of educational awareness amongst those who had the power to do something about it ... as for the Labour politicians, they did not know the first thing about it in general.¹⁸⁵

(Councillor on Education Committee)

It appears that the extent of their involvement was to espouse the comprehensive cause at meetings, largely because it had become official national policy, rather than through a deep commitment to, or understanding of, it:

Comprehensive schools started as a fetish imported from England. It was forced on Scotland for national political reasons. Our own system was damned good, but certain elected members created such a song and dance about it at almost every meeting that comprehensive schools were 'the thing'. Although the truth is they hadn't a clue what a comprehensive school was. They just got hold of a nice catch phrase.¹⁸⁶

(Convener of Education Committee)

Apart from sloganising, the only evidence of active participation on the part of councillors was in the case of a reluctant Director (as in Lanarkshire) where they mounted a campaign to put pressure on him to change. A point worth making is that some interviewees referred to what they saw as the unwillingness of the Roman Catholic hierarchy to have their schools adversely affected by comprehensivisation. It may be, then, that Catholic councillors faced a dilemma caused by a tension between their religious and their political allegiance. In general, it can be concluded that most councillors voted along party lines, because their general educational awareness was limited, and confined itself to

practicalities.

The Committee was not interested in educational philosophy or deep discussions about the aims of education. They were interested in the mechanics, the operation of the system. So discussions were about school meals, residential schools, finance, art or music courses, promotion of teachers.¹⁸⁷

(Convener of Education Committee)

The general feeling was that, with regard to comprehensive education most councillors did not affect policy, but accepted suggestions put forward by the Directorate. However, just as with Directors, the importance of personalities was stressed:

(The influence of councillors) varies and depends on personalities. In Glasgow, Dan Docherty and Willie Harley had entirely different views and approaches ... The personal interests and views of the Education Committee Chairman are important. Strong personalities achieve much. Also important is the sort of relationship they strike up with the professionals whose job it is to implement the ruling party's policy.¹⁸⁸

(Convener of Education Committee)

The second main point to make is that the power of the Director to influence depended on the strength of political feeling in the Committee, and whether a strong ruling group made its presence felt as in Glasgow and Lanarkshire:

A significant factor in Glasgow was that many leading local politicians were involved in some way in education ... they were strong personalities and carried a lot of weight and local respect ... the leadership in the local Labour Party had a strong educational basis.¹⁸⁹

(M.P.)

I have to say that in Lanarkshire, comprehensive education had to be fought for. It was a real struggle ... the Director was hostile and he did not lead the Council. The councillors were badly advised by the Directorate ... The Director was opposed to it and his word was law.¹⁹⁰

(Academic)

The situation in Renfrew was quite different:

Much of what happened in Renfrew had to do with the political set-up of the Council. It was non-party. In the main, people were Conservative, with Labour representatives coming from the big centres of population ... the Labour Group was not as organised as elsewhere. There was no whip ... The Director ... was able to get over the notion of his beloved two-tier system to the Committee by persuading them that it was in line with comprehensive principles.¹⁹¹

(Convener of Education Committee)

Even taking account of the political ambience, however, it is clear talking to individuals involved in politics that, at the time of the introduction of comprehensive education, Directors had considerably more power than nowadays. This comment is typical of many:

Initiatives came from the Directorate, were discussed in Committee and a decision was reached. I would say that the Directorate was influential as a starting point, then decisions were reached jointly.¹⁹²

(Convener of Education Committee)

In the mid-60s, Directors could virtually call the tune as long as they did not act beyond their powers.¹⁹³

(Regional Councillor)

Hence it would appear that, in the West of Scotland, those initiatives that were taken arose from the ranks of the Directorate. The ostensible non-involvement of most local councillors and their lack of awareness of the implications of Circular 600 suggest that there was an absence of grassroots agitation for comprehensive schools, which arose as a result of a political decision taken outside Scotland.

Discussions with representatives of the world of politics also reveal that by no means everyone in the Labour Party was sold on the idea of comprehensive education. Despite the public posture adopted of a unanimous call to extend equality of opportunity, there were Doubting

Thomases who privately maintained their support for selective education:

Many people in the Labour Party were - and are - deeply imbued with the Protestant Work Ethic, and are motivated by the desire to grasp opportunities. Most of them were able to do that through the educational system since they came from ordinary backgrounds themselves.¹⁹⁴

(Politician)

There is no doubt that many good schools suffered a change of character and ceased to have the same importance in the eyes of local people ... the shift to uniform comprehensive education spoiled education by reducing it to its lowest common denominator ... we had some damned good schools ... Local politicians did not realise the implications for some of our better schools.¹⁹⁵

(Convener of Education Committee)

It is not surprising that examples were found of local councillors sending their own children to selective schools not in their residential catchment areas.¹⁹⁶ One MP commented on this fact thus:

There was much hypocrisy in the Party, much waving of egalitarian flags, much public mouthing of principles.¹⁹⁷

A prominent figure in the national campaign to abolish tripartite education in England in the post war years made a telling comment which betrayed the ambivalent feelings on comprehensive schools of many in the Labour Party:

If only we'd said everyone was going to get a grammar school education and not called them 'comprehensive schools' there wouldn't have been such a fuss.¹⁹⁸

All those interviewed took the view that politics was absolutely crucial to initiating educational change. Politics was the catalyst or stimulus to change, as the educational system is so inextricably connected to the structure of society. The general feeling was that politicians' principal concerns were with policy and resources, the former reflecting the will of the electorate, the latter reflecting the priorities of the

party in power at any given time. One interviewee spoke for many thus:

The role of politics in initiating educational change is absolutely crucial. Politics is about managing society. Educational provision fashions society and educational policy is a reflection of the priority it is given on the political agenda. The essence of politics is priorities. The kind of educational system we have and how it is resourced are political decisions of the first magnitude.¹⁹⁹

A final relevant point arising from the interviews with political figures concerns their views on the extent to which a local authority should enforce its public policy statements on education. The ideal situation, for many of them, is summed up in these terms:

They must go the whole road. Defaulters cannot be allowed to circumvent broad policy statements. General policy must be adhered to, otherwise what's the point of making it in the first place ... experiment within a policy framework is to be encouraged ... but basic planks of policy must be carried out.²⁰⁰

(Regional Councillor)

Such direct accountability, however, cannot always be guaranteed, so that the scope for variation of interpretation, particularly with regard to comprehensive education, seems almost inevitable. One reason often quoted by interviewees was the strong professional independence displayed by Directorate staff and headteachers, with its consequential resistance to what it saw as political interference.

In conclusion, it can be argued that, as far as comprehensive education was concerned, the influence of local politicians was slight, and only increased in strength where Directorate staff appeared obstinate. Directors had most direct power in the absence of a strongly politicised Education Committee, and events were shaped by outstanding personalities and their personal perceptions in both the educational and political worlds. An exception to this general conclusion, however, can be found

in the area under study. No account of the political context of comprehensive education would be complete without reference to the furore caused by the few selective secondary schools in Glasgow, and the crescendo of feeling it generated over the six year period from 1967-73. The series of events which occurred is the only parallel in the Scottish context to the public outcry caused in England at Enfield and Tameside over the Government's intention to make comprehensive reorganisation mandatory for local authorities.

The subject is enormously complex and the principal details of the story are set out in chronological order in Appendix 1.²⁰¹ It is pertinent to note that even after the issue of Circular 600, Glasgow, which had decided in the later 1940s to go over to comprehensive secondary provision, nevertheless opted to retain its former fee-paying selective secondary schools, even in the face of Labour Government measures to withdraw funding from the private sector. Events were further complicated by the varying fortunes of the major political parties at both national and local levels: the Conservative Group won the council elections in 1968, the Conservative Party won the General Election in 1970, and the Labour Group regained the majority locally in 1971. With the issue of Circular 760 in 1970, the Government reversed the mandatory policy contained in Circular 600. The majority Labour Group took advantage of the new permissive legislation and exercised its statutory freedom to organise secondary education as it chose, namely to make all schools comprehensive and phase out selective intakes to its six selective secondary schools. In the face of a strong and sustained public outcry denouncing its authoritarian stance, the ruling Labour Group instructed the Director of Education for the city to compile a report indicating how the six schools were to be integrated into the

city-wide system of comprehensive schools. Feelings ran high, and three of the headteachers of the selective schools were publicly disciplined for their opposition to the ruling group's policy. The issue was finally resolved when the Secretary of State, who had earlier enlisted the support of the courts to force the Labour administration to continue in 1972-73, finally acceded to its anti-selective plan, resulting in five of the six schools becoming area comprehensives and the sixth (The High School of Glasgow) being discontinued.

SOME ISSUES RAISED BY THE CONTROVERSY

With the possible exception of the case of R F MacKenzie, no other educational issue in recent years has generated so much emotive argument and bitter public reaction. An Inspectorate Report made this observation:

Difficulties mainly of an educational nature, involving controversy between professionals of differing views on the comprehensive system began to intrude as the waves of reorganisation lapped on the shores of traditional areas or involved hierarchical organisations like schools run by religious orders ... any further progress by the Authority takes them into realms of difficulty, not only of an educational nature but full of social and political controversy. In many ways ... they strain at deep cultural roots and in the bygoing cause a passing environmental stir. As the complicated mesh of comprehensive system approaches the centre of the city, it is difficult to superimpose it without disturbing the historical reminders of elder educational systems, both general and territorial.²⁰²

The events outlined in the previous section show how the position of the local authority changed in a short space of time. Initially, it appeared to accept that comprehensive schools and selective schools could co-exist in the same system, and indeed Elected Members who identified themselves with the abolitionist cause were publicly rebuked. Even in the face of national moves in the late 1960s to penalise the

private sector, and of threats to introduce legislation to abolish selective schools, the Education Committee in Glasgow persisted in its desire for their retention, a position strengthened both by the large number of Tory Councillors on the Committee and by the fact that Labour Councillors were divided on the issue. These factors also enabled fees to be charged when the legal loophole in legislation had been found. Two key events enable the radical Labour Group to gain the ascendant: the issue in July 1970 of Circular 760, and the dramatic change in the political complexion of the Education Committee after the local elections in May 1971. It is ironic to observe that a Circular issued by a Tory Government enabled a Labour-controlled Council to abolish selective schooling.

Another feature to emerge is further evidence for the already mentioned claim that not all Labour Party members were solidly behind the egalitarian thrust which underlay the comprehensive principle.²⁰³ Indeed, many appeared to favour the retention of an element of selectivity. Several of the individuals connected with the world of politics interviewed for this study quite openly stated that they could not subscribe to the abolitionist lobby, and went on both to justify the place of selective schools and to lambast the actions of the Labour Group on Glasgow Education Committee:

The excuse that these (selective) schools 'creamed' pupils away from the state schools was and is puerile. I think both kinds of school can co-exist. the selective ones can then act as catalysts, examples of excellence, of what can be accomplished.²⁰⁴

(Labour MP)

When the principle of comprehensive education was accepted, it was logical to eliminate schools like Glasgow High School. But in my view, the political side did not realise the sensitivity of certain sections of the community. They used a sledgehammer to crack a nut. They moved too crudely, too fast.²⁰⁵

The controversy over selective versus comprehensive schools in Glasgow also sheds valuable light on the subject of central control and the role of the Secretary of State, particularly at a time when the conventional partnership alleged to exist between central and local government was under attack. The Secretary of State had an unenviable role: he had to maintain allegiance to the government of the day, but had at the same time a statutory duty to ensure that educational freedom was exercised in a lawful manner. A delicate balance had to be struck, therefore, between national policy and local freedom, while still taking cognisance of the educational merits of Glasgow's proposed schemes with regard to the six selective schools. He certainly showed himself to be responsive to what could have been construed as an unreasonable attempt to enforce a uniform pattern of secondary schooling on the city. When the Education Committee directly challenged his authority, he had recourse to the law, which found for the parents, since the actions of the local authority were held to be ultra vires. Indeed, it is possible to argue that the Scottish Education Department remained in control throughout and got its way in the end. One local councillor summed up thus:

So yes, schools were used as testbeds for Labour Party dogma, but the push came from the SED not the Directorate.²⁰⁶

This view is substantiated by an examination of the correspondence between the Scottish Education Department and Glasgow Corporation on the issue of selective schools. After a copy of the revised arrangements for the selective schools had been submitted to the SED, the Town Clerk received from a civil servant a letter of which this extract illustrates the directive tone:

The Secretary of State cannot consider the reorganisation of these schools in isolation but should relate these proposals to the total pattern of provision in the city, in particular other selective secondary schools (both junior and senior secondary) ... the Secretary of State cannot at this stage be certain that he will be able to reach definitive decisions about the proposed amendments ... the Secretary of State would like the Authority to make a public announcement about their arrangements for these schools for next session at the earliest possible date.²⁰⁷

The Authority was also taken to task over the unacceptability of its consultative procedures:

In view of the many representations made to the Secretary of State about the adequacy of the consultations undertaken by your Authority in relation to their original proposals, the Secretary of State expects the Authority to undertake detailed consultations about the implementation of the modified proposals with the parents and staff concerned ... in addition to individual letters to parents explaining the new arrangements fully, local meetings might be held with parents and staff ...²⁰⁸

It is interesting to reflect that the Scottish Education Department considered the consultation advocated in Circular 760 important, but apparently did not make similar insistence when Circular 600 was issued. At that time of equally momentous change, the wishes of those affected seemed to count for less.

The move to eliminate the six selective schools in Glasgow also illustrates how little room for manoeuvre the Director had when faced with a large majority of one party on the Education Committee and a determined ruling group. Events indicate strongly that the Director in Glasgow was virtually under political instruction what to do, and that educational considerations were subordinated to political ones. It appears that both Dr Mackintosh and his successor, although committed to the comprehensive principle, could not quite bring themselves to order the wholesale abolition of some of the city's most famous schools, as

one interviewee pointed out:

In Glasgow, where in many ways they had taken positive steps to introduce comprehensive education years before C600 appeared, the big stumbling block was the former fee-paying selective schools and their integration into a comprehensive system. There was a fierce local attachment to these schools, indeed some of the Councillors sent their sons to them. The Directorate adopted a very ambivalent attitude throughout.²⁰⁹

(Politician)

After the Labour victory at the local elections, the Director, John Bain, was asked to report on his plans to eliminate selection of pupils to the former fee-paying schools, and end the system of junior and senior secondary schools which still operated in some parts of the city. His report proposed that Hillhead High School should become a neighbourhood comprehensive, while the other five were to be allocated an intake from specific areas of the city of pupils of all levels of ability. If the number of applicants exceeded the specified number, admission was to be by ballot. Mr Bain explained the rationale for his scheme in these terms:

It is not possible to bring these schools generally within the territorial system of all-through comprehensive secondary schools because of their locations in the centre/west end of the city and the plans already implemented for providing all areas of the city with territorial secondary schools ... suggestions are therefore made to enable the buildings to continue to be used to the best advantage and to allow parents a limited choice of secondary schooling outwith the present strictly controlled territorial system of secondary allocation of pupils.²¹⁰

Inspectorate correspondence of the period indicates that the Director was of the opinion that his plan, albeit including elements of selectivity offered the best compromise, and was displeased by its reception:

I enclose copies of Mr Bain's original plan for the following reasons:

- a) Mr Bain has asked me 'Is it too much to hope that at least

the Department might be made aware of the proposals, which I thought provided a reasonable solution, submitted by the Director of Education?'

- b) Though there seems no prospect that the Glasgow proposals will relate in any way to Mr Bain's suggestions - the Convener has called them 'unacceptable' - and although we might have had serious reservations about them in any case, the Director's plan still has an important relevance for us, for it represents the view of the highest official in Education in Glasgow that it is not only the Boy's high for which a viable catchment area should not be able to be contrived.²¹¹

But, predictably, the all-powerful Labour Group rejected his report in preference for a revised scheme for the future of the six schools which was based more completely on the existing buildings being used as area comprehensives. This revised plan was finally accepted as policy in March 1972 by the Education Committee, a decision which was the culmination of a concerted political determination to end selectivity at all costs. The fact that the Director was instructed publicly to censure three headteachers for expressing their private views of events - an almost unheard of step - shows just how politicised the affair had become. The position of the Director and his proposal are well summarised by the District Inspector for Glasgow:

I have reason to believe that Mr Bain can hardly credit the Secretary of State's countenancing the discontinuance of the High School. This leads him still to wonder whether his original plan for city-wide selective schools is beyond resurrection. On the last occasion he mentioned this, I said that, irrespective of the educational pros and cons it would have been difficult for the Secretary of State in his own name to have produced a counter-proposal which was identical to a proposal widely known to have been previously made by him to the Education Committee and rejected outright.²¹²

A further issue raised by these events in Glasgow is how a political party proceeds to implement a policy based on principles fundamental to its professed ideology, especially in the face of opposition from within its own ranks and increasing public outcry. The ruling Labour Group's

rigid adherence to the doctrine that any form of selection was inconsistent with the comprehensive principle brings into focus the argument that it used schools as testbeds for unproven political theories, and resorted to social engineering to prohibit the co-existence of selective and comprehensive schools. As one former education convener put it:

I don't think the former fee-paying schools constituted an obstacle to comprehensive education. The theoretical anti-private schools stance doesn't stand up in reality. State dictation impinges on freedom of choice in a democracy. So yes, both types of school can co-exist.²¹³

But the Labour Group could be accused of a lack of democracy in the manner in which it conducted its business. The egalitarian rationale for the stance it took is revealed in this briefing note for councillors:

Selective schools should be ended because

- a) it cannot be assumed that children can be identified at 11 or 12 as being educationally better than others
- b) it is completely unjustifiable to select 1000 children ... and say they are different and should be educated in a different manner
- c) education should reflect society and society has rejected elitism. So the continuation of an elitist system of education is no longer acceptable.²¹⁴

One former Education Committee member described the intransigence of the Labour Group thus:

The Glasgow Corporation Education Department and the Elected Members adopted a very paternalistic attitude in the early 1970s - telling people where to live, go to school etc., and based their views on theoretical arguments of doubtful validity.²¹⁵

This comment raises a final but central aspect of the selective schools' eventual demise: the freedom of local authorities to devise their own form of secondary provision and the extent to which this may conflict

with parental freedom of choice. Although Circular 760, a document which embodied permissive legislation, had been on the statute book since 1970, the Secretary of State unquestionably adopted delaying tactics in his consideration of Glasgow's successive proposals. After all, it could be argued that Circular 760 gave them freedom to institute whatever secondary system they chose. This was apparently not the case.

The Secretary of State's objections were these:

- 1) he refused to consider the fate of the six selective schools in isolation from the total pattern of comprehensive reorganisation implemented in the city
- 2) he was unimpressed by the haste with which the proposals had emerged, and with the inadequate consultation entered into by the Corporation. Accordingly, he stated that his eventual decision would not entail approval of any changes being effected before session 1973-74.

The Corporation in response, arranged a series of meetings in April 1973 for parents in each of the six schools. Councillor Daniel Docherty's opening address to parents on each occasion is revealing for the testimony it bears to the strength of public hostility generated, and for its admission that consultation had effectively been ruled out until the Secretary of State's intervention:

As Convener of the Education Committee, may I welcome you to this meeting. I am accompanied by Mr John Bain. I have asked the headteacher to join us, not because he/she is to be taken as supporting the policy, but because he/she may be more capable of dealing with any detailed matters affecting the school ... the attitude of representatives of parents' associations and former pupils were perfectly clear - determined opposition to changing the character of the schools. This view was expressed directly to me by many letters ... no amount of consultation would in my view have brought parents to the way of thinking of the Education Committee ... it was made clear to me by the Secretary of State ... that he wished any changes in organisation to be

discussed with parents. This meeting fulfils that obligation. I must stress that this meeting has not been called to argue the pros and cons of selective or comprehensive education, or to debate whether or not the Education Committee should have reached the decision it did.²¹⁶

It is not unfair to conclude that for Dr Docherty 'consultation' was equated with telling parents and teachers what had been decided in Committee. Although for a time the law was on the parent's side and court decisions went in their favour, they ultimately were defeated by the Secretary of State's agreeing to the end of the six schools on a selective basis and using the terms of Circular 760 to justify his decision. Any hopes parents may have nurtured that his delaying betokened a latent desire to reject Glasgow's scheme were ill-founded. The headteacher of one of the six schools involved expressed his feelings thus:

The selective issue went to the House of Lords because of the very strong feelings it generated among parents and staff. The Government made a commitment then ratted on it. We were sold down the river by Gordon Campbell, the Secretary of State. The irony is we got more honest support from Willie Ross.²¹⁷

Whatever explanation can be adduced for the Secretary of State's eventual acceptance of the Glasgow scheme, it may be that educational considerations based on Inspectorate advice won the day, but that he was able still to stick to his party's policy of the moment with regard to comprehensive reorganisation. The educational position may well have been conveyed to him by Ministers with the help of Her Majesty's Inspectors Report alluded to earlier. The local Inspectorate was highly critical of the six schools, although conceding the strong local feelings their threatened demise had aroused. From an educational point of view, the Inspectors were not enamoured:

The schools themselves, however, are neither the vehicles for nor the instruments of educational development, the pattern of their work becoming increasingly irrelevant in this field ... by and large they occupy a developmental backwater, unless the headteacher or principal teacher (often a product of the comprehensive system) gives a dynamic lead.²¹⁸

Tracing the historical events which enabled these schools almost to detach themselves from mainstream authority provision and 'forge their own brotherhood' the Report proceeds to criticise the selective principle:

By these historical factors, therefore, the schools must be assessed, the breadth of their education aims is narrowed by the specific objective they have in mind - academic excellence; and the attainment of these is made easier by the ability inherent in their pupils. We must further assume that the schools attract the kind of staff and promote the conditions most likely to achieve their principal aims.²¹⁹

The Report states, as might be expected, that the performance of the schools in public examinations was creditable, and they were generally efficient and successful in achieving the purpose for which they existed. But the educational picture was disappointing, to judge from inspections of three of the schools in question:

The general impression of all three schools by departments was that they were effective and largely successful, but far from outstanding ... all departments displayed the same characteristics: thorough familiarity with traditional content and method, and skill and practice in imparting it on a teacher to pupil basis; a tendency to seem old-fashioned in a rapidly changing educational world and a vague distrust of change.²²⁰

The inspectors conclude that the explanation for this state of affairs was that the headteachers were principally responsible for the impressions their schools generated, and the attitudes to education evidenced by their staffs heavily conditioned by a preoccupation with

the pursuit of examinations. The Report unequivocally endorses comprehensive developments in the city, from which the selective schools had in general excluded themselves:

We cannot avoid asking 'apart from the inexorable demands of public examinations and University entrance, what educational purposes do the schools now serve?, and our visits have failed to supply a satisfactory answer. Whereas the headteachers of such influential schools could be powerful exponents of educational advance in Glasgow, we submit that the initiative has been seized by those able men who direct the fortunes of Glasgow's leading comprehensive schools.²²¹

THE REORGANISATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Given the period covered by this research, it would be impossible, in a chapter dealing with the political contexts in which comprehensive education evolved, not to mention the reorganisation of local government which took effect from session 1975-76. In a sense the upheaval caused by regionalisation could not have come at a more unpropitious moment for the development of comprehensive education. Schools were still struggling to come to terms with Circular 600 and raising of the school leaving age; then came industrial unrest in the teaching profession in pursuit of a salaries claim; and the full economic stringency caused by the oil crisis of 1973 began to bite on the education service. Making no reference to these considerable difficulties, Edward Miller, the newly-appointed Regional Director, outlined his plan for the education service in Strathclyde to his fellow Scottish Directors. Asserting that regionalisation would give the public in the West of Scotland an improved service in which it could participate, provide a better framework within which the strategic services could operate, and create more harmony within the education service itself, he ended his address on an optimistic note:

The education service will be what we make it ... in the education service we weave a thread into the fabric of

society, and try to ensure that things will be a little better than when we found them. Education is a most important and vital service. The whole object of reorganisation is to provide a better service.²²²

Mr Miller's confident assertions were somewhat dented two years later. The same audience heard that Regionalisation had caused some awkward problems. The speaker catalogued the chief among them:

- 1) An increase in bureaucratisation and remoteness.
- 2) A separation of function between the Region and its Divisions.
- 3) A friction between competing services caused by the implementation of corporate management.
- 4) An increased politicisation of local government which has disrupted traditional patterns of working of elected members and officers.²²³

Since the alleged benefits from Regionalisation had apparently not accrued, it is reasonable to surmise that the Directorate, given its own internal management problems, would be even less inclined than normal to address the many pressing and unresolved issues attending comprehensivisation. One interviewee pointed to an added problem in these terms:

I would say, however, that since Regionalisation things are much more bureaucratic because of the size of Strathclyde. The Region is the overlord of the Divisions which have lost the autonomy of the former councils. So a Divisional Education Officer is not the same as the former Director of Education. The Divisional Education Officer is someone in charge of the day to day administration of the division, and an implementer of regional policy decisions. Power has been relocated to the Centre.²²⁴

(Education Committee Convener)

Thus, many Directorate staff in the region had to come to terms with an altered concept of their role in a refashioned educational service in which traditional operating assumptions were being challenged. Dr Malcolm Green, Vice Chairman of the Region's Education Committee, in an address in 1980, welcomed the new structure, although he conceded it had

'internal tensions', but was, nonetheless, a vast improvement on the unco-ordinated picture at officer/member level prior to Regionalisation.

He explained how 'co-ordination' had been achieved:

Policy matters are now initiated by Elected Members, in contrast to pre 1975, when officers planned and initiated policy. the role of the members has now grown from assent and watchdog; they now have a greater say in policy formulation and monitoring.²²⁵

Dr Green's account is supported by the following explanation given in interview:

Up to local government reorganisation, (Elected Members) had hardly any influence because of the mystique of professionalism. Officials made policy and got it accepted by, in the main third rate members. Nowadays, a process of self-selection has occurred, such that the calibre of all councillors, but especially of Labour ones, has increased. They are now generally more able intellectually.²²⁶

It is reasonable to claim, therefore, that for the first time, officials had to countenance a reduction of power in real terms and, by implication, a diminution in their status.²²⁷ As a result, it is unlikely that the new state of affairs would dispose them favourably to dealing with the day-to-day problems being faced by schools. Rather, their attention would be likely to be increasingly devoted to bureaucratic and administrative concerns as they strove to implement decisions taken by the politicians. One interviewee described the effects of corporate management thus:

... since regionalisation, Directors and their staffs cannot dictate policy as much as they did.²²⁸

The position of headteachers, too, appears to have altered with the arrival of Regionalisation. Allusion was made earlier in this chapter to the fact that Directorate staff left the internal running of schools

to headteachers, and the obvious corollary of this position is that they had a great deal (if not total) autonomy to shape their schools in their own fashion. The Senior Depute Director of Education for Strathclyde, commenting on the inevitability of political involvement in education, and the increased questioning of professionals practices since regionalisation, described the new environment within which headteachers had to operate in these terms:

Much power is still devolved to the headteacher, but he has less budgeting control and has to cope with a variety of bodies giving him directions ... heads have many problems of accountability, to the Director, to parents, to elected members.²²⁹

Thus, for all concerned in the education service, it would seem that loss of a traditional and valued autonomy and increased accountability were concomitants of the concept of corporate management. It may be, however, that the extent of the accountability is more notional than real. One interviewee from the political world expressed doubts about claims that regionalisation had made inroads into the world of the professional:

A regional council has no time to find out what is going on in schools. Virtually everything is left to the head and his staff. Professional independence is still very strong among those in education. Policy ought to be carried out. There ought to be more accountability - like headteachers on a five year trial period.²³⁰

It is possible to claim, therefore, that Regionalisation may not have provided the better service Mr Miller claimed it would, but actually it created a whole set of new problems which were superimposed on those which already existed. On this argument, the difficulties inherent in the implementation of comprehensive education (which will be examined in greater detail in the next chapter) were unlikely to have been

addressed in any serious manner by Directorate staff. Indeed, it is possible to argue that, with the changed concept of educational administration which emerged after Regionalisation, the matter of what happened in schools was not accorded a high place on the priority list. One interviewee, with several years' experience of working in educational administration since Regionalisation described the official's life in these terms:

Day to day life is characterised by the following:

- a deluge of paper, much of it non-educational
- a plethora of meetings, a lot of which do not lead anywhere
- sending memos, to give information about what you are doing, or to cover yourself ...
- attending meetings with other, non-educational agencies

...
So officials lead a very busy life, although I am prompted to ask: busy doing what?²³¹

Not surprisingly, therefore, matters educational which directly affect what happens in schools do not figure largely on the agenda by the sheer force of circumstances:

Priorities are different in administration. They will say that they are concerned about education, and will be able to find an educational justification for what they do. But the structure of administration creates the priorities ... and encourages the view that things are the responsibility of others. In general, I would say that the kind of thing most administrators have to attend to do not allow them to concentrate on matters educational.²³²

Indeed, it could be claimed without excessive exaggeration that an understanding of the problems of school management is a topic which administrators are precluded by the very nature of their job from acquiring:

Administrators do not know a great deal about the problems involved in running schools. ...it is very much a case of: GET ON WITH IT, AND LET ME KNOW IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM. If administrators do not hear of problems, they do not exist. Schools and their problems impinge on the administrator's reality and priorities ... supplies, buildings and finance

rather than education is their concern.²³³

Considering the period 1975-80 in the light of these remarks, it is possible to argue that education officials in Strathclyde Region could not or did not give much attention to what was going on in schools, coming to terms as they were with a new management structure and confronting the pressing day-to-day aspects of their job. This is all the more regrettable, since it could be argued that it was in these years that the comprehensive chickens born of Circular 600 were coming home to roost, with the emergence of Standard grade as the Government's official response to the recommendations of the Munn and Dunning Committee. Although the Region, to judge from its publicity brochures, was committed to providing comprehensive education in its secondary schools, it would appear that officials may not always support that policy, a fact which has a consequential effect on the attitude they adopt.

Educational administrators rarely expose their own views publicly, especially on regional policy matters. The extent to which they set to work to see that policy is implemented or improved upon is questionable. As I said earlier, their remits and hectic existence preclude serious involvement in matters educational.²³⁴

Thus, in the last five years of the period under review, when the problems caused by comprehensivisation were far from having been resolved, the Regional Directorate appears to have been prevented from considering the problems affecting secondary education by having to come to terms with life after Regionalisation and by the very nature of its daily job. In particular, its thoughts seem to have been far from assessing the extent to which the educational aims of comprehensive reorganisation were being met, and the reality of the match between comprehensive theory and actual practice. An explanation for the uninvolvedness of the Directorate can be found by consulting Inspectorate

reports on the Western District for the period 1974-77 which, in varying ways, give a strong indication that senior staff at Regional Headquarters were experiencing difficulties. The Report for 1974-75 states ominously:

Continuity of educational planning has been upset by changes in Directorate staff. This has caused a malaise which affected curriculum planning ... the new Director for Strathclyde has not made public his plans for machinery to promote curriculum development and co-ordinate the work of the various agencies involved ... the capital intensive aspects of curriculum development have begun to be examined in cost benefit terms.²³⁵

Nevertheless, the same report, pointing out that it was the Region's policy to make secondary provision in large six year comprehensive schools, indicates that problems had been far from solved:

The implementation of a policy of comprehensive reorganisation in large six year schools should, ideally, have been achieved progressively, as and when purpose-built accommodation became available. In practice, however, many schools on going comprehensive have had to make do with existing premises, with the provision of extensions or with the addition of temporary classrooms²³⁶

Not surprisingly, therefore, there were few innovatory developments either in school organisation or in the curriculum offered to pupils experiencing 'comprehensive' education. The Directorate appear not to have taken the same view on policy implementation as one interviewee:

While allowing for diversity and differences of emphases ... a region should go all out to see that its stated policies are implemented in all its schools. Any contrary policies uncovered should be changed or personnel persuaded to do so. Directorate staff and advisers should adopt a high profile in this respect.²³⁷

(Politician)

But the Regional Directorate appear to have encountered internal problems of staff co-ordination:

This huge authority will require patience from all of us.

It is to be hoped that this year will have seen the worst of the personality clashes, the insensitivity, and the requirement to work under less than sympathetic pressures from the Policy and Resources Committee of the Region.²³⁸

Committee and working parties were set up to facilitate communication between Region and Divisions, and to enable policy to be formulated by those in senior positions in both, but this commendable initiative was thwarted by awkward working relationships in the Directorate:

In spite of these attempts to promote liaison between the Regional Directorate and the Divisional units, friction has occurred. The basis was probably laid when appointments were made to important senior posts. None of those appointed to senior posts had been Directors of Education. Youth and inexperience were resented by more and more experienced people who had not been successful.²³⁹

These observations suggest that some of the problems besetting secondary education in the late 1970s were related to the quality of management in the Education Department.

This professional disharmony gave rise to a host of problems which, according to the Inspectorate, resulted in inter-divisional jealousy and tension, and suspicion of and antagonism toward the Region. Moreover, the level of funding continued to have its effect on the quality of provision:

Economics caused the abandonment of proposals and policies which would have gone some considerable way towards raising standards in the schools of the west.²⁴⁰

Worse still, such initiatives as had been taken, like the committees mentioned before, began to founder, through confusion or lack of communication:

There has, however, been a great deal of uncertainty surrounding the work of both regional and divisional committees, particularly the latter, and this has led to a

great deal of disquiet and indeed, lowering of morale amongst members. There is a general lack of clear purpose in the divisional committees, and serious doubts as to how many recommendations which they may make will be communicated to the Education Committee and from there to the Director.²⁴¹

Indeed, the Inspectorate pull no punches over the Region's initial performance in the early years of Regionalisation, with obvious implications for the effect on schools:

The Region's most pressing need is to overcome the temptation to use current financial restraint as an excuse for doing nothing.²⁴²

The following year's report was still very critical of Directorate staff:

There is a wide variation in the quality and contribution of those holding senior management position at Regional H.Q. and in the Division ... the general level of leadership given at H.Q. and in the Divisions is patchy.²⁴³

Although policy was emerging on such issues as staffing and buildings, no discernible policy on the curriculum had been formulated:

... the situation across the Region could be described as either healthy diversity or as one characterised by duplication of effort and ad hoc activity. Certainly it would be difficult to postulate the existence of an overall strategy. Particularly where working parties are involved in topics which have implications for overall policy, it is highly probably that isolated efforts within Divisions are offering up hostages to fortune.²⁴⁴

Thus, towards the end of session 1976-77, the regional and divisional Directorate staff were not ideally placed to tackle the many problems resulting from the implementation of comprehensive education which confronted them in the schools and which obviously were in need of attention. The Inspectorate concluded:

It is conceivable that the many difficulties are not capable

of resolution within the existing structure of the Directorate.²⁴⁵

This depressing picture of the quality of management and its failure to address the central problems facing comprehensive schools was echoed by one interviewee from the world of politics:

I get the impression that, since the introduction of a comprehensive system of education, professionals secretly admit to a series of educational blunders and poor management, and always pin faith on the next initiative to sort the mess out. Of course, it never does, because there are never policy statements with targets to be met. Schools do not know where they are going, and are left to their own devices far too much. So much is thrown on the shoulders of the individuals involved, with the almost inevitable variation in response.²⁴⁶

One can reasonably conclude that, with the advent of Regionalisation, the problems inherent in implementing the comprehensive school increased, in that the new management structure appeared not to address them. Increased political intervention in the world of educational administration, and a challenge to the traditional values of the professionals, with its consequential role confusion, did not help those coming to terms with the reality of administering the service under the theory of corporate management. Indeed, in the novel political and administrative world of regionalisation, the pressing concerns of schools seem not to have occupied a high place on the agenda of concerns.

Several other aspects of the political landscape in the late 1970s deserve a brief mention in conclusion, as they have a bearing on comprehensive schools:

Falling School Rolls

Given that the birthrate had been declining since the early 1970s, its

impact was beginning to make itself felt in schools, and authorities had to face in stark terms the question of school closures. To give some indication of the magnitude of falling school rolls, the following figures provided by Statistics Section of Strathclyde Regional Council Education Department, are revealing:

Division of Strathclyde	Secondary Roll Session 1977-78	Calculated Secondary Roll Session 1988-89
Dumbarton	26,463	22,412
Glasgow	63,902	34,738
Lanark	48,595	35,000
Renfrew	31,599	23,683

Thus, in the four divisions of Strathclyde study, the secondary school population was expected to drop by upwards of 54,000 pupils from 1977-1989. Thus the education service was contracting, and painful decisions had to be made. An Under-Secretary at the Scottish Education Department pointed to the implications:

Education cannot be considered in economic isolation ... it can be taken as a basic assumption that resources will not become reasonably bigger in the next 10-15 years ... this means being prepared to question basic assumptions and identify what is essential to the fabric ... we are beyond the stage of looking separately at staff and buildings. Closures, with consequent adjustment of catchment areas, are inevitable.²⁴⁷

Government Expenditure Restraint

Public expenditure cuts resulted in a diminishing scale of school building and improvement programmes, and all aspects of the education service came under the financial microscope. Local authorities found themselves forced to make painful decisions about priorities. Thus,

educational progress was governed by the diminished resources made available by central government. The effects were described by the Under-Secretary of State for Education at the Scottish Office in blunt terms:

Priorities will have to be determined in the light of the Government's policy on public expenditure restraint ... the government looks to the assistance of authorities to ensure that resources will be utilised productively ... schools will have to be managed more efficiently by effective deployment of staff and careful husbanding of resources.²⁴⁸

The Parents' Charter

Since its victory in the General Election in 1979, the Conservative Party began to honour its election promises, and set about changing the course of Scottish Education to save it from what it saw as the worst excesses of the comprehensive school. The aim was to introduce an element of private initiative into a system which the Government saw as stifled by a centralised and bureaucratic administration. This had resulted, it claimed, in the traditional Scottish ideal of excellence being subordinated to an elusive search for equality. In an attempt to redress the balance and introduce an element of consumerism the Education (Scotland) (1980) Bill contained three new features: a scheme to offer financial assistance for parents of modest means who wished their children educated privately; a requirement that each school produce a handbook which would contain information about schools; and the new parental right to send children to any school of their choice, thus destroying the concept of the local catchment area on which the comprehensive school concept was premised.

Without going into the full implications of the foregoing, suffice it to say at this stage that, in the closing years of the decade 1970-80

schools endeavouring to come to grips with the implications of the decision to go comprehensive in 1965 were in some difficulty. It has been suggested that internal problems at an administrative level prevented appropriate attention being directed to the problems experienced by schools. Moreover, a change of government coupled with a cutback in resources were threatening to make the most significant change of direction in the educational system since the introduction of comprehensive education, and this at a time when resources were at a premium. The comprehensive principle seemed increasingly under threat.

CHAPTER FOUR

FOOTNOTES

1. Contemporary Scottish Education was to have been a volume of essays commenting on various aspects of the Scottish educational scene. Several essays were commissioned by a small group of headteachers in overall charge of the projected book. In the event, it was never published. Essays which had been submitted were among private papers lent to the author by A.B. Niven, headteacher of Armadale Academy.
2. Circular 600 (op cit) para 1 (my underlining).
3. ibid, para 8 (my underlining).
4. ibid, para 8; para 15.
5. Interview PL13.
6. Interview PL10.
7. Dame Judith Hart in a written communication to the author.
8. Circular 600 (op cit) para 20.
9. ibid, para 18.
10. Interview HM4.
11. Interview PL8.
12. Interview HT3.
13. Interview PL10.
14. Interview PL15.
15. Interview HM2.
16. Interview HM8.
17. Interview HM4.
18. Interview PL4
19. Interview DS7.
20. Interview DS14.
21. Interview HM3.
22. Frame of Reference OECD (op cit) para 6.

23. Bruce Millan's speech to Annual Congress of the SSTA, quoted in 'The Times Educational Supplement (Scotland)' 6/5/66.
24. Extract from the Godfrey Thomson Memorial Lecture delivered by Dr W.B. Inglis, quoted in 'The Times Educational Supplement (Scotland)' 12/5/67.
25. SED file ED/48/988, which contains a collection of press comments on the introduction of comprehensive education. This extract is dated September 1968.
26. 'Political Schools', editorial in 'The Glasgow Herald' 4/1/65.
27. 'Educational Administration' in Contemporary Scottish Education (op cit).
28. ADES Annual Conference Reports 1973-74. 'Planning at the Centre', address given by J.M. Fearn.
29. Letter dated 28/11/75 from HMI Martin (Division 1 SED) to HMCI Graham in File 'Educational provision (Lanark) I/2/1/64 in Western Division H.Q. Glasgow.
30. Letter dated 28/6/74 from Miss P.A. Cox to HMI Martin (ibid).
31. Letter dated 24/5/72 from Norman Graham (Secretary, SED) to Hector Monro, Under-Secretary at the Scottish Office in File 'Educational Provision - Miscellaneous (Glasgow) I/2/1/5 in Western Division H.Q., Glasgow.
32. The Scottish Schoolmaster Vol. 24, No. 12, December 1966.
33. Scottish Certificate of Education Examination Board Minute 21/10/71.
34. HAS Minute 2/2/56 in HAS File 'Minutes 1945-58'.
35. Extract from Secretary's Annual Report 1975 in HAS File 'Miscellaneous Papers'.
36. Crisis and Opportunity: The Staffing Shortage in Scottish Secondary Schools HAS Scottish Academic Press 1970.
37. Extract from Secretary's Annual Report 1970-71 in HAS File 'Minutes Papers 1970-73'.
38. EIS Annual Proceedings 1965-66 'At the Crossroads', Presidential Address by J T Cree.
39. EIS Annual Proceedings 1969-70. Education Committee Minute 11/4/70.
40. EIS Annual Proceedings 1970-71. Education Committee Minute 27/10/70.
41. McPherson and Raab (op cit) discuss this matter using the concept of 'representativeness'.

42. ADES Council Minutes Files. Minute dated 16/12/21 (my underlining).
43. STUC Proceedings 1965. Report of a meeting between a STUC delegation and Mrs Judith Hart on 29/1/65.
44. Dumbarton Local Association of the EIS Minutes. Talk given to a general meeting of the Association 18/10/68 by James Carmichael.
45. Letter from Director of the Scottish Examination Board to Miss P.A. Cox (SED) dated 1.6.79 reacting to Proposals for Action (SED) 1979. Examination Board Minute (no date).
46. Ibid.
47. Extract from 'Educational Administration' in Contemporary Education in Scotland HAS (op cit).
48. 'The Scotsman', letter to the editor by Charles Mungall 19/6/76.
49. Frame of Reference OECD (op cit) para. 15.
50. ADES Annual Conference Reports 1961-62. Talk 'The Parts and their Functions' given by Sir William Arbuckle.
51. John P. MacKintosh M.P. writing in 'The Scotsman', quoted by W.McL. Dewar in 'The Irrelevancy of Comprehensivisation' in 'The Times Educational Supplement (Scotland)', 11/4/75.
52. 'Educational Administration' in Contemporary Education in Scotland HAS (op cit).
53. 'Comprehensives - where are we in Scotland?', Ian Findlay in Forum Vol. 6, No. 3, 1974.
54. 'The Staffing of our Schools - Questionnaire Analysis' in HAS File 'Miscellaneous Papers 1969-71'.
55. The 'Green Paper' makes it clear that the proposed structure of posts was deemed necessary because of developments resulting from comprehensive reorganisation. See The Structure of Promoted Posts in Secondary Schools in Scotland SED 1971, para. 3.6.
56. ADES Annual Conference Reports 1970-71. Talk given by Hugh Fairlie on the 'Green Paper'.
57. ADES Annual Conference Reports 1972-73. J.P. Forsyth HMCI, the first director of SCSSA gave a talk to explain its creation.
58. 'The First Two Years'. SCSSA Occasional Paper No 1. p. 6 (among a number of documents lent to the author by J. Havard, the present Director).
59. 'Educational Administration' in Contemporary Education in Scotland. HAS (op cit).
60. Extract from a Report of the SED Residential Conference held in Dunblane in September 1966, in ADES file 'SED Conferences' (my

underlining).

61. *ibid*, *passim*.
62. Education in Scotland SED (1966) p.11.
63. EIS Annual Proceedings 1968-69, 1972-73, 1973-74 respectively. Extracts from Presidential Addresses in 1969, 1973, 1974.
64. SSTA Yearbook 1977-78. SSTA comments on a SED Consultative Paper on 'School Accommodation', dated 14/4/78.
65. EIS Glasgow Local Association files. President's address delivered 22/3/73.
66. 'Evening Citizen', 2/6/72; 'Daily Express', 13/12/78 respectively.
67. Extracts from Pro Virile Parte, A Short History of the SSA, James O'Neill (unpublished) p.7; p.12.
68. STUC Proceedings 1974-75. Report of a meeting between a STUC delegation and the Under-Secretary of State on 31/5/75.
69. SSTA Yearbook 1966-67. General Secretary's Report to Congress in April 1977.
70. ADES Conference Reports 1968-69. 'Educational Priorities', talk given by Dr. David Dickson HMDSCI.
71. *ibid*.
72. The Raising of the School Leaving Age SED Circular 813 18/11/71.
73. *ibid*.
74. *ibid*.
75. *ibid*.
76. *ibid*.
77. ADES File. 'Liaison with SED'. Minute of meeting held 26/2/71.
78. HAS File 'AGM's'. Minute of AGM held in Edinburgh 6/2/71.
79. EIS Annual Proceedings 1969-70. James Carmichael's Presidential Address to the Annual Congress.
80. STUC Proceedings 1971-72. Stanley Allan speaking in the RSLA debate at the 1972 Annual Congress.
81. ADES File marked 'SED Conferences'. Summary of talks given at the Symposium on RSLA by SED at Middleton Hall in 1971, p.3.
82. *ibid*, p.11.
83. *ibid*, pp.16-17.

84. *ibid*, pp.1-2.
85. *ibid*, p.19.
86. SED File ED/31/529.
87. Letter from I.D. Hamilton (Division VII SED) to Miss P.A. Cox dated 26/11/71 (*ibid*).
88. *ibid*.
89. I.D. Hamilton. Response to House of Commons Question on RSLA 13/11/73 (*ibid*).
90. House of Commons Answer to the Question of RSLA (*ibid*).
91. Briefing notes to the Secretary of State for House of Commons Supplementary Questions 10/11/71 (*ibid*).
92. Quoted in 'The Glasgow Herald' 9/11/71.
93. Nicol, Currie, quoted in The Scottish Educational Journal 3/4/70.
94. J.K. Henderson, quoted in The Scottish Educational Journal 26/6/70.
95. John Pollock's address to a conference on Scottish education for trade unionists in Kirkcaldy High School. Quoted in The Scottish Educational Journal 7/2/75.
96. Raising the School Leaving Age SED 1966; 1970 (op cit).
97. The speculativeness of this assertion receives support from the statements of 'RSLA' pupils contained in Tell Them From Me, L. Gow and A. McPherson, AUP 1980 (passim).
98. Frame of Reference, OECD (op cit) para.7.
99. *Ibid*, para. 4.
100. HAS File 'Minutes 1963-69'. 'The Role of the Inspectorate', address by Dr David Dickson to HAS Annual Conference in 1968.
101. Quoted from School Inspection in Scotland T.R. Bone ULP 1968.
102. 'Scottish Education', Thomas Jardine in GLEAM Summer 1973.
103. HAS File 'Minutes 1972-76'. Minutes of HAS/SED Liaison Meeting 6/2/74, quoting HMDSCI Neville Fullwood.
104. Report of the Select Committee on Education and Science (op cit) p.3.
105. *ibid*, pp.5-6.
106. *ibid*, quoting HMSCI Dr Dickson, p.18.

107. ibid, quoting Sir Norman Graham, p.20.
108. ibid, p.20.
109. ibid, p.20.
110. ibid, p.69, quoting Dr. W.B. Inglis.
111. SED File ED/18/4382/1. General Report on Glasgow 1970-71.
112. J.T. Lowe (OECD) in a personal communication to the author 30/9/85.
113. The following selection of quotations illustrate the point:
 'In 1973, I remember being at a meeting of which J.F. McGarrity said: WE HAVE NO OBJECTION TO COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOLS. Such a low-key statement seemed to me to sum up official thinking - not over committed in reality' (*Interview TU5*)

 'The comprehensive notion had no sympathy whatever in the ranks of the HMII I knew' (*Interview MS2*)

 'There was hesitancy, even alarm at its contents (C600) in some Inspectors. The general impression was that they did not want to get their feet wet in this new-fangled idea'. (*Interview AD15*)
114. A senior member of the Inspectorate, in a written communication to the author 24/10/85.
115. Report of Select Committee on Education and Science, quoting Sir Norman Graham, p.20.
116. The S.C.E.E.B. was founded in 1963; the C.C.C. and the G.T.C. were founded in 1965.
117. Frame of Reference OECD (op cit) para.15.
118. Joint SCEEB/CCC file held at Board Offices. Introductory note in CCC consideration of the Working Party Report on Drama 1978.
119. ibid.
120. Interview CD2.
121. Interview HM3.
122. Interview HM4.
123. 'Curriculum Development in Scotland', John Nisbet The Journal of Curriculum Studies Vol. 2, No. 1, 1970.
124. Interview HM7.
125. Interview HM8.
126. Communication and Implementation of Aims in Secondary Education, Report of CCC Working Party chaired by Hugh Fairlie (1974) (unpub.).

127. Former HMDSCI in personal communication to the author 24/10/85.
128. Interview CDI.
129. 'Grasping the Comprehensive', Peter Mullen in GLEAM Winter 1974.
130. Interview HM7.
131. Interview HM7.
132. Interview CD3.
133. ADES Conference Reports 1961-62. 'Channels for the Flow of Ideas', address given by Lachlan B. Young.
134. A Manual for Educational Administration ADES (unpublished). Copy lent to the author by T.E.M. Landsborough, Director of Education for Clackmannanshire.
135. *ibid.*
136. *ibid.*
137. Dumbarton County Council. Minute of Teachers and Teaching Sub-Committee 9/12/64.
138. *ibid.* Letter dated 22/8/66 from Secretary of State. Sub-Committee Minute 31/8/66.
139. The Corporation of the City of Glasgow Education Committee. Minute of Schools Sub-Committee 11/8/65. (McPherson and Raab (op cit) have recently drawn attention to the fact that the SED was very critical of Glasgow's ability to plan its school building programme, given that the local authority devoted more funds to and chose prime sites for housing developments.)
140. The Corporation of the City of Glasgow Education Committee, Minute 9/12/66.
141. Lanarkshire Local Association of the EIS Minute of the Education Committee 21/11/64.
142. County Council of the County of Lanark. Education Staffing Sub-Committee Minute 14/1/65.
143. 'Reorganisation in the Motherwell/Wishaw Area: Secondary Report' 9/6/66 in File 'Secondary Reorganisation' in County Buildings Hamilton.
144. The Nature and Organisation of Secondary Education: A Review of Current and Possible Developments. A Report by the Director. Feb. 1965 in File 'Secondary Reorganisation'.
145. Secondary Education. Advisory Council Report 1947 (op cit), para.138.
146. Patterns for the Organisation of Secondary Education. Memorandum

147. *ibid.*
148. County Council of the County of Renfrew, Education Committee Minute 24/3/66.
149. Letter from I.M. Robertson (SED) to Director of Education 26/8.66 in personal papers lent to the author by W.J. McKechin.
150. Notwithstanding the guarantee of confidentiality given to all interviewees who participated in this research, the author later felt that a more accurate account of comprehensive developments in the four areas under review would emerge if their Directors of Education could be quoted directly rather than use a paraphrase of what they said. Accordingly, permission to attribute statements was subsequently sought and obtained from all four, after they had been informed of the extracts the author intended to include in the text.
151. Interview DS2.
152. Interview DS4.
153. *ibid.*
154. Interview DS1.
155. Interview DS3.
156. Interview DS1.
157. Interview DS4.
158. Interview DS2.
159. Interview DS3.
160. Interview DS2.
161. Interview DS1.
162. Interview DS4.
163. Interview DS3.
164. Interview DS4.
165. Interview DS1.
166. Interview DS3.
167. Interview DS2.
168. Interview DS4.
169. Interview DS2.
170. Interview DS4.

171. Interview HM2.
172. Interview HT58.
173. Interview AD15.
174. Interview PL15.
175. Interview HT60.
176. Interview HT22.
177. Interview HT39.
178. Extract from Education in Dunbartonshire 1961-66, HMI District Report held in Western Division H.Q. Glasgow.
179. *ibid.*
180. Extract from Review of Secondary Education in the West 1964. HMI General Report held in Western Division H.Q. Glasgow.
181. *ibid.*
182. Extract from District Report on Lanarkshire 1964-65 held in Western Division H.Q. Glasgow.
183. The Renfrewshire scenario suggests that the Director had been impressed by his experience of the two-tier system while in a junior post in Fife, and was keen to transport it to Renfrewshire. In an interview, he described the difference between the selective and the two-tier system in these terms:

The senior secondary skimmed the double and single cream from the milk, leaving it in a depressed situation in junior secondary schools. In the two-tier system, the whole bottle is kept together for two years and then leaves the milk and the single cream in the junior high school. The double cream, concentrated on the senior high school, thrives on an academic atmosphere which makes the best use of highly qualified staff.

(Quoted by A.H. Young in Reorganisation in Renfrewshire, Unpublished MEd thesis (Glasgow University) 1971)

184. The Director in Glasgow illustrates the importance of one man in creating both the climate and mechanisms for change. His counterpart in Lanarkshire presents an image of a reactionary force resisting change to the last. It appears, indeed, that pressure eventually had to be applied to encourage him to change. A senior official in Strathclyde Region said in interview:

The Director was evidently not keen and resisted attempts to start it. Eventually he was told that if he was not going to move, the Committee would replace him to someone who was.

(Interview PL14)

185. Interview PL11.
186. Interview PL9.
187. Interview PL5.
188. Interview PL4.
189. Interview PL2.
190. Interview AC9.
191. Interview PL11.
192. Interview PL12.
193. Interview PL14.
194. Interview PL10.
195. Interview PL9.
196. For example, Councillor Daniel Docherty in Glasgow and Councillor Robert Kennedy in Dunbartonshire.
197. Interview PL3.
198. Baronees Bacon made this comment in the course of a telephone conversation with the author 30/8/87.
199. Interview PL7.
200. Interview PL14.
201. This chronology was compiled from a perusal of press reports in the period 1967-73 and from consultation of the Education Committee Minutes of Glasgow Corporation for the same period.
202. Secondary Education in the City of Glasgow: The Selective Element, HMI Report February 1972 held in Western Division H.Q. Glasgow.
203. Pedley found a similar division of opinion on the comprehensive issue in Labour-controlled authorities in England.
204. Interview PL3.
205. Interview PL12.
206. Interview PL15.
207. Letter dated 23/3/72 from Miss P.A. Cox to Glasgow's Town Clerk, in File 'Education Provision (Miscellaneous) Glasgow' I/2/1/5 held in Western Division H.Q. Glasgow.
208. Letter dated 9/3/73 from W. Hutchison SED to Glasgow's Town Clerk held in Glasgow Corporation Education Department File D/ED 11/1/53 in Mitchell Library.

208. Letter dated 9/3/73 from W. Hutchison SED to Glasgow's Town Clerk held in Glasgow Corporation Education Department File D/ED 11/1/53 in Mitchell Library.
209. Interview PL10.
210. 'Future Arrangements for Selective Schools' Report by Director of Education 16/11/71 (author's personal copy).
211. Letter dated 1/3/72 from R.S. Johnston HMI to Miss Pat Cox (SED) in File 'Educational Provision (Miscellaneous) Glasgow' I/2/1/5 held in Western Division H.Q. Glasgow.
212. Letter dated 14/8/72 from R.S. Johnston HMI to Miss Pat Cox (SED), *ibid.*
213. Interview PL12.
214. 'Selective Schools and Future Developments in Education' 24/3/72 held in Glasgow Corporation Education Department File D/ED/11/1/149 in Mitchell Library.
215. Interview PL15.
216. Extract from Dr Docherty's address in Glasgow Corporation Education Department File D/ED/11/1/53 in Mitchell Library.
217. Interview HT24.
218. 'Secondary Education in the City of Glasgow: The Selective Element', *op cit.*
219. *ibid.*
220. *ibid.*
221. *ibid.*
222. ADES Conference Reports 1974-75. 'Regionalisation: The Prospects for Education' address given by Edward Miller.
223. ADES Conference Reports 1976-77. 'The Consequences of Local Government Reorganisation in Scotland' address given by R. Rhodes.
224. Interview PL7.
225. ADES Conference Reports 1979-80. 'Relations between Central Government, Local Government and Officials', address by Dr Malcolm Green.
226. Interview PL15.
227. It should be noted that the change in the relationship between elected members and officials did not occur dramatically upon Regionalisation but developed gradually over a number of years. (This observation is based on a reading of The Political Administration of Education in Strathclyde, Gordon Jeyes, M.Ed

229. 'The School and its Region' address by Duncan Graham to HAS Annual Conference 1978 in HAS File 'Minutes 1976-81'.
230. Interview PL3.
231. Interview MS5.
232. *ibid.*
233. *ibid.*
234. *ibid.*
235. Western Division: General Report 1974-75 in Western Division H.Q. Glasgow.
236. *ibid.*
237. Interview PL10.
238. Western Division: Area Report 1975-76 in Western Division H.Q. Glasgow.
239. *ibid.*
240. *ibid.*
241. *ibid.*
242. *ibid.*
243. Western Division: Area Report 1976-77 in Western Division H.Q. Glasgow.
244. *ibid.*
245. *ibid.*
246. Interview PL15.
247. ADES Conference Reports 1979-80. 'Falling School Rolls' address by I.M. Wilson.
248. ADES Conference Reports 1979-80. Address by Alex Fletcher M.P.

CHAPTER FIVE

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION: INNOVATION; CRISIS; REFORM?

The main obstacle was the conceptual poverty which existed at all levels in the Scottish educational system at the time ... there was a signal failure on all sides to grasp the essential practical consequences of giving equality of educational opportunity to all children. The issues were just not tackled ... people simply did not see where to begin.

(Interview/AD/15)

I now think that our management approach was not as tight as it could have been. We left a lot to schools, and did not offer much in the way of practical help ... we in the Directorate tried to implement these ideas, but we failed the teachers. It was a slow grind.

(Interview/DS/9)

The reality is that only a minority of staff thought seriously about the real implications of comprehensive education, and one or two did excellent work. The vast majority did not adopt a professional approach to the changed circumstances. There was no internal drive to make comprehensive education work.

(Interview/HT/17)

In general, educational revolutions never turn out as they were intended to, and comprehensive education is no exception.

(Interview/HT/1)

The three preceding chapters, presenting data gathered in the course of this research, have attempted to examine the consequences of the issue of Circular 600 in 1965, a major document which heralded the demise of a bipartite system of secondary education by its requirement of local authorities to reorganise provision on comprehensive lines. After considering reactions to and definitions of comprehensive education, the decision to go comprehensive was set first against the background of the Scottish educational tradition and then aspects of the prevailing political context in the period and area under review. Based on the premise that Circular 600 marked an educational development of the greatest significance in the post-war years in that it introduced a novel form of secondary education for all, at least on paper, the present chapter will explore data relating to the implementation of comprehensive policy and the practical realities it encountered.

At face value, the Circular was a political statement in favour of a structural change in secondary education, but it arguably encapsulated major implications at a deeper level: one central question to be resolved was how the existing system would adapt in physical terms; another was how, given the complete spectrum of pupil ability contained in comprehensive units, such issues as curriculum, methodology and assessment would be tackled. This chapter will look at how the system responded to the radically new demands placed upon it, and assess the extent to which comprehensive education constituted an opportunity for educational advance, or merely highlighted and exacerbated problems which already existed for practitioners. It opens with an account of the implementation in general terms, and goes on to look at particular problems in the four areas of West Central Scotland which are the focus of this study. Consideration is then given to some factors, external

but related to schools, which arguably acted as inhibitors to a smooth evolution of the comprehensive system. Turning to implementation as it affected schools directly, the matter of curriculum development and the approach adopted to it will be examined, looking subsequently at the role of the advisory service and the burgeoning field of in-service training which resulted in a plethora of courses in the late 1960s and 1970s. The focus will then narrow to the schools themselves, first with a general outline of six key aspects (guidance, management, raising of the school leaving age, internal organisation, methodology and assessment), followed by an analysis of particular developments in schools in Dunbartonshire, Glasgow, Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire, as revealed in a selection of area, and general reports written by members of Her Majesty's Inspectorate based in the West of Scotland. The chapter will end with an account of the mounting dissatisfaction with the direction taken by comprehensive education in the mid 1970s, culminating in the publication of the trio of Reports (Munn, Dunning and Pack) in 1977, representing a government acknowledgement of the need for reform and acting as a precursor of the Standard Grade courses which were to be ultimately devised from the Development Programme to which the Reports gave rise.

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A POLICY OF COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION

In the early years, progress was understandably slow, although official pronouncements were not devoid of optimism. A senior civil servant made this reply in 1966 to a STUC submission on how Scottish education was, in its view, characterised by 'closed-circuit thinking':

The Minister said it was too early to give a definite reply on how far local authorities had moved towards the comprehensive system. Many authorities had implemented the system before the Department Circular was issued, and there was no doubt that, in the main, authorities were progressing fairly well, except where there were problems of

accommodation.¹

A few years later, her successor in office announced to a similar delegation that implementation had hit a snag, due to cuts in public expenditure, inter alia:

The Minister said that the ultimate pattern of comprehensive education would take a little longer as a result of deferment, because it was tied up with new building ... the problem of fee-paying secondary schools remained only in the cities of Edinburgh and Glasgow ... (he added that) comprehensive schools were now introducing common courses, whereas there had been none a few years before.²

The Scottish Council of the Labour Party passed a composite motion at its 1966 Conference asking the Secretary of State to institute more research into comprehensive education in order to facilitate the early implementation of the proposals contained in Circular 600. The Secretary of State's reply was cautious:

Since capital investment is not available specifically for the purpose of the reorganisation of secondary education, authorities will have to implement their plans gradually, and in some areas short-term arrangements will be necessary until all the new buildings can be provided ... schemes of reorganisation must be realistic and take account of local circumstances e.g. the location and type of existing accommodation, current and future housing developments and population increase ... from the responses to C600, it is clear that authorities are responding well to national policy and are anxious to proceed as quickly as possible with schemes of reorganisation ...³

An indication of the rate of progress made can be gleaned from consulting relevant Scottish Education Department Annual Reports of the period. The state of play on the issue of the circular was described in these terms:

The varied and complex patterns of secondary organisation of the individual authorities have largely grown in a piecemeal fashion ... without a large measure of centralisation, however, it is scarcely possible to make adequate physical provision for modern secondary education in a reasonably

economic fashion ... there must remain a strong feeling that too often the pattern of an area has simply grown over the years without any overall plan to control it. A main effect of Circular 600 should be to correct this situation.⁴

Notwithstanding the patchwork of provision alluded to here, the Report of the following year stated that the response of local authorities had shown that they were 'in general agreement' with the principles enunciated in Circular 600, and were engaged in a 'fresh assessment of their provision of secondary education'. Considerable initial headway had apparently been made in a relatively short space of time:

Substantial progress was made by most authorities in establishing their future pattern of development: a few were asked to consider modifications of varying importance; but by the end of the year the proposals of some 20 authorities (out of 35) had been wholly or very substantially approved.⁵

Recognising that comprehensive reorganisation could not be achieved in one fell swoop (as had Circular 600), the same report listed the main problems identified in the local authority submissions, received by the Secretary of State: the two-tier system in populous areas; the retention of a number of junior secondary schools due to lack of accommodation; the continued existence of local authority fee-paying schools; and the continued operation in many areas of primary transfer boards, which was held to be inconsistent with a comprehensive system.

A year later, the extent of reorganisation was described thus:

Very substantial progress has been made with the planning and reorganisation of secondary education on a comprehensive basis ... reorganisation has continued to occupy a good deal of the time and energy of the Department and education authorities. By the end of the year, all 35 authorities had submitted schemes or reorganisation, and all had been wholly or substantially approved subject to further negotiation on certain aspects. The schemes are generally based on the six year all-through school, but there are variations in a few places to suit local circumstances.⁶

According to that Report, fifty per cent of pupils attended schools reorganised on comprehensive lines. The 1969 Report declared that thirty three out of the thirty five local authorities had been granted Secretary of State approval for their revised transfer schemes in the light of the requirements of Circular 614, and was able to conclude that:

Progress towards comprehensive reorganisation has on the whole been good ... only two areas (Glasgow and Edinburgh) have major issues unresolved.⁷

Five years later, alluding to the issue in April 1974 of Circular 898, the Annual Report claimed that it:

recognised that the process (of reorganisation of secondary education on comprehensive lines) was very nearly completed: in January 1974 approximately 98% of all pupils in local authority schools attended schools with a comprehensive intake.⁸

Thus, in a matter of nine years, comprehensive reorganisation had ostensibly been achieved, although it must be stressed that, as the last extract suggests, the achievement was external in terms of structure rather than internal in terms of process. Indeed, several years prior to the full comprehensivisation of the system, one commentator had hinted that the situation in the schools themselves was far from being as uniform as the new structure taking shape:

The changeover to a fully comprehensive system of state education proceeds apace, although there is still considerable variation in the mode of its implementation, and certain areas present particular difficulties.⁹

This view is substantiated by the responses of a considerable number of individuals interviewed in connection with this research. One interviewee summed up the thoughts of many in these words:

The immediate consequences of C600 and C614 were a baffled

and bewildered teaching force. There had been absolutely no consultation and preparation for the change ... although those on high were decreeing that schools should be comprehensive there was no spelling out of what that entailed ... it was a case of putting all local children under one secondary roof - an organisational, structural change, which was seen as horrendous enough, without any attempt or desire to adapt the educational provision to suit the broader spectrum of ability.¹⁰

(Headteacher)

It can be argued, then, that the early implementation of comprehensive policy principally affected the outward form rather than the nature of secondary education. Supporting contentions made in earlier chapters¹¹, it can be further claimed that the manner of the policy's presentation, and the lack of clarity surrounding its significance, both militated against its easy implementation.

IMPLEMENTATION AND PROVISION IN WEST CENTRAL SCOTLAND

Dunbartonshire

It has already been suggested that the Director of Education endeavoured to implement the political decision contained in Circular 600 in a spirit of earnest support and to encourage attitudinal change by promoting examples of good practice and taking headteachers with him. Scrutiny of records available suggests that the implementation was effected most smoothly in this county of the four studies in this thesis. The problems were relatively straightforward, as one member of the Directorate staff pointed out:

What happened in Dumbarton re comprehensive provision took four forms:

- 1) Existing multilateral schools like Hermitage Academy, Vale of Leven continued
- 2) Senior secondary schools like Lenzie Academy, Bearsden Academy and Clydebank High became comprehensive
- 3) Old junior secondary schools closed and were absorbed into the high schools
- 4) Completely new schools were built - Douglas Academy, in Cumbernauld new town and several R.C. schools.¹²

While acknowledging that Dumbarton laboured under the same government strictures concerning finance and the school building programme as other counties, this picture is endorsed by a senior political figure who was closely involved in consideration of local authority submissions:

In Dumbarton there were relatively few problems and a very co-operative Director. The only things I recall were the need to build more R.C. schools and upgrading some of the existing old senior secondary schools.¹³

(Politician)

In general, the Secretary of State approved the authority's proposals for reorganisation, with one exception, Clydebank. It had been resolved initially that Edinbarnet, Dalmuir and Braidfield secondary schools in the town should become territorial junior high schools transferring pupils at the end of Secondary 2 into Clydebank High, which would serve as the senior high school (Secondary 3 - Secondary 6) for the town.¹⁴ This proposal aroused local opposition, with the Old Kilpatrick Area Sub-Committee advocating two comprehensive units for the town, formed from a merger of Dalmuir Secondary and Clydebank High and Braidfield and Edinbarnet Secondaries. The Secretary of State appeared to agree:

Proposals for Edinbarnet, Braidfield, Dalmuir and Clydebank High School - without full information about which of these the authority intended to develop as a full all-through school, the Secretary of State was unable to judge how far the proposals would contribute to the accommodation required for the eventual all-through system ... it seemed preferable to the Secretary of State that the authority should take a first step towards an all-through system as soon as possible rather than adopt a two-tier system which would have to be changed later.¹⁵

A later minute reveals that, after consideration, the Education Committee accepted the idea of two all-through comprehensive schools for Clydebank, and this won the Secretary of State's approval.¹⁶ It should be added that these eventual proposals aroused some antipathy from the

teaching staffs of the schools involved, as did the proposal to merge Dumbarton Academy and Hatfield Secondary. Letters were exchanged and deputations were permitted access to the Education Committee to air their grievances.¹⁷ After delays for building and alterations, comprehensive education was officially established in all non-reorganised areas of the county from the beginning of session 1972-73 and the role of the former Primary Schools Transfer Boards became redundant.¹⁸ From the evidence assembled, it appears that comprehensive reorganisation was achieved relatively quickly and smoothly in Dumbarton, at least on the structural level.

Glasgow¹⁹

Mention has already been made of the fact that, unwittingly anticipating thinking of the Advisory Council Report, Glasgow's Director of Education had convinced his Education Committee to agree as early as 1946 that all future provision for secondary education should be planned on a comprehensive basis, and that this proposal was first seen in the building programme for schools sited in the large housing estates which sprang up on the periphery of the city to rehouse the population from the slum areas in the inner city as these were gradually demolished. The seriousness of the Education Committee's resolve can be seen in a decision it took after the new headteachers of Crookston Castle and St. Augustines Secondaries had been appointed in March 1954:

The sub-committee agreed in principle that a deputation be authorised to visit certain comprehensive schools in England and Wales. The Director reported that it was proposed to visit schools in London, Birmingham, Southampton and Anglesey.²⁰

Subsequently, the Director submitted to the Committee a detailed report relating to questions of organisation of comprehensive schools based on

the experiences gained by the delegation.²¹ Thus, Glasgow was ahead of the field both in terms of external reorganisation of secondary education and of thinking about internal arrangements. The pioneering spirit which this represented is well captured by one of the headteachers:

We read in a half page article in the 'Evening Citizen' that the headmasters had been selected already, 'handpicked' I recall was the phrase used ... a short time later, Dr. Stewart Mackintosh - whom I would place alongside Sir James Robertson as the most enlightened Scottish educationists of this century - called at my school to tell me I had been appointed to St. Augustines and (was to) go and look at developments south of the border which might prove to help ... with this scanty experience David and I set out to build our own New Jerusalems in Glasgow's green and pleasant outer fringes. We had outstanding support from our Director and a succession of sympathetic conveners.²²

After this determined start, the agreed pattern of territorial schools for the whole city gathered momentum as building and finance permitted, since it was also decided that the establishment of new comprehensive schools should be undertaken only when purpose-built comprehensive schools were available in order to avoid the problem of operating schools on split-site campuses.²³ It should also be pointed out that for some years while the statutory leaving age was 15, the city operated a system of four and six year comprehensive schools, since insufficient pupils in some areas made it hard to justify a reasonable choice of courses without uneconomic use of staff.²⁴ The fact, however, that transfer of pupils at the end of Secondary 4 in four year schools to six year establishments caused the former to develop an 'inferior' status, and that this was not popular with either staff or parents, led the Education Committee to change its policy in 1963. Thenceforward, all comprehensive schools would be of six year status.²⁵ An indication of the speed of development in the city is gained from scrutiny of education committee minutes: thirty three out of fifty seven schools

had been officially reorganised on comprehensive lines only three years after the issue of Circular 600, and plans were in hand to modify and eventually eliminate the workings of the Transfer Boards city wide.²⁶ Remarkable though this achievement may appear, however, it should be said that, in addition to the battle over selective schools already mentioned, Glasgow had not solved all its reorganisation problems by 1972, when forty three schools were officially designated 'six year' comprehensives.²⁷ There were four problem areas which inhibited an earlier completion of reorganisation plans:

i) **Comprehensive Provision in the Bridgeton Area**

The problem was the resolution of the catchment areas concerning St. Mungo's Academy, Our Lady and St. Francis's Secondary and St. Mary's (Calton) Secondary. The delay in the introduction of full comprehensive provision was due to difficulties of accommodation, the recruitment of new staff and the need for curriculum changes. Ultimately it was agreed that the long term provision should be made by the creation of two single-sex R.C. comprehensive schools, (St. Mungo's in a new building) and our Lady's from 1975 onwards, but that in the interim, comprehensive intakes should begin for all three schools in August 1973.²⁸

ii) In 1972, four junior secondary schools were still in operation - Hamilton Crescent, Garrioch, Wellshot and St. Mary's (Calton). The Scottish Education Department approved arrangements for their immediate discontinuance as at June 1972.²⁹

iii) The city still had three senior secondary schools - Hyndland Secondary, North Kelvinside Secondary and Eastbank Academy. It was decided that they should become territorial comprehensive schools from the beginning of session 1972-73.³⁰

iv) The two four-year comprehensive schools still in operation in

1972 enjoyed differing fates: Riverside Secondary was upgraded to six year status, and City Public School was amalgamated with Allan Glen's School.³¹

It should be added that Glasgow stood alone in formally considering the implications of comprehensive reorganisation for school building. Indeed, the Director set up a School Building Study Group which produced two reports (1967, 1971) of which the second was the more adventurous. The Director insisted that all members of the group should be practising headteachers in order to temper doubts that its recommendations would be too idealistic. The Director in a foreword to the Second Report said that it:

postulates a new type of school. It is in effect the basis of a brief for the building of a new type of school.³²

The report was undoubtedly ahead of its time in the thinking that it espoused. The introduction sets the scene:

Comprehensive education, which is itself a product of post war economic and social conditions, will almost certainly require schools to undergo a series of radical changes in organisation, curriculum and attitudes to learning.³³

A flavour of its avant-garde approach can be gauged from this extract advocating an integrated approach to the curriculum:

There is an increasing recognition in progressive authorities that Education is as much a learning as a teaching process, in which each child will learn at his own speed and in his own way, making use of a variety of aids, media or methods ... the curriculum should provide the opportunity for each pupil to discover and express himself as an individual whether in words, actions or materials ... learning is not just a matter of isolated facts dispensed by a succession of specialist teachers, but, at its best, is an intricate pattern of inter-related and inter-dependent experiences. Controlled integration can co-exist with traditional patterns.³⁴

Taking account of such curricular thinking, the Report recommended that the physical structure of schools should reflect the fact that they were being called on to undertake an increasing variety of activities. Advocating that they should become less institutional in nature, the Report urged a greater diversity of size and shape of teaching space, and argued that teaching areas should be planned for flexibility and adaptability and include demountable walls, open-plan areas, project areas, workshops and resource centres. Indeed, such features were a prerequisite for implementing new ideas:

The new organisation should be sufficiently flexible to enable headteachers and teachers to see a clear path from the old to the new. If flexibility is lacking and there is too big a gap between the old and the new, headmasters will tend to use the new building in the old way.³⁵

In conclusion, it can be argued that the not inconsiderable achievements of the City of Glasgow in implementing a pattern of comprehensive secondary was in some measure due to the fact that Dr. Mackintosh was the Director of Education in the formative years. It has already been asserted (Chapter 4) that he saw himself as a tone-setter, and several contributors have attested to his educational vision and forward thinking. As one interviewee put it:

Mackintosh in Glasgow created a quantum of enthusiasm and heightened his teachers' awareness.³⁶

Lanarkshire

The implementation of comprehensive education in Lanarkshire was marked by enormous complexity. From the outset to eventual completion in 1977, the process seems beset by difficulties and persistently dogged by problems. These stemmed from two sources, described by two interviewees in these terms:

In Lanarkshire there was a rash of two and four year local schools. Talk of closure brought out local jealousy and

prejudice. In addition to that, the Director of Education was an impossible man to deal with at any level - very argumentative and awkward. This made dealings far from easy.³⁷

(Politician)

The Director in Lanarkshire did not enjoy good relations with central government and took up a position opposite to them on most issues, including comprehensive education.³⁸

(HMCI)

The Director, in a very full and well-written paper³⁹ in which he discussed the reorganisation of secondary education, made it clear that he was not in favour of a uniform solution for Lanarkshire. He argued that considerations other than the purely educational (staffing, buildings, geography, local circumstances) had to be taken into account, and recommended reorganisation of three different types for the county, based on his fundamental view that differing educational aims and the correspondingly appropriate curricula had to be provided in different sorts of establishment and be age-related: all-through comprehensives for some areas, from year comprehensives feeding intending secondary 5/6 pupils into the nearest six year high schools, and intermediate schools for age range 11-14, with final year pupils going either to senior high schools serving 14-18 year olds or to Colleges of Arts and Crafts for general/vocational courses. His argument was partly based on the extremely varied pattern of provision which existed at that time⁴⁰, and concluded thus:

It is difficult to see that there is enough justification in the class or social issue to justify the wholesale rebuilding and radical reorganisation of secondary education which is sometimes advocated, the best justification for which would be that pupils were at present prevented by the existing system from obtaining an education suited to their needs and aptitudes.⁴¹

The Education Committee, however, did not share the Director's view of

the status quo, and after consideration of his report, unanimously passed the following motion:

... to introduce comprehensive education throughout the County in session 1966-7 ... we desire an all-through comprehensive school (although) we accept that various forms will have to be accepted in the early years. Our ultimate aim is an all-through comprehensive school in all areas as and when this becomes possible, as a result of new school building, and the adaptation of existing schools ... all future secondary schools will be designed on the basis of a fully comprehensive school.⁴²

Whether as a result of this rebuff or not, the Director's subsequent statements about reorganisation are notable for their cautious and guarded tone. A good example (typical of many) is contained in an introductory letter to the proposed scheme of reorganisation (sometimes containing as many as three alternative plans) which the Education Committee made public in October 1966 after its decision to go comprehensive:

The changeover to the new system cannot be made all at once. It will have to be done in stages spread over a number of years. All the proposals relate to the ultimate stage. It is not possible at the present time to give details of what the intermediate stages will be or when they will come into operation⁴³

This is not to say that, given the pattern of schools operating in the county at the time of the changeover, difficulties were not very real. One document illustrates that for denominational and non-denominational provision 13 new schools would be required and 22 existing ones required modernisation and/or extensions, at a capital cost of at least £8m.⁴⁴ Although the proposals for the ultimate pattern of reorganisation were issued in April 1967, scrutiny of the Education Committee Minutes for the years immediately following reveals several complex appendices containing suggested interim arrangements, issued almost annually⁴⁵, and

running to some dozen pages in length. Some understanding of the problems faced in Lanarkshire is gained by studying the following extracts:

- i) A new all-through school is to serve the whole area ... considerable progress has been made with the preparation of plans.
(Cambuslang)
- ii) The long-term pattern is envisaged as two all-through comprehensive in Wishaw and one or two in Motherwell.
- iii) Reorganisation on the basis of comprehensive schools will involve the closure of secondary departments and smaller schools.
(Biggar and Lanark)
- iv) In practice, the pattern of reorganisation must depend to some extent on the geographical distribution of these numbers and the physical fact of the location of existing schools so far as these are not due for replacement.
(Hamilton and Blantyre)
- v) Much of the existing accommodation is spread over three permanent and a number of temporary buildings. Much of it is seriously substandard.
(Larkhall)
- vi) The present provision for Roman Catholic pupils in the county is very largely on selective lines.⁴⁶

Formidable though the obstacles appear to have been, the Director repudiated a suggestion from representatives of the Local Association of the Educational Institute of Scotland that an Assistant Director of Education be appointed with the specific brief of making the transition to a fully comprehensive system as smooth and efficient as possible, with the assertion that the administrative requirements of reorganisation should be kept separate from the general trend of educational developments irrespective of reorganisation.⁴⁷ Whether one agrees or not with the Director's separation, it is undeniable that a multitude of administrative problems had to be resolved. The Education Committee Minutes for the County reveal that, amongst many others, the following proved particularly thorny and resistant to easy solution;

and indicate that accommodation was a key issue in comprehensive reorganisation in Lanarkshire:

- provision both denominational and non-denominational in Coatbridge, finally reorganised from August 1972⁴⁸
- ending selective education in Hamilton Academy and Elmwood R.C. Convent School for girls⁴⁹
- reorganisation in the Biggar/Lanark/Lesmahagow/Strathaven/Stonehouse/Larkhall areas⁵⁰
- proposals for the Hamilton/Blantyre/Uddingston area, which went through a series of revisions, the final details being arranged in 1973
- R.C. provision for Carluke/Lanark/Wishaw/Motherwell pupils, finally resolved in 1973 with the decision to open a new Our Lady's High School (mixed all-through comprehensive) in Motherwell, with others attending St. Aidan's Wishaw⁵¹
- Non denominational provision in Wishaw, finally resolved when both Coltness High and Wishaw High became all-through schools from August 1974, the former having been a 2 year school, the latter a senior high school (secondary 3-secondary 6)⁵²
- provision in the new town of East Kilbride, which had to be continually reviewed and amended due to pressure from an unexpected increase in pupil numbers
- the continued existence in 1972 of 13 schools without certificate courses⁵³
- the continued existence of 14 four year schools in 1973⁵⁴
- non denominational provision in Motherwell.⁵⁵

It should also be added that Lanarkshire's problems were compounded by the Scottish Education Department Letter⁵⁶ announcing the postponement

of raising of the school leaving age due to government public expenditure cuts, and the consequent rephasing of the Schools Building Programme. This no doubt was a contributory factor to a report by the Director listing the temporary (huttled) accommodation required by Lanarkshire schools.⁵⁷

The Secretary of State replied to the Education Committee on its (admittedly indeterminate) ultimate proposals, and it is clear from his reply that all interim (i.e. 2 year and 4 year) schools were passed as precisely that, on the understanding that they would be upgraded as soon as pupil numbers permitted.

In the light of these considerations it is surprising to record the president of the Local Association of the Educational Institute of Scotland making this assertion in his valedictory address in 1973:

The introduction of the comprehensive system of secondary education has proceeded fairly smoothly throughout the County. Many of the school mergers made necessary by the reduction in the number of school units have been carried through, if not painlessly, at least expeditiously.⁵⁸

It seems a more accurate assessment to say that comprehensivisation in Lanarkshire was carried out in conditions of extreme difficulty. An Inspectorate Report written as late as 1974 indicates the extent of the unsatisfactory nature of accommodation in the county, and concludes:

These four categories of requirement are all ultimate necessities if the Committee's policy of developing comprehensive education and improving staffing standards are to be carried out. Many are inescapable necessities.⁵⁹

The Director gave an account of the difficulties Lanarkshire had faced (although holding the government totally responsible) in an indignant letter to the Scottish Education Department. He was reacting to press

reports which appeared after the publication of Circular 898 in 1974 which implied that Lanarkshire was one of a number of local authorities which had not proceeded as fast as they might with reorganisation:

Since the policy decision in June 1965 to end selection in secondary schools my authority has energetically pursued this policy although no capital investment allocations for secondary school reorganisation have ever been made available to them ... many new schools and extensions have been built with the aim of ending selection ... in other districts selection has been ended by reorganising existing schools, though this has often meant the use of annexes and the erection of temporary buildings ... the Authority has progressed so far towards its goal of complete non-selection that only 160 of the 11,930 pupils due to start secondary education in August 1974 will be admitted to schools which do not offer courses leading to the SCE 'O' Grade.⁶⁰

In redressing the balance, perhaps the final word on Lanarkshire should be left to some interviewees with first hand experience of developments in the County:

The HMI never got co-operation from the Director. He never replied to EIS or SED letters until forced to. He had total power and exercised it ... he was opposed to it (comprehensive education) and his word was law. His underlings had no power at all.⁶¹

(Academic)

The Director's main concern was to implement government policy with the least educational upset ... he went for a gradualist approach, especially given the shortage of highly qualified staff, which he wanted to concentrate in the upper stages of the high schools and not see their talents frittered away on junior pupils.⁶²

(Staffing Officer)

The Director was reluctant to throw the existing system out of the window. He wanted to retain the best of what he had. He believed there was a place for schools like Hamilton Academy.⁶³

(Headteacher)

Renfrewshire

Reference has already been made to the fact that Renfrewshire was unique in the West of Scotland in that its Director of Education was a

determined advocate of a quite particular form of secondary provision, namely the two tier system of junior and senior high schools permitting transfer to the latter at 14 and 16, and had successfully persuaded his Education Committee that, in the prevailing circumstances of the County, this was the direction in which it should move:

Buildings dictate policy and the use of good schools and the need to preserve them might demand a pattern of secondary education which is not that which might otherwise be chosen.⁶⁴

Again, as in Lanarkshire, the Director's conception of comprehensive reorganisation was heavily influenced by existing buildings and staffing. The Education Committee Minutes reveal that the Director consistently endeavoured where possible to make the two-tier system into a reality because he sincerely believed it to be the best form of comprehensive system. He subsequently composed four memoranda⁶⁵ covering provision in the entire county, the proposals of which can be summarised thus:

Eastwood Area:

to be served by two Junior High and one Senior High School.

Paisley Area:

to be served by five junior (four of which new) and three senior High Schools.

Greenock Area:

due to difficulties in acquiring land for new building, a compromise solution was adopted: part of the area would be two-tier, but also include two all-through schools.

Roman Catholic Provision in Education Districts 1, 2, 3 (Barrhead, Johnstone, Renfrew, Linwood, Paisley):

to be served by six junior (one new) and two senior high schools.

The Director's perspective is well summed up in an assertion from the Paisley document:

The two-tier system is one which holds educational advantages over most others.⁶⁶

The Secretary of State's refusal to accept the original plan passed by the Committee in March 1966, was explained thus:

In Renfrewshire the Director was an enthusiast for the two-tier system ... and he genuinely believed it to be a comprehensive system. We, however, only ever saw it as an interim plan. They had the wrong schools on the wrong sites.⁶⁷

(Politician)

It is interesting to compare this rebuttal with a section of Circular 600⁶⁸, and with earlier quoted statements by Scottish Education Department officials that the government wanted to proceed by 'co-operation' and 'persuasion' in its dealings with local authorities. Clearly, Circular 600 was much more directive than its rather permissive wording gave readers to understand. The upshot of the official rejection was an amended scheme⁶⁹ in which more all-through schools were envisaged, and it was implicitly accepted that junior high schools were a temporary expedient which left the way clear for their evolution to all-through status in the future. The amended plan was finally passed by the Secretary of State with the exception of proposals for Roman Catholic provision in Port Glasgow and Greenock.⁷⁰ A further amended memorandum was prepared to incorporate the Scottish Education Department's criticisms, and this was accepted by the Secretary of State, and ratified as Renfrewshire's scheme by the Education Committee,⁷¹ which then proceeded over the next few years to realise its implementation. Nevertheless, despite the Director's frequent references to problems over staffing and buildings, and his attachment to the (in his view) educational superiority of the two-tier system, it became gradually obvious even to him that the all-through model made

most sense for political and practical rather than educational reasons.⁷² The end came when he was directed by the Committee to submit a Memorandum to reorganise the County's schools on an all-through basis.⁷³

However, the legacy of so many junior high schools proved problematic to remove completely. In 1975 the Educational Institute of Scotland Members of Sacred Heart High School wrote to Educational Institute of Scotland Headquarters:

The EIS members on the staff are seriously disturbed not only at the delay in implementing comprehensive education in a small group of schools in the Paisley area, but also at the failure of the Regional Authority and the previous local authority to issue a clear and unequivocal statement of its proposed solution to this anomalous, unjust and educationally unsatisfactory situation ... the continual temporising of the past four years which has set aside this fundamental issue is dispiriting to staff, parents and pupils.⁷⁴

The Organising Secretary took up cudgels on the schools behalf, and wrote to the Director of Education for Strathclyde, describing the situation as 'a travesty of the concept of comprehensive education'.⁷⁵

The Senior Depute Director replied in these terms:

... it is hoped that a revised system will be in operation possibly next session.⁷⁶

In the event, the newly appointed Divisional Education Officer for the Renfrew Division sent a letter to parents early in 1976, in which it was made clear that an all-through system of secondary education had received the go-ahead:

The scheme for the reorganisation of secondary education in the Renfrew Division has now been agreed by the Regional Council. As a result, the two-tier system will be phased out, and more secondary schools will become six year comprehensives. This changeover will commence in August

1976 ... reorganisation in the Renfrew Division is a subject which has been debated and discussed for many months. Its implementation will mean an end to a period of uncertainty.⁷⁷

Thus, although the major part of the reorganisation of secondary education in the four areas in question had been finally achieved between approximately 1974 and 1976, some final tidying up was left to the newly constituted Education Committee of Strathclyde Regional Council. The areas in question were: Larkhall, Lesmahagow, Strathaven, Lanark (Non-Denominational); Hamilton, Blantyre (R.C.); Uddingston, Bellshill, (Non-Denominational and R.C.); Airdrie and Coatbridge (R.C.); Bishopbriggs (Non-Denominational and R.C.); Greenhills, East Kilbride; Bearsden, Milngavie (Non-Denominational); Eastwood (Non-Denominational). Final patterns were either still outstanding or dependent upon rezoning of catchment areas due to the opening of new schools.⁷⁸ Final decisions on all the above were taken in 1978. Thus, from beginning to end, the complete reorganisation process in the four areas of West Central Scotland which are the focus of this study took thirteen years to achieve (1965-78).

Over this period, the four areas responded differently to the demands of Circular 600, notwithstanding that each had similar problems with regard to the school building programme and capital grants, both governed by the Scottish Education Department. Dumbarton effected a relatively easy reorganisation of its secondary provision into comprehensive units, so that by the time of an Inspectorate Report in 1976, all schools were either fully comprehensive, or had comprehensive intakes passing through their secondary stages.⁷⁹ Glasgow had also reorganised to a substantial extent by the early 1970s, but it had a few pockets with selective provision still to rationalise not to mention the anomaly of the former

fee-paying corporation schools discussed in Chapter 4.⁸⁰ On the issue of Circular 600 Lanarkshire had a largely selective system of secondary education based on a pattern of three, four and six year schools. The request to go comprehensive thus entailed an extensive reorganisation programme with almost all school buildings having been originally designed for the selective system. The changeover was thus effected over a long period of time in trying circumstances, with many schools old or having to operate on split sites or with huddled accommodation.⁸¹ The effects of reorganisation and the problems it brought in its wake in such a situation are not difficult to imagine. In Renfrewshire, reorganisation likewise took a long time, but for a quite different reason: the particular conception of comprehensive education adopted by the then Director, a two-tier system which proved resistant to swift rationalisation, and meant that many schools in the county went comprehensive by a process of gradual transition. The impression gained from an examination of the facts of comprehensivisation in these four areas of West Central Scotland is that a new order was grafted on to the existing system, and, like Topsy, 'just grew' as circumstances permitted. Thus, a situation was imposed on schools which called for the management of innovation and a different code of professional practice, sometimes in physical surroundings which were far from ideal (with the exception, of course, of new, purpose-built schools). Comprehensive education had been established in the face of considerable difficulties and was operating by 1978, at least in a structural sense.

PROBLEMATIC FACTORS RELATING TO THE EVOLUTION OF COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION

Consultation

From what has been said so far in this chapter, it will be clear that,

despite official assertions of the ease with which comprehensive education was introduced in Scotland as compared with England, the scale of the conversion in the West of Scotland was extensive. It is instructive, therefore, to consider the extent to which individuals affected by the implications of Circular 600 were consulted about developments, a requirement written into the Circular itself.⁸² It is clear that authorities were alert to their responsibilities in this regard:

The meeting agreed that the local press be invited to co-operate in keeping parents and the public informed of the Education Committee's proposals for comprehensive education.

(Dunbartonshire)

... copies of the report should be issued to the teachers' organisations and to the headteachers of the secondary schools concerned ... and short summaries of the suggestions for each area be prepared for issue on request to anyone who wished to have them ...

(Lanarkshire)

... it was agreed that the Director of Education should write an explanatory article for the local newspapers to explain plans for the introduction of comprehensive education in the area.⁸³

(Renfrewshire)

Such well-intentioned statements, however, should not automatically be taken at face value. Doubts were raised in many quarters. The education correspondent of a prominent Glasgow Newspaper had this to say on consultation:

The decision to publish C600 was taken without an advisory body being set up to examine the proposals. It paid lip service to the need to consult parents ... teachers have views - sometimes strong and contradictory views on comprehensive schools - and one would have thought it important to consult them on such a radical change.⁸⁴

It has not been difficult to find evidence which supports the journalist's contention in two of the areas under study in this thesis:

The President had been asked to convey the Director's apologies for his having been unable to send them prior

information about closing the schools in Wishaw due to comprehensive reorganisation ... it was decided to write to the Director pointing out the difficulties of staffs in these schools who, not having full and correct information, suffer from rumour and counter rumour.

(Lanarkshire)

The Committee of Management has repeatedly expressed its concern that large scale reorganisations of secondary education have taken place in the city, and the Local Association have been made aware only after they have been officially approved by the Education Committee.⁸⁵

In his presidential address to the Educational Institute of Scotland in 1966, James Cree had this to say:

I do not think that calling teachers together to tell them what is going to be done constitutes consultation ... there has been very little consultation with the profession on the advisability of introducing comprehensive education.

One interviewee expressed strong dissatisfaction with the extent to which teachers were involved in comprehensive planning:

Teachers in Scotland have always been treated badly by their superiors not at all as human beings with feelings and views ... as a result, the theoretical and the actual are destined never to meet ... there was no thought whatever given to the poor teachers ... no awareness that they were thinking adults with opinions that would need to be won round.⁸⁶

(Headteacher)

As for parents, it is possible to detect also that where they were consulted, it usually took the form of inviting their comments on proposals that had virtually been decided. In Lanarkshire for example, many adverse comments did come from parents who took the trouble to consider reorganisation 'proposals':

Reorganisation throws a severe handicap on P.7 children whose chances of transfer to Uddingston Grammar School by age 16 are obviously limited by the low standard of education at Hozier (junior) secondary. The standards of a school are set by its level of teaching ... the Education Committee have not given this subject any thought from the educational point of view, and have treated it as purely juggling with numbers to achieve an end result.⁸⁷

As a counter-balance to such expressions of parental concern, it should be pointed out that a fair number of parents in the West of Scotland appear to have accepted the changeover to a comprehensive system without demur, and, for positive or negative reasons, did not cause a public outcry over the issue. People interviewed in connection with this research were virtually unanimous in their opinion that most of the public are apathetic to education in general, and usually take an interest only when their own children are passing through the system. The only parents to take issue with the proposals for reorganisation tended to be those who saw the 'dilution' of the former senior secondary schools as a retrograde step, or those who feared that comprehensivisation would adversely affect their own children. To judge from the correspondence columns of the Glasgow Herald and other quality newspapers at the time, however, it is probably fair to say that such parents constituted a significant minority. The overwhelming impression among interviewees was that any objections were localised and came mainly from middle class sections of the community. This perception is supported by a study of comprehensive reorganisation in Renfrewshire,⁸⁸ where the author found that it evoked only a muted public reaction.

Staff Shortage

A major problem throughout most of the period under review for schools in the West of Scotland was staff shortage, in some cases verging on the chronic. A succession of Scottish Education Department Annual Reports allude to it, and to the effects it was having on the emergent comprehensive system:

The overall pupil teacher ration fell to 16.5:1, but Glasgow, Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire continued to be substantially less well staffed.

Imbalance in the provision of staff in some areas, notably in parts of the West of Scotland has led to some quite

serious curricular problems in certain schools. Inevitably, shortages in one subject or another have compelled the inclusion in the curriculum of some pupils a disproportionate amount of time spent on other subjects which are relatively well-staffed.

Shortages in Lanarkshire and Glasgow are still evident.

Despite overall improvements in secondary school staffing, some authorities, notably Strathclyde, found difficulty in recruiting enough specialist teachers of certain subjects - Business Studies, Technical, Mathematics, Physics and Music.⁸⁹

The Area Report for Glasgow makes clear that the staffing position in Glasgow had consistently been worse than the national one, and indeed showed variations across the city. This was not helped by the persistent problems of staff turnover (caused by retirements and promotions), and the chronic shortage of specialist teachers. It concludes:

The consequences upon the quality of education which can be offered by schools affected by shortages ... are clear ... the range of subjects and allocations of time to them are affected. In some schools the needs of less able pupils may be subordinated to the more insistent pressure from courses which lead to examination presentation.⁹⁰

A similar Report for Renfrewshire was more blunt:

Staffing has persisted in being the most intractable problem facing the authority in recent years despite the strenuous efforts of the staffing department ... the existence of several systems of comprehensive organisation within the same region is a further factor affecting pressure on staffing ...⁹¹

The position was by far the worst in Lanarkshire:

Whatever the criteria, the shortage of staff was severe. Practically all subjects were affected ... the prolonged and acute staff shortage brought many problems. Part-time education had to be introduced in some schools, sometimes for lengthy periods; classes were often large ... there was a rapid turnover of staff in most schools ... and the varied age structure of most staffs made it more difficult for schools to develop curricular policies and effective systems

of communication within schools.⁹²

Only Dunbartonshire escaped these problems, and, despite a rapid increase in pupil population and staying-on rates, it consistently enjoyed 'very favourable pupil-teacher ratios'.⁹³ These reports also make mention of the various steps the most hard-pressed authorities took to improve the flow of teachers: the offer of additional payments to staff in schools designated as ones of teacher shortage; the refunding of travelling expenses; the provision of free transport by bus to certain schools; the offer of housing for all new recruits; media advertising; trips abroad by senior officials in the Directorate to persuade teachers to teach in the West of Scotland. One is driven to the conclusion, however, that these strenuous efforts led only to a meagre overall improvement in the situation:

A heavy responsibility rests upon the Authority to press home its recruitment policy ... decisions to advertise more posts nationally, for example, are taking effect. The disappointing conclusion to emerge from the results of the Authority's present campaign is the plain fact that whatever success it has is confined to the neighbourhood of Glasgow ... any new ideas to stimulate recruitment will have to be radical and ingenious if they are to capture the imagination of teachers from further afield.⁹⁴

The Religious Question

No discussion of comprehensive education in the West of Scotland would be complete without some reference to the question of separate denominational and non-denominational schools. A recent study⁹⁵ has shown that the disparity between the Roman Catholic sector of education and the national picture is attributable to a set of circumstances which go back to the years immediately after the 1918 Education (Scotland) Act, when Catholic schools were absorbed into the state system. The inequalities manifested themselves in the number of secondary places, pupil-teacher ratios, accommodation quality and staff shortages.⁹⁶ The

important point for this study is to stress that the Catholic secondary schools were still grappling with a backlog of such problems when comprehensivisation came upon them. As the author of the study points out, the difficulties caused by the implications of Circular 600 in other schools were exacerbated in the Catholic sector, due to the fact that it had a higher birth rate than the national average, and was disproportionately represented in areas of urban deprivation.

Proponents of a radical model of comprehensive education would argue that it is misleading to talk of a national system of comprehensive schools as long as the denominational non-denominational divide persists. Such segregation, it could be argued, undermines the arguments for comprehensive education based on the notion of social cohesion. But it is important to realise that attachment to separate schooling in the West of Scotland has a historical, religious and cultural basis which has developed deep roots. At the 1971 S.T.U.C. Annual Congress a decision was taken in support of a concerted move towards a non-sectarian education system:

The question that seems to arise is whether Catholic education can be brought up to a standard which ensures equality of education and opportunity for Catholic children ... the present position appears to be unfair to Catholic pupils, parents and teachers.⁹⁷

However, the implication that equality was not being met and, in consequence, that the comprehensive principle was being breached did not necessarily indicate a widespread call for integration. The Annual Scottish Conference of the Labour Party heard from the Scottish Education Department in the following terms in a letter replying to a previous resolution passed in favour of integration:

Successive governments have taken the view that it would be

premature to reconsider the basic statutory provisions relating to denominational and non-denominational schools until there is a wide measure of agreement between the religious and educational bodies concerned, and among the general public about any changes which should be made. This view accords with the recommendation that legislative changes should not be imposed upon an unwilling Catholic Community.⁹⁸

The 1977 Conference again passed a resolution calling for the immediate abolition of denominational schools as a violation of the comprehensive principle. It is curious to find the following justification for single-sex R.C. Schools, written at the time of the furore over selective education in Glasgow:

Within the context of comprehensive education it is difficult to find valid reasons for single sex schools ... traditionally the religious orders have run schools for children of their own sex ... by allowing schools to continue single sex, the Education Committee avoids alterations for subjects like Technical and Homecraft and toilets ... it is best to dwell on the practical rather than theoretical reasons for the continuation of single sex education.⁹⁹

Whether this extract should be seen as pragmatism or problem avoidance is open to question, and it is also interesting to note that the idea of separate denominational schools apparently does not offend against the comprehensive principle to the extent that single sex schools do. Clearly, however, there is evidence of an unwillingness in Catholic circles to allow the spread of comprehensive education in the West of Scotland to do anything to harm the place that the senior secondary school had come to occupy in the Roman Catholic community. While happy to acquiesce in developments inasmuch as they led to a dramatic increase in the provision of secondary education for Catholic pupils,¹⁰⁰ any suggestion that comprehensivisation would lead to diminished opportunities for them relative to other groups met with tacit resistance, a point endorsed by several interviewees, and exemplified in

this extract:

Catholic Labour Councillors and Holy Orders had found for the previous 40-50 years an efficient way to produce a Catholic professional class - selective Catholic schools. They enabled Catholic lads o'pairs to get out of the slums. The comprehensive school and attempts to plead for integrated secondary education were seen by Catholics as undermining a system which had served them well. Catholic Labour Councillors thus found themselves in an ambivalent position: publicly they had to defend comprehensive schools but privately they passionately believed in selective solutions.¹⁰¹

The Continued Existence of Selective Schools

The question of the existence of an element of selectivity in the developing comprehensive pattern was dealt with in Chapter 4, referring specifically to the controversial situation in the City of Glasgow. The problem appears to have been much more serious in England, and the campaign for Comprehensive Education mounted a vigorous attack on the detrimental effects of selective schools on comprehensives.¹⁰² In order to assess reactions to the problem in the West of Scotland, interviewees were asked if they thought that the continued existence of selective schools (both state and independent/grant-aided) constituted an obstacle to the emergent pattern of comprehensive schools. There was a virtual unanimity of response to the effect that the number of such schools in the West was so small as to be insignificant and ineffectual. Most interlocutors thought that both types of school co-existed with little friction or mutual detriment, but some felt that the furore in Glasgow ironically gave the comprehensive movement a bad press, and others reiterated the previously mentioned point about the special place occupied by selective schools in the Roman Catholic concept of education. Nevertheless, there is some evidence to suggest that these schools did cause some creaming of neighbourhood schools. A Her Majesty's Inspector Report for Glasgow contains these comments:

Whitehill Secondary:

The drift to fee-paying school starts at age 9, about 12 pupils annually at Primary 7. The staff is factional, resentful and disenchanting.

Penilee Secondary:

The school has a poor reputation in the local area. It is rather unspectacular and attracts adverse criticism from 'high flyer' parents area. This is resented by the head and staff who regard it as robbing them of their 'rightful top'.¹⁰³

Areas of Social Deprivation

Another factor to be borne in mind is the existence of schools serving areas of social deprivation, the indices of which have been consistently high in the West of Scotland. Particularly relevant are the many post-war industrial housing estates built to absorb inner-city tenants on the demolition of their inner-city dwellings. As well as being the result of housing policy (over which the education service had no control), such areas also suffered from the subsequent social policy of concentrating within them a high proportion of families experiencing a variety of social problems. Again, interviewees were questioned on the effects of schools located in areas of deprivation on the move to comprehensive provision. A high proportion felt that they were 'an unfortunate fact of life', and, given their status as enforcers of social apartheid, had the educational odds stacked against them from the outset. It was stated that the combination of uni-class groups and deprivation (sometimes multiple deprivation) exposed the naivety underlying the politicians' hopes for the comprehensive school as an instrument of greater social class cohesion. The plain fact of urban social polarisation conflicted sharply with reformist egalitarian

theory. Reference was made to the fact that aspiring families simply move to 'better' areas, leaving a sizeable concentration of population with a less positive attitude to education.¹⁰⁴ In fairness, mention was also made to the fact that, by dint of these adverse conditions, some schools in areas of deprivation forged an 'esprit de corps' among the staff which resulted in some inspired and imaginative teaching in line with enlightened comprehensive thinking. Notwithstanding these commendable instances, the overall impression was not encouraging, as this Inspectorate account illustrates:

Like its sister schemes, Garthamlock was originally attractive but there has been an accelerating decline ... there are many boarded-up empty houses. The better families have moved out ... the majority of incomers are either on social security or unemployment benefit. One parent families are strongly represented ... truancy, delinquency and indiscipline are increasing ... these are having an adverse effect on teachers. Agencies outside the school which should be helping are themselves overburdened. ... Staffing problems are endemic ... the children enter secondary school ill-fitted for a normal secondary curriculum. A high proportion of the staff consists of young female probationers, who find the going difficult ... where teachers have more sophisticated aims, frustration often leads to their moving elsewhere ... it is clear that the children with the most limited home backgrounds also tend to receive the most limited educational experiences both in absolute and curricular terms.¹⁰⁵

Pressure for Change

One final point should be borne in mind when considering factors of which the educational system had to take cognisance as it gradually became comprehensive, namely that comprehensive education was only one of many others with which schools had to contend in the late 60s and 70s. There are many references to the fact that the teaching profession was assailed on all sides by demands to change; innovation was the order of the day:

The reorganisation of comprehensive education on comprehensive lines has brought about an explosive chain reaction, in which the system is beginning to dissolve and

reform ... the Government proceeded to put this profound change into effect without apparently having given much thought to the educational consequences. At best, perhaps, the C.C.C. has signposted a path to comprehensive education, but the path is not very clearly delineated and teachers and pupils may quite easily get lost on the way.¹⁰⁶

A year later, a prominent Educational Institute of Scotland official underlined the stress change and the official approach to it was causing teachers:

Recommendation after recommendation and report after report are coming from the S.E.D. ... many teachers owing to lack of staffing and accommodation are being asked to do the impossible ... the major trouble in the profession is that there has been too much unco-ordinated change. Reform has been piled on reform and much unhappiness and strain has been caused because the reforms have not been phased and properly prepared ... teachers need reassurance, guidance, co-ordinated planning ...¹⁰⁷

The purpose in outlining what seem to be relevant and important factors that must be taken into account in the development of comprehensive education in the West of Scotland has been to show that the implementation of the political decision had to confront inescapable, practical realities which militated against a rapid and smooth introduction of the system envisaged. Consultation as required by the Circular was variously attempted and enjoyed varying degrees of success. Moreover, it seems clear that politicians and administrators in the corridors of power responsible for launching comprehensive education may have over-relied on the fact that their objectives would be universally acceptable to those who were to be crucially affected by their decisions.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN THE COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM

Circular 600 was a political document which embodied the government of the day's will to effect an organisational change in the way in which

secondary education was provided. Almost by definition the presence under one roof of a wide spectrum of pupil ability was going to carry important implications for the process of education, incorporating central issues like curriculum, methodology and assessment, which correspondingly took on a complexity hitherto not experienced by large numbers of teachers. This section of the chapter will examine the attempts that were made to develop an appropriate curriculum for the comprehensive school.

Mention has already been made (Chapter 4) of the role of J.S. Brunton in giving curriculum development a high profile by involving the Inspectorate in development groups, and increasing their direct contribution to educational documentation in the form of reports and papers relating to aspects of the curriculum. A senior member of the inspectorate described Brunton's intentions in these terms:

J.S. Brunton saw Inspectors as the spearhead of the teaching profession and his efforts, from my stance as a young Inspector, were essentially on behalf of humanizing the curriculum and schools and of concentrating our limited resources where they were most needed - on ordinary boys and girls.¹⁰⁸

His support of curriculum development led to the setting up of the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum at the instigation of the then Secretary of the Scottish Education Department. Its role has recently been described in an important OECD Report:

Consensus in the comprehensive school reform has been further assured thanks to the contribution of the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum ... it represents a variety of professional interests and operates through a number of subject sub-committees. It is thus plainly an expert body ... the pursuit of consensus is both determined and relatively smooth ... teachers appear to feel less threatened by change than in many other educational systems mainly because they are given the opportunity to participate in the innovatory process.¹⁰⁹

Notwithstanding the co-operative and rather complacent image of curriculum development portrayed in this extract, it was suggested in the last chapter that the alleged contribution of the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum and its catalogue of curriculum papers is at least open to question. A member of the Inspectorate in interview cast doubt on the certainty of its part in curricular policy-making for the comprehensive school system:

There was much frantic activity in a sea of confusion because all the familiar things on the educational landscape had been knocked down or at least questioned. New concepts like curriculum development ... appeared and took their place in the new millennium. There was much activity but little serious thought. Assumptions were made that because the CCC was created with its panoply of committees that the management knew what it wanted or where it was going. In the event, everyone scurried around frantically in a totally alien environment clutching at straws and any half-baked idea that sounded good as a solution to their current problems.¹¹⁰

(H.M. Inspector)

Conceding some truth to this view raises doubts about the extent to which curriculum development took place according to a deliberate plan, and how much it was subject to expediency and the personal contribution of individuals. It is true that teachers did become involved in development work. The Annual Reports of the Scottish Education Department for the late 1960s and early 1970s bear witness to their increasing participation:

At national and local level appraisal of many branches of the curriculum has continued, the advent of comprehensive education has added a new dimension to the problems, and led to one or two significant changes of direction. ... The ever-growing involvement of teachers in the work of curriculum development reflects a substantial amount of activity.¹¹¹

But it would be a mistake to assume that such activity was always co-ordinated. One eminent educationist in the West of Scotland saw

curriculum development occurring in response to perceived local need:

Scottish teachers have had much to contend with in the past decade ... the cumulative effect should not be underestimated. Many resent the lack of specific guidance from the SED. The growth of working parties has led to the grassroots development of courses, some of a very high standard ... since so much has been left in Scotland to initiative at local level, it is gratifying to find how much has been done.¹¹²

Thus it can be argued that the majority of teachers interested enough to participate in curriculum development when schools in the West of Scotland were coming to terms with the curricular implications of Circular 600 did so at local level. Those invited to join national groups were probably handpicked, for reasons described in Chapter Four. But there is evidence, ironically gathered at the behest of the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum, that its various committees and the ensuing publications had not reached as wide an audience as it had intended, suggesting that the tension between professional autonomy and exhortations to change is not easily resolved: the 'Fairlie' Report (1974) concluded that for many classroom teachers the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum and its workings was a remote and irrelevant body, and urged the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum to acknowledge that the aims of secondary education could not be successfully implemented without a concerted attempt to involve more practitioners in the process of curriculum development.¹¹³ An indication that most classroom teachers' time and energies were diverted for valid reasons from thoughts of curriculum development, and that, in any case, ideas for change were not always greeted with enthusiasm, was given by one Glasgow assistant headteacher (curriculum):

To talk of curriculum development in the present climate of severe staff shortage and professional unrest is singularly difficult. In the atmosphere that prevails, much modern educational punditry has to be discarded, and perhaps at the end of the day not much will have been lost ... the

proliferation of teaching programmes which are said to be child-centred should not obscure the purpose of education which cannot simply be to keep children interested.¹¹⁴

In an attempt to probe the manner in which curriculum development was approached, interviews were conducted with the Directors of three of the Curriculum Development centres set up in 1971. They took the view that the centres came into being not only as a response to the curricular difficulties being faced as a result of comprehensive education, but also in anticipation of the curricular implications of raising of the school leaving age. Initially, they were subject specific and were intended to service the ideas put up by the respective Central Subject Committees, with which they worked in close co-operation marked by consensus. The Central Committees decided curriculum development 'policy' in the form of recommended principles of good teaching, and the Centres' task was to disseminate these. One Director hinted that their role was by no means clear:

The Centres were set up in 1971 as a reflection of the current thinking and on the impetus of N.C.I.S.T.T. They were seen as the major subject areas of that period. Colleges were used as the locus because of administrative convenience. The compromise solution was to make them a college adjunct rather than independent, since there were doubts about their status, function and actual performance.¹¹⁵

(Centre Director)

The Directors acknowledged the powerful centralising influence of the Scottish Education Department (Chapter Four), but varied in their views of the extent to which the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum was an appendage of central government. Nonetheless, they all accepted that in such a system the predominant model for curriculum development was of the centre - periphery, or top-down type. They shared doubts about the effectiveness of the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum as a

vehicle for curricular reform - although agreeing that it was 'influential' - given the power of Scottish Certificate of Education examinations as determinants of what is taught, and the fact that teachers want curricular assistance which is of direct and immediate applicability to the classroom situation. At best, they opined, reform was gradual over the period under study, and conducted within established and accepted lines.¹¹⁶ They confirmed that the appointments of practising teachers to Consultative Committee on the Curriculum Committees were made on the advice of Her Majesty's Inspectors' identification of 'good' practice. They were in agreement - perhaps not surprisingly - that the Centres had been successful, insofar as they had provided guidance for teachers in the form of teaching materials and documentation, and generally offered guidelines for curriculum development in a comprehensive education system. A final point worth making is that they all stated that no systematic evaluation had been undertaken of the Centres' success in getting the ideas they promulgated taken up in schools, largely due to a lack of manpower and resources. Clearly, therefore, a heavy reliance was put on the power of their publications and materials to induce teachers to take new ideas on board, and it is by no means certain that all the undoubted effort expended at both national and local levels brought schools any nearer to a solution of the complex problem of devising an appropriate curricular model for the comprehensive school:

Answers are still being sought to the problems of meeting all the educational needs of all young people who now remain in school till they are 16 ... despite a sustained national effort in curriculum development, there is a general awareness that much remains to be done ... most schools would have to admit to a failure to engage the interest of that proportion of their pupils who cannot relate to the traditional academic organisation in our schools.¹¹⁷

It is not, therefore, fanciful to suggest that, curricular innovation was allowed to 'muddle on', with little in the way of serious

monitoring, and that any planning undertaken was confined by the parameters of the existing educational system, and principally targeted at the provision of instant assistance for hard-pressed teachers. Moreover, it is likely that the subject-centred basis of many Consultative Committee on the Curriculum committees of that time precluded the consideration of more radical considerations like multi-disciplinary courses. Curriculum development for the comprehensive school thus appears to have been based more on expediency than on any underlying philosophy. The implication is that only the genuinely committed teacher would endeavour to re-orientate his professional practice to a comprehensive wavelength, while other teachers - for very understandable reasons - eschewed change in favour of well-tryed classroom practices. The last word is left to one of the Centre Directors:

What was required was the evolution of a whole new set of aims and objectives ... much was attempted, there was much controversy and polarisation ... we have only had partial success in our attempts to provide support for teachers in terms of curriculum development ... we have only really begun to scratch round the edges of confronting the sheer enormity of the task of changing the educational system at the level of its curriculum and practice ... change takes place at a pace dictated by public and/or professional opinion, which means that the bureaucrats can sit back in their controlling position and approach innovative ideas or proposals for reform with a 'let's wait and see how it works in practice outlook and attitude of mind' ...¹¹⁸

THE ADVISORY SERVICE AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING PROVISION

The growth of curriculum development in the 1960s, given extra impetus by the changeover to comprehensive education, saw the expansion of the advisory service, with subject specialists being added to the existing organisers or superintendents who had been appointed as resource assistants in practical subjects.¹¹⁹ In the area under study, Glasgow led the field in recognising the need for a group of proven subject

specialists to advise the Directorate on subject developments, and assist schools with their implementation.¹²⁰ The Director of Education, addressing his Association of Directors of Education in Scotland colleagues, attributed his authority's decision to appoint advisers to the pace of innovation and reform, and the fact that the momentum was such that the existing Directorate staff complement was unable to take the strain. Having identified people of appropriate experience with the proper personal qualities, the authority would charge them with the task of going into schools and helping teachers to overcome their fear of change by becoming professionally involved with them in development tasks, but in a non-interfering way. He sounded a note of optimism:

Advisers will bring up to date what is taught and introduce new methods of teaching ... there is a great leap forward in Scottish education and the use of advisers will go a long way to ensuring that the leap has a successful landing.¹²¹

Official accounts of the development of the education service over the period speak in complimentary terms of the contribution of the advisory service, and suggest that the Director's vision was being fulfilled. A Scottish Education Department Annual Report, for example, has this to say:

Additional advisory staff are a further impetus to local development. They have often exercised a decisive influence in stimulating and funding re-appraisal and experiment.¹²²

The O.E.C.D. in a recent report was likewise full of praise:

Advisers provide a link between nationally inspired initiatives and their adoption in schools, and give advice on the teaching of specific subjects ... we gained the impression from the few areas visited that they exercise an influence out of all proportion to their small numbers.¹²³

However, in the exercise of their duties, advisers did not always earn the plaudits of those with whom they came in contact. The Report commissioned by the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum, while recognising that the greatest potential for dynamic change existed where there was a corps of able and enthusiastic advisers backed by the Directorate¹²⁴ stated that two difficulties had been encountered in practice: the variable abilities, personalities and enthusiasm of those holding advisers posts, and the varying conceptions they held of their responsibilities and duties. Interviewees (excluding advisers) questioned in connection with this research acknowledged that some advisers had fulfilled their role in an exemplary fashion but felt that, in general, they functioned as a peripheral group, lacking authority, credibility and above all co-ordination, and were increasingly perceived as the messengers of the Directorate. In order to qualify these perspectives, it was considered important to take account of the views of advisers themselves as revealed in interviews given in connection with this study. There was a general acknowledgement that one of their key functions was to help teachers face the curricular implications not only of comprehensive education, but of the bewildering complexity of change in the years under review. While they saw themselves as 'leaders of development', a number alluded to the fact that they were part of a body which essentially reacted to central initiatives, since the concept of the adviser's function had never satisfactorily been clarified by the system. There was virtual unanimity, however, on their own conception of their function: principally to foster curriculum development, support teaching staff and hopefully thereby improve the quality of teaching, and offer subject advice to headteachers and Directorate staff alike. Two interesting descriptions given were of advisers as 'professional brokers' and 'agents of quality control'. Since a

substantial part of their work involved relationships with other groups in the education service, advisers were asked to describe how they had found them as colleagues in the task of promoting development work in comprehensive schools. A recurring point made was that in the early years of the period under review Directorate staff relied heavily on the advisory service and accorded it some status as their 'eyes and ears' in the same way that career civil servants rely on the Inspectorate. Similarly cordial and collaborative relationships had been enjoyed with members of the Inspectorate, who had acted as 'ideas people'. Dealings with headteachers were described as variable and person-specific, but on the whole most heads had taken a positive stance towards advisers and relied on their support and assistance. Notwithstanding a minority of hostile or awkward principal teachers, most advisers had had good relations with and much goodwill from a majority, even if individuals varied in their levels of enthusiasm for change.

On the extent to which, in their view, change had actually occurred, the advisers' consensus was that any development had been slow: although in many cases teachers 'had to change to survive', changes in content and methods were gradual, even with the avalanche of work-sheet based work to which comprehensive education gave rise. The power of the familiar exercised a strong influence on practice, particularly on any 'radical' ideas about mixed grouping of children and integrated courses involving several departments. Preparation for certificate examinations never left teachers' consciousness, and impinged on work even in the early stages of the comprehensive school. One is left with the strong impression that only the minority of really committed teachers actively kept up with developments, and attempted to realise them in their classrooms, so that whereas it was undeniable that changes in the

curriculum and methods had taken place, advisers found it difficult to quantify the willingness with which new ideas had been greeted. The advisers interviewed were also asked to enumerate the difficulties they had encountered in the exercise of their duties. The salient points can be listed for convenience, and not only provide an interesting gloss on the official statements on the advisory role mentioned earlier, but reflect great credit on the achievements of those advisers who were successful in effecting changes in classroom practices:

- winning the genuine support of headteachers and principal teachers
- insufficient time to visit schools and meet practising teachers, due to a deluge of paperwork
- insufficient budget and secretarial assistance
- competing with other advisers for in-service time slots
- persuading superiors in the Directorate of the need for change, and for more direct intervention in the school curriculum
- role uncertainty deriving from their uneasy position on the fulcrum between the Directorate and headteachers/schools.

But by far the main source of frustration expressed by the advisers was the marked change in their role and function since the reorganisation of local government, some of the effects of which were discussed in Chapter four. The Director of Education for Strathclyde produced a paper in 1975 on the advisory service, which listed what he saw as its functions (advice to schools; in-service work; promotion of curriculum development; assistance with placement of teachers; advice on staffing; assistance with monitoring of requisitions/equipment; assistance with planning new schools; arrangements for courses/festivals for pupils) but suggested changes:

The quality of the education service depends to a significant extent on the performance of these functions by

qualified and experienced officers ... the term 'adviser' is not wholly appropriate. Some of their functions are executive ... much of their work is in the 'field'. In these circumstances it is recommended that those appointed ... should be designated as 'field officers' ... some rationalisation of the service is necessary to ensure that all parts of the Region receive the benefits of the service ... the future establishment will be 121 as against the 129 employed at present.¹²⁵

The Report went on to suggest that four existing posts should be subsumed by education officers, that advisers should be paid on local government rather than teachers' salary scales and that teachers should be temporarily seconded to posts as field officers 'as an occasional alternative to filling a vacancy'.

The Report caused a furore in the service and was universally resented by advisers who took it to be an expression of the Director's personal misgivings about their role.¹²⁶ Be that as it may, many advisers interviewed testified to a marked loss in executive authority consequent on the Report and an diminished responsibility for decision-making. They experienced a reduction in their power and an almost public loss of status, and this at a time (the late 70s) when curriculum development in the shape of the Munn and Dunning Development Programme was beginning to acquire a new lease of life after comprehensive education and raising of the school leaving age. Indeed, they spoke of a perceived erosion of their curricular function (this being overtaken by the Inspectorate), not helped by their having had a widened role thrust upon them with responsibilities for a variety of additional, administrative tasks for which they had no training. Several remarked that, as a result of the lack of educational vision of the Directorate, advisers had become emasculated functionaries responding to their superiors' fiat, from whom they had become increasingly distanced professionally. It may be that

the new relationship between advisers and officials arose partly because of the more political and bureaucratic atmosphere which followed Regionalisation to which reference was made in Chapter Four. Nevertheless, asked if they thought that schools had benefited from having had their services at a time of rapid change, most took the view that they had offered positive help to teachers, and in some cases extended their professional vision and acted as a pressure group on their behalf. One regret shared by most was that, despite being in existence for almost twenty years, the potential of the service had never been fully appreciated, with its efforts remaining unco-ordinated and undervalued.

From the foregoing, it is possible to argue that the advisory service suffered from the fact that the implementation of comprehensive education was confronted after its adoption as official policy. Moreover, a policy perceived as imposed and from which practitioners have been largely excluded, probably is likely to be harder to implement, intensifying the marginal role as change agents of a group like the advisers. Above all, their experiences of promoting change in comprehensive schools illustrate how difficult it is to translate policy ideals into curricular reforms at classroom level. The picture which emerges from this account of the advisory service in the West of Scotland is that it suffered from the fact that there appeared to be a lack of overall control and co-ordination of the education service as it was coming to terms with the realities of comprehensive education, with the inevitable result that the service had no policy or strategy to direct its functioning. Perhaps Glasgow's Director of Education in 1968 was naive in his assumption that advisers could effect lasting change, given the traditional autonomy of schools and the likelihood of varying

degrees of defensiveness in response to pleas for change from the outside.

One of the principal means by which advisers could heighten teachers' awareness of curriculum development was by arranging in-service courses in the many Teachers' Centres which were created in the late 1960s. One of the first of these, Dundas Vale Teachers' Centre in Glasgow, opened in 1968, and its warden described its function as outlined by Dr. Mackintosh, the Director of Education under whose influence it had been brought into being:

A Teachers' Centre exists to investigate the objectives of teaching, develop methods and materials and then set up evaluation and feedback for classroom practitioners.¹²⁷

That the Centre was utilised is in no doubt; the warden stated that in session 1969-70, 41,629 individuals had participated in talks, conferences, working parties and exhibitions. Indeed, one of the first major conferences held was on the subject of the comprehensive school. The Director of Education explained the thinking behind it:

The establishment of a comprehensive system in Glasgow has been carried out largely if not entirely based on our local knowledge and resources. It is felt, however, that any future developments or consolidation might be improved by making comparative studies of comprehensive systems elsewhere.¹²⁸

To that end, an English headmaster had been invited to address the assembled gathering of Glasgow headteachers on 'The Essential Comprehensive School', after which delegates split into five discussion groups to consider communications, assessment, guidance, the role of parents, and the social character of the comprehensive school. Successive Scottish Education Department Annual Reports bear witness to the proliferation of in-service courses in the late 1960s and early

1970s, and the expansion of Teachers' Centres in other areas of West Central Scotland. The activity was widespread, and considerable effort was expended in mounting a wide variety of courses for teachers both during the day and after school hours or at weekends.¹²⁹ Impressive though these initiatives were, however, there were problems, as an O.E.C.D. report acknowledged:

A wide range of national and regional in-service training, partly provided by authorities, partly by colleges attempts to ensure that those wishing or requiring additional training can be provided: for ... such training is discretionary in that no teacher can be forced to undertake it. Many would wish to see more training, but with limited staff flexibility in schools and limited resources, probably as much as can be is being done. Less is known than perhaps should be about the effect of such training.¹³⁰

The enormity of the task should not be underestimated: given that for the most part curricula and methods had been slow to change and had remained geared to the needs of an academic, selective system, nothing short of a revolution would have been required to remedy the perceived inadequacies of teachers' training, as a preparation for the realities of teaching in a comprehensive school. Nevertheless, it is possible to argue that the approach adopted was not as effective as it might have been. One interviewee, closely involved with in-service provision over most of the period under review, while, acknowledging the sincere efforts of N.C.I.S.T.T.¹³¹ and members of the Inspectorate, college lecturers and advisers in organising in-service courses offered this assessment:

In-service provision was so diverse that regrettably it was not kept under as much review as it should have been. Colleges and authorities have tended to go their own way. So many agencies were involved. Occasionally an attempt was made to gather information, but not much was done with it.¹³²

(Academic)

This interviewee felt that a major inhibiting factor to the success of in-service work had been that it was virtually unco-ordinated, with no one person in overall control (pace N.C.I.S.T.T.). The result was that courses which were mounted occurred in an ad-hoc way, as a response to school trends and the perceived needs of teachers, and were staffed thus:

Contributors to courses came from the 'old boy' network. Usually they were people who had made an impact in their particular field. It is always easy to do this in Scottish education, where the same stage army of participants is repeatedly wheeled into action.¹³³

The planning of courses fell victim to the pressures of educational management:

All attempts made by Strathclyde to create formal mechanisms for consultation with the college fell by the wayside for lack of clear aims. There were twice-yearly meetings of the Depute Director, college staff, six education officers and HMI, which were of limited value, and amounted to an exchange of views. The theory was fine: identification of in-service needs from the education officers, followed by an attempt to mount an in-service programme to meet those needs. The reality is this: the pressure of day to day life on education officers is so great that ... in-service training is relegated on the list of priorities ... much depends on the individual drive of college and connections established by individual advisers. A lot of what happens springs from private arrangements.¹³⁴

To counterbalance the provider's perspective, interviewees were asked to comment on how helpful in-service courses in their experience had been in enabling teachers to come to terms with the implications of comprehensive education. On the credit side, the overall view was that courses had heightened professional awareness of the issues involved, had enabled a fruitful interchange of ideas to occur, and not least had bolstered flagging morale by spreading the realisation that 'others were in the same boat'. But it was felt that much effort had been dissipated (albeit for well-intentioned motives by those involved), so that

provision was adjudged inadequate and effects at best uneven. Mention was also made of the fact that many participants at courses felt them to be over-concerned with theoretical matters, and this was allied to a suspicion of the credibility of some college staff, whose background and experience had not equipped them to speak with authority about the new situation in comprehensive schools. Also mentioned was the view that many participated in courses so as to maximise their promotion chances, while the lieutenants of the 'stage army', by becoming 'hero innovators', were destined for a meteoric rise through the ranks.

Advisers, too, had views on the development of in-service work over the period, but from a different standpoint. In general, they took the view that it had been important in shaping ideas and 'getting things moving', but had serious reservations about the following features: the fact that attendance by teachers was voluntary; the same teachers tended to support courses; the crucial importance of adviser enthusiasm and industry; the divergence between effort expended by organisers and the follow-up on ideas in schools, which, in some cases amounted to no more than a token nod in the direction of innovation. Some candidly stated that efforts had been amateur if well-motivated, and substantially lacking in co-ordination and planning. The school-focused in-service work, which expanded after the contraction of teaching college pre-service courses in 1977, after a promising start in the embryonic stages of the Munn and Dunning development programme also ran into difficulties of negotiation and co-ordination. One is left with the conclusion that what was achieved was not as effective as it might have been, always conceding that teachers struggling to keep abreast of the welter of developments in comprehensive education would almost certainly have been worse off had nothing at all been attempted. Perhaps the result was

inevitable in a system in which curricular matters are the province of the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum, and assessment that of the Examination Board, with in-service training left to straddle the divide uneasily and responsibility for it being assumed by a variety of different organisations and individuals both locally and nationally. Moreover, if it is argued (as did one interviewee) that 'good curriculum development precedes good in-service', then perhaps part of the explanation is that both were promulgated simultaneously by individuals who were as much in search of answers as their target audience. Not surprisingly, therefore, what was provided reflected the perceptions and preoccupations of the providers, which may not always have mirrored teachers' needs. The difficulties in arranging effective in-service were summed up thus:

The impact of in-service over the period has been patchy. Some of it has been very good, and you can see its effects at work in schools. Other factors impinge on potential impact, so that it is not possible to detect a simple cause and effect linkage. Headteacher and staff support is a crucial factor ... the mechanism for linking off-school courses and what happens in schools is weak. There has been very little staff development of a serious or co-ordinated nature ... up till now a systematic approach to staff development has been alien to the Scottish scene.¹³⁵

(Academic)

ORGANISATIONAL AND PEDAGOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH A COMPREHENSIVE POLICY OF EDUCATION

It has always been argued in this thesis that those charged with implementing the policy enshrined in Circular 600 tended to conceptualise comprehensive reorganisation in essentially structural terms. Indeed, interviewees affirmed that once all post primary pupils had been allocated to the local secondary school in their catchment area there was a widely-held perception that a comprehensive system of secondary education had been achieved. It seems clear, however, that

underpinning the purely physical change was the objective of broadening the goals of secondary education. The attainment of this objective carried far-reaching implications for prevailing concepts of educability, the administration of secondary schools, curricular provision, classroom organisation, methodology and assessment. This section of the chapter will consider these matters and examine how schools came to terms with the more fundamental implications of comprehensive policy.

Guidance

The Scottish Education Department 'Orange' booklet Guidance in Scottish Secondary Schools (SED 1968) proposed that in view of the changing circumstances of Scottish education (comprehensive schools, larger school population, the imminence of raising of the school leaving age) there was a need to systemise the traditional 'concern' that all good teachers displayed for their pupils, and that this be achieved by the introduction of a new concept - 'pupil guidance' - which should have three main branches - curricular, vocational and personal. The intention was to provide a balanced form of guidance in which the needs of the whole child would be catered for, and the booklet can be seen as an attempt to propose a rationale for one of the pressing practical problems of the new comprehensive school as it was evolving. It acknowledged that certain authorities had already instituted a 'house master' system and that this venture had met with success.¹³⁶ Guidance arose ostensibly from the growing importance being attached in the educational world to the needs of the individual pupil, and from an increasing awareness that the quality of personal relationships had a vital place in the educational process. It was also consonant with a comprehensive philosophy, in that was posited on a wider concept of

education, namely that all pupils of all abilities should develop their full potential. On a more practical level, guidance was intended to deal with the problems arising from the complex nature of the comprehensive school, the broader range of abilities, and the wider socio-economic background of the pupils.

A recent study of guidance in Scottish schools explained the rationale for the new system in these terms:

The functioning of the large comprehensive school offered a new set of challenges to staff and pupils alike. In the new situation there was need for a facilitating agency to help the comprehensive ideal develop and work in practice and at the same time enable the pupil to gain the maximum benefit from it ... the various patterns of guidance structure began to emerge in response to the developing needs and problems of the comprehensive school.¹³⁷

One Scottish Director of Education encapsulated the essence of the new concept in these words:

Guidance is the systematic organisation of forces which ensure the efficient discharge of the social responsibilities of the school ... guidance is a whole school responsibility for the beneficent influence upon the education, vocational and pastoral needs (of the pupils) ... (it is) the acceptance of a wider social role.¹³⁸

He went on to stress that this acceptance entailed a complete re-appraisal of the philosophy, policy and practice of the school, and brought schools unquestionably into the arena of management, requiring aims to be defined and specific responsibilities to be delegated. These implications had not proved easy to embrace:

Entrenched school establishments underwent spasms of dynamic conservatism before acceptable organisations and patterns of management were elaborated ... points of friction, pockets of misunderstanding, clashes of principle, attitude and personality have arisen. An untried sociological approach with untrained operators has been introduced after generations of well ordered, subject-based, 'real' education.¹³⁹

The Annual reports of the Scottish Education Department for the period also indicated that schools' attempts to introduced systematised pastoral care were causing problems, but typically in a more muted prose style:

It will be some time before significant progress towards realising the aims suggested in the Memorandum can be expected, but in a number of areas conferences have been held and committees set up to consider the issues and make recommendations.¹⁴⁰

Even by the late 1970s, an important study of the effects of the introduction of comprehensive education in a sample of Scottish schools suggested that guidance, especially careers guidance, was still problematic:

The general picture of guidance was still diverse.¹⁴¹

A paper delivered at an international seminar on comprehensive education drew attention to one area of contention:

Schools were left to devise a system which seemed to them to suit their needs ... the speed with which (guidance) posts were filled, and the criteria used in making the appointments led to a certain discontent among the teaching profession ... the new guidance systems were born into a somewhat sceptical and hostile world.¹⁴²

Guidance appears to have suffered the fate of many educational innovations: its introduction without consultation with and understanding by those who had to administer it caused unrest, and supportive measures were provided after the event. It thus had to be seen as a major organisational change imposed on the emerging comprehensive school, an enforced structural alteration as it were, which was left struggling to establish its identity in an educational landscape in a state of flux. It is, therefore, not surprising to find pleas from thinking practitioners trying to make the system work,

apparently in the dark:

A complete rethink is required on the meaning of the concept of guidance in schools and of viable structures which will allow its development, without additional endemic organisational problems. Given that they have promoted this innovation in Scottish education, the SED have a responsibility to aid its correct development, and to prevent its becoming subject to the distortions it has sadly had to endure in too many of our schools.¹⁴³

The writer was not alone in her concern that guidance was going adrift, as evidenced by other pieces of research conducted in the 1970s.¹⁴⁴ Even Her Majesty's Inspectorate acknowledged that, although progress had been made, problems still existed in the concluding section of its own published survey of developments: changing staff relationships; especially guidance/non-guidance; variable quality of guidance offered; organisational forms which inhibited personal guidance; engaging staff support for the concept; restricted use of guidance staff; inadequate 'social education courses'; unclear role definitions for guidance staff; the need for guidance to be a 'whole school' responsibility; the need for more in-service training.¹⁴⁵ Even by the end of the period under review, the tensions caused by the introduction of guidance had by no means been resolved:

Criticism of guidance does exist within the teaching profession. Commitment to the ideals and organisation of guidance are not universal.¹⁴⁶

It may be that the partial success of the guidance system derives from the fact that the wrong emphasis was adopted: the implementers were put in the position of having had their awareness of an issue (pastoral care) heightened, but had not been sufficiently persuaded of the need to change schools as institutions as a consequence of comprehensivisation. Such circumstances were likely to militate against a ready acceptance of

pastoral care and its ramifications.

School Management Structures

I urge heads to acquire the tools of management, and to accept the change from benevolent autocracy to the leadership of a professional team.¹⁴⁷

The statement is indicative of the growing awareness in the late 60s following comprehensive reorganisation that the existing structures for running schools were obsolete. A recent Inspectorate report describes the need for a management approach thus:

From 1965 a series of major political decisions brought about the reorganisation of secondary education along comprehensive lines, the abolition of selection on transfer from the primary to the secondary stage and the raising of the school leaving age. These major shifts of emphasis called for a critical look at management planning if schools were to adjust to them, and a proper framework for co-ordinating and directing change effectively.¹⁴⁸

In 1971, following a study of the duties and responsibilities of staff in a number of secondary schools, the Scottish Education Department published 'The Green Paper',¹⁴⁹ which described the far-reaching changes that had recently taken place in secondary education in these terms:

The reorganisation of secondary education ... has affected both pupils and teachers ... for the teachers these changes have involved the devising of courses which are relevant and suitable for a wide range of ability; the re-examination of established methods of teaching ... the planning of the work of departments as a combined exercise; and the application of revised forms of assessment. For the organisation of the secondary school in general, these changes have had important implications for administration, timetabling, curricular planning and supervision, staff training and the supervision of probationer teachers, and the provision of curricular guidance.¹⁵⁰

Consequent upon such considerations the Department set forth a new structure of promoted posts, better able, in its view, to deal with the

complexities involved in running comprehensive schools. The paper argued the case for more managers because schools were, notionally at least, no longer solely academic institutions. It also implicitly questioned the idea of the autocratic headteacher by introducing the concepts of management - organisation, policy and aims, communication, delegation - clearly favouring a more participative approach. To realise its aims, this plan for administrative innovation introduced new promoted posts (assistant principal teachers (subject)); assistant headteacher; assistant principal and principal teachers (guidance), and advocated that schools should be managed by 'a board of studies', (Para 6.3) comprising the schools senior promoted staff. The increased range of responsibilities for staff at senior levels carried an expectation that comprehensive schools could more easily cope with innovation by having in place a structure to facilitate the coherent management of the curriculum and of the guidance system. Arguing the case for revised promotion procedures and for a greater say in appointments by headteachers, the paper stated:

The increase in the number of promoted posts and the growing importance of the functions attached to them make the selection process of vital consequence for the well-being of the schools and for the morale of the teaching profession.¹⁵¹

Although the paper was subtitled 'a document for discussion', little discussion is recorded, and in the space of a few years, all local authorities had made appointments to the new posts. The speed with which the new posts (and consequential vacancies) were filled, and the criteria used in making some appointments sometimes led to professional discontent, as evidenced by this attack on the 'advert mania' which followed the Green Paper's publication:

This precipitate action is disturbing, as the proposals raise fundamental questions which ought to be answered

before any action is taken ... before any more authorities jump on the bandwaggon, uniformity of purpose must be established.¹⁵²

It must be borne in mind that, like the introduction of guidance, the Green Paper called for a major modification of the traditional organisational landscape in an educational system of which the subject departments and their principal teachers were major and established features. Thus the new proposals had an inbuilt potential for conflict. Indeed, the Scottish Education Department Annual Reports for the period indicate that the ready acceptance by authorities of The Paper's recommendations had resulted in a number of problems: lack of definition of the duties/responsibilities of holders of the new posts; a demand for in-service training in management; a promotion merry-go-round; staff mobility slowing the pace of curriculum development; lack of success in using the structure to improve the quality of curriculum planning in schools.¹⁵³ Partly in response to this situation, the Scottish Centre for Studies in School Administration was set up in 1972 in Moray House College of Education, and since then it has become the principal national agency for training senior school staff. Its main purposes are to co-ordinate information on the application of basic management principles in schools, to collect current views on curriculum design and information and to develop courses as a means of disseminating such information. It did not assume a precriptive role, but sought to promote an exchange of ideas and experience among participants by exposing them to programmes and visiting speakers of a high standard. The Centre also issued to every secondary school Occasional Papers commissioned on relevant management topics. The current director cites the continuing demand for places on the courses it runs as the best evaluation of success of the centre's programme.¹⁵⁴

Be that as it may, the ostensible stimulus given to wider participation in school policy formulation by The Green Paper sometimes resulted in a degree of devolution of authority which was more apparent than real. The Fairlie Report had this to say three years after the Paper's publication:

All headteachers freely admitted in discussion with the Working Party that there was a need for them to look at communication systems within their schools. They accepted that hierarchical systems tend to operate only downwards ... and that many schools do not as yet provide adequate channels through which the views of the teachers can be transmitted ... in all schools the new management structures were a recent innovation and their potential for promoting curriculum policy had still to be considered and developed.¹⁵⁵

The Working Party also discovered that the responsibilities of the new post of Assistant Headteacher had not as yet been defined in any serious manner, nor had the holders begun to assume a policy co-ordinating role, being described by one interviewee as 'glorified message boys'. The findings of a study conducted just after the period covered by this research suggested that the implications of the structure of promoted posts advocated in the Green Paper had still not been fully faced.¹⁵⁶ The ten year period may have been marked by some progress, but, even accepting that serious efforts were made to mount management courses, it is suggested that promoted staff in secondary schools found difficulties in adapting to the management challenges thrown up by comprehensivisation (the formulation of policy, the management of the curriculum, effective delegation, communication and consultation). That the management of educational change was the subject of an Inspectorate Report in 1984¹⁵⁷ should come as no surprise, as one interviewee explained:

Comprehensive reorganisation and what it has achieved in schools has at best stuttered forward in places. Only bits of revolutions ever really succeed. Each new official

report from the SED is best seen as an acknowledgement of the system's inadequacies and failures.¹⁵⁸

The Raising of the School Leaving Age in Practice

Raising of the school leaving age was discussed in Chapter Four as an example of policy handling by the Scottish Education Department. It is appropriate to return to it, since it was, after comprehensivisation, the next most fundamental change that the secondary system had to accommodate in the face of professional opposition to its practical implications. Notwithstanding this reservation, some saw it as an opportunity to make comprehensive education more of a reality than it had been:

In the past ten years an attempt has been made in some comprehensive schools to retain selectivity and still come to terms with zoning by grafting on some of the more immediate innovations of the comprehensive system ... it was like connecting a carburetor to a steam engine in a vain attempt to improve performance ... now, when RSLA is imminent, is the moment in history to go completely comprehensive and develop a system that is relevant to our time.¹⁵⁹

The sentiments expressed by this Glasgow headteacher accord with those of a considerable number of people interviewed in connection with this research, who took the view that raising of the school leaving age in 1972 forced many teachers, who in various ways and for various reasons avoided the implications of going comprehensive in 1965, to acknowledge them in earnest. Most notably, raising of the school leaving age threw the problems of making appropriate curricular provision for the complete spectrum of pupil ability into sharp relief. However, the enthusiasm evident in the above extract was not universal, and successive Scottish Education Department Annual Reports bear witness to several problems, despite the frenetic activity of many local working parties of teachers trying to devise suitable curricular materials: the level of planning

for raising of the school leaving age varied from authority to authority; schools were experiencing difficulties in integrating Scottish Certificate of Education and non-Scottish Certificate of Education elements in so-called 'bridging' courses; staff shortages were adversely affecting development work; many locally produced courses were being rejected by teachers in favour of increased presentation of pupils for Ordinary grade courses (after awards were banded in 1973) or of presenting them for the Certificate of Secondary Education Mode 3 offered by English boards; such raising of the school leaving age courses as were tried proved too difficult for the least able.¹⁶⁰ Once again, it seemed, the Scottish system had failed to provide an answer to the question of providing a viable and valid educational diet for pupils ill-suited to academic work.¹⁶¹ Indeed, there is evidence that some schools were at a loss as to what to do with the pupils 'inherited' as a result of raising of the school leaving age. The Education Committee of the Educational Institute of Scotland had been alerted to a dubious curricular practice:

Members had to hand copies of evidence gathered by the central advisory committee on Home Economics in support of its complaint that Home Economics departments were being used as dumping grounds for non-certificate pupils.¹⁶²

Even where teachers had recourse to a detailed strategy for dealing with the curricular problems posed by raising of the school leaving age, the response was sometimes less than encouraging. This was the case, for example, in Glasgow, where a working party had produced a Report¹⁶³ which argued its case on three key points: a flexible timetable to make the curriculum fit the pupil; a wider use of integrated courses involving several departments; the attempt to balance the subject curriculum by the compulsory insertion of a new concept - Intra

Curricular Activities. One Glasgow AHT described the uptake of these ideas in these terms:

The Report was totally ignored by some, half-heartedly welcomed by others and greeted by a few as a genuine attempt to solve the problems thrown up by RSLA ... I.C.A. was greeted by cynicism and derision by teachers.¹⁶⁴

There seems little doubt that raising of the school leaving age caused schools coming to terms with comprehensive education a real headache, and confronted teachers with a dilemma in terms of what to teach and even how to cope with the needs of a wide range of pupils - comprehensive education with a vengeance. At the time, newspapers repeatedly drew the attention of their readers to the fact that all was not well. Two brief extracts from widely differing publications will serve as an illustration of the many which appeared:

These pupils are among hundreds all over Scotland who go to school to do nothing ... some sit and play cards, a few do odd jobs for janitors. They are known as 'ROSLAS' ... according to many teachers they are being left in many classrooms with no lessons. An English teacher at a Glasgow secondary school said: WE JUST WEREN'T PREPARED FOR THE ROSLAS. THEY GET NO EDUCATION AND NO ONE KNOWS WHAT TO DO WITH THEM.

We have to face the fact that for many children of limited ability attempts at day school education are not working. The problem has been accentuated by RSLA ... the non-academic is only too aware that he does not fit into an academic system in which he is bound to fail ... many comprehensive schools are not a feasible educational situation.¹⁶⁵

Her Majesty's Inspectorate, with uncommon frankness in a published report, acknowledged that raising of the school leaving age had been a failure in terms of what comprehensive schools provided for the pupils, and catalogued the shortcomings: teacher rejection of national and locally-produced courses in favour of mass presentation in Scottish Certificate of Education exams; teachers unwilling or unable to face

the demands in terms of organisation and planning that these courses required; teachers largely made improvised arrangements which induced disenchantment, and apathy in many pupils; teacher attitudes communicated themselves to the pupils; the least able were very badly done by.¹⁶⁶ The report contains a rare acknowledgement that the demands placed on hard-pressed teachers had perhaps been unrealistic, and that it was imprudent to expect too much of schools:

It is important that those who plan such changes ensure that the generality of schools can progress at a reasonable pace; to leap too far ahead is to invite difficulties.¹⁶⁷

Above all, perhaps, two points are worth making about the spectacular lack of success of raising of the school leaving age: it may well be the case, with the benefit of hindsight, that putting all the eggs in the curriculum basket was not the best or only solution to the problems posed by these pupils. Indeed, it could be argued that the differentiated curricula which emerged in the wake of raising of the school leaving age in effect worked to the disadvantage of the very pupils the measure was intended to help in the new comprehensive system; in what curriculum work was done, it is clear that innovation has a greater chance of success when it is attempted with the co-operation and involvement of the teachers expected to put it into practice. One senior member of the Inspectorate put it thus:

Preparations for RSLA were based on practice somewhere, but the established practice of local authorities producing what are now called 'guidelines' - these were often handsomely produced examples of long-winded, cliché-ridden platitudes about 'relevance' and 'practical activities' - left too many teachers in the dark, ignorant of classroom problems, or what was wanted or how to set about producing it. Too many steps between the production of guidance and implementation of practice were omitted, and no training system outside the classroom could really bridge the gap.¹⁶⁸

Internal Organisation

It was suggested earlier that comprehensive policy implied a new rationale for secondary education - equal respect for all pupils as individuals irrespective of ability. This increased the importance of ensuring that the education offered to pupils was matched to their abilities and progress.

A thorny aspect of comprehensive reorganisation proved to be the seemingly endless debate on how to organise the incredible variety of pupils of varying achievement, interests and aptitude which constituted the pupil body. Conferences in-service courses and subject journals both local and national all included contributions from enthusiastic practitioners who claimed to have found a 'better solution' to a central question in the comprehensive school: how and when to differentiate according to ability. The journal of the Educational Institute of Scotland reflected the professional confusion in 1966 in what could be seen as a prophetic statement:

The internal organisation of comprehensive organisation also raises problems to which no one has yet found a satisfactory answer.¹⁶⁹

Over the next few years, Scottish Education Department Annual Reports bore witness to schools' attempts to come to terms with the organisational realities of the comprehensive school in what could be described as a spirit of cautious experimentation, the main features of which were: mixed-ability groups (random, balanced or in broad bands of ability)¹⁷⁰ a common course of subjects lasting for Secondary 1; group methods very unpopular in secondary classes; extraction for special attention of pupils with severe learning difficulties; the gradual emergence of setting, usually in Secondary 2, and certainly in

mathematics and modern languages; the common course resulting in the postponement of a second language; the opening of Technical Subjects and Home Economics to both boys and girls.¹⁷¹ Obvious in the Reports' comments and guarded prose are the disputes and divisions of opinion which such issues caused among teachers:

The problem of catering for differences of ability in particular subjects is a real one.¹⁷²

Two further official reports of the early 1970s give an indication of the direction developments took. A Her Majesty's Inspectors document, while stating that the common course had been generally adopted for Secondary 1 and some of Secondary 2, and that clear trends towards mixed-ability grouping in the period of orientation were discernible, pointed out that reservations about heterogeneous grouping still persisted:

Many schools have abandoned their traditional fine setting in the initial stages. The great majority of comprehensive schools still maintaining streaming were in the West of Scotland ... almost all schools modified their internal organisation in order to take account of the different aptitudes of pupils as these revealed themselves ... By far the most common method was setting, usually delayed until S2.¹⁷³

One year later, the Red Book (an attempt to establish national staffing standards) testified to the fact that many schools were still engaged in a process of organisational transition:

The principle of mixed-ability grouping in S1 and S2, and the attempt in S3 and S4 to extend setting beyond those pupils following exclusively SCE courses in order to give all pupils an adequate choice and activities within a balanced course were still at an early stage of development.¹⁷⁴

By and large, Secondary 1 and Secondary 2 were treated in comprehensive schools as a period of general education within a common course, with

progressively emerging differences in ability catered for by setting or the provision of additional subjects; in Secondary 3 and Secondary 4 a more perceptible separation occurred, with pupils placed either in certificate or non-certificate grouping, the former having little exposure to practical/aesthetic subjects, the latter occasionally exposed to vocational/leisure course elements. It is relevant here to mention the Strathclyde Regional Council study alluded to earlier. One of its findings was that the operation of subject options at the Secondary 2/Secondary 3 interface in effect constrained pupil choice, and that four-fifths of early school leavers could be correctly identified as they entered Secondary 3. Moreover, the researchers found that decisions taken at this crossover point were almost irrevocable, and caused a split in pupil attitudes to school, those having been selected for Ordinary grade presentation exhibiting a significantly higher degree of liking for schooling.¹⁷⁵ A survey conducted in Glasgow schools essentially provided support for the findings of these national trends in years Secondary 1 - Secondary 4 of the comprehensive school, but its authors concluded their findings with two pleas: that urgent consideration be given to the consequences of organisational changes in terms of in-service help for teachers; and that teachers should make more realistic assessments of pupils' ability, and cease giving so many the benefit of the doubt with regard to Scottish Certificate of Education presentation.¹⁷⁶ An unmistakable feature of the situation was the enormous variety of practice which characterised comprehensive schools in their attempts to find satisfactory organisational strategies. One factor which helps to account for such a variation was alluded to by individuals who were interviewed in connection with this study: the latitude accorded to headteachers in implementing comprehensive policy according to their own definitions in their

schools.¹⁷⁷ Interviewees displayed virtual unanimity in stating that headteachers had a completely free hand, left as they were to their own devices by the Directorate. All they ever received were broad guidelines, never directives, so that they were key people in controlling the extent and pace of organisational developments. Interviewees made much of the concept of a 'comprehensive facade', which they claimed often masked a dilatoriness and a passive resistance to pressures to change.¹⁷⁸ Questioned on the related theme of the internal changes that took place in the wake of comprehensivisation, a recurrent point made was that vested interests (caused by training, experience, ideology, and the desire to prove that comprehensive schools could succeed in national examinations) remained to the fore, so that adherence to grouping by ability proved a powerful concept, traditional ways remaining substantially unaffected by external exhortations to innovate. A point also made was that the enormity of the change expected was misunderstood, and that in such circumstances a reversion to elitism was inevitable, resulting in an unintentional educational discrimination against pupils of lower ability in the comprehensive system. Even as late as 1980, the advance towards uniformity of practice in internal organisation had made only marginal gains, as the Strathclyde Study already mentioned found out.¹⁷⁹ In the booklet 'Organisation of Classes', the researchers reported that a significant number of teachers considered mixed-ability classes 'unteachable', although they were able to advance the educational and social justification for their formation. Homogeneous classes on the other hand, preferably streamed, were the ideal. Teachers claimed to be able to tell the difference, even when it was proved to them that all classes are really of mixed-ability. It was suggested that the use of labels like 'mixed-ability' and 'set' may create teacher expectations which

have little basis in reality, and that general ability does not necessary correlate with ability in subjects across the curriculum. In effect, the booklet argued against the traditional, expository paradigm of class teaching, and suggested that improvements should be sought by exploring the possibilities of individualised learning. Such a concept, however, seemed far from the consciousness of many teachers in comprehensive schools, if the OECD was able to state in 1983:

To summarise the present view of comprehensive education in Scotland, therefore, there should be no selection at the end of primary school and a common course for the first two years of secondary with some setting in some subjects ... treatment of the least able constitutes a further difference of views.¹⁸⁰

An official study of comprehensive schools commissioned by the Scottish Education Department and conducted from 1970-72 argued that comprehensivisation was a prime example of an organisational change the rationale for which had theoretically changed the goals of secondary education. The finding was, however, that, given the ambiguity and uncertainty surrounding the aims of comprehensive education, there was a very real danger that the change was largely cosmetic and structural, leaving the goals for the school system held by practitioners largely intact. The research report ended with a strong recommendation 'to those responsible for the management of the school system as a whole', presumably Scottish Education Department officials, Her Majesty's Inspectors/Inspectorate and the Directorate:

Many of the developments over the past decade have been essentially organisational ... yet it appears that insufficient thinking has been done about the organisational implications of these innovations ... which have been conceived for political, philosophical or educational reasons; but the organisational consequences have been largely unintended ... in future the organisational implications of any development must be scrutinised ... if this is not done, the educational impetus may be thwarted or compromised.¹⁸¹

Methods

Organisational change has not as a matter of course been accompanied by changes in methods.¹⁸²

So commented the Inspectorate in its survey of significant trends emerging in a fluid situation in comprehensive schools in the early 1970s, and gave evidence of a wide variety of staff attitudes on methods for teaching mixed-ability classes. The Inspectors noted that the much-quoted fear that able pupils' progress would be impeded in heterogeneous class groups was not widespread, and stated that successful new arrangements owed much to headteacher initiative, even if the survey 'revealed a disconcerting absence of clearly defined policy' in schools. Innovation was clearly at the experimental stage, and had not yet been elevated to the level of the management of learning. Again, the Annual Reports of the Scottish Education Department for the period 1968-74 provide a useful barometer of the speed of educational developments, and, with regard to the adaptation of teaching methods, the account they offer can best be summed up as pointing to a growing appreciation among teachers of the need to change, embryonic moves to develop appropriate materials, and a gradual experimentation with alternative methods. Nevertheless, the following verdict was recorded:

In S1 and S2 teachers of some subjects were still having difficulties with mixed-ability teaching.¹⁸³

Interviewees, asked about the effect of comprehensivisation on methods, almost all bore witness to the powerful hold exercised by whole class teaching. The justification given by many was the monolithic presence of the Scottish Certificate of Education exams, and the reluctance to depart from well tried ways for fear of damaging the prospects of the 'high flyers'. Consequently, the overwhelming perception was that

change was gradual (if it happened at all) in the comprehensive schools in the West of Scotland, and that any serious-minded efforts to institute new teaching methods were confined to a minority of comprehensive enthusiasts. Notwithstanding this general picture of sporadic, piecemeal progress, a not inconsiderable number of interviewees freely admitted witnessing the emergence of a freer atmosphere in classrooms, the increased use of worksheets and other specially devised teaching materials and the generally beneficial effect of new examination syllabuses, all of which were attributed to a gradual broadening conception of educability amongst teachers as the comprehensive system developed. It could thus be argued that the introduction of comprehensive education, and more specifically the problems highlighted by the related concepts of the common course and mixed-ability grouping gradually over time increased teachers' awareness of the wide variations in pupil ability and potential for progress. One conclusion of the research commissioned by Strathclyde Regional Council in the late 70s was that mixed-ability classes had merely highlighted pedagogical problems which selective grouping had concealed, but the researchers found that teachers resorted in the main to, two strategies: whole class teaching pitched somewhere around the middle of the ability range, or an over-reliance on the prop of worksheets, some of which were of indifferent quality. Their list of prerequisites for effective mixed-ability teaching (inter alia adequate resources; adapted timetabling; teacher attitude; school policy statements; appropriate assessment techniques; greater awareness of the potential of resource-based learning) indicated by implication that these had not been greatly in evidence in the sample of schools surveyed.¹⁸⁴ One of the papers prepared for an international seminar on comprehensive education in 1980 argued that mixed-ability classes had been accepted by the majority of

teachers in Scottish situation more as 'a vital means of social control in the comprehensive school' than out of a subscription to the social integrationist arguments promulgated in their defence. Acknowledging that 'the tradition of class teaching dies hard', the paper went on to paint the following picture:

Most teachers are now concerned with the 'how'; of mixed-ability teaching rather than the 'why', and are chiefly interested in finding appropriate materials and methods ... the task facing teachers is a fundamental realignment of thinking and a revision of attitudes, particularly towards pupils with learning difficulties.¹⁸⁵

Recognising that all the problems associated with mixed-ability teaching were far from being solved, the paper welcomed what it called the 'greater degree of sophistication' (Para 3.3) apparent in classrooms in comprehensive schools in the late 1970s.

A major shift in teacher attitude is underway, and for a greater number the pupil rather than the subject is of primary importance. It could reasonably be argued that the comprehensive school, and in particular the mixing of abilities within it, has been chiefly responsible for this significant change ...¹⁸⁶

This assessment was substantiated by many interviewees when asked if they thought that the advent of the comprehensive school had caused teachers to reappraise their professional approach to the job of teaching. They stated unequivocally that teachers simply had to confront change in some measure, and that the comprehensive school had acted as a gradual catalyst over time. They were of the opinion that the rate of change was age-related, and also due to the thinking of headteachers and particularly principal teachers (subject): the more keenly they 'pushed', the more change occurred. By the late 1970s, they claimed, professional thinking was beginning to embrace concepts like 'skills', 'process' and 'differentiation' in a more positive frame of

mind. While encouragement should be derived from such statements, it has to be said that this review of organisation and methodology suggests the following propositions:

- the traditional autonomy of Scottish schools accounted for the wide variety of practices encountered. There was no agreement in finding answers to what comprehensive education meant in practice
- the exponents of innovatory practices should not underestimate the power of routine practices and the institutionalised, inherited professional customs of teachers
- the unpreparedness for and insecurity caused by requests to experiment without adequate support can lead to a reversion to the familiar
- implementers are not passive recipients of external exhortations to change, which, if delivered in a top-down way, are liable to lead to the adoption of a defensive stance
- despite preservice training and years of practical experience, many teachers' academic expertise was not matched by a ready adaptability to the requirements of teaching in comprehensive schools:

Assessment

a) S1/S2. In common with curriculum, organisation and methodology, the changeover to a comprehensive system brought about changes in thinking about how pupils should be assessed. One writer has recently stated:

... one of the main ideas behind comprehensivisation (is) that a wide range of pupil abilities should be assessed.¹⁸⁷

Official reports written in the late 1960s and early 1970s indicated that the wider spectrum of ability in the comprehensive school gradually forced teachers to the recognition that traditional methods of assessment would require to be modified. The picture which emerges, as with earlier aspects examined, is one in which departures from the norm

were cautious, and radical experimentation rare: most schools retained formal written examinations for all pupils (sometimes reducing the number from two per annum to one), and an appreciable number conjointly operated a form of what was called 'continuous' assessment, but which perhaps more accurately should have been described as 'periodic' or 'unit' testing, the function of which was largely predictive and assisted with ranking.¹⁸⁸ The investigation into practices in Secondary 1 and Secondary 2 commissioned by Strathclyde Region discovered the following features in the sample of schools it studied: primary school reports were used for allocation purposes; pupils were assessed in Secondary 1 and Secondary 2 by a combination of formal exams and continuous assessment, attachment to the former being for 'atmosphere' purposes; results tended to be standardised about a common mean; reports to parents contained numerical marks, an 'effort' grade, and sometimes a grade for behaviour.¹⁸⁹ At this stage, therefore, assessment served no function either as an evaluation of what was being taught, or as a probe into the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Practices appeared to be heavily conditioned by prevailing system goals and teachers' assumptions about the purposes of school education. It was only towards the end of the period under review that a more refined assessment model began to be discussed, and aspects of it incorporated as an integral part of teaching materials.¹⁹⁰ This involved the concept of criterion referenced assessment, in which tests are used diagnostically as formative teaching instruments rather than a summative statement of performance. Such a system is predicated upon the syllabus being broken down into detailed objectives in terms of the knowledge and skills pupils should have attained as they progress through the course. Even by 1980, however, such ideas were only beginning to impinge on the professional consciousness:

It is too early to arrive at a balanced judgement on the usefulness of this form of testing ... the challenge will be to see how applicable it is to every subject and investigate its potential for national assessment.¹⁹¹

A counterbalance to such innovative work in the field of assessment is provided by a statement made on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary in 1979 of Crookston Castle Secondary School, one of Glasgow's pioneering comprehensives:

The ideal of the comprehensive system for laymen is that all children have equality of educational opportunity. In effect, this has led to all children being taken into a territorial school, assessed for the first two years or so ... after a process of continuous assessment, the subjects at which the child is best and enjoys most are sorted out and decisions are taken.¹⁹²

Thus, even as new approaches to assessment were being advocated, restricted perceptions of its function in comprehensive schools still obtained.

b) S3/S4. An extract from an O.E.C.D. Report provides a useful context for a consideration of assessment in the middle years of the comprehensive school:

The nature of the national examination system has a considerable effect on the curriculum followed by pupils in S3 and S4 ... the stable teaching groups of the earlier years become fragmented as individuals choose subjects most relevant to their needs and interests, and in which they may be set by ability. Since comprehensivisation an increasing number of pupils has attempted these examinations. Many would argue that this is one of the benefits of the change from early selectivity.¹⁹³

Given the ideology which informed the thinking of members of the Working Party's whose Report (1959) established the Scottish Certificate of Education Ordinary grade (Chapter 3), and what has already been said

about problems attendant on raising of the school leaving age, the last sentence is open to some doubt. Nevertheless, the Ordinary grade examination, conceived as a solution to certain practical problems besetting the Scottish educational system¹⁹⁴ enjoyed an almost spectacular success, and came to occupy a pre-eminent place in the minds of teachers and provided a focus for much of their work. A notable feature of the examination is the fact that it did not undergo fundamental change for many years. Such changes as did occur were of form and content rather than scope.¹⁹⁵ Mention has already been made (Chap. 3) of the mounting discontent with the adequacy of the Ordinary grade examination as successive cohorts of pupils in comprehensive intakes came through the system. Despite strongly-expressed advocacy of examination reform, notably from leading figures in the Educational Institute of Scotland, the Scottish educational establishment set itself resolutely against change.¹⁹⁶ The case for a reconsideration of the national examination system at Secondary 4 was argued on grounds of social justice by the HAS:

There is at the start of S3 a division between those who pursue certificate studies and those who do not. There seems an element of injustice or betrayal at this point if the school firmly aligns itself with the certificate followers while the rest pursue courses which are more or less unstructured ... a large number of our colleagues who manage comprehensive schools are troubled by the injustice here implied.¹⁹⁷

The argument then assumed a blatantly pro-comprehensive, not to say anti-academic stance:

A situation in which a syllabus of facts and theories is committed to memory, then regurgitated on paper in an examination is one that bears no relevance at all to the work of the world ... by perpetuating it as the significant achievement, schools continue to align themselves with those few for whom such a skill is a temporary relevance.¹⁹⁸

The extent of the success of such calls for a realignment of the Ordinary grade examination with a developing comprehensive system can be gauged in the Exam Board's eventual (compromise) decision that, from 1973, awards would be made on a banded scale A - E (instead of A, B and C). Hardly a revolutionary step, but it was explained as the outcome of the Board's deliberations over a five year period which had taken account of professional disquiet, and of the proceedings of the two conferences on examinations it had held in 1968 and 1970 to which reference was made in Chapter 3.¹⁹⁹ The decision to band may be better understood in the light of the Board's view that, while it had no objection to a consideration of the future of the Ordinary grade, its positive contribution to (assessment-led) curriculum development should not be misjudged simply because, consequent upon raising of the school leaving age, pupils outwith its intended ability range were being presented for it rather than take 'unsuitable courses for the less able'.²⁰⁰ Nevertheless, the Board set up a sub-committee in 1973 to report on the form, purpose and structure of examinations held and certificates awarded, in order to determine whether a review of existing practice was necessary 'in the light of the changing circumstances of Scottish education'. That existing examinations were not catering for the entire range of candidates from comprehensive schools presented is evident from the Board's Annual Reports from 1974 onwards. In these, examiners repeatedly draw attention to the following unsatisfactory features in scripts: candidates with poor spelling and punctuation; candidates unable to express themselves in simple comprehensible English; massive overpresentation of candidates, with many ill-equipped to tackle written examination requirements; the lodging of appeals for candidates with little hope of passing. All of which suggests that the following opinion had some justification:

Despite all these indications of an awakening interest in new models of assessment, the academic tradition of a written test prevails in Scottish education ... there has been no radical change ... the hungry sheep look up and are not fed, or else are withdrawn from the system ... without speedy implementation of a national system of assessment and certification for all pupils, comprehensive education, will be in the doldrums throughout the 1980s.²⁰¹

This examination of developments in assessment in comprehensive schools prompts the following reflections:

- teachers in comprehensive schools faced an insoluble dilemma: whether to provide success in public examinations for the able minority of their pupils (in order to prove that comprehensive schools were succeeding) or to give equal attention to the needs of those of average and lesser ability. In other words, there was a tension between the desire to educate and the need to certificate
- comprehensive schools found themselves caught up willy-nilly in the contemporary clamour for qualifications in society at large, and thus had foisted upon them an instrumental role which militated against equality of treatment for all
- the official adoption of comprehensive education did not imply any fundamental change to the system's 'raison d' être and underlying' goals, which were related to conventional academic success
- extended secondary education, by providing equality of access for all pupils but concentrating on those who could meet academic criteria, created a surreptitious form of selection by the curriculum in Secondary 1 and Secondary 2, occasioned by the percolating influence of Scottish Certificate of Education Ordinary grade examinations.²⁰²

COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION IN PRACTICE IN FOUR AREAS OF WEST CENTRAL SCOTLAND: AN INSPECTORATE PERSPECTIVE

Having examined in general terms some of the central developments with which schools had to contend as they came to terms with the implications of comprehensive education, attention will focus in this section on the particular picture presented by schools in the four areas of West Central Scotland with which this thesis is concerned. Observations will be drawn from a selection of Reports prepared on these areas by members of Her Majesty's Inspectorate.

Her Majesty's Inspectors of schools in Scotland play a major role not only in the periodic assessment of school performance, but in initiating and implementing change, especially with a view to encouraging parallel progress throughout the country ... there are 113 Inspectors, enough to ensure a substantial impact.²⁰³

It is generally agreed that the Inspectorate occupies an unique position in the education service, in being able to form an accurate picture of the day to day work of schools in order to discharge the former of the two responsibilities mentioned in the above extract. It is, therefore, a reasonable hypothesis that Inspectorate Reports are authoritative and reliable accounts of the work of schools. Prior to considering reports which appeared post Circular 600, it is instructive briefly to note comments made in reviews of secondary education in the West of Scotland one session earlier, by way of setting the later statements in context. In general it can be said that, even in areas where an embryonic form of comprehensive organisation was in operation, the prevailing ethos and modus operandi in secondary education was academic, and geared to the aims of the senior secondary school. In the section on Dunbartonshire, for example, we find this paragraph:

It is time to say that the vast majority of schools have only a limited aim - the thorough preparation of pupils for SCE exams - and few headmasters have as yet formulated any definite philosophy of education ... If we accept that the

aim of most schools is the presentation of as many pupils as possible for the maximum number of subjects in SCE exams, and the number of pupils who pass as a measurement of the schools success, then we must admit that this aim is generally realised. It is nevertheless a limited aim, vocational rather than general.²⁰⁴

The report on Glasgow, while complimentary about the city's expanding comprehensive provision, pointed to a basic problem in secondary schools:

The contrast between paper qualifications and standards of teaching is all too often striking. Teachers appear to be insufficiently critical of their own methods in a good many instances. It may well be that Principal Teachers are appointed at too late a stage in their careers when they are less willing and less able to accept change readily, and consequently their assistants do not receive the help or guidance they need.²⁰⁵

The quality of leadership in secondary schools in Renfrewshire came in for some trenchant comment:

The many suggestions offered by the (1959) Working Party have not greatly influenced Renfrewshire secondary schools ... old traditions are clung to without serious consideration of other problems and radical rethinking of the basic curriculum is unlikely to take place until new headmasters take over.²⁰⁶

That this approach was being undertaken for 'good' motives is explained slightly later, in a telling snapshot of the atmosphere in many secondary schools:

It would be unjust, however, to leave the impression that secondary education is in the hands of wooden traditionalists. The schools are doing what the majority of the staff believe is in the best interests of the pupils ... There is an underlying feeling that things should not be made too easy, and that there is merit in asking rather too much of the pupils ... It is doubtful if one can honestly say there have been notable developments in teaching methods.²⁰⁷

A report on Lanarkshire bemoaned the fact that newer techniques of

teaching had not had marked effects on the work of secondary departments in a strictly segregated and unchanging system:

The general situation throughout the county is much the same as in previous years, the majority of senior secondary schools providing tangible evidence of successful teaching in terms of SCE exam results, and junior secondary schools providing courses which reveal few departures from the established pattern.²⁰⁸

The Inspectors also drew attention to other recurrent features of secondary education at that time: didactic, whole class teaching often with dictated notes, setting pupils by ability, neglect of practical and aesthetic subjects, few attempts at social education or integration of pupils of differing abilities. From these reports, then, it can be seen that, on the eve of comprehensivisation secondary schools in the West of Scotland were in general work-orientated institutions characterised by uninspired if thorough teaching methods which pushed pupils inexorably towards presentation in national examinations. Clearly, the impending metamorphosis enshrined in Circular 600 was going to pose formidable problems.

INSPECTORATE REPORTS 1965-80

Dunbartonshire.

The picture which emerges is of a county which made a genuine effort to grapple with the problems facing secondary education and that this approach came from the top:

The Director has been responsible for most of the work concerned with the recruitment of staff. He shows a sympathetic and imaginative approach to problems. Under his leadership, the morale of the teaching profession has greatly improved and relations between staff and administrators are cordial. He has regular meetings with headteachers at which a wide range of topics is discussed.²⁰⁹

At the level of catering for the needs of teaching staff as they arose, officials in Dumbarton were described as 'an efficient unit', particularly with regard to in-service, in a subsequent report:

The Authority in Dumbarton is active in its policy of providing teaching staff with as much in-service training as possible, usually in the form of meetings of subject panels, working parties and conferences.²¹⁰

The same report stated that headteachers at one such conference on guidance in March 1972 expressed themselves satisfied with progress, but the Inspectors noted that district staff would 'urgently require to undertake a detailed appraisal of what had been achieved'. Particular praise was reserved for the Authority's initiative in setting up a Resource Centre, and appointing a Development Officer to provide a reference point for teachers who had to cope with the realities of raising of the school leaving age. Nevertheless, some comments on subject teaching, showed that school staffs had not always responded to the challenge of teaching in a comprehensive school:

English: The Course book - centred lesson is still the norm in many classrooms in the County.

History: Teaching is generally effective but on the whole in a rather conventional manner.

Modern Languages: Changes at P.T. level have deprived departments of the leadership of able teachers, at a time when changes in approach and methods are still in train. Even more regrettable is the absence of an adviser.

Art: A working party report does not appear to have led to experimental work in non-certificate art courses. A change of method and approach is required.²¹¹

Some organisational features of the comprehensive school were proving slow to integrate:

The new structure of promoted posts has been introduced, but the development of guidance has been slow in most secondary schools. The new structure has made less impact than in other areas of the Western Division.²¹²

Predictably, class teaching gave the Inspectors cause for concern:

It is not reasonable to expect teachers with little previous experience of mixed-ability secondary teaching to cope with classes of between 30 and 40 ... teachers are currently grappling with a new teaching situation in physical conditions designed for passive class learning by intellectually homogeneous groups.²¹³

A later report on secondary education in the county drew further pointed remarks, this time about new management structures in schools:

In a number of schools senior teachers have encouraged or initiated interesting experiments, but others have not yet come to terms with the demands implicit in the responsibilities assigned to them. Many A.H.T.'s. are committed to administration or to class teaching, and lack the time or opportunity to develop their ideas.²¹⁴

This report went on to be critical of the limited effect of the advisory service, directorate staff and assistant headteachers (curriculum) had been able to bring to bear on development work despite good intentions and hard work, and added that this threw a greater burden on Principal Teachers (subject), not all of whom responded appropriately:

In most schools Principal Teachers assume their traditional role of giving guidance to staff and the organisation of resources with responsibility and diligence, but the wider conception of the P.T. as departmental manager has not always fully been realised.²¹⁵

Methods in Secondary 1/Secondary 2 were dominated by class teaching, and in Secondary 3/Secondary 4 the work seen was widely influenced by the requirements of Scottish Certificate of Education presentation. The Inspectors concluded:

The considerable extension of the range of pupils involved has not been accompanied by a comparable widening of the range of teaching methods and resources in use.²¹⁶

An appropriate management structure for guidance had only been

'partially developed' and was lacking in teamwork, even though teachers in the guidance field were sympathetic and conscientious. Even the Curriculum Development Centre, the object of earlier praise, came in for criticism:

The Authority showed foresight in setting up the Centre. It is therefore disappointing that conclusions have to be drawn about the effectiveness of its operation, and the way in which it produces its innovatory materials ... schools still have to take full advantage of the services offered and the materials produced.²¹⁷

In-service provision came in for praise for its scope but adverse comment for its lack of co-ordination. The Inspectorate view of developments in comprehensive education as reported in these official documents leads to the following assessment: the County was fortunate in having a Directorate team which endeavoured to tailor provision to the rapidly changing circumstances of the period and maintain co-operative relationships with its teaching staff. Nevertheless, work remained to be done to translate some of the sound initiatives and hard work into fruition in its schools.

Glasgow

As is to be expected, District Reports on the city tend to be lengthy, but all give a powerful impression of an authority which spared no effort, despite formidable difficulties, to assist its teachers come to terms with new ideas consonant with its long established comprehensive philosophy. Not long after the issue of Circular 600, the following developments took place: a committee under the Depute Director was set up to examine transfer schemes in the light of Circular 614; all schools were generously supplied with all manner of audio-visual equipment; the E.T.V. service established in 1965 was expanded; a report on the education of less able pupils was in preparation; and new

appointments were made to the advisory service.²¹⁸ Further evidence of the forward thinking of the Directorate is provided by its decision to appoint a Steering Committee of Headteachers which, working with thirty colleagues, met to discuss the comprehensive school, the house system, the comprehensive curriculum, internal organisation, less able pupils and timetabling.²¹⁹ However, the pioneering, vocationally-oriented courses devised in the spirit of the Brunton Report were running into difficulties:

The recurring problem in courses of this kind is the degree of integration that is desirable, the working out of worthwhile contributions from established subjects, and matters of organisation relating thereto. Progress has been slow ... most of them cater for the abler pupils in non-certificate courses.²²⁰

The city's decision to expand the advisory service made an early impact on newly-opened comprehensive schools, and those in the process of transition:

Secondary advisers have made a considerable contribution to curriculum development and are beginning to initiate relevant in-service training ... their impact on development has been very great, many new panels have been formed. Advisers have produced reports and guidance papers. In future they may have to pay more attention to in-service training so that the teaching force may be able to adopt their advice with confidence in the classroom situation.²²¹

One of the early Consultative Committee on the Curriculum papers (The Ruthven Report, 1967) was made the subject of a series of conferences, given its major relevance to the comprehensive school, and much discussion took place on Secondary 1/Secondary 2 organisation, timetabling flexibility, orientation and observation and the use of group methods.²²² The Inspectorate paid glowing tribute to the development in the city of comprehensive education in theory and practice made by the Director and three pioneering headteachers of early

comprehensive schools, all of whom retired in 1968; the Director's service was 'marked by an enlightened enthusiastic dedication to education and a constant advocacy of and pressure for extended provision and new developments', and the heads were praised for translating 'visionary and idealistic dreams into the reality of a school'.²²³ Another factor which contributed to Glasgow's position in the vanguard of educational advance was its active involvement with Her Majesty's Inspectors staff:

In the absence of a parallel machinery of initiation, promulgation and advocacy, the Director involved Glasgow staff in his policies, until it became a cliché of official utterances to acknowledge the presence, participation and even the inevitability of the Inspectorate at the centre of educational development in the city.²²⁴

The results of this partnership, the Inspectors claimed, had beneficial effects on comprehensive secondary education:

It is the general contention of the Inspectorate that the Authority can turn to its advisers with growing confidence to maintain intensive contacts with schools ... the development of a complex system of committees and attendant advisers determined more or less what is taught in schools and how.²²⁵

Turning their attention to schools, the Inspectors recorded their satisfaction with some headteachers:

The successors to the founder fathers of Glasgow's comprehensive schools have made an encouraging start. They have not donned the mantle of the great; on the contrary, their cool appraisal of the situations in their schools makes it extremely probable that comprehensive education may change direction not a little. One thing is already apparent: the new men are less emotionally swayed by social considerations, and will probably intensify their efforts on the academic side (in the best sense of the word) of the provision they make. Without seeming to be anything as sinister as a cabal, they operate as a gregarious team pooling ideas and sharing each other's experiences at meetings in other schools.²²⁶

Thus the Directorate appeared to be conscious of the importance of the criteria on which vacant headships in comprehensive schools should be filled. It also took an important step in employing auxiliary assistance in all secondary schools in an attempt to free teaching staff from routine administrative tasks. Her Majesty's Inspectors commented thus on the quality of the auxiliaries:

The applicants were of high calibre and play a most valued role. They have established their position and make a good impression.²²⁷

Nonetheless Glasgow teachers, even with the impressive degree of assistance offered by the Authority on all fronts still experienced difficulties with the practice of comprehensive education:

There is a general reluctance to adopt group methods, and difficulties in dealing with mixed-ability. The fear is that the pace of the whole class is retarded, and better pupils are insufficiently stretched ... the prevailing view is that it is simpler to stream ... pressure of exam subjects is responsible for a reluctance to adopt the idea of minority time ... it is proving extremely difficult to achieve the integration of subjects in any permanent manner. ... schools are dominated by the demands of SCE examinations and its separate subject compartments.²²⁸

Other difficulties alluded to in comments on individual subjects show the diversity of receptiveness to comprehensive practices: principal teachers divided roughly into two camps - those eager to embrace development work and those who react with hostility at the mention of the word and are left behind (English); very active work in History being translated into good practice in schools; much committee activity but questionable uptake of ideas in schools (Geography); slavish following of the book, attention to the able and consequent disadvantage to the less able (Mathematics).²²⁹ A subsequent report noted the following achievements in the field of secondary education: the establishment of a long term approach to problems of education in

socially deprived areas; the convening of a committee to co-ordinate plans for raising of the school leaving age; and the decision to hold regular study conferences (at least two a year) on matters of major importance to the changing scene in secondary education.²³⁰ It also drew attention to a particular problem facing headteachers in old established senior secondary schools as comprehensive pupil intakes progressively made their presence felt:

The comprehensive intakes in schools like Albert and Whitehill have tended to be too much for staffs ... long but narrowly experienced staff have devoted themselves to getting a very ordinary group of pupils SCE passes ... headteachers have had to lead men and women, accustomed to matching their colleagues in fee-paying schools in standards, into a period where the fate of comprehensive schools in the city is likely to rest on them rather than on the teachers in comprehensive schools which have already made their mark.²³¹

Undaunted by these residual pockets of senior secondary practice, the authority forged ahead with an even more intensive programme of in-service provision of formal courses, annual conferences, study conferences, and ad-hoc group meetings, all specifically targeted at the comprehensive school:

The Authority thinks that committee membership is itself a form of in-service training. Ten per cent of staff are involved in some for or another ... in its exploration of the concept and organisation of the comprehensive school, the Authority has been trying to ensure that by means of working parties etc., headmasters in particular become a positive thinking force.²³²

After pioneering what was to become guidance by its appointment in 1963 of housestaff, the Authority decided to undertake a review of its current practice in this domain after its introductory period, and, further, gave 'active consideration to the overall organisation and curriculum planning for raising of the school leaving age' by setting up

a top-level working party to examine the central issues in detail.²³³ However, such was the pace of change and the self-selected range of tasks by the Authority, that in the run-up to regionalisation, Her Majesty's Inspectors drew attention to what it saw as a potential hazard:

Where an authority is deficient in its systematic organisation for development, it has always been a proper function of HMI to make this known to the Director, and persuade him to remedy the position ... one of the main tasks of District staff has been to establish the comprehensive organisation for development which a large authority needs to stimulate new development and keep its service under review.²³⁴

Her Majesty's Inspectors pointed out that the Directorate team was overstretched, some remits being too heavy, others lacking in unity. Nevertheless, the undoubted activity at senior levels produced two major local reports:

1. The Green Paper (1971) having been adopted in principle, a small committee was set the task of reviewing its operation in practice in a sample of schools to assess the overall quality of school management. The overall conclusion was 'cautious movement', but showing considerable progress in exploiting the potential of management, with as yet more concern with immediate practical issues than with long term policy planning. Communications and delegation had been inadequately addressed.
2. A sub committee on comprehensive education was set up in April 1972 to make a full study of all aspects of secondary education and report to the Authority as it deemed advisable. Under the leadership of the Depute Director and adviser in secondary education, the group produced a report (after visits to schools in the city, in England, and wading through in excess of thirty educational reports) which crystallised its findings in fifteen

principal recommendations to headteachers, covering organisation, communications, curriculum, discipline, staffing, links with parents and outside agencies.²³⁵

In their accounts of the developing picture of secondary education in Glasgow, the Inspectorate, while not ignoring the difficulties and setbacks Glasgow had to face create a picture which depicts in senior officials a genuine concern for educational advance, and no reluctance to confront the problems inherent in comprehensive education. The Authority, having once committed itself to development, provided its teachers with opportunities to become involved in the initiatives it stimulated. In Glasgow there certainly seems to have been plenty of goodwill matched by much hard work in an attempt to deepen understanding of and provide guidelines for the complexities of the comprehensive school. The evidence suggests, however, the achievement of these intentions seems to have been rather uneven.

Lanarkshire

A similar willingness to tackle the implications of comprehensive education was not evident in Lanarkshire. An early Her Majesty's Inspectors Report commented on the county's 'poor image' as an employer, caused in no small degree by its apparent isolation from schools, a factor which was to be remedied by dint of Her Majesty's Inspectors pressure:

... curricular development within the county has not hitherto been co-ordinated by the Authority; nor has there been much attempt to arrange for consultation with teachers at county level. This session, however, the Director has agreed that to this end Development Committees should be set up in most subjects of the secondary curriculum; and detailed arrangements have been worked out by consultation with HMII.²³⁶

The establishment of these committees to identify aspects of subjects in need of development and offer advice to the Directorate staff clearly represented a major breakthrough:

It had been hoped that during the past session conferences of secondary Headteachers would be held to discuss the internal organisation of the comprehensive school; but, for a variety of reasons, it was agreed after discussions with the Director, that the time was not opportune for these. Instead it has been agreed that next session the Authority will convene a series of conferences ... at which a variety of organisational and curricular aspects of secondary education will be discussed.²³⁷

Given that Circular 600 was issued in 1965 it is interesting to reflect on why the Director felt it inopportune to discuss its repercussions at school level, when a strong lead from his staff was called for to initiate such activity. The District Report for 1967-68 had to record that the authority had been 'disappointingly slow' in setting up the appropriate machinery to stimulate curriculum development and provide schools with guidance on various aspects of comprehensive education, and provided this explanation and account of its consequences:

The reasons for the Authority's inaction in this respect are many and complex but ... the principal factor is the lack of sufficient administrative staff to run an organisation as big and important as Lanarkshire educational system with vision and efficiency ... the present administrative complement (of four) ... is so deeply involved in the day to day administration of the system that none of them is able to formulate an overall educational policy, to ensure co-ordinated progress on the major educational developments of the day, or to maintain adequate contacts with teachers ... the results ... are that schools are uncertain of the direction in which they should develop ... such developments as take place are halting and haphazard, and the educational administration is viewed with suspicion and antagonism by teachers and parents alike.²³⁸

Given that no committees had been set up (despite persistent advice from Her Majesty's Inspectors) to examine secondary education, no conferences had been arranged, no subject advisers appointed, the implementation of

comprehensive education was left to develop with no terms of reference for schools:

... as the various problems unfold, each headteacher is left very largely to his own resources in facing them, and no coherent strategy or guidance on the part of the authority can be discerned ... a very serious case can be made for the appointment of a professional educationist charged in the first instance with the development of secondary education along comprehensive lines.²³⁹

The lack of authority initiative prompted members of the district inspectorate team to conduct an informal survey with Lanarkshire headteachers 'of where they were and where they intended to go with regard to comprehensive education' in early 1968.²⁴⁰ Not surprisingly, the picture which emerged was marked by glaring diversity of practice with a marked reluctance to jettison the trappings of selectivity, the Inspectorate intervention having been the first time many heads had had the opportunity to broach the issues involved in comprehensive secondary education. Her Majesty's Inspectors commended such headteacher initiative as was found, and the obvious enthusiasm and heightened morale which teachers participating in the Curriculum Development committees displayed, but such efforts seemed condemned to exist in a policy vacuum:

What has been missing, as in previous years, has been any overt sign on the part of the Authority that they accept the need for educational advance or are prepared to establish the machinery necessary for it ... the consequences of the County Council's policy are frightening ... one can only look forward to a further period of maladministration, inefficiency, inadequate planning and friction with teachers. Teachers will become increasingly frustrated by absence of county policy on important educational issues.²⁴¹

However bleak the prospects for comprehensive education, given such a lack of policy and absence of any lead from the authority, Her Majesty's Inspectors reported a further serious obstacle:

HMI have found a wide range of reactions among Headteachers to ideas expressed in C600, C614, the Ruthven Report and Guidance in secondary schools. Very few wholeheartedly accept the views of the comprehensivists ... the majority, while conceding the need for organisational and curricular reform especially in the context of the comprehensive school, are quick to put forward reasons for not introducing changes at present ... a considerable number of heads have told HMII that they have no intention of making any changes in their schools until the Director lays down a policy on comprehensive education.²⁴²

Indications that teachers would have to look in vain for help in implementing the comprehensive policy imposed on them by the authority could only have been reinforced by its delay in distributing to schools the bulletins and reports produced by the Curriculum Development Committees. The 1969-70 Her Majesty's Inspectors Report²⁴³ was the first to testify to encouraging signs of change (more administrative assistants for schools; the decision to buy a Teachers' Centre; publication of a series of Staff Papers and Advisory Newsheets; the appointment of more senior staff to the authority; an increase in in-service provision), but the praise was somewhat diluted by criticism that the benefits accruing were dissipated through lack of co-ordination and poor communications by the Directorate:

The slow progress made must again be largely attributed to the failure of the administration to offer guidance and leadership in tackling the many problems arising from the implementation of comprehensive education. In particular, no attempt has yet been made to bring together some of the able headteachers in the county to help in formulating advice and policy for their colleagues on the basis of experience gained in their own schools. Thus interesting developments in individual schools are unknown to the majority.²⁴⁴

In fairness, however, the Director did produce a paper containing his ideas on the operation of the House System in comprehensive schools which appears as an appendix to a Her Majesty's Inspectors' Report.²⁴⁵ This departure from normal practice provided a note of encouragement for

teachers in comprehensive schools who had to deal with a repetitive failure on the authority's part to bring developments, once agreed, to fruition. One Inspectorate Report begins by enumerating areas in which changes expected did not materialise - the advisory service; the Teachers' Centre; working groups on raising of the school leaving age; publication of the curriculum papers emanating from subject committees; lack of any formal in-service training.²⁴⁶ In such circumstances of drift, new thinking on developments arising from comprehensive education - and raising of the school leaving age - could hardly make the desired impact on school staffs, and the inevitable conclusion was drawn:

It is evident that many schools have a very great deal of fundamental rethinking to do about school organisation and staff functions in relation to the aims and objectives of comprehensive education.²⁴⁷

Even when the advisory service was expanded the following session, the response to advertisements was so disappointing both in quantity and quality that only a few appointments were made, the others being re-advertised.²⁴⁸ Planning for the Teachers' Centre and Resources Centre in a local college was described as 'fitful', and Her Majesty's Inspectors recorded the fact that there had been continuing complaints from teachers about poor communications with and a lack of consultation by the Directorate staff.²⁴⁹ It is hard to escape the conclusion that public relations did not constitute a feature of the decision making process at senior levels in the educational administration. As a consequence of the authority's failure to provide adequate in-service opportunities for teachers, despite evidence that many wished to participate, and to devise an efficient means of co-ordination and development of the organisational and curricular aspects of comprehensive education, no policies emerged on the following key areas:

pupils with learning difficulties; raising of the school leaving age; assessment; and internal management functions (in the light of the Green Paper).²⁵⁰ When a major expansion of the advisory service was finally effected, the advance, though welcome, was marred by the fact that advisers' duties were not clearly defined, all the more regrettable since the ultimate incumbents of the posts were of good calibre and willing to tackle the backlog of development work which awaited them.²⁵¹ Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that, at the time of their appointment six or seven years after the issue of Circular 600, major problems relating to all the principal implications of comprehensive education had yet to be confronted. As the Inspectorate put it:

The whole question of organisation and management seems to be of concern in all secondary schools.²⁵²

Lanarkshire provides a stark contrast to other areas in West Central Scotland in its reaction to the implementation of Circular 600. Its repercussions were analogous, yet, notwithstanding the county's endemic buildings and staffing difficulties alluded to earlier, there seems to have been an unwillingness on the part of Directorate staff to become involved. Indeed, the Inspectorate Reports give a strong indication that the Director had to be 'pushed' into action on a number of glaring deficiencies which could only make comprehensivisation even more difficult to achieve: no strategy or co-ordination for development; poor communications with schools; failure to act upon what recommendations were made. While sympathetic to the Inspectorate's explanation of insufficient senior administrative staff, it is difficult not to conclude that this was only part of the reason for the manifest inaction. An underlying factor appears to have been the Director's hostility to the comprehensive principle, to which allusion has already been made. Indeed, the case of Lanarkshire provides an interesting

study of the effect of a political directive (Circular 600) on the education service. From the evidence presented in this study it appears that the Director had a definite sense of mission which caused him to follow his educational principles rather than simply yield to government pressure to go comprehensive, which he did not see as necessarily appropriate. Had schools not had the support of the Curriculum Development Committees, they would have operated in even greater isolation than they did at this time of educational ferment. That ferment, and the Directorate response based on expediency rather than a calculated policy on comprehensive education, could only have hindered educational progress even more in a county which did not have its problems to seek in the sphere of secondary education.

Renfrewshire

A Report written in the late 1960s suggested that education in Renfrewshire was in the hands of a Director with insight and a sense of purpose:

The Director has done a first rate job. A shrewd, clear thinker, but quick-tempered, and occasionally, as he is extremely jealous of his own position, his decisions are unduly affected by what he sees as unwarranted interference by the Department.²⁵³

It went on to praise the work of enthusiastic subject organisers and the generous supply of equipment to schools, both of which had contributed to 'a more propitious climate of opinion' in the County. Certainly, as regards comprehensive education, a conference was arranged at Eastwood High School in April 1968 addressed by eminent speakers, and a committee of headteachers was set up to study and report on comprehensive education in operation in other parts of Great Britain. On the management side, most secondary heads were sent on a course at Moray

House College of Education. The picture to emerge from observations in the Report on subject teaching was encouraging: the inevitable comments 'conservative attitudes', 'little experiment' were more than matched by mention of steering committees of teachers, broadsheets and subjects 'on the move'.²⁵⁴ Such was the interest in and action on developments in secondary education that the Inspectors closed the report by saying that Renfrewshire was 'educationally one of the most progressive counties in Scotland'.²⁵⁵ Subsequent Inspectorate judgement indicated that the Directorate had made the changing pattern of secondary education a priority: two teachers' Centres were inaugurated; a rapidly developing and co-ordinated plan of in-service training had been devised; steps were taken to foster links between the primary and secondary sector; experience gained from implementing 'Brunton-type' courses was to be used to produce a county policy for the imminent raising of the school leaving age.²⁵⁶ Mention was made of favourable developments on the subject front and the general 'awareness of change', indicating that education in the county was 'in a healthy state'.²⁵⁷ This complimentary account of the manner in which the Directorate reacted to the implications of comprehensive education was set in context by a later observation:

Conflicting views and clashing personalities of the Director and his staff prevent the realisation of harmony of which working as a team they would be capable.²⁵⁸

Such apparent disharmony notwithstanding, there was evidence of a clear rationale in the administration: in-service was the responsibility of the Depute Director, and a small committee was set up to oversee secondary education; developments in the field of guidance were progressing and a series of Bulletins on its various aspects was distributed to schools; preparations for raising of the school leaving

age were directed by a steering committee of Headteachers and Advisers, and a final report was due in 1972 after trial and evaluation of its ideas in schools.²⁵⁹ Moreover, early signs were that the new structure of promoted posts established by the Green Paper was being assimilated into comprehensive schools with a minimum of friction, heads being freed by the new posts from routine tasks, and thus able to concentrate on policy and planning.²⁶⁰ A major Inspectorate Report made reference to the county's problems in effecting a rapid move towards the reorganisation of secondary education on comprehensive lines, given the two-tier pattern that the Director had persuaded the county to adopt.²⁶¹ A high proportion of older school buildings, the Inspectorate claimed, was inflexible for the requirements of comprehensive secondary education, with the resulting tendency to concentrate on whole class teaching, which did not provide adequate support for less academically inclined pupils.²⁶² The industrious commitment to and energetic promotion of curriculum development by the advisory service were not paralleled by uptake in schools of the new trends discussed at in-service courses:

Much thought has been devoted to determining the needs of teachers and how these can be satisfied. It is disappointing to note, then, that although courses have usually been viewed as useful by teachers, they appear to have had little impact to date in many schools ... it is clear that the authority, directly and through the advisers, have spent much effort and achieved a great deal in trying to provide the means by which educational development may proceed. It now needs to seek out the reasons why results do not, however, more completely reflect the stimulus they have provided.²⁶³

Commenting on the crucial role of principal teachers (subject) and assistant headteachers (curriculum) to development, and the fact that the level of leadership from both groups was variable, the Inspectors drew attention to a 'transitional' obstacle to progress in comprehensive

schools:

Many schools are still staffed by teachers with experience in the former selective system. They feel most competent and secure in work the aims and content of which have been defined for them by past experience ... teachers are now faced with the problems of adapting techniques to meet the whole ability range ... this points to a widespread unfamiliarity with the extended range of courses now to be found in most schools.²⁶⁴

In addition, the two-tier system was causing a particular problem - concentration in the junior high schools on the able, potential certificate pupils to the detriment of the others:

It was clear that teachers had not yet fully adjusted to the aims of the comprehensive system, nor to the approach generally agreed to be appropriate to achieving them ... there were few signs of the employment of alternative methods to class teaching ... schools employed methods of organisation (broad banding and streaming) to cater for the promotion requirements of senior high schools.²⁶⁵

Inspectors also commented on the disparity between Directorate/advisorate efforts to devise courses suitable for raising of the school leaving age pupils, and the extent to which schools had exploited their potential, with interesting work the preserve of a small number of teachers with imagination: once again the tentacles of Scottish Certificate of Education examinations gripped curricular provision. Earlier encouraging remarks about guidance systems were now tempered by observations on their continued development: variation between schools caused by the priority accorded by the headteacher; more emphasis on curricular/vocational than personal aspects; inadequate definition of the duties of promoted post-holders; problems of communications.²⁶⁶

Despite these critical comments, however, the Inspectors had confidence

that the shortcomings would be accorded appropriate attention in what they saw as 'an educationally progressive authority':

The authority have an Education Committee, Director of Education and other senior officials who have shown courage and initiative in initiating development, who have proved themselves to be enlightened and progressive in their approach to education, and who are determined by their combined efforts to keep Renfrewshire in the van of educational thinking and practice.²⁶⁷

The implication was that even more effort from teaching staffs was required in order that the educational potential of the support they had been given could be realised.

All local authorities had no choice but to implement Circular 600, and all faced similar problems - staffing school-building programme, the strictures imposed by government, funding levels, etc. Yet the Inspectorate Reports provide a revealing insight into the varying responses to the implementation of the Circular after its adoption as official policy: Dunbartonshire made an earnest attempt to grapple with the educational implications; Glasgow spared no effort to help teachers in its forward-thinking commitment to development; Renfrewshire showed an awareness of teachers' needs and was innovation conscious. Nevertheless, it is clear that there were variations in the gap between good intentions and their translation into practical achievements in schools. Only Lanarkshire of the four areas under review left schools almost entirely on their own to cope with comprehensivisation, what was provided in the way of assistance being too little too late. It has already been claimed in this thesis that Directorate staff were overwhelmingly absorbed by the administrative aspects of comprehensivisation, and unable to devote much thought to its educational repercussions. The Inspectorate reports have shown that,

even where a conscious effort was made to provide leadership for schools, the principal concomitants of a comprehensive policy for education mentioned earlier in this chapter still proved difficult to integrate into the educational system: what turned out to be massive demands on the existing system resulted in teaching staff having to devise coping strategies, while attempting to resist the pull of old habits and practices. The enormity of the implications of comprehensive policy encountered the hard realities of schools in the West of Scotland, and resulted in large measure in a pragmatic response to exhortations to change. What had been expected was change of a kind and to a degree that only a minority of committed enthusiasts was able to deliver. The cautious majority responded to innovation in a way that did not seriously threaten established practices.

THE MID 1970s CRISIS OF CONFIDENCE

From about 1973 onwards, it gradually became clear that all was not well with comprehensive secondary education. A mounting disquiet manifested itself both among educationists and in bodies with a vested interest in educational development. A debate on education in the S.T.U.C., for example, contained this extract:

Even with the comprehensive system in existence at the moment there is still a split between academic and non-academic pupils, so we still have a problem in respect of equality of opportunity ... all pupils do not get their moral and social right to an equal education.²⁶⁸

The following year, another speaker gave the following account of the consequences of the failure of comprehensive education:

The situation today in most of our comprehensive schools is a blackboard jungle ... this is a sad reflection on the reputation of the Scottish educational system ... a comprehensive system has been introduced and on top of that RSLA to 16 ... the end result is that children consider themselves to be prisoners ... a considerable number of

pupils have in fact opted out.²⁶⁹

Various explanations were offered for this unsatisfactory state of affairs. One academic observer opined that 'progressive' thinking had not dislodged the traditional image of teachers and teaching, but had succeeded in causing uncertainty:

Education is marked by conflicts ... many of the difficulties occur as a result of the need to bring about a change of attitude in the minds of those responsible for education ... there is a confusion about aims ... education should aim to educate the individual to make his own choices in a changing society and develop him to the highest level of his capabilities.²⁷⁰

From the practitioners perspective, the retiring EIS President argued that there had been too much change, externally inspired, which had destroyed much of value, while playing on the goodwill of teachers:

... for the last ten years the educational world has been in a ferment of change ... faced with the extravagant claims of enthusiasts, of headteachers, of administrators climbing on the bandwagon of seeming progress, it is the duty of teachers to stress the value of the existing before it is swept away by the novel and fashionable ... part-truths exaggerated to the level of dogma and slogan thinking, (and) a false idea about equality have led to some distortions of curriculum and method ... in all areas of education there is dissatisfaction. The immediate future is one of extreme agitation and unrest.²⁷¹

Simultaneously the press, both popular and quality, began to carry articles of varying degrees of sensationalism which pointed to the perceived crisis in schools, which was portrayed to the public as characterised by indiscipline, violence, truancy and, not surprisingly, teacher stress. The leitmotif which pervades many of the articles is that comprehensive education and raising of the school leaving age were to blame.²⁷² Even allowing for journalistic exaggeration, it must be said that the newspaper coverage presented a disturbing picture. A more balanced account was given by one commentator:

The Labour Party's obsession with comprehensive education has been with bricks and mortar ... we have created a society in which education is compulsory for all, but we have yet to ensure that it is meaningful for all. The Labour Party has been too concerned with institutional and structural change. They have not devoted enough attention to take teachers with them in the move to comprehensive education.²⁷³

It is ironic that R.F. MacKenzie, the quintessential comprehensivist, was dismissed from his headteacher's post in 1974 for trying - but failing - to take his staff with him in his pursuit of the comprehensive principle. In a telling comment on his dismissal, however, the potential of the Scottish educational system to embrace change was described in these terms:

He has pursued his career in the state sector of education. Thus, he has imposed self-limitation on the speed and the extent to which he could introduce innovation.²⁷⁴

Experiment, the article went on, had to be conducted in 'controlled areas' and have regard to 'conventional educational needs'. Coupled with this depiction of secondary education in disarray, went the assertion that comprehensive education and the philosophy it enshrined had brought about a decline in standards.²⁷⁵ Some evidence, however, indicated that comprehensive education in Scotland had not brought about the alleged deterioration. One study, for example, concluded that the reorganisation of education on comprehensive lines had made little significant difference in patterns of attendance and solving social difficulties, and that educational output had remained much the same as it would have been.²⁷⁶ In a specifically Scottish context, a research study already mentioned produced two important findings:

There was no indication that the considerable changes in the degree of comprehensive entrant in Scotland from 1970-74 had resulted in any appreciable changes in standards or attainments as at age 14 ... changes in comprehensive education appear to have had little measurable effect as yet

on the inter-relationship between home and school and between attainment and attitude.²⁷⁷

Such positive evidence, however, had little impact on attitudes. The HAS put forward a motion at one of its annual conferences that teachers should take a form of industrial action by not co-operating with the Scottish Education Department and Scottish Certificate of Education Examination Board to draw attention to the unsatisfactory situation in schools. The motion was defeated, but in putting it forward, the proposer said:

Comprehensive education was introduced without adequate planning, and the vast experiments in curriculum development and in-service training, however desirable in themselves, have increased the strain on teachers ... the job of teaching is infinitely more difficult because of the demands of society ... tired, worried teachers cannot teach.²⁷⁸

The Association was so concerned with the prevailing ambiance in comprehensive secondary schools that it conducted a survey of its membership to assess the strength of feeling. The published findings contain this conclusion:

The essential point, however, is the existence of a widely held conviction that the system is over-extended ... the increase in the number of secondary pupils, problems arising from RSLA, the complexity of the organisational structures of comprehensive schools, the speed of change in curriculum content and method create demands ... which must be matched by a commensurate allocation of financial resources.²⁷⁹

The booklet went on to call for 'an authoritative statement' on the role of the secondary school, which, it claimed, was in a state of confusion in the minds of theorists and practitioners alike. Two years later, in a talk to his colleagues, a prominent HAS official summed up feelings, and called for a brake on innovation:

Politically, economically, sociologically and above all educationally, MPs reached for the moon ... teachers are

dissatisfied with what they are doing with their pupils ... let staffs get their ideas in order and let it be known that schools alone cannot be the saviours of mankind.²⁸⁰

There was thus a general feeling that the well-intentioned motives behind the introduction of comprehensive secondary education had encountered a situation in schools and inhibiting factors in society which militated against their easy attainment. Apparently, schools were suffering from overload caused by imposed changes and were beginning to run out of steam.

The situation in the West of Scotland in this difficult period of educational development is well-chronicled in a series of General Reports on the Western Division compiled by the Inspectorate. In the introduction to the first, the Chief Inspector, after acknowledging the 'educational malaise' which had affected education in the area, went on to stress how educational development was at the mercy of two almost insuperable difficulties: staffing and the socio-economic background of many schools:

It cannot be too often said: you get no change from discussing the principles of assessment or staff management with a headteacher who has a 10% staff shortage, a pupil drop out rate of 95% at S4 and a rate of absenteeism at twice the national norm.²⁸¹

The Report itself, after cataloguing the changes which the education system had had to absorb from the onset of comprehensive reorganisation, conveyed a picture of their unsuccessful implementation in the face of declining teacher morale:

In recent years teachers in the West of Scotland have faced changes in the organisation of secondary schools which must inevitably influence the development of the curriculum and guidance of pupils. There was little evidence that these major organisational changes have made a salient impact on the secondary curriculum this session.²⁸²

However, the following session proved even less satisfactory. The EIS produced a statement of '5 Principles' concerned with class size and other aspects of conditions of service, as a result of mounting teacher discontent. In the event, this was the prelude to the year (1974-75) of 'troubles', with a succession of work to rule, one day strikes and rota strikes, not helped by Strathclyde Regional Council's uncompromising stance on the matter.²⁸³ In view of continuous teacher militancy, part-time education and absenteeism on a wide scale of which mention was also made by the Inspectorate, it is not surprising that HMI's encountered on visits to comprehensive secondary schools, an atmosphere not conducive to educational advance:

As will emerge from the report, the session just begun has been an undistinguished one from the point of view of real educational progress and curriculum development. In particular ... change in organisation has not been generally accompanied by a comparable revolution in the style of teaching adopted in secondary schools.²⁸⁴

Although teacher militancy abated with the acceptance of a teachers' contract and a salary increase recommended by the Houghton Committee, Inspectorate accounts in the two succeeding sessions continued to be critical of a whole series of familiar problematic areas: mixed-ability teaching, provision for non-certificate pupils in S3/S4, the operation and function of management structures, styles of management and a marked absence of educational philosophy or indeed discussion of educational matters in comprehensive schools:

So far as curriculum development is concerned, it must be said there are schools in which very little in the way of fundamental thinking takes place, or where curriculum policy is at an early stage of development, or where curriculum is considered in the narrow sense of periods per subject, or where schools have little engagement with the curriculum and are simply waiting for Munn and Dunning.²⁸⁵

Nor could even those schools attempting to give thought to the quality of their work with pupils look to Strathclyde Region for assistance:

Curriculum development is probably the area in which least progress has been made, mainly due to a lack of direction and effective leadership from the Depute Director in charge ... (there is) an absence of any clear rationale for the region as a whole ... it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the whole process of curricular review and development within Strathclyde had at best marked time for the year, if it has not been quite firmly set back.²⁸⁶

It is a truism that change in education does not happen overnight: in common with other bureaucratic organisations, schools are notoriously slow to change. Change increases workload, causes insecurity and confusion. Yet, it appears that in 1977, more than a decade after the adoption of comprehensive education, comprehensive schools in the West of Scotland had not responded with notable success to the climate of opinion which had urged change and a search for more effective methods of education. Despite the vast sums of money expended, and the praiseworthy efforts of many well-intentioned individuals two results had been achieved: many teachers were disillusioned because their established ways had been disrupted without any strategy or set of aims to take their place; considerable numbers of pupils too, the ostensible object of all the effort, were patently disaffected by what schools had to offer them. Perhaps too much had been expected. At all events, it would not be unjust to say that only token concessions had been made by schools in response to the impetus for a change of emphasis.

The comprehensive school seemed poised, between a former system of education to the trappings of which teachers still clung, and the emergence of a different model which rejected its predecessor's values and principles as inappropriate and untenable. Clearly, an alternative ethos for secondary education was required, as a member of the

Inspectorate noted:

There has been during the past decade or so plenty of progress of an administrative and organisational order ... it has been essentially provisional and superficial, it has not penetrated to the heart of the darkness ... there are strikingly few new ideas being generated by the system which promise some sort of solution even in the next decade ... the events of the 70s suggest that what schools are prepared to offer is not all that popular with the consumers ... inevitably I am led to conclude that we require to recalculate the terms on which compulsory education may continue to survive.²⁸⁷

INITIATIVES FOR REFORM

The years 1977-80 were dominated first by the expectation, then the publication of the findings of the Munn, Dunning and Pack Committees, which had been set up in the mid-1970s to inquire into three aspects of comprehensive secondary schools (curriculum, assessment, discipline) which were giving cause for concern. Throughout these three years there was some reaction to the theoretical principles on which the reports were based, but most of the debate centred on the practical implications of these principles. It is outwith the scope of this thesis to examine the three reports in detail or to assess their subsequent effect on the development of comprehensive secondary education. An attempt will be made, however, to relate the events 1977-80 to the foregoing discussion in order to give some impression of reactions, and assess what progress had been made by 1980 in using the recommendations of the reports as a basis for the formulation of solutions to the problems besetting secondary schools.

The Munn Committee explained its *raison d'être* in these terms:

There is considerable public professional concern that adequate solutions have not yet been found to many of the curricular problems posed by the introduction of comprehensive education and the raising of the school leaving age. Criticism from outside the system and

pressures from within it both point to the need for change and for the design of a curriculum for S3 and S4 which will provide pupils with a more effective education for life.²⁸⁸

Its sister committee saw its remit as updating the existing national assessment system to bring it in line with the demands of its consumers from comprehensive schools:

The SCE 'O' grade has become to a large extent a casualty of its own popularity. It was set up to service a minority of pupils and, by and large, in relation to those pupils, it can be said to have done so with a fair measure of success. It was not designed to provide for the substantial group of pupils who are now being presented. ... we are not happy about the narrow aims, inappropriate emphasis and frustrated aspirations which arise in this situation.²⁸⁹

The Pack Committee saw the rationale for its inquiry as a disgruntled teaching force and disaffected pupils in comprehensive schools:

Some pupils felt themselves trapped by RSLA ... many teachers felt themselves trapped, in another sense, by the change to comprehensive education - teachers who had chosen their careers under a selective system and who now experienced the need for expertise for which they were not well prepared. The sudden increase in the number of promoted posts in schools led to a rapid turnover in staff, with consequent unsettling effects in secondary schools. There has been extensive part-time education ... since we began our work there has been a teachers' strike ... All factors that break the habit of regular attendance or lead to the question of its relevance operate in favour of truancy and indiscipline.²⁹⁰

As the three committees were nearing the completion of their tasks, a conference was arranged in Edinburgh in September 1976 under the joint auspices of the EIS, COSLA and 'The Scotsman' newspaper to bring together interested parties to debate the problems besetting secondary education. The organisers of the conference, appropriately entitled 'SIGNPOST FOR EDUCATION', hoped that it would, in the words of the Chairman 'have a reasonably lasting influence on the direction of Scottish secondary education', and thus the overarching theme was to be

'what Scotland of the future requires of the secondary education system'. The opening address was delivered by the Secretary of State for Scotland, and, the following extract aptly summarised the problems which which the committees were grappling and also indicated the challenge facing them:

I believe it is no accident that as comprehensive education has spread, so more young people every year have stayed at school in order to get academic qualifications. At the same time this very system has highlighted some problems ... schools have to work within the framework formed by the curriculum structure and the national examination structure. This framework may at times appear to constrict and distort the educational provision needed for some groups of pupils ... it is our duty at a national level to see to it that the framework is as flexible as possible. It must accommodate the needs of all pupils, and take account of economic and social change ... the aim must be to enable every pupil to achieve his or her full potential: we cannot afford to waste our human resources.²⁹²

It is interesting to note in this extract two points: the definition of the comprehensive school had not substantially altered - an institution to which more youngsters go to gain academic qualifications so that the nation's economy may benefit to the full - and the implicit admission that after a decade all pupils were manifestly not achieving their full potential. In the event, the three committees reported a year later.

As is normal practice after the publication of official reports, interested bodies were invited to comment. The evidence relating to responses is conflicting: the Scottish Education Department view was that the responses 'lacked unanimity';²⁹³ a S.C.R.E. survey conducted among one in three Scottish teachers found 'wide support' for the central recommendations;²⁹⁴ a recent study of the reports described the reaction is 'ranging from enthusiastic acclamation to withering condemnation';²⁹⁵ an O.E.C.D. report claims the reports received

'general and wide support' and gives this explanation to account for the acclaim, given that Government 'lacks the power to impose reforms':

In our view there are several reasons for this general acceptance: first, there is a widespread belief that the Munn and Dunning proposals will improve the comprehensive school, and help it to cope with the problems which led to the setting up of the committees ... the Munn proposals emanated from a group fully conversant with sentiments outside Government circles. Secondly, the proposals accorded well with the tradition of a broad, liberal education in Scotland. Moreover, the underlying philosophy reflects some ideas of the much admired Report on Secondary Education, which is well remembered by most senior inspectors, headteachers and teachers. Thirdly, Scotland is a relatively small country in which LEAs confer extensively with one another ... local authority consensus is undoubtedly the most weighty factor.²⁹⁶

It is not known whether the OECD inspectors who conducted the survey on which their final report was based were familiar with the contents of the 1947 Advisory Council Report or with the reception accorded to it (Chapter Three). Taking their statement at face value, however, to make such a parallel did not augur well for the fate of the 1977 Reports! Moreover, there is evidence which suggests that not all 'sentiments outside Government circles' concurred with the view that the recommendations would solve the problems of the comprehensive school. Indeed, a number of observations indicate that a significant body of opinion held them to be inherently divisive and thus antipathetic to the comprehensive principle.²⁹⁷ While, for example, the HAS gave the Reports 'qualified acceptance', the AUT 'welcome the general tenor of the conclusions and recommendations of both reports', the CBI 'accepted' Dunning and thought that Munn would provide 'the basis for a complete and radical review of the curriculum', and COSLA 'welcomed' Munn and 'agreed in principle' with Dunning, other important bodies disagreed. A submission from the NAS/UWT contained this less than optimistic forecast:

We are afraid that good classroom teachers will desert the chalkface to perform Parkinsonian tasks in education which will have little real benefit for teachers or pupils. The underlying ideas are admirable, but the bulk of the work will devolve on the unfortunate class teacher who already has enough to do. The proper implementation of the recommendations in these reports would cause a massive upheaval ... if there must be upset, let it be with some point.²⁹⁸

The EIS, for its part, was not sanguine about the report's potential for improvement:

Here is no clearly thought out strategy for radical reform, but rather a series of recommendations which are left to be interpreted as liberally or illiberally as one pleases, and which call for more work and study ... the central issue to which one is forced back is the need to provide a more satisfactory education for the substantial number of children for whom the present system is unsuitable - for many wildly unsuitable. This need was the *raison d'etre* of the committees, but it is not, as it should have been, the focal point of their reports.²⁹⁹

The Joint Committee of College Principals also regarded the outcome as a missed opportunity:

Some of our members feel that the setting up of the three committees with limited remits has resulted in a less radical review of the content and structure of secondary education than is required to solve the problems which exist in secondary schools at present.³⁰⁰

There was, then, some feeling that the reports, having raised expectations of reform, had failed to discharge their responsibilities adequately by merely suggesting alterations to the status quo, and leaving the door open to a continuation in comprehensive schools of a subject-based academic curriculum, with pupils segregated by ability, and the system dominated by an even more rigid examination system with a mere semblance of novelty. It may also be the case that the existence of separate committees looking at the curriculum and assessment contributed to such feelings of discontent.

Notwithstanding these expressions of disappointment, the Secretary of State had announced in Circular 997 of October 1977 the inception of a feasibility study to explore the practical implications of the Munn and Dunning Reports. In February 1979, the results of this Inspectorate-led initiative were published.³⁰¹ The Report considered the following aspects: differentiation; overlap; internal components; foundation courses ('the greatest effort and priority'); assessment and the technical and administrative aspects of awards; staffing; accommodation; timetabling; in-service training. The report identified three main areas for action: national guidance to schools on syllabus preparation, the creation of a new examination system, an associated in-service training programme. It calculated that the earliest feasible date of operation would be the mid 1980s, advocating the 'advantages of hastening slowly'. This advice was obviously heeded by the Secretary of State, who gave the first government reaction in a document which appeared the same year. It broadly endorsed Munn's recommendations but with reservations, but was less than supportive of Dunning's proposal of certification for all. Moreover, no precise programme for development or implementation was included. In a rather cautious and tentative reply to 'the positive spirit which animated the Committee's deliberations which enlisted the sympathy of the educational world', the Secretary of State announced his decision.

The Secretary of State, therefore, believes that it would not be proper for him to undertake to implement all the recommendations of the two Committees. This conclusion is reinforced by the analysis in the Report of the Feasibility Study of the careful planning and further development and research that will be necessary to resolve the numerous educational, technical and logistical difficulties implicit in the report's recommendations.³⁰²

With the further recommendation that any development work should be

'pursued in an evolutionary manner', and a warning that results would not 'commit the government to an irrevocable course', the report left the possibility of the main recommendations being reconsidered, if not abandoned. In that sense, one wonders if its title was not a misnomer. Certainly teachers in comprehensive schools widely regarded it as negative, and indicative of a loss of urgency in the government's seriousness about the reform of secondary education.³⁰³ It was with the return to office of a Conservative Government that, in March 1980, a definite commitment was made public: the principal recommendations of both committees had been accepted, albeit with some modifications, and a three year period would be set aside for the implementation of a development strategy, at the end of which time the new Secretary of State would give his final decision. As the decade closed, therefore, it is not an exaggeration to say that comprehensive schools found themselves somewhat in limbo: the much-vaunted trilogy of reports had appeared, reactions had been registered in the appropriate places, and only after lengthy ministerial hesitation and delay, had the first signs of real 'action' appeared. The operating conditions in schools during the years 1977-80, it is safe to assume, changed little, despite the slowed pace of development.

Before concluding, however, account must be taken of the facts of social change over the period under review. Society has changed markedly since the halcyon days of 1965, with the result that deliberations on and ultimate decisions about the shape of the comprehensive system had to take place in an altered ambiance. Whatever functions it was supposed to have performed in the past would inevitably be conditioned by a new set of factors, which for convenience can be enumerated as follows:

- the newly-elected Government brought about a major shift in political

- ideology after 1979 which affected all aspects of society
- a widespread recognition that the educational reform of the 1960s, of which comprehensive education was a major strand, had failed to produce the equality of opportunity that its architects had envisaged
 - partly as a consequence, the educational system would be subject to more concentrated accountability; it had to some extent become the scapegoat for its failure to rectify society's shortcomings
 - demographic studies had forecast a declining birth rate which began to affect schools in the phenomenon of 'falling school rolls'
 - rising youth unemployment (and unemployment on a national scale) cast major doubts on the age-old assumption that 'a good education' would automatically procure a good job
 - given the declining resources available to the education service, exhortations to innovate would take place in at best static, at worst shrinking financial environment
 - any strategies for educational innovation would have to take more cognisance of the realities of the teaching situation if they were to avoid the unsatisfactory outcomes of experiences in the 60s and 70s.

Accordingly, the principal issues in the controversial educational debate about comprehensive education - structure, organisation, curriculum, methodology, assessment, discipline and control - had to be considered against an almost totally new backdrop, while at the same time trying to come to terms with and, hopefully provide a solution to the problem that, for a significant proportion of the population in comprehensive schools, the services they offered were not considered relevant. Poised on the threshold of the 1980s, a senior government official exuded confidence as he pledged a commitment to reform:

The potential benefits of improving curriculum and assessment are immense. We all share a common determination

to give every pupil a full opportunity to achieve worthwhile goals in the final years of compulsory education ... we want to remove the frustrations this (present) situation creates for young people, which hardly prepares them for the imminent challenges and obligations of adulthood.³⁰⁴

It was to be hoped that his reforming zeal had been informed by the reflections of two academics four years earlier, who suggested a way forward, stressing the need for a new coherent strategy:

It is widely recognised that the reform of Scottish secondary education over the last decade has been piecemeal and unsatisfactory. Traditional practices have been bent to new purposes for which they were not designed. The establishment of three committees ... is the most obvious reflection of these concerns ... a reconsideration of potentially conflicting priorities, an accurate assessment of current practice, and a redefinition of 'essential' features will be necessary if scope for further improvement, especially for the educationally disadvantaged is to be secured.³⁰⁵

CHAPTER FIVE

FOOTNOTES

1. STUC proceedings 1965-66. Judith Hart at a meeting with a STUC delegation in Edinburgh 21/1/66.
2. STUC proceedings 1967-68. Bruce Millan at a meeting with a STUC delegation 27/1/68.
3. Official Report of the 1967 Conference of the Scottish Labour Party (Mitchell Library). Extract from William Ross's reply to SCLP motion.
4. Education in Scotland, SED 1965, pp.37-38.
5. Education in Scotland, SED 1966, p.2.
6. Education in Scotland, SED 1967, p.2.
7. Education in Scotland, SED 1969, p.15.
8. Education in Scotland, HMSO 1974, p.4. (my underlining).
9. Charles Blacklaw, Address to EIS Annual General Meeting, quoted in The Scottish Educational Journal 19/6/70.
10. Interview HT4.
11. In Chapter Two that comprehensive education was widely perceived as a 'fait accompli' of English origin; in Chapter Three that much of the emphasis in attempts at reorganisation was placed on its physical aspects.
12. Interview DS7.
13. Interview PL10.
14. Dumbarton County Council. Minute of Teachers and Teaching Sub-Committee 21/3/66.
15. *ibid.* Extract of letter from Secretary of State to Dumbarton County Council dated 22/8/66 quoted in Sub-Committee Minute of 31/8/66.
16. *ibid.* Sub-Committee MInute 8/2/67.
17. *ibid.* Sub-Committee Minutes 21/3/66; 13/3/68.
18. *ibid.* Sub-Committee Minutes 8/9.71; 21/1/72.
19. Since the controversy over Glasgow's former fee-paying selective schools was discussed in Chapter Four, no mention will be made of it here. Suffice it to say that it constituted a problem which

seemed intractable for several years.

20. The Corporation of the City of Glasgow Education Committee, Sub-Committee Minute 3/5/54.
21. *ibid.* Minute 20/9/54. The delegation was composed of the Depute Director of Education and the two headteachers concerned.
22. James Murray, first headteacher of St Augustine's Secondary School, in a written communication to the author 12/10/85.
23. Comprehensive Secondary Education in Glasgow, Report by the Depute Director 7/4/72 in Glasgow Corporation Education Department File D/ED/11/1/119 in Mitchell Library.
24. *ibid.*
25. Several references are made to this dual system by interviewees. The decision to discontinue it is recorded in an Education Committee Minute 28/3/63.
26. Corporation of the City of Glasgow Education Committee Sub-Committee Minute 3/1/68.
27. 'Territorial Secondary Education: Present Provision'. Paper dated 29/3/72 in Glasgow Corporation Education Department File D/ED/11/1/119 in Mitchell Library.
28. Corporation of the City of Glasgow Education Committee Sub-Committee Minute 23/6/72.
29. *ibid.* Sub-Committee Minute 22/6/72.
30. *ibid.* Sub-Committee Minute 29/3/72.
31. Letter from Depute Director to Town Clerk in Glasgow Corporation Education Department File D/ED/11/1/60 in Mitchell Library: decision also recorded in Sub-Committee Minute 18/6/72.
32. New Secondary Schools: Second Report of a Working Group. Glasgow Corporation Education Department 1971 (Foreword). Personal papers lent to the author by Harry S Wylie, Govan High School.
33. *ibid.* Introduction.
34. *ibid.* Section on the 'Curriculum in 'S1/2'. The ideas contained in the Section 'The Organisation of the School' formed the basis for the architect's brief for Glasgow's first purpose-built, open-plan secondary school. (Whitehill Secondary, opened 1977).
35. *ibid.* in section 'The Organisation of the School'.
36. Interview HM8.
37. Interview PL10.
38. Interview HM8.

39. The Nature and organisation of Secondary Education: A REview of Current and Possible Developments. 1965 Report by the Director in File 'The Reorganisation of Secondary Education' in County Buildings, Hamilton.
40. One all-through school, four omnibus schools, ten junior high schools, ten selective senior secondary schools which took the top 20% of the primary intake and potential SCE Higher candidates from the junior high schools, and a large number of purely junior secondary schools providing 'standard' courses.
41. *ibid.*
42. County Council of the County of Lanark Education Committee. Schools and Schemes Sub-Committee Minute 27/5/65
43. Statement by the Director on the Reorganisation of Secondary Education, dated October 1966, in File 'The Reorganisation of Secondary Education', in County Buildings, Hamilton.
44. 'Summary of Building Requirements to meet comprehensive reorganisation', undated, but probably late 1966 - early 1967. *ibid.*
45. e.g. 'Action being taken regarding the transfer of pupils to secondary schools in August 1967; 'Reorganisation of Secondary Education - suggested arrangements for August 1968'; 'Secondary Schools - requirements and possible temporary alternatives' (Schools and Schemes Sub-Committee Minutes 5/7/67, 3/4/68, 26/4/67 respectively).
46. 'The Application of the Principle of non-selective provision throughout the County' (undated) in File 'The Reorganisation of Secondary Education', County Buildings, Hamilton.
47. Minute dated 17/6/66 of a joint meeting of the local EIS and Members of the Education Committee.
48. County Council of the County of Lanark Education Committee. Schools and Schemes Sub-Committee Minute 2/6/71.
49. Hamilton Academy amalgamated with St John's from August 1972; Elmwood R.C. Convent School closed in August 1977 with the opening of a new R.C. Comprehensive School in Bellshill. Minute 23/4/71, *ibid.*
50. Final solutions reached 1973, *ibid.*
51. *ibid.* Sub-Committee Minute 27/12/73.
52. *ibid.* Sub-Committee Minute 7/2/73.
53. *ibid.* Sub-Committee Minute 1/3/72. The decision was to close ten, provide additional courses at two, and upgrade one to 4-year status.
54. *ibid.* Sub-Committee Minute 7/3/73. The decision was to phase in S5 and S6 over the period 197-76 for these schools.

55. Bradhurst High School was upgraded to six year status, giving Motherwell two all-through comprehensives.
56. Letter from P.C. Rendle, SED dated 23/1/68 in File 'The Reorganisation of Secondary Education', County Buildings, Hamilton.
57. 'Temporary Accommodation: An Outline of Present Requirements', Report by the Director, 5/4/72, *ibid*.
58. Lanarkshire Local Association of the EIS Minute Book 197-73. Extract from Stanley Yoeman's address 17/2/73 entitled 'All Change'.
59. 'School Building Programme: Accommodation Requirements' in File 'Educational Provision Lanark I/2/1/64 in Western Division HQ Glasgow. The 'four categories of requirement mentioned are: extra classrooms (16 schools), the elimination of distant annexes (12 schools), the replacement of temporary buildings (21 schools), and internal upgrading of existing schools (50 schools).
60. *ibid*. Letter from the Director of SED dated 3/5/74. The picture which emerges from this extract accords with the record of Lanarkshire's Director presented in McPherson and Raab (*op cit*). The authors portray the Director as having fought hard for increased resources for the County, having had good relations with the SED and local councillors. In the book, a former Under-Secretary at the SED describes the Director as having 'commanded attention, while the authors argue that, among his fellow directors he was 'influential', p.395.
61. Interview AC9.
62. Interview MS3.
63. Interview HT43.
64. County Council of the County of Renfrew Education Committee. Extract from Patterns for the Organisation of Secondary Education - Memorandum by the Director 10/9/64.
65. Eastwood Area; Paisley Area; Greenock Area; R.C. Provision in Education Districts 1,2,3; ratified by the Education Committee on 10/12/64, 11/2/65, 11/11/65, 10/3/66 respectively.
66. Paisley Area Memorandum (*op cit*).
67. Interview PL10.
68. Circular 600, Para 9, in which it is stated that the form of organisation to be adopted by local authorities 'will depend on the extent to which school buildings can be adapted and the number of specialist teachers available'.
69. The new scheme is contained in the Director's Memorandum of 13/10/66, passed by the Education Committee 10/11/66. Details

are:

Eastwood: two junior high schools, one senior high school.

Paisley: five junior high schools, two senior high schools, three 'all-through' schools

R.C. Areas 1,2,3: six junior high schools, three senior high schools

Greenock: four junior high schools, one senior high school.

70. County Council of the County of Renfrew Education Committee. Minute 23/2/67.
71. *ibid.* Minutes 9/3/67, 8/6/67, 30/11/67 respectively. The new memorandum dealt with R.C. provision in Greenock and Port Glasgow and proposed one senior high school and three junior high schools on the grounds of easier eventual conversion to all-through schools.
72. *ibid.* Minute 13/9.73 in which the Director recommended the abandonment of the two tier system in the Eastwood area given the imminent opening of a new school at Kirkhill.
73. *ibid.* Minute 7/5/74, the resultant memorandum being approved 7/11/74.
74. Extract of letter sent to EIS Headquarters by staff dated 2/10/75. (Lent to author by John Pollock.)
75. Letter from EIS to Edward Miller, Director of Education dated 12/11/75. (Lent to author by John Pollock.)
76. Letter from Duncan Graham to EIS dated 3/12/75. (Lent to author by John Pollock.)
77. Letter from T.J. McCool, Divisional Education Officer (Renfrew) to parents 13/2/76. (Personal papers lent to the author by W.J. McKechin.) The Education Committee of Strathclyde Region approved the ending of the two-tier system in areas where it still existed at its meetings on 19/12/75; 4/2/76.
78. Detailed accounts are contained in Strathclyde Region Education Committee Minutes 29/6/77, 19/10/77, 16/11/77, 14/12/77.
79. Education in Dunbartonshire. A Report by H.M. Inspectors of Schools, SED 1976.
80. Education in Glasgow. A Report by H.M. Inspectors of Schools, SED 1973.
81. Education in Lanarkshire. A Report by H.M. Inspectors of Schools, SED 1977.
82. Circular 600, para. 18.
83. Education Sub-Committee Minutes 21/3/66, 2/11/66, 10/12/70 respectively.
84. 'The Glasgow Herald' 23/9/68.

85. EIS Local Associations (Lanarkshire and Glasgow) Minutes 5/2/70 and 14/1/70 respectively.
86. Interview HT22.
87. 'Observations on Reorganisation Proposals' in File 'Reorganisation of Secondary Education', County Buildings, Hamilton.
88. A.H. Young (op cit).
89. Education in Scotland, S.E.D. Reports for 1971, 1974, 1975, 1978 respectively.
90. Education in Glasgow, (op cit) pp.18-20.
91. Education in Renfrewshire, A Report by H.M. Inspectors of Schools, SED 1974, pp.7-8.
92. Education in Lanarkshire (op cit) pp.17-8.
93. Education in Dunbartonshire (op cit) p.3.
94. Education in Glasgow (op cit) p.20.
95. T.A. Fitzpatrick (op cit)
96. The HMI Reports quoted above testify to the fact that staff shortage was particularly acute in the R.C. sector well into the 1970s.
97. STUC Proceedings 1970-71. Extract from debate at 1971 STUC Annual Congress.
98. Official Report of the 1972 Annual Conference of the Scottish Labour Party. Letter from R.H.B. Johnson (SED) to the Executive of the Scottish Party.
99. 'Reasons for Single-sex R.C. Schools' in Glasgow Corporation Education Department File D/ED/11/1/149 in Mitchell Library.
100. T.A. Fitzpatrick (op cit)
101. Interview MS1. A snippet of official correspondence confirms this view:

Councillor Docherty is having to go along with a policy with which he is not in complete accord. This means that he should be described as 'a gradualist', one who cannot forsake the Labour Party's opposition to selective schools but who, personally, would be prepared to accept a gradual phasing out.

(Extract from letter dated 4/4/72 from HMI R.S. Johnston to Miss P.A. Cox (SED) in File 'Educational Provision - Miscellaneous (Glasgow) I/2/1/5 in Western Division HQ Glasgow)

102. See, for example, numerous articles on this subject in its journal Comprehensive Education and the special publications Public Schools and Comprehensive Schools (1966) and Comprehensives or Co-Existence? (1975). Caroline Benn played a leading role in the campaign's activities.
103. Comments on various Glasgow Schools in File 'Educational Provision - Miscellaneous (Glasgow)' (above). A similar resentment was alluded to by interviewees in Lanarkshire concerning the highly selective nature of Hamilton Academy.
104. The difficulties teaching and learning in areas with social problems are vividly illustrated in Learning to Labour, P. Willis, Gower 1977 and Schooling the Bash Street Kids, P. Corrigan, Macmillan 1979.
105. Studies in Areas of Social and Other Difficulties, HMI Report, held in Western Division HQ. The studies were compiled in session 1973-74.
106. 'Chain Reaction' editorial in The Scottish Educational Journal 2/8/68.
107. James Carmichael, address to Renfrewshire Local EIS quoted in 'The Scottish Education Journal' 28/3/69.
108. Senior Member of the Inspectorate in a written communication to the author 24/10/85.
109. Comprehensive Schooling at the Lower Secondary Level: Review of Scotland OECD 1985 (unpublished), paras 16, 18.
110. Interview HM8.
111. Education in Scotland (SED) Reports for 1968 (p.15) and 1970 (p.20) respectively.
112. S.L. Hunter, in the third of a series of articles on RSLA in The Scottish Educational Journal 25/2/72.
113. The Fairlie Report (op cit). The report reprinted two quotations from teachers who had been interviewed prior to its completion:
 1) The only time anyone in the staffroom reads one of the curriculum papers is when he is going to be interviewed for promotion.
 2) The Consultative Committee on the Curriculum - What's that?
114. 'Education for All', John McGonigal in GLEAM, Spring 1975.
115. Interview CD1.
116. As one Director put it:

We have a much less decentralised system than in England. I think this is an area in which we have the balance about right ... an experimental school like Countesthorpe is unthinkable in Scotland; we don't tolerate that

degree of idiosyncrasy. (Interview CD3)

117. Extract from 'The Headteacher and the Curriculum'. HAS Volume of Essays 1980 (op cit).
118. Interview CD1.
119. It has recently been argued that HMII were instrumental in persuading Directors of Education to create an advisory service as an outgrowth of their embryonic development work in the early 1960s in The Changing Role of the Advisory Service. B. Williams, Unpublished M.Ed thesis, University of Glasgow 1986.
120. Glasgow began appointing advisers in 1967. The other counties in the West did so between 1972-74.
121. ADES Annual Conference Reports 1968-69 'The Role of Advisers', address by John T. Bain.
122. Education in Scotland (SED) 1971.
123. OECD 1985 (op cit) para 21.
124. The Fairlie Report (op cit) para 11.
125. The Advisory Service, Report by the Director 26/3/75. Strathclyde Regional Council Education Department.
126. Some support can be adduced for the advisers' reaction from an Inspectorate Report:

The appreciation of the potential of a comprehensive advisory service particularly in the field of curriculum review and in-service training evident in most discussions is in marked contrast to the almost hostile and certainly sceptical attitude to advisers at the highest level in the Region.

(Western Division General Report 1976-77, in Western Division H.Q. Glasgow)

127. J.R.B. Christie writing in GLEAM, Winter 1970.
128. J.T. Bain. Extract from his opening address to a conference on 'The Comprehensive School' held 3/12/69 in Corporation of Glasgow Education Department File D/ED/11/1/119 in Mitchell Library.
129. An analysis of meetings at Dundas Vale for session 1971-72, for example, reveals that 38,073 participants attended 1,416 meetings. (Personal papers lent to the author by James R. Carson).
130. Frame of Reference OECD op cit, para. 35.
131. The National Committee for the In-Service Training of Teachers was a nominated body which sat from 1968-85 with Robert Robertson (convener Renfrew Education Committee) and Malcolm Green (Convener, Strathclyde Education Committee) as successive

Chairmen. Its purpose was to keep under review the provision of national courses.

132. Interview AC12.
133. *ibid.*
134. *ibid.*
135. *ibid.* For a recent account of in-service training, see 'The Future of In-Service Training in Scotland', W.B. Marker in The Scottish Educational Review, Vol. 14, May 1982.
136. Dr Mackintosh instituted just such a scheme in 1964 in Glasgow schools. It is widely believed that the SED had this in mind when the Inspectorate team under Dr Dickson drew up 'The Orange Book' (1968).
137. Guidance in Schools, Anne Fletcher, AUP 1980, p.18.
138. ADES Conference Reports 1972-73. 'Guidance in Practice', address by J.A.D. Michie.
139. *ibid.*
140. Education in Scotland, SED (1969) p.25.
141. Scottish Trends in Secondary Education, A study of some Scottish comprehensive schools conducted 1973-76. SCRE 1976.
142. Guidance in Theory and Practice. Paper delivered at the Franci-Scottish seminar on comprehensive education in Sevres, Nov. 1980. (Personal papers lent to the author by J.P. Cranston).
143. 'More guidance needed on guidance', Rosemary McDonald in The Scottish Educational Journal 18/10/74.
144. a) Rosemary McDonald argued that the SED concept of guidance was directive, and the system was turning into a bureaucratic mechanism for pupil selection with scant regard to personal guidance. (Unpub. M.Ed thesis, University of Glasgow 1971).

b) N.S. Johnston argued that guidance was a means of breaking large comprehensive schools down into more manageable administrative units by paying lip-service to pastoral care. (Unpub. M.Ed Thesis, University of Glasgow 1979.)

c) Iain Smith argued that a fundamental problem was the discrepancy between the model of guidance proposed by the change agents and the practices of teachers. (Research reported in Scottish Educational Studies, Vol. 10, 1978.)

d) Bennett and Wilkie claimed that guidance had been introduced with organisational naivety, concentrating on structure at the expense of overall philosophy ('Structural Conflict in School Organisation' in Decision Making in British Education ed. G. Fowler et al. Heinemann/Open University. 1973.)

- e) John Gray, in an overview of guidance from a pupil perspective, argued that the system was based on an over-optimistic model of teacher-pupil relationships, and that the curricular/vocational aspects of guidance had received more attention than the personal aspect (The Impact of Guidance, CES 1979).
145. Guidance in Scottish Secondary Schools, A Progress Report by HM Inspectors of Schools, SED 1976, paras. 5(1)-5(12).
146. 'The Guidance System' in Contemporary Scottish Education HAS (op cit).
147. 'Secondary School Administration' talk given by Peter Poli, Headteacher of St Augustine's Secondary, Glasgow to HAS Conference, October 1968 in HAS File 'Papers 1963-69'.
148. Learning and Teaching in Scottish Secondary Schools: School Management, A Report by H.M. Inspectors of Schools, SED 1984, para. 1.3.
149. The Structure of Promoted Posts in Scottish Secondary Schools (1971) op cit.
150. *ibid*, para 3(5).
151. *ibid*, para 5(15).
152. Extract from editorial in The Scottish Educational Journal 5/3/71.
153. Education in Scotland, SED Reports for 1972, 1973, 1974.
154. Every year since 1972 the Centre has offered 8-10 courses of one week's duration to senior promoted staff. By 1984, 67% of headteachers, 40% of deputes and 25% of assistant heads had attended at least one course. In addition, Strathclyde Regional Council has organised a senior management course in conjunction with Jordanhill College of Education. The author is indebted to the present Director for documentation relating to the Centre: The First Two Years, J.P. Forsyth; The SCSSA J.E.A. Havard; Evaluation of SCSSA Courses, J.A.E. Havard. The author was not permitted access to participants' evaluations of the courses on the grounds of confidentiality.
155. The Fairlie Report (op cit).
156. Communications in the Secondary School, John Watt, unpublished M.Ed thesis, University of Glasgow 1981. This study demonstrated that the mere establishment of structures does not ensure their successful operation, and that hierarchical management in schools militated against communications and a more participative approach.
157. School Management, SED (1984) op cit.
158. Interview HM2.

159. 'A Revolution in Education', T. McDonald in The Scottish Educational Journal 9/6/72.
160. Education in Scotland SED Reports for 1973, 1974, 1976.
161. c.f. the school system's general lack of success in implementing the recommendations of such official publications as Junior Secondary Education, SED 1955 and From School to Further Education, SED 1963.
162. EIS Annual Proceedings 1973-74. Education Committee Minute 6/4/74. (The author's personal experience in a Glasgow school in the mid 1970s supports the Committee's instancing of curriculum imbalance.)
163. RAising the School Leaving Age: Report of a Working Party on Courses, Glasgow Corporation Education Department (1973).
164. 'Grasping the Comprehensive', Peter Mullen in GLEAM, Winter 1974.
165. Extracts from 'Schools for Scandal' in 'The Sunday Mail' 18/3/73 and 'Teaching with Tears' in 'The Scotsman' 6/4/74 respectively.
166. The Raising of the School Leaving Age in Scotland: A Report by HM Inspectors of Schools, SED 1976, paras. 6(2), 6(4), 6(5), 6(6), 6(10).
167. *ibid*, para 6(11).
168. Written communication to the author 24/10/85.
169. Editorial in The Scottish Education Journal 10/6/66.
170. Mixed Ability Teaching in the Secondary School, ed B. Davies and R. Cave, Ward Lock Educational 1977. In a chapter of this book Peter Corbishley makes it clear that the interest in mixed-ability teaching/grouping coincides with period of the extension of secondary education to all pupils below the age of 16, and that its real growth matched the increase in the number of comprehensive schools (Chapter One). In the same book, C. Jones-Davis asserts:
- Mixed-ability teachings is the quintessence of comprehensive education and as such must cater for all needs equally. (p.111)
171. Education in Scotland, SED Reports for 1968, 1969, 1970, 1972.
172. Education in Scotland, SED 968, p.15.
173. The First Two Years: Report of a Survey by H.M. Inspectors, SED 1972, paras. 12, 13, 25, 26.
174. Secondary School Staffing, SED 1973, para 2(12).
175. Scottish Trends in SEcondary Education, SCRE (op cit) pp.28-30.
176. Organisation of Courses in Comprehensive schools. Advisory

Committee of Headteachers, Glasgow Corporation Education Department. Report on S1/S2, S3/S4, May 1973.

177. This view is substantiated in an article in 'The Times Education Supplement (Scotland)' 21/6/68. The three pioneering Glasgow headteachers of Knightswood Secondary, Glenwood Secondary and Cranhill Secondary retired in June 1968. In an adulatory piece, Jean Reid said:
- Christie, Gardner and Macrae have all played a part in laying the foundations of a system of non-selective secondary schooling; yet neither the men nor the schools they have shaped fit into any neat pattern ... the free hand given by the local authority ... has left each headmaster to work out his own comprehensive salvation.
178. It was claimed that only when comprehensive education was widely held to have 'failed' post-Regionalisation that questions began to be asked in a more interventionist manner. Hence, for example, the commissioning by Strathclyde Regional Council of the Report in S1/S2 in 1982.
179. Organisation and Learning in S1 and S2, SCRED (op cit).
180. Frame of Reference, OECD (op cit) para.17.
181. The Administration of Comprehensive Schools SED commissioned research project conducted by R. Wilkie and S. Bennett 1970-72. Final Report p.158.
182. The First Two Years, SED 1972 (op cit) para 36.
183. Education in Scotland, SED, Report for 1975, p.6.
184. Organisation and Learning in S1 and S2 (op cit). Booklet entitled 'Coping with Differences'.
185. The Adaptation of Teaching Methods to All Levels of Ability', paper given at The Franco-Scottish Seminar on Comprehensive Education, Sevres 1980, paras. 2(2)-2(3). (With regard to pupils with learning difficulties, mention should be made of the increased attention given to this subject consequent on the publication of A Language for Life (The Bullock Report) 1975, which resulted in many schools in policies for 'LANGUAGE ACROSS THE CURRICULUM'. From personal experience, and the testimony of many colleagues, such policies had little lasting impact. Much more activity was generated by the HMI Report The Education of Pupils with Learning Difficulties, SED 1978, which advocated a consultative role for remedial specialists, and acknowledged a much wider range of learning difficulties than countenanced hitherto, many of which had curricular origins.)
186. *ibid.* para 37.
187. 'Assessment in the Comprehensive School', G. Turner in Selection, Certification and Control, ed. P. Broadfoot, FALMER 1984.
188. Education in Scotland, SED Report for 1969, p.16; The First Two

Years (op cit) paras 41-44.

189. Organisation and Learning in S1 and S2 (op cit). Booklet entitled 'Assessment'.
190. An interesting example is the mode of assessment used in the Scottish Central Committee on Modern Languages Course Tour de France, which was piloted in the late 1970s prior to national publication.
191. 'The Adaptation of Teaching Methods to All Levels of Ability' (op cit) para 55.
192. '25 Years On'. Article appeared in 'The Evening Times' June 1979. Copy lent to the author by the headteacher of Crookston Castle Secondary School.
193. Frame of Reference, OECD (op cit) para 18.
194. The new examination provided a more attractive target than did the old SLC Lower for those pupils leaving school as an entry qualification to further education or to jobs in commerce and industry; it also was intended to give an attainable recognised qualification to those pupils who, after selection at 12, attended institutions which did not present for national examinations; and it finally was designed to induce to remain at school those pupils capable of doing so (c.f. SED pamphlet GIVE THEM THEIR CHANCE, January 1956 addressed to parents in an attempt to persuade them of the worthwhileness for pupils of staying on. HAS Minutes 1951-56 attest to professional worries about early leaving from senior secondary schools).
195. Annual Reports of SCEEB for the late 1960s/early 1970s indicate that several new subjects became nationally examinable, alternative or new syllabuses were devised and, in some subjects, objective test items were included. Basically, however, the target audience of the examination remained the same as it had since its inception in 1962.
196. Following the Director of the Examination Board's Report, The Future of the 'O' Grade (1970), a Board enquiry of the SED whether the time was ripe for a reconsideration of the place of the examination received this reply:
- In the Secretary of State's view, no further remit is at present called for.
- At a meeting in August 1971, however, the Secretary of State did offer two suggestions to the Board: banding and the possible use of school assessments (SCEEB Minute 21/10/71).
197. Extract from Final Report of the Working Party on National Examinations, HAS February 1973, para 6, in HAS File 'Minutes and Papers 1970-73'.
198. *ibid*, para. 10.
199. The Banding of 'O' Grade: Comments by the Board in SCEEB File

'Committee on Examinations - Minutes'.

200. *ibid.*
201. 'The Scope of Assessment' (no author) in *Contemporary Scottish Education HAS (op cit)*.
202. Recent research conducted in Scottish comprehensive schools suggests that pupils' courses choices made in S2 are based on assumptions of ability level and the nature of subjects, both of which are conveyed indirectly to pupils via the expectations teachers make of them. Choice and Chances, A.C. Ryrie, A. Furst, M. Lauder, SCRE 1979.
203. Review of Comprehensive Schooling OECD (op cit) para 20.
204. Review of Secondary Education in Western Division 1964, Chapter on Argyll and Dumbarton, Western Division HQ, Glasgow.
205. *ibid*, Chapter on Glasgow.
206. *ibid*, Chapter on Renfrewshire.
207. *ibid.*
208. District Report for Lanarkshire 1964-65, Western Division HQ, Glasgow.
209. Education in Dumbarton 1961-66, Western Division HQ, Glasgow.
210. General Report on Dumbarton/Renfrew/Argyll 1971-72, Western Division HQ, Glasgow.
211. *ibid.*
212. District Report Dumbarton/Renfrew/Argyll 1972-73, Western Division HQ, Glasgow.
213. *ibid.*
214. Education in Dunbartonshire 1974, Western Division HQ, Glasgow.
215. *ibid.*
216. *ibid.*
217. *ibid.*
218. District Report on Glasgow 1966-67, Western Division HQ, Glasgow.
219. *ibid.*
220. *ibid.*
221. District Report on Glasgow 1967-68, Western Division HQ, Glasgow.
222. *ibid.*

223. *ibid.*
224. District Report on Glasgow 1968-69, Western Division HQ, Glasgow.
This report contains an interesting piece of Inspectorate self-description:
- HMI have two invaluable attributes as well as disinterestedness: incomparable mobility and the rate at which they can acquire a total impression of the characteristics of a novel or transitory situation ... they continue to debate the dilemma of their two images: experts with a unique knowledge of the local situation, and provocative traffickers in educational development.
225. *ibid.*
226. *ibid.*
227. *ibid.*
228. *ibid.*
229. *ibid.*
230. District Report on Glasgow 1969-70, Western Division HQ, Glasgow.
231. *ibid.*
232. *ibid.*
233. *ibid.*
234. District Report on Glasgow 1972-73, Western Division HQ, Glasgow.
235. *ibid.*
236. District Report on Lanarkshire 1966-67, Western Division HQ, Glasgow.
237. *ibid.*
238. District Report on Lanarkshire 1967-68, Western Division HQ, Glasgow.
239. *ibid.*
240. *ibid.*
241. District Report on Lanarkshire 1968-69, Western Division HQ, Glasgow.
242. *ibid.*
243. District Report on Lanarkshire 1969-70, Western Division HQ, Glasgow.
244. *ibid.*

245. ibid. The Function of House Staff and Houses in Secondary Schools: A Note from the Director
246. District Report on Lanarkshire 1970-71, Western Division HQ, Glasgow.
247. ibid.
248. District Report on Lanarkshire 1972-73, Western Division HQ, Glasgow.
249. ibid.
250. ibid.
251. District Report on Lanarkshire 1972-73, Western Division HQ, Glasgow.
252. ibid.
253. General Report on Renfrewshire 1967-68: Assessment of Progress since the Area Report 1962, Western Division HQ, Glasgow.
254. ibid.
255. ibid.
256. District Report on Renfrewshire 1968-69, Western Division HQ, Glasgow.
257. ibid.
258. General Report Renfrewshire/Dumbarton/Argyll 1971-72, Western Division HQ, Glasgow.
259. ibid.
260. ibid.
261. Area Report on Renfrewshire 1972-73, Western Division HQ, Glasgow.
262. ibid.
263. ibid.
264. ibid.
265. ibid.
266. ibid.
267. ibid.
268. STUC Proceedings 1972-73. Extract from Speech by J Pearson at STUC Annual Congress 1973.
269. STUC Proceedings 1973-74. Extract from speech by A. Farmer at

STUC Annual Congress 1974.

270. ADES Annual Conference Reports 1975-76. 'Scottish Education - a Survey', address given by Prof. B.T. Ruthven in 1976.
271. EIS Annual Proceedings 1973-74. Extract from Alex Russell's Presidential Address June 1974.
272. A selection of headlines of the time gives a flavour of the impression given to the reading public:
- A SCHOOL DREAM SHATTERED ('The Daily Express' 8/11/74)
THE BLACKBOARD BUNGLE: A WASTE OF 30 YEARS ('The Daily Express 20/10/76)
SCHOOLS: A JUNGLE OF VIOLENCE ('The Sunday Express' 9/6/74)
FIRMER HAND ON SCHOOL ROWDIES ('The Daily Record' 12/5/75)
TERROR IN THE CLASSROOM ('The Sunday Mail' 27/2/72)
SCOTTISH SCHOOLS AT BREAKING POINT ('The Scotsman' 24/11/73)
TEACHERS ON THE POINT OF REBELLION ('The Glasgow Herald' 21/1/74)
THE SECONDARY SICKNESS: EDUCATION WITHOUT A STRATEGY ('The Scotsman' 25/3/76)
273. Extract from Alf Young's address to HAS Conference 1977, quoted in 'The Scotsman' 10/10/77.
274. 'Summerhill Suspension Defended' in 'The Scotsman' 9/4/74.
275. Prominent in this regard were the contributors to the series of 'Black Papers' which appeared 1969-77, which set in train feelings of discontent culminating in James Callaghan's Ruskin Speech (18/10/76). In this speech the Prime Minister alluded to current contentious issues - standards of literacy and numeracy, 'informal' teaching methods, the relationship between school and the world of work. The controversy was fuelled by a comparative study of formal and informal teaching methods which drew massive media attention: Teaching Styles and Pupil Progress, N. Bennett, Open Books 1976. This was the background to the 'Great Debate' in 1977.
276. 'Research and the Comprehensives', Prof. J. Eggleston in 'The Times Educational Supplement (Scotland)' 24/1/75.
277. Scottish Trends in Secondary Education SCRE (op cit).
278. J.L. Whiteford, Extract from address to HAS Conference 1974 in HAS File 'Minutes 1972-76'.
279. Current Discontents in Scottish Secondary Schools, HAS 1975, p.14.
280. 'A Contribution to the Great Debate' A.B.Niven. Talk given at HAS Summer Conference, May 1977. In HAS File 'Minutes 1972-76'.
281. Western Division: General Report 1973-74, Western Division HQ, Glasgow.
282. *ibid.*

283. The Region issued a Circular 'The Possibility of Industrial Action' in which it was stated that it gave no recognition to the EIS 'Five Principles' and in May 1975, the Director instructed headteachers to draw up timetables based on the SED 'Red Book'.
284. Western Division: General Report 1974-75, Western Division HQ, Glasgow.
285. Western Division: General Report 1975-76, Western Division HQ, Glasgow.
286. *ibid.*
287. Western Division: General Report 1973-74, (Introduction), Western Division HQ, Glasgow.
288. The Structure of the Curriculum in the Third and Fourth Years of the Scottish Secondary School, 'The Munn Report', SED 1977, para 2(13).
289. Assessment for all. 'The Dunning Report', SED 1977, para 1(22).
290. Truancy and Indiscipline in Schools in Scotland, 'The Pack Report', SED 1977, para 1(29).
291. George Foulkes in the Foreword to the published report of the Signpost Conference, p.4.
292. Bruce Millan. Extract from opening address to the Signpost Conference, *ibid.*
293. Proposals for Action, SED March 1979, para 13.
294. The Response to Munn and Dunning, J.P. Forsyth, B. Dockrell, SCRE 1979.
295. A Study of the Munn and Dunning Reports, G. Kirk, Ward Lock 1982.
296. Comprehensive Schooling at the Lower Secondary Level, OECD, (*op cit.*), paras 40-43.
297. Reaction submissions: HAS March 1978, AUT 30/3/78, CBI 25/2/78, COSLA 30/3/78. (References from personal papers lent to the author by Dr Joseph Dunning. The SED refused the author access to submissions on the Munn & Dunning Reports, despite the fact that extracts from most were publicised at the time.)
298. NAS/UWT reaction submitted 30/3/78, *ibid.*
299. EIS reaction submitted 25/2/78, *ibid.*
300. Joint Committee of Principals reaction submitted 25/2/78, *ibid.*
301. Curriculum and Assessment in the Third and Fourth Years of Secondary Education: A Feasibility Study, SED 1979.
302. Curriculum and Assessment in the Third and Fourth Years of Secondary Education: Proposals for Action, SED 1979, para 19.

303. Views on the Secretary of States 'Proposals for Action', CCC internal document - lent to the author by Dr Dunning (no date) para 2.
304. ADES Annual Conference Reports 1979-80. Extract from Alex Fletcher's address to 1980 Conference.
305. Extract from 'Some Positions and Trends', a background paper for the Signpost Conference (1976) prepared by John Gray and David Raafe in Conference Report, p.81.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS

Just because our times are critical and our need so great, there is a panic tendency to ask of schools more than they can give. Formal education is but one of the many agencies shaping the lives of the young ... we believe that schools can and will play a great part in the new world that is taking shape, but nothing could be more ruinous than to ask the impossible of them. History is strewn with the wreckage of such millennial hopes.

(Secondary Education: Report of the Advisory Council on Education in Scotland, SED 1947, para. 46)

Comprehensive education is a logical, unstoppable subject. Equality at this level either involves complete, pre-packed fairness, rigorously monitored opportunity; or it is a glossy sham, the unachievable wrapped up in the rhetoric of spurious certitude.

(Peter Preston in 'The Guardian' 20/6/73)

The comprehensive school is in danger of becoming something everybody knows about but which very few understand.

(From an ILEA Education Booklet, quoted in The Comprehensive Experiment D. Reynolds and M. Sullivan, FALMER 1987 p.vi.)

It must be recognised that the future of the comprehensive school as we have come to know it is now at stake. We can no longer be complacent. We can no longer assume that the comprehensive school is the dominant form of secondary schooling for the nation's young people.

'Comprehensive Schools', David Hargreaves in Education and Society Today, eds. A. Hartnett and M. Naish, FALMER 1986, p.148.)

In the previous four chapters the data gathered in the preparation of this thesis has been examined against the four explanatory contexts and related theoretical propositions presented in Chapter One. In this concluding chapter, an attempt will be made to draw the diverse stands of the argument together into a coherent statement representing the interpretation taken by the author, and to explore some of the many underlying issues which the findings raise.

The chapter begins with a short summary of the main propositions to emerge from the earlier chapters (2-5). This will be followed by an outline of the principal conclusions of the research, after which an analysis will be undertaken of some important issues which unfold from the evidence. The chapter ends with an analysis of the three organising concepts selected as central to this study, and an exploration of the connections between them. After examining the changed ideological climate in which the education system functions in the late 1980s, an attempt will be made to suggest some possible ways in which the comprehensive school may develop in the foreseeable future.

In Chapter Two, it was suggested that the comprehensive school was widely seen as having been imposed on the Scottish educational system from South of the Border. Official opinion in Scottish Education Department circles was found not to have been favourable to its introduction, seeing it as arising from a particular political ideology and as a proposed solution to several contemporary practical difficulties in the British educational system. This situation led to optimistic theoretical assertions by political figures about the potential of the comprehensive school as a vehicle for social and educational reform, but to a very real confusion about its precise

definition. Although Circular 600 came to have a mandatory force despite its official status, the Scottish Education Department adopted a predominantly laissez-faire attitude to the construction put on the terms 'comprehensive education' and 'comprehensive school', once it was satisfied that the principal objective had been achieved, namely that secondary provision had been rationalised and was thenceforward to be delivered in single secondary units. Thus, its response to the new order envisaged by Circular 600 could be described as pragmatic, and apparently unconcerned with the philosophical implications involved in the changeover to a comprehensive system. The chapter also showed that there was a widespread diffidence among the teaching profession about comprehensive education, so that it would be an exaggeration to assert that it was born into an enthusiastic environment.

Chapter Three was concerned to show that the comprehensive school, in reality a new educational phenomenon in a Scottish context, encountered a powerful tradition of secondary education, the distinctive features of which caused the new idea to be perceived as a threat to, and potential destructor of, what were generally held to be 'good schools'. The fact that the well-established omnibus school offered a homespun solution to perceived difficulties of finding an acceptable working definition of the comprehensive school appeared rather ironic, since the 1947 Report on Secondary Education, in which it had been hailed as a model for secondary education, was for so long ignored by the Scottish Education Department. This apparent volte-face can be explained by suggesting that the omnibus school (with internal selection) suited vested interests well as a paradigm for the new notion of the comprehensive school, and fitted well with the emphasis on structural reorganisation which posed little threat to the prevailing value system. The chapter

further sought to show that a lingering attachment to a meritocratic concept of education enshrined in the hallowed 'lad o' pairts' syndrome, and bolstered by a continuing academic tradition with the Scottish Certificate of Education exam structure at its apex, was fundamentally at odds with the comprehensive principle and its concomitants (e.g. equal concern for all pupils irrespective of ability, concern for abilities other than academic, acceptance of the importance of personal and social development), which were, inevitably, compromised, or even undermined in practice. It was found that many teachers experienced substantial insecurity in trying to come to terms with the realities of comprehensivisation, to the extent that in many cases comprehensive 'reform' remained largely nominal. Teachers did not stray far from familiar practices. Exhortations to embrace a new concept of education did not find a receptive professional audience, and much of the old order was seen to have been left intact. Paradoxically, therefore, it could be said that the advent of the comprehensive school in the West of Scotland, not only intensified divisions between pupils, but also produced no more than cosmetic change to the former bipartite system.

Chapter Four examined the roles of the principal contributors to the policy process. Taking the view that Circular 600, albeit a directive document was, nevertheless, an act of faith to establish a new model for the secondary school, it went on to show that the Scottish Education Department maintained a latent but firm control over the administrative/financial aspects of comprehensive policy, but left its educational dimensions at the level of exhortation. No official line on the internal workings of the comprehensive school having been discovered, it was further argued that a reactive policy model based on expediency was adopted in the years which followed the issue of Circular

600. Members of the Inspectorate were found to have dutifully nudged developments in a comprehensive direction, and the pointers to implementation contained in the publications of the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum were judged to have had little real impact on what happened in schools. At the level of local government, the response to Circular 600 was chiefly of an administrative and practical kind, Directors of Education and local politicians being chiefly concerned to establish an outward structure which ostensibly satisfied the requirements of reorganised provision. The advent of the reorganisation of local government was shown to have created a new set of problems for the Directorate, with the result that, for the first few years at least, schools were very much left to their own devices, with little evidence of the increased accountability which local government reorganisation was alleged to have brought in its wake.

Chapter Five concentrated on how comprehensive policy was implemented. After an examination of practical difficulties in the four counties of West Central Scotland with which this thesis is principally concerned, and a number of problematic factors encountered by the policy, it was argued that these inescapable realities made progress towards the realisation of a comprehensive system slow, and certainly much slower than is commonly asserted. The strategies adopted to initiate reform within schools were found to have been gradualistic and, despite much well-intentioned effort on the part of advisers and those responsible for mounting in-service training programmes for teachers, the uncoordinated nature of the activity resulted in a patchy and limited impact on practitioners. Attention was also paid to some problematic organisational developments related to comprehensivisation, and it was concluded that the enforced nature of their introduction, and the

magnitude of the modification to existing school practices they entailed, resulted in their being taken on board with varying degrees of success. In the face of these difficulties, schools in West Central Scotland received variable support in assisting them to devise strategies to cope with the implications of comprehensive education, but this was inadequate to prevent the emergence of a widespread malaise in secondary education by the mid 1970s. The reform proposals which arose from the national working parties set up to address the difficulties took shape at the end of the period covered by this research, but it was suggested that, notwithstanding these measures, the comprehensive school in the West of Scotland in 1980 was still beset by unresolved problems (e.g. curriculum, pedagogy, assessment), and in need of a new rationale and identity.

From the foregoing discussion, it is possible to synthesise the salient points into an argument which represents the core of this thesis: the politically-inspired introduction of comprehensive education in 1965 acted as a catalyst which put a formidable array of crucial issues on the educational agenda in such a way that they could not be ignored in an educational system which had hitherto operated according to well-established historico-cultural principles. Scottish official opinion was not predisposed to the changeover, a fact which resulted both in unprecise definitions of the terms 'comprehensive education/comprehensive school', and in the prevalence of a limited conceptualisation of comprehensivisation as essentially a rationalisation of existing bipartite secondary provision. The educational world into which the new concept was launched was unpropitious to its development for cultural and ideological reasons. This led to the emergence of a gap between comprehensive policy ideals

and the system imperatives they encountered. Despite all the rhetoric emphasising a relatively easy transition to a comprehensive system in Scotland (as compared with England), the evidence suggests that implementation was inadequately co-ordinated and managed. Much, in fact, was left to the discretion of individuals at all levels in the education service, so that many of the political and educational aims of the move towards comprehensive education in the West of Scotland failed to be realised in practice. It can, therefore, be argued that the reality of comprehensive education caused considerable disturbance and confusion in the secondary sector, and many of its inherent problems remained substantially unresolved in 1980. Although there were eventual signs of a changing emphasis and approach in schools, it cannot be claimed that the underlying implications of adopting a comprehensive system of education were honestly and realistically addressed in the period under review (1965-80).

The obvious question which the observer of the developments in Scottish secondary education over these fifteen years must ask is: why did the changeover to a comprehensive system, claimed by its advocates to mark the arrival of an improved secondary provision, turn out as it did in the West of Scotland? Which factors played a major role in shaping the course of events in the newly reorganised system and its evolution? It should be stated at the outset that the object of such an analysis is not to pillory the individuals and bodies who were charged with the task of making comprehensive policy a reality, and reproach them with their shortcomings. As will become evident the task was daunting, the obstacles formidable. Rather, by examining this period of recent educational history, the intention is to clarify what seem to be the important issues which help towards an explanation and understanding of

how our educational system functions and adapts to major change. In attempting to answer the second of the two questions posed above, the first point to make is that the choice of the subject of comprehensive education has resulted in the generation of data of considerable richness and complexity. Indeed, close examination of the material gathered in the course of this research reveals that it raises a number of important issues which concern the functioning of Scottish secondary education. Since, however, it would clearly be impossible to do justice to all of them in one thesis, it will be necessary to be selective, and focus on those which seem central to this study. Accordingly it is proposed to concentrate on only three: CULTURE, IDEOLOGY and MANAGEMENT. From the documentary and oral evidence on which this study is based, it can be argued that these three concepts emerged with a regularity that is striking. Often they were inter-related and exercised a combined influence on both individuals and events over the period under review. It seems clear, however, that they had a crucial impact on the formative years of the comprehensive system, and it can be argued that many of the other important issues raised by the data can be subsumed under these three central headings. Moreover, the view is taken here that the Scottish educational system in general, and schools in particular, are illustrations of some aspects of Scottish culture and its processes, and that any discussion which ignores this point is fundamentally flawed. An interpretative approach which stresses the cultural context of the educational system is evident in the works of contemporary commentators.¹ The findings of the study also support recent work which has stressed the centrality to the story of twentieth century Scottish education of a quite distinct ideological framework which influenced policy and coloured the philosophy and practice of many in leading positions in the system.² Nor is it difficult to justify the inclusion

of a management perspective. One of the principal findings of the research was that, after the decision to 'go comprehensive', much of the detailed implementation of the policy was left in the hands of individuals in the education service from members of the Inspectorate to classroom teachers. The decisions that were taken and the approaches adopted inevitably, therefore, raise issues of management. Although the discipline of educational management was a relatively under-developed and unsophisticated field in 1965, the years covered by this study have witnessed a veritable 'growth industry' in terms of University courses and an ever-expanding literature on the subject. This academic effort has made an important contribution to the professional dialogue by drawing attention to the potential of management concepts and theories for an understanding and amelioration of educational practice. One of the principal conclusions of a recent Welsh study of the operation of the comprehensive system was that part of its lack of success was attributable to poor management.³ One academic has recently argued that professional, modern management of the education service is the only way forward to the creation of a national consensus and theory which will resolve the present 'cracked consensus' between writers of the New Left and New Right on curriculum and schooling.⁴

CULTURE

Although Scotland is widely regarded as having a distinctive culture, attempts to define its salient characteristics are fraught with difficulty, not the least of which is the danger in such an enumeration of its degeneration into a catalogue of nationalistic traits. A further problem is that Scottish culture is marked by contradictions and confusion, with many of its heterogeneous elements having historical, economic, religious and social determinants. Nevertheless, the view is

taken here that account must be taken of culture, consciousness and social perceptions in the education service to offer any chance of a meaningful explanation of its workings. In this view, the perceived sense of reality in individuals is culturally determined, and education is inextricably bound up with values and cultural transmission. Many writers have attempted to define the term 'culture', and as a result of their work it can be regarded as being capable of division into several overlapping categories. A useful definition for the purposes of this study is drawn from pattern theory:

Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behaviour acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may on the one hand be considered as products of action, on the other hand as conditioning elements of further action.⁵

Culture, in this sense, represents the shared principles of life of various groups in society, and arises to enable them to make sense of their everyday experience.⁶ This culture, as a particular way of life, imbues different spheres of social existence with patterns which tend to persist as custom, despite changes, so that the latter are seen as selections or rejections consistent with cultural patterns. Raymond Williams has drawn attention to the importance of the operation of what he calls the 'selective tradition' in an understanding of culture. He argues that it puts pressure on academic institutions to preserve hallowed culture patterns and to resist change:

In theory, and to a limited extent in practice, those institutions which are formally concerned with keeping tradition alive are committed to the tradition as a whole and not to some selection from it according to contemporary interests ... in the analysis of contemporary culture, the existing state of the selective tradition is of vital importance, for it is often true that some change in this tradition - establishing new lines with the past, breaking

or redrawing existing lines - is a radical kind of contemporary change.⁷

Indeed, much of the writing of Williams is of direct relevance to the theme of culture and the comprehensive school. He argues in a memorable chapter⁸ for 'equality of being' among individuals based on a common, but not equal culture, the coherence of which derives from open and readily accessible channels of communication. Such a common culture, he contends, is necessary for the continued survival of British society. This view represents a strong attack on the elitist school of cultural theorists, like Leavis and Eliot. Williams contends that no-one should have the prerogative of arrogating to himself the right to determine the advance of understanding. The cultural system must be flexible and is in any case unplannable. It has no place for the authoritarian imposition of a minority, elite culture or, by implication, the culture of the masses. Williams sees culture as resting on a metaphor - 'the tending of natural growth' - and argues that a genuinely common culture can be compatible with increased specialisation. Thus, all can contribute to it in individual ways creating diversity without schism. One means of achieving this 'solidarity' is by having a broad general compulsory education for all which transmits the best elements of the tradition of the common culture. It could be claimed that this desire to cater for the diversity of human beings within a common culture using the education service as an instrument to provide general education for all is consonant with the aim of the comprehensive school. Indeed, Williams attempted to translate this theoretical notion into educational reality by providing, ahead of its years, a template for a core, common curriculum for the comprehensive school as part of a changing educational system and a rapidly changing society.⁹

These observations are highly pertinent to the introduction of comprehensive education in the West of Scotland, and provide a valuable context in which to consider the findings of this study. It was noted that the 1947 Report of the Advisory Council, many of the recommendations of which are consistent with the comprehensive principle, was largely ignored by the Scottish Education Department - an early indication of official opinion on comprehensive education. That the omnibus school advocated in its pages was adopted as the model for the comprehensive school in the years after 1965 is indeed ironic, since its description in the Report did not match the philosophy espoused in Circular 600, where the early years of secondary education were envisaged as a period of orientation. The cultural appeal of the model appears to have led to a widely-shared perception (corroborated in interview evidence) that Scotland already had 'comprehensive' schools, and to the associated complacency about the extent to which the system would be required to change. This, in turn, led to the emphasis on structural adaptation and to claims that the comprehensive school described in Circular 600 was in line with the Scottish educational tradition. The findings of this study, however, suggest that the comprehensive school caused cultural dissonance in the Scottish context, conflicting sharply with accepted educational values which were the antithesis of a common education and a common culture.¹⁰ These values shaped the predominant cultural ethos in schools to an extent that it would not be an exaggeration to say that there was a cultural predisposition against the common school catering for all pupils in the West of Scotland. In this sense, the prevailing cultural ethic was a powerful obstacle to the scope of the comprehensive school for providing a valid and relevant secondary education for all pupils. The most that can be said is that the concept was accepted in principle, but its

underlying effects limited in practice. Looking at events in the West of Scotland, it has to be concluded that the arrival of the comprehensive school disturbed the educational peace and produced major cleavages in professional opinion. The fact that the concomitants of the comprehensive principle (e.g. mixed-ability teaching, the common course, altered forms of assessment) were perceived as destructive of existing 'good' schools is an indication of the extent of its diametric opposition to the prevailing value system. In this context, it is hardly surprising to discover from the data that the comprehensive school attracted only lukewarm support from many teachers.

The research has also shown that the persistence of certain aspects of the Scottish cultural tradition in education militated against the likelihood that the comprehensive principle would herald radical change. The survival of a particularly Scottish interpretation of equality of opportunity appears to have resulted in the comprehensive school being seen as an instrument for increasing educational provision on a meritocratic basis.¹¹ * The dominance of Scottish Certificate of Education examinations, and the gearing of much of the secondary system to their requirements and entry to higher education, it is argued, resulted in many 'comprehensive' schools being mere replicas of the senior secondaries they replaced. It is fair to say that, despite the changeover to a comprehensive system, the Scottish trait of according primacy to the cognitive continued unchallenged, and the related concern to protect and promote the academically able did a disservice to a considerable number of pupils during their secondary education. The academic orientation of many reorganised schools determined the style of pedagogy and methodology adopted, and it is difficult not to conclude that the pre-eminent criterion was competition rather than co-operation

in the classroom with the inevitable result that pupils who did not match up to academic yardsticks were swept under the educational carpet in a variety of ways. In this connection Williams has alerted us to the danger of viewing education as the distribution of a mere product:

It is not only that the way in which education is organised can be seen to express, consciously or unconsciously, the wider organisation of a culture and society, so that what has been thought of as simple distribution is in fact an active shaping to particular social ends. It is also that the content of education, which is subject to great historical variation, again expresses, again both consciously and unconsciously, certain basic elements in the culture, what is thought of as 'an education' being in fact a particular selection, a particular set of emphases and omissions.¹²

The 'active shaping to particular social ends' is a reminder that Scottish society had a quite specific expectation of secondary schooling - namely that it was a mechanism for the promotion of the ablest youngsters to a place in higher education and a respectable job or profession in later life. In such a traditional scenario, the comprehensive principle, with its emphasis on the varied needs of all pupils was bound to struggle to carve out a niche for itself. Its reverence for the uniqueness of individual personalities and its desire to foster an equal concern for all pupils, irrespective of their ability, would find difficulty in taking root in an educational system which operated according to an accepted definition of educational success. Indeed, this study has shown that, even after the formal introduction of a comprehensive system of education, there still lingered an uncritical acceptance of the innate values of the previous order. Such an invocation of the virtues of traditional elements of the education system, not surprisingly, delimited the scope for change, let alone enquiry or experiment. It may be that teachers working in the new comprehensive schools felt that the only way to gain public recognition

and acceptance of the reorganised schools was to strive at all costs to preserve the 'best' features of their selective predecessors. In any case, this study has suggested that going comprehensive in the West of Scotland in reality meant an endeavour to bend a system designed for the able few to meet the diverse needs of the entire ability range - a curious happening in a country which prides itself in having an egalitarian and democratic educational system.¹³ It is not an exaggeration, therefore, to claim that the comprehensive school was predicated on a view of teaching and learning, and indeed of the function of secondary schooling, which few teachers in the West of Scotland were, in cultural terms, prepared for or desired with enthusiasm. Although the scale and organisation of secondary education was irrevocably altered by the issue of Circular 600, the cultural foundations of the educational system and its goals and values remained to a large extent unchallenged. From the evidence presented in this study, the educational juggernaut lumbered on, only partially dented by a spirit of reform. A complex of cultural forces, operating often at a subconscious level, shaped the ideas and actions of individuals, with the result that the environment in which the comprehensive school operated showed an attachment to traditional ideas and values. In a curious paradox, Scottish culture both welcomed comprehensive reform but rejected it in practice. This suggests a dichotomy in the Scottish psyche, egalitarian on the one hand but deeply elitist on the other.

IDEOLOGY

Every idea arises in the midst of an ongoing culture and thus cannot entirely divest itself of important elements of that culture.¹⁴

This statement serves as a reminder of the close connection between culture and ideology. Skilbeck provides a useful conceptualisation of

the connection when he says that belonging to a culture is a necessary feature of human existence, and that individuals can belong to it more or less passively; but ideology involves something prescriptive, something which acts to direct belief and action.¹⁵ Ideology is an important concept in education because the education system is an important component of the social structure, and one of the principal means by which ideas are reproduced and disseminated throughout society. If it is accepted that to attempt to shape or modify human experience and influence the nature of society is 'to engage in an ideological project',¹⁶ then comprehensive education is unmistakably ideological, since it represents a desire to implement a particular form of education. Even a cursory glance at the vast literature on the subject of ideology reveals that the term is beset with conceptual confusion. The bewildering array of definitions offered is not particularly helpful in the search for a working definition. Indeed, it might even be contended that there is no generally accepted meaning of the term, despite the numerous studies in various fields of human activity.¹⁷ Williams has provided an explanatory guide to the confusion by tracing the development of the term from its Napoleonic origins as a social policy derived from a social theory in a conscious way, through its pejorative connotation as an impractical or fanatical theory to Marx and Engels' use of it to denote the failure to realise that ideas are the expression of the dominant material relationships in society. In this sense, ideology is illusion. Williams rounds off his account with a mention that its use today still tends to the pejorative, but in the sense of a philosophy particular to a group.¹⁸

Nevertheless, in broad terms an ideology can be said to be a system of beliefs at the basis of any society which governs the way groups of

people act and think. Cosin has argued that ideologies depend on social relations for their existence, and are necessary for the maintenance of social structures. He defines ideology as:

A system of meanings with which individuals are involved, or a stock of meanings on which they draw to interpret their experience of the world ... (ideology) is a system of ideas working in a social structure which helps to keep it going.¹⁹

Among a plethora of definitions in the literature, that of Corbett is particularly helpful in its open-endedness and lack of restriction of the content of beliefs which constitute a particular ideology:

By ideology is meant here any intellectual structure consisting of: a set of beliefs about the conduct of life and the organisation of society; a set of beliefs about man's nature and the world in which he lives; a claim that the two sets are inter-dependent.²⁰

In addition, it may be useful to enumerate certain traits common to most ideologies but which are particularly relevant to the ideological world into which comprehensive education was introduced in Scotland:

- dominant ideologies serve the interests of certain institutions and those who attain positions of leadership in them
- ideologies being concerned with authority are closely linked to the political process and ultimately to policy²¹
- ideologies often appeal to the emotions, attitudes and prejudices of their adherents rather than to objective facts. Thus, factual and value elements may be indistinguishable
- ideologies often spring from vested interests, draw their legitimacy from the predominant value system and are concerned to ensure the preservation of a given order
- proponents of ideologies resist the explicit introduction of a revision of their belief systems, which appear to adherents as

incapable of betterment

- ideologies work on assumption, and it is thus difficult to challenge the group values which inform them
- educational thought and practice are influenced by ideology, even though those engaged in the educational process may not always be aware of its permeating effects.

The advent of the comprehensive school in 1965 is aptly described by Skilbeck in a discussion of educational values:

Educational values and beliefs about the best ways of expressing these values change over time. These educational changes are part of a broader process of cultural change, but they reflect prevailing political ideologies.²²

The data gathered in the course of this research makes it possible to argue that the comprehensive school, born of a particular political ideology, presented a new educational orthodoxy for teachers working in the secondary system in the 1960s, an orthodoxy, moreover, the central tenets of which (e.g. an equal concern for all pupils and their varying abilities) were at odds with the prevailing conceptions of the function of schools and schooling. The mismatch should not come as a surprise, as the education system is an arguably powerful contributor to and shaper of the ideological foundations of any society. A major problem in Scotland was that those who made key decisions in and dealt with the day-to-day management of the educational system were the successful products of the previous system and, it could be argued, ideological prisoners of their own educational background. The ideology which has governed Scottish education for most of the twentieth century has proved difficult to dislodge, as McPherson and Raab point out.²³ This helps to explain the apprehensiveness and reticence over comprehensivisation evidenced in members of bodies like the HAS and ADES, as well as in the

major teaching unions. Hence the pervasive influence on the thinking of many of a meritocratic vision of an academic hierarchy of subjects, professional qualifications and pupils which turned out to be little affected by the more compassionate features of a comprehensive philosophy of education. One need look no further for evidence than the inadequate professional response to raising of the school leaving age. That many 'reorganised' schools merely assumed the form of amalgamated senior and junior secondary schools is attributable in no small measure to the continued presence of an ideology of separatism which insisted on keeping differing pupil groups apart, and proved a powerful obstacle to the integrative elements which underpinned comprehensive philosophy. The impetus for change was also blunted by the bureaucratic ideology of the system and the professional ideology of teachers. The former, characterised by remoteness from the events to which its actions relate, is concerned with procedures rather than substantive philosophical issues in education. These procedures become self-perpetuating and over the years build up a kind of institutional inertia which resists fundamental change. The latter, relating to perceived social status and professional autonomy of teachers, tends to resist outside pressures and induce a conformity among them and a conservativeness of outlook. Thus, a combination of ideological forces conspired to resist the potential disruption of the status quo by the more radical features of egalitarianism - mixed-ability classes, child-centred approaches, individualised learning, group work, less expository teaching styles, etc. Indeed, it can be argued that the historically directive and authoritarian cast of the Scottish educational system was severely at odds with some of the innovative ideas introduced in the wake of comprehensivisation. This partially explains why the guidance system came to be (if it was not conceived as) an administrative adjunct in

schools rather than a mechanism to offer personal assistance to pupils; and why the more participative/consultative management strategies of the 1970s proved so difficult to adopt and integrate. The data also showed that the number of people genuinely committed to comprehensive reform and all its implications in the West of Scotland remained small throughout the period under review. Indeed, it appears that to have been pro-comprehensive was almost to deviate from the ideological norm, such was the attachment to, and defence of parochial, narrowly-defined professional practices. This is, of course, not to deny the inherent difficulties in trying to put a comprehensive philosophy of education into practice. Rather, it is to demonstrate how ideological considerations accounted in part for the negative posture adopted by many teachers to its introduction. The uncritical celebration of accepted (and, to many people, acceptable) system practices appears to have resulted in many of the potentialities residing in the comprehensive principle not being grasped to the full in the period covered by this thesis. What gains had been made came under threat with the change of political ideology in 1979, which can be interpreted as heralding the embryonic dismantling of the comprehensive system by questioning its rationale.

The prevailing ideological climate also exerted a profound influence on the reception accorded to the comprehensive principle. A noteworthy feature of the documentary evidence consulted in the preparation of this thesis was the absence of any coherent definition of key terms like 'comprehensive education' and 'the comprehensive school'. What these terms meant was never made the subject of professional debate. Indeed, individuals interviewed gave such a variety of personal interpretations of these terms that one is tempted to say that, in the Scottish context,

the Roman adage QUOT HOMINES, TOT SENTENTIAE applied in matters of definition. Many interviewee responses were characterised by idealism and theoretical assertion rather than by precise concrete terminology. In the sections relating to the organisation of schools, Circular 600 itself used tentative permissive language, which suggested that a comprehensive system of education would be established with the mere creation of neighbourhood secondary schools with an unselected pupil intake. The comprehensive school was seen either as a harmful product of socialist dogma, or a move towards a 'better' education system by making senior secondary education more widely available to all in accordance with the democratic tradition.

This study has also shown that, in the West of Scotland, the creation of comprehensive schools served to remove junior secondary schools from the educational map, and thereby remove the social stigma associated with having to attend establishments which were generally held in low esteem. In terms of what the new schools would offer educationally for the widened ability intake, however, much of what was claimed remained at the level of rhetoric and idealism. This situation gave rise, of course, to a right-wing school of educational thought, exemplified in the writing of Dr Rhodes Boyson, which held that comprehensive schools were merely a more efficient means of effecting selection by ability.²⁴

Given that comprehensive reform lacked a philosophical/theoretical justification, it was almost inevitable that those charged with forging an identity for comprehensive schools felt that they had nothing to go on, no model to which to aspire, and consequently experienced insecurity and apprehension. It could be argued that the uncertainty surrounding what was meant by comprehensive education, and the grip of prevailing

ideological assumptions almost guaranteed a continuation of previous attitudes and practices in education, at least for some years to come. It is, of course, readily conceded that the timescale required to introduce significant educational change should not be underestimated, but the point is that its length is closely bound up with ideological issues. Not surprisingly, therefore, most comprehensive schools in the West of Scotland were positioned somewhere on the meritocratic/egalitarian model spectrum (Chapter One), with very few features of the radical model in evidence. It may even be that supporters of comprehensive education paradoxically harmed their cause by striving to integrate too 'strong' a version of the comprehensive principle (i.e. equal treatment for all pupils) into an educational system which found it basically alien. If it is accepted that equality has limits, then the issue of differentiation becomes central to the operation of the comprehensive principle. Equality need not mean the same treatment for all, but may encapsulate the concept of equality of consideration, which involves taking account of, and attempting to cater for, relevant differences among pupils. Thus, it becomes crucial to decide how and when the educational needs of pupils are to be met in differing ways. From the evidence gathered in this study, the advent of the comprehensive school in the West of Scotland appears to have entrenched rather than blurred divisions between pupils, with the issue of differentiation causing heated professional disputes. Comprehensive education over the period just grew, evolving from, rather than replacing the previous system, many of the traits of which it retained. Thus the comprehensive school, a new arrival on the educational scene, and uncertain of its role, had to fight against the odds to establish its identity and 'raison d'etre'. Given the ideological and cultural forces at work in the system, it seems in retrospect unrealistic to have

expected too much too soon in the way of change. A further point to be acknowledged is that the operation of the comprehensive school is inherently complex. The fact, however, that difficulties exist in its implementation need not negate the validity of the principle, or imply that it is flawed. The view is taken here that the comprehensive system must mean that the education of all children is of equal value and deserving of equal attention and respect from teachers. The comprehensive school must show an equal professional obligation to all pupils, and give them all full and equal access to all its resources, human and physical. Its central task is to manage the learning experiences it provides in such a way that success for all pupils (irrespective of their social background) is maximised, and whatever abilities/potential they possess is allowed to develop. Such a philosophy, based as it is on equality of consideration, emphatically does not mean the same educational diet for all pupils. To retain the culinary metaphor, special recipes need special ingredients. In aiming for the academic and social development of all its pupils, the comprehensive school must treat them according to their individual needs, and allow the differing abilities to contribute to the collective whole. It must give different children selectively different experiences but within a common curriculum. Central to this stance is the notion that academic success (which in no way contradicts the principle) is only one type, and that while high academic standards are to be encouraged, their attainment should not be allowed to become the school's sole aim. The corollary is, of course, that inferior educational or personal status should not be conferred on pupils unable to scale the academic heights. Implicit in this conception of comprehensive education are different educational values and attitudes: indeed, it enshrines a new evaluation of the purpose of schooling, of

the role of the school in society, of the processes of teaching, learning and assessment, and of the ethos which pervades the secondary school. The comprehensive principle, a pre-requisite in any attempt successfully to operate a policy of comprehensive education, should inform the aims, decision-making, policies and professional practices of the comprehensive school. A theoretical, philosophical perspective is essential. It has to be said that this study found little evidence of any such coherent or consistent philosophical basis to the operation of comprehensive education in the West of Scotland (1965-80). Circular 600 appears not to have succeeded in forging a new model of secondary education: 'Equality' was seen pre-eminently in terms of access to a six year secondary school, and the 'opportunity' was that of competing in an essentially academic hurdle race.

MANAGEMENT

A major finding to emerge from the data collected for this study is that the introduction and development of the comprehensive school in the West of Scotland was characterised by a lack of management strategy and strategic thinking. The change from a segregated to a comprehensive system had such profound implications that it should have been accompanied by a management strategy to turn the policy into reality. Such an approach evidently did not materialise. Many of the individuals interviewed attested to the widely-held perception in the West of Scotland educational world that the comprehensive policy was foisted on the Scottish educational system and was in reality designed to solve some pressing educational problems in England. Such a view was unlikely to endear the initiative to practitioners. With the early Glasgow comprehensives pointing the way, changes post-1965 tended to be limited to structural level. Although there was extensive involvement at

Ministerial level in considering reorganisation plans submitted by local authorities, it appears from this study that the Scottish Education Department was happy to accept an outward appearance of comprehensivisation. There does not seem to have been any official desire to examine how the new schools were to operate. No indication was found in the study of a co-ordinated or long-term plan for comprehensive secondary education having been worked out. Rather, the evidence suggests that the policy was ill-thought out in educational terms. After the quasi-compulsory introduction of the policy by Circular²⁵ (despite the choice of a Circular being determined by the Labour Government's adoption of a non-directive approach), the Scottish Education Department appears to have adopted a laissez faire attitude to how schools interpreted the policy in practice, claiming in this way to encourage experiment and discussion. Such a permissive stance, it is argued, was bound to inhibit the realisation of any radical implications the policy may have had. The fact, moreover, that comprehensive policy statements remained at the level of exhortation indicates that much faith was pinned on the goodwill of those required to implement them. McPherson and Raab, in their discussion of curriculum development, argue that to a large extent policy was determined by school practice.²⁶ This managerial 'strategy', apparently lacking in direction, helps to account for the variety of responses it elicited in schools, and the gap between policy intention and the reality that ensued. The ad-hoc, essentially reactive nature of developments throughout the period tempt one to conclude that the Scottish Education Department had no policy in educational terms for comprehensive schools. In such circumstances, the predictable perception among educationists gradually contributed to the feelings of professional discontent which emerged in the mid 1970s. Nor did the Scottish Education Department evidently expect the level of

policy monitoring constantly advocated in current Inspectorate Reports on secondary schools. Indeed, precious little systematic scrutiny of comprehensive education in action seems to have been instigated. The switch to comprehensive secondary education was a potentially bold and imaginative measure, but no new criteria for practice or success were devised. Its underlying implications appear not to have been properly grasped at the most senior management levels of the education service. Questions of the fundamental objectives of the reform seem not to have been addressed. A consequence was that no cohesive educational philosophy to match the change in structure emerged and no new educational strategy was developed.

Management is inextricably bound up with the concept of power, which is taken here to mean the exercise of influence in an intentional manner on the behaviour and actions of others based on authority. On that definition, the introduction of comprehensive education in the West of Scotland (1965-80) provides interesting instances of its exercise. Circular 600 itself was an attempt to effect a fundamental change over the whole secondary education system by political fiat. The study has supported the view that, although having no force in law, the Circular was in effect mandatory, and the Scottish Education Department appeared to be reluctant to accept any modification to, or deviation from the 12-18 all-through comprehensive school as the preferred model in Scotland. Even if the co-operation of local authorities had been assumed, the example of Renfrewshire in this study vividly illustrates the official reaction to proposed alternative forms, and this despite the fact that Circular 600 had, in theory at least, permitted them. In matters of administration and financial detail, the control of the Scottish Education Department was prominent. This view was supported in the

findings by the accounts provided of the consultative procedures undertaken by the Scottish Education Department with the main bodies in Scottish education: these turned out to be polite exercises in public relations, with a strong sense that the Department would heed only what suited its purpose. Thus, the role of the Scottish Education Department in the matter of comprehensive reorganisation has been found in this study to be ambivalent: on matters of finance, administrative detail and the outward form of comprehensive schools the Department took a firm stance; on matters of internal organisation, curriculum and pedagogy, however, its stance was hesitant and even permissive. This ambivalence may have stemmed from the fact that a national decision had been taken to 'go comprehensive', and thus the form of provision was not in question. The fact, however, that many senior officials were imbued with what McPherson and Raab call 'the bipartist ethic',²⁷ suggests that they would have had difficulty in coming to terms with the rather different educational philosophy at the basis of comprehensive reform. The ambivalence may also be attributable to a deeper cultural conflict in the Scottish psyche, namely that between liberalism and authoritarianism, permissiveness and conservatism, thus suggesting that the Scottish Education Department may have genuinely been uncertain of where or in what way to intervene in the developing comprehensive scene. Some evidence was also found of the centralist, top-down model of control in the efforts of the Inspectorate and the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum to produce curriculum papers for an emergent comprehensive market. But proposals for the best form of curricular provision appeared to be official endorsements of good practice as identified by the Inspectorate rather than innovatory schemes determined to put the comprehensive principle into practice. For most of the period under review, and certainly until the restructuring of the

Consultative Committee on the Curriculum in 1976, this study has not been able to find an indication of an official desire to examine the fundamental issues of curriculum and pedagogy associated with comprehensive reform. Even when it became apparent that comprehensive secondary education was experiencing difficulties in the 1970s, the adoption of the traditional committee of enquiry with a hand-picked membership and tightly prescribed remit increased the predictability of a series of recommendations which would be unlikely to solve the problems perceived. By these means, it is suggested, vested interests in the 'policy community'²⁸ in Scottish education impeded the likelihood of any real progress, while at the same time appearing to be tackling pressing issues with a seriousness of purpose. It is difficult not to reach the conclusion that few members of the policy community supported the notion of the comprehensive school, let alone countenanced the possibility that it was going to revolutionise secondary education. From a management perspective, it can be claimed that, with regard to comprehensive education, central power was exercised, but only in a limited and very conservative manner.

The accounts of the transition to a reorganised system in the four counties which feature in this study have shown that Directors of Education were much more powerful figures in the mid 1960s than now, and were able to wield considerable influence on developments, even though in the final analysis they could not obstruct what was a major national policy. Although the political complexion of the Education Committee was undoubtedly important, as the example of the non-partisan Renfrewshire showed, the fact that there was a high proportion of Labour Councillors in the area under examination ensured that the principle, if not the practice, of comprehensive education would be accepted without

demur. Equally, however, the study has shown that some Labour Councillors were at least ambivalent, if not secretly hostile to the idea for historical, cultural and personal reasons, and found it very difficult to break their allegiance to the selective tradition. This dilemma was heightened for some during the furore over the six remaining selective schools in Glasgow - another illustration of the significance of the level of political commitment and consciousness. In the heated debates which ensued, some councillors' private views were at odds with the public posture of the ruling Labour Group (viz: total opposition to any form of selection). The episode illustrates not only the limits to the power of the Scottish Education Department, but also what can happen when a particular policy is strenuously pursued at local level against the wishes of a substantial section of the electorate. In that circumstance, the power of the Director was seen to have been severely circumscribed, with local freedom finally winning the day, but only after political intervention at the highest level. It was from the mid 1970s that the political control of education increased with the advent of the reorganisation of local government. Important for this study, however, is the point that although councillors began to take a more active and public interest in the workings of the education service than hitherto, in terms of management their higher people did not impinge on the substance or practice of comprehensive secondary education and schools continued to be left largely to their own devices. As such, a major finding of this study has been that there was no serious analysis of the workings (and shortcomings) of the system as it came to terms with the implications of comprehensive education. The central purpose of the comprehensive school as a philosophical concept did not figure on the agenda for discussion - once launched, it was allowed to evolve according to the individual philosophy and approach of those who had to

implement the changeover.

One of the central concepts in management is leadership. From the many analyses of the leadership function, it can be seen that it is centrally concerned with defining aims, exercising influence through communication and persuading through involvement. Those exercising a leadership function ought, also, ideally, to be aware of the relevance of theories of motivation and achievement which have demonstrated those features of the working situation from which individuals derive most job and personal satisfaction. One of the main conclusions of this study is that, after the issue of Circular 600 little constructive assistance was given to those expected to cope with its implications. There seems to have been a widespread expectation that everyone would willingly co-operate and deal with the realities of a changed situation. In a hierarchically organised system like the education service, there is a need for mutual trust and co-operation between the various parts that make it up, otherwise there is little prospect of devising agreed aims. In the event, evidence was found of both professional and parental opposition to the changeover to a comprehensive system.

Members of the Directorate on the whole adopted a predominantly pragmatic, administrative role in developments. Contrary to the admonitions in the ADES Manual, their role as educators appears to have been suppressed.²⁹ This is not to say that they and their staffs did not provide any leadership for those in schools trying to tackle the internal difficulties associated with comprehensive education, once the outward structure had been established; but its extent was variable. The four counties examined in this thesis faced difficulties of a practical kind in the changeover. Administrative staff in

Dunbartonshire, Glasgow City and Renfrewshire provided some evidence of strategy and sense of direction, and took well-intentioned steps to assist schools. Even then, however, their efforts met with formidable obstacles within schools. Lanarkshire stands alone in providing an example of inadequate leadership and little guidance. When these four areas became part of Strathclyde Region, the study found that the new authority offered no strategy or policy planning for secondary education in the years 1975-80. Internal communications within the Education Department, and those with schools, left much to be desired. One is tempted to say, on the basis of the evidence, that the introduction of comprehensive education caused a professional ideas vacuum, which was left to be filled by initiatives at grassroots level. The example of the curricular provision for the influx of pupils resulting from raising of the school leaving age illustrates how much at a loss schools were and how great the gap was between the educational ideals hoped for and the extent of the help provided for teachers to realise them. The combined efforts of the Inspectorate, the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum and the Advisory Service, however well-intentioned, dutiful and energetic, remained unco-ordinated, and had a patchy and dubious impact on schools. Perhaps the reluctance to confront curricular issues is to be explained by the fact that none of these bodies had in reality any answers of their own to provide on the subject of comprehensive education and its workings. Hence, the only examples of real leadership found in this study came from the minority of committed enthusiasts who genuinely espoused a comprehensive philosophy, and made strenuous efforts to put it into practice in schools. It was from them that came articles in the various subject periodicals and the educational press, and they who donned the mantle of proselytisers for comprehensive education at national and local courses in the 1960s and 1970s.

The extent and quality of such leadership as was shown was in the hands of individual institutions. This study found that, in the changeover to a comprehensive system, much was delegated to headteachers and their staffs. An exploratory approach was adopted to comprehensive education, the problems of which were confronted as they occurred. Accordingly, commitment to the comprehensive initiative and its actual practice varied enormously. In reality, headteachers and principal teachers (subject) controlled the pace and scope of change. The resultant variability in adherence to and application of the comprehensive principle seriously impeded its widespread realisation in schools in the West of Scotland in the period 1965-80. There may have been some subscription to the principle inasmuch as it was believed to be in line with the Scottish democratic tradition of making a good education widely available. But the realisation of the demands it made on teachers to effect its translation into practice caused upset to many teachers because it challenged deeply-held values and beliefs. To operate a comprehensive system of education paying heed to its necessary concomitants held massive implications for changes in traditional practices. It appears from this study that many teachers did not succeed in grasping the essential principles of comprehensive education. If Hoyle is correct in asserting that the majority of teachers are probably 'restricted professionals',³⁰ then they tend to stand by what has been shown to work. It seems that their capacity for embracing and sustaining the level of change required to give the reorganised system a serious chance of success was seriously under-estimated. This account of the introduction and development of comprehensive education in the West of Scotland suggests that when innovatory ideas are not adequately supported by their instigators for those expected to carry them out, they are likely to founder. It also illustrates the outcome of allowing

a major change to occur in an unco-ordinated way: although the Scottish Education Department was able to effect a relatively rapid organisational changeover to a comprehensive system, its preoccupation with structures and inattention to the fact that organisations are not reified, but inextricably bound up with the actions and intentions of those who work in them, meant that it was less successful in managing the corresponding change in education practices.

It has already been claimed in this study that the comprehensive school was unquestionably an innovation, despite attempts to assert that it was closely allied to the traditional Scottish secondary school dating back to John Knox's parish school. Equally, it has been demonstrated that there was a distinct dearth of awareness of the basic theoretical propositions concerning the successful introduction of innovations into the educational system. Indeed, one is struck by the fact that no prior thought seems to have been given to the effects of the introduction of a comprehensive system of education: it seems to have been restricted to what was seen as practicable, and much governed by trial and error. Many of the 'sine qua non' features of successful innovations as demonstrated in the vast literature on the subject³¹ appear to have received scant attention

- the complexity of the change was under-estimated by those responsible for advocating it
- the need for support for the change was not appreciated so that at best tokenism, at worst passive resistance resulted
- the directive and exhortatory nature of the change caused resentment and opposition in the system on which it was imposed
- the management implications of the changeover were not grasped, thus militating against the easy assimilation of the major modifications

to the world of secondary education it entailed

- the people expected to operate the new system had no sense of involvement in the changes proposed to their habitual 'modus operandi', with the result that the need for change was not perceived by many.

What is astonishing is that, in the adaptation of the bipartite to the comprehensive system, blind faith seems to have acted as a guide to those managing the change. Amazing assumptions seem to have been made: all children would have the same start in secondary 1; a common curriculum of traditional subjects would be suitable for all pupils; appropriate methodology and assessment techniques would somehow emerge. Nobody in Scottish education seemed concerned to undertake a review of the purposes of the whole system in the light of the fact that access to full secondary education was the entitlement of all children. Teachers, with very little training and a distinctive educational frame of reference were invited to take on board complex concepts³² into which they had had little opportunity to gain an insight. To some extent, therefore, the crisis of the mid 1970s referred to in Chapter Five can be attributed to the misapplication of an educational innovation deriving from an imperfect understanding of it. From the evidence of this study, the most that can be said is that the comprehensive school acted as a very gradual catalyst to change over time. What appears to have been neglected is that any educational innovation, to have any chance of success, needs good planning and management and must have a sound theoretical basis. Innovations need management skills if change is not to be piecemeal and unco-ordinated. It is contended here that the aims of comprehensive education can be advanced only by a planned, systematic approach to innovation and its implications, in such a way

that school structures and procedures are affected. The concept of management needs to be tackled head-on, if comprehensive education is to move nearer becoming reality. While it is conceded that education alone cannot change society, a well-planned and executed approach to comprehensive education can achieve more worthwhile objectives - a flexibility in which the academic, personal and social needs of all pupils are honestly addressed. On the evidence of this study, much remained to be done in 1980 to oust the meritocratic ethic which tenaciously gripped Scottish secondary education. By the end of the period under review, secondary schools in the West of Scotland seemed to be poised on a divide between past traditions and an uncertain future, struggling to address new educational ideas and practices. While some improvements had undoubtedly taken place, there remained enough vestiges of the outlook described by a prominent comprehensive advocate over twenty years ago to give continuing cause for concern:

Our philosophy is one of limitation and restriction ... the weakest must go to the wall, the race is to the swift and the battle to the strong.³³

In this concluding section of the chapter an attempt will be made to examine what the data presented in this thesis suggest about the three concepts of culture, ideology and management and their inter-relationship. After subsequently considering the changed ambiance in which the comprehensive school finds itself in the late 1980s, the chapter will end with some suggested lines of development which comprehensive education may have to contemplate in the remaining years of this century.

Concepts are useful analytical tools when endeavouring to make sense of and impose an order on the array of data yielded by a piece of

educational research. Closer examination of the three concepts highlighted in this chapter may make it possible to advance some propositions which may be helpful in delineating areas of future enquiry in this field of research.

It seems clear that the culture of any society has been so long in the making that it penetrates deep into the national psyche and exerts a powerful influence over the beliefs and activities of its members. The importance of the education system in sustaining an awareness of culture and perpetuating its transmission is readily seen. Hence schools, as organisations, contain elements which derive from the ends and purposes for which they are perceived to have been instituted, and their procedures are embodiments of established cultural values. The debate about comprehensive education, related as it is to an egalitarian ethos, is unequivocally concerned with culture. It can be argued that Circular 600 presented a fundamental challenge to the cultural underpinning of the Scottish educational system, because the rationale on which it was based (equal concern for all pupils, a belief in the educability of all pupils) flew in the face of past tradition and offended some central aspects of Scottish culture: the role of the education system in identifying and promoting the academically able, prevailing definitions of educational success, the primacy of academicism. The prevalence of these cultural norms prevented any serious debate about the comprehensive schools, the essential principles of which (e.g. the common curriculum, social and affective aspects of education) remained unexplored for a long time. It is thus possible to argue that Scottish culture provided an enduring link with the past, and at the same time acted at an almost subconscious level to shape the course of developments subsequent to the official introduction of comprehensive

education in 1965. Indeed, it could be contended that Scottish educational culture has cast a predominantly conservative shadow over the development of the educational system, with the result that any alternative concept of the role and purpose of education in society has immediately come up against powerful barriers. These barriers consist of unarticulated assumptions about ways to behave and entrenched beliefs in accepted system practices, both of which are in turn culturally determined, and create a deep-seated inertia and reluctance to embrace change at all levels in the service, from policy makers through policy implementers to teachers and the pupils themselves. Hence, the cultural foundations of the education system proved resistant to imposed change, and the Scottish 'solution' to comprehensive education was essentially to adapt a system designed for an elite minority to the needs of mass secondary education.

Ideologies, as belief systems which act as guides to belief in and action on, the way society should be shaped, are cultural derivatives. Reference has been made earlier to the ideology of separatism which characterised Scottish education for the first sixty years of the present century, and which set up appropriate structures for the educational system to reflect the predominant attitudes and beliefs of the policy makers about the purpose of secondary schooling. But culture is not static, and periodically new ideologies arise in response to changing political, social and economic forces. On this view, the issue of Circular 600 in 1965 represented an ideological incursion into the prevailing and static value system of many in the world of Scottish education, representing as it did a revolutionary, if not alien, educational orthodoxy. Since, however, the incursion failed to take account of the cultural climate in which it would be located, it came up

against vested interests at all levels in the educational establishment. So the comprehensive school had to struggle in an unfavourable ideological climate to establish itself in the face of considerable opposition in a country where the policy for secondary education including curriculum and assessment rested on fundamentally different premises. Thus, it may be argued that radical change imposed on the educational system from a particular political philosophy can only be successfully implemented if there are sufficient individuals among those in management positions with a conceptual grasp of the full implications of the change. Such considerations are illuminating when reflecting on the handful of radical proponents of the comprehensive school who tried to innovate on a broad front, but were rejected by the educational establishment and unable to rely more than limited support for their ideas and ideals.³⁴ Irrespective of any errors in approach they may have made, their fate serves as a reminder of how entrenched traditional attitudes and practices are and how they militate against change, especially given the cultural and ideological forces which sustain them. Just as many of the recommendations of the 1947 Report consonant with the comprehensive principle were rejected because they found little favour with educational policy makers of the day, so in 1965 there was a similar antipathy to comprehensive reform because those called upon to introduce it were ideologically opposed to it, even though a more appropriate structure (the all-through comprehensive school) had been created at the behest of the politicians. This study of developments in the fifteen years which followed the issue of Circular 600 raises the question of the consequences of misplaced optimism about the outcomes of a particular political ideology which arises out of a contemporary consensus of values. It also suggests that the potential of counter-ideologies to effect genuine and lasting change in the educational

system is severely limited. Politicians might do well to reflect on the notion that, to judge by the account of comprehensive education given in this thesis, political intervention at the highest level to effect radical change may prove ineffective unless it addresses the ideological and cultural foundations of the educational system in such a way as to acknowledge their probable implications and inhibitory effects.

It is contended here that the efforts of those whose task it was to implement the political decision to go comprehensive met with the lack of success recorded in this thesis because it was inadequately managed. This criterion rests on three propositions: that the concept of management was narrowly conceived in terms of routine administration, paper-work and statistical returns to the detriment of its more fundamental characteristics (specifying long-term/short-term aims and objectives, strategic planning, priority setting, policy formulation, managing people and the curriculum, devising appropriate consultation mechanisms and channels of communication); that to introduce a major change of the magnitude of comprehensive education requires a management strategy based on theoretical principles, rather than on assumption of co-operation, if it is not to lose direction and thus fail to impinge significantly on educational practice; that to conceptualise major change solely in terms of management, failing thereby to take account of and plan for the effects of the cultural/ideological forces it will encounter in the education system is to risk its rejection by practitioners. In essence, those responsible for the management of the change to comprehensive education ignored the phenomenological perspective, and failed to address the central question of how the new regime related to the values, attitudes and education frame of reference of those most affected by it. At worst the system culture was ignored,

at best attempts were made to manage round it. Few efforts appear to have been made to devise a management strategy which took cognisance of the receiving culture. By implementing a strategic change which violated the existing culture of the education system, decision-makers demonstrated an inadequate grasp of the crucial power-block that wider forces can create. Though politicians and policy makers envisaged change exclusively in management terms, their failure to grasp the ideological/cultural dimensions of the educational environment into which it was to be launched led to the policy impact being neutralised. To that extent, and in a more general sense, recourse to a management approach by itself is an inadequate response: indeed it may lead to two undesirable outcomes: that talk of management and its central concepts becomes anathema to many practitioners; or that it engenders a form of management mania which creates the illusion of its powers to be a panacea for perceived ills. Mention was made earlier of the predominantly pragmatic response to the introduction of comprehensive education made by many in the education service. In the light of the foregoing propositions it is possible to argue that even to adopt a pragmatic response is to assume a particular theoretical stance, given the pervasive impact of cultural and ideological features of the educational system. On the evidence presented in this study, it can be claimed that political attempts to innovate founder when they encounter entrenched traditional values. Further, the predominant top-down management model, imposed on people who have no sense of involvement in it, leads to a loss of ideas in the passage between their pioneers and their recipients, more especially if proposed changes are predicated on an ideology not perceived to be required. A recent study of the comprehensive school has highlighted the fact that there is a dislocation between the providers' policy expectations in education and

those of the implementers.³⁵ Chapters Four and Five of this study found ample evidence of this contention. The message appears to be that, given the increasing stress placed on a managerial approach in the education service, cognisance will require to be taken of the notion that managers are not merely passive recipients of the ideas of others but, as educated professionals, have an important contribution to make to the policy process, and to policy implementation, an important aspect of which would be to act as barometers of the cultural/ideological climate at any time, but especially when major change is being contemplated. In other words, they would adopt a contributory rather than reactive stance to major educational issues. Highly relevant to this proposition is the recent report on Strathclyde Regional Council Education Department completed by an external consultancy.³⁶ A central conclusion is that the Department requires to shift the focus of its attention from administering change to the active management of it. The report distinguishes sharply between administrators and managers; the former respond in a passive way to an unchanging situation, while the latter respond actively and constructively in order to shape a constantly changing situation. The report echoes some of the conclusions of this study about Strathclyde Region's Education Department in the first five years of its existence: that it lacked a sense of purpose, and had no overarching philosophy of policy as a guide to practice. It also welcomes the initiative of the recently appointed Director to foster a new culture in the Department in which a more open atmosphere will permit the Directorate to communicate with its clients and employees. The new Director described the creation of the new ethos as a move from a 'controlling' to an 'enabling' authority.³⁷

The foregoing examination of the concepts of culture, ideology and

management leads to the conclusion that they are inter-related in terms of human behaviour. Culture and ideology intertwine and permeate individuals' consciousness to create a social identity, and generate ideas to support a particular social or political theory. This interaction establishes a received wisdom about the purposes of education, an accepted educational ethos and the system practices which derive from it. It also sets up powerful barriers to change, which is difficult to effect since it negatively disrupts established patterns of behaviour. This suggests that to have any chance of successful introduction, change needs to be integrated into the prevailing value system, a task which requires careful pre-planning and calls for the provision of much support for practitioners. Management, in its proper sense, is a rational approach to achieving aims and objectives through people. It is, therefore, people-dependent, and its effectiveness will be diminished if no account is taken of the human resources of the system it is controlling. Especially at a time of major change, managers must be aware of the multiplicity of sub-systems of which the education system is composed, and be prepared to expose and confront its 'cultural/ideological factors which can cause conflict and opposition. Account must also be taken of learning theory, and its postulation that motivation is one of the major keys to the learning process and, therefore, to the outcomes of the education system as a whole. Managers must, therefore, set out to influence people initially to accept major change as a first step towards its eventual internalisation into the belief system of those expected to adopt it. A major difficulty for managers at all levels in this respect is that it is not a question of one organisation, but a whole education system with its culture and ideology which has become entrenched over many years. Thus, at all levels in the system, there is a complex mix of people with varying

expectations and frames of reference. In such circumstances, managers cannot assume any consistency in the perceptual reactions they will engender. Moreover attitudes and perceptions are influenced by factors other than culture and ideology. If it is accepted that behaviour is the link between culture, ideology and management, then it must be conceded that the inter-relationship is one of enormous complexity, involving the way people see themselves, the way they think and operate, and the way managers conceive of their responsibility to influence the human resources in the system to produce desired ends. That a link exists, however, suggests that there is a possibility of a greater compatibility between culture, ideology and management, however difficult it is to achieve. Indeed, it is suggested that a more harmonious inter-relationship is essential if major change in the education system is to have any lasting effect. The account of the introduction and development of comprehensive education in the West of Scotland given in this thesis illustrates what can happen when the three concepts are mismatched, with management operating in a vacuum and simplistic assumptions being made about its nature and potential to bring about change.

If the introduction of comprehensive education in 1965 represented a radical ideological intervention in the educational system, it could be argued that the policies and tactics of the present Conservative Government offer an interesting parallel. Critics have claimed that a culture endemic to the South East of England is gradually being imposed on Scotland which clashes with some of the more deeply-held native values. In such arguments it is interesting to observe that the values to which appeals are made are those which derive from the democratic tradition (broad general education, its availability to all social

classes, the importance of uniformity of provision). At all events, in terms of the three pivotal concepts being examined in this chapter, it can be said of current Conservative educational initiatives that they appear to have disregarded the cultural and ideological ambiance, as a result of which they have been severely lampooned. Nevertheless, in terms of the way they have been managed, they display a sharpness and a sense of purpose which have left both bureaucrats and professionals at a loss for counter-arguments of substance. The challenge to the view of education as a means of effecting societal change which they represent may well be enjoying its current success because the policy consensus of the post-war years has been broken.³⁸ An alternative explanation may lie in a point made earlier, namely that they have been conditioned to a reactive role, and have thus been preoccupied with devising appropriate administrative machinery to implement decisions rather than with confronting substantive questions about the purpose of proposed changes. This observation assumes added significance when it is considered that the present political culture transforms the status of managers, who become central figures in delivering an improved performance. In that sense, the political culture is well disposed to the ideology of management.

In any meaningful discussion of comprehensive education in the late 1980s, cognisance must be taken of the fact that the wider social and political climate has changed markedly. The economic recession of the 1970s challenged the optimism which had claimed a link between educational expansion and economic prosperity. Doubts began to emerge about the ability of the comprehensive school to deliver what its supporters asserted that it could - an appropriate educational experience for all pupils. Consequently, arguments for the

comprehensive school do not find as ready a political acceptance as they formerly did. The value terms which appealed in the mid 1960s - EQUALITY, JUSTICE, SOCIAL UNITY - no longer feature on the educational agenda. The vogue words now are SUCCESS, QUALITY, SELECTIVITY. Indeed, many of the intrinsic features of the ideology of the comprehensive school appear to fly in the face of prevailing social and political Zeitgeist.³⁹ A major contributory factor to the changed ideology is the educational policy of the present government, which has put education high on the political agenda, and adopted a highly interventionist and directive stance on policy matters. Dubbing developments 1980-88 'THE THATCHERITE REVOLUTION', one commentator⁴⁰ takes the view that post-war Britain is witnessing a new revolution, which he calls 'post non-selective education'. This revolution is based on the view held by many that the comprehensive reforms of the 1960s have not succeeded in producing an educational system in which all pupils, especially those of average and below average ability, achieve the highest standards of which they are capable. The revolution is also characterised by a change in the balance of power, with schools and local authorities having lost much control to political, bureaucratic and managerial centres of power. Doubts about the capacity of local authorities to manage the system effectively have grown, and with this have come increased pressures for accountability, with a substantial increase in the level of parental choice. The competitive environment created by current government policy can be seen in terms of what some commentators have called the 'crises' and 'settlements' which have characterised the history of British educational policy since 1945.⁴¹ On this view, present policies are explicitly designed as a settlement of the crisis caused by the expansionist educational ideology of the 1960s. One of the aims of the contemporary education 'reforms' is to redress the

balance by giving parents and local communities a much greater say in how the education service is managed. A central aim is to effect an overall improvement in standards by extending choice and sharpening competition. It certainly seems that the values of free-market consumerism are in the ascendant as the concept of dependency culture comes under attack. Schools are increasingly being required to vie with each other in a competitive educational market place, and headteachers to manage their schools with an eye firmly on the demands and aspirations of their customers. Sayer⁴² traces the origins of these developments from the earliest Black Papers through the Great Debate of the mid 1970s, and attributes the present situation to a change in the will to achieve societal progress through education in the 1960s to a dismissal of education as the scapegoat for a perceived national decline in the 1980s. From the point of view of the comprehensive school, government policy already on the Statute Book, as well as developing lines of thought, give substantial cause for concern: free parental choice of school, which has killed the notion of territorial comprehensive schools, and created so-called 'magnet schools'; the Assisted Places Scheme, whereby able children of modest means are enabled to reap the benefits of a private education; the proposed City Technology Colleges, funded by industry and commerce, and designed as centres of excellence;⁴³ the National Curriculum; testing in the primary school; the possibility of schools opting out of local authority control and becoming self-governing; the imminent School Boards. Many commentators see these changes as indicators of a desire to put the educational system under closer scrutiny, despite the rhetoric of increased democracy in accounts by government officials.⁴⁴ Perhaps the most worrying facet of the Conservative's education package in the context of this study is its potential for divisiveness and the

dismantling of the comprehensive principle. In this connection, Chitty has referred to the emergence of a spectre of 'an ideology of institutional differentiation'.⁴⁵ It is certainly true that the combined effects of falling school rolls and the Parents' Charter could well result in a differentiation of schools by the community they serve.

An additional factor of which account has to be taken is the climate in which schools currently operate. Notwithstanding present government policies, schools are in the grip of confusion and uncertainty following the recent prologued period of industrial action. Teacher morale is low, and there is a lack of ideological unity as to how best to proceed. Teachers are subject to compulsory transfers as school rolls fall; promotion prospects are bleak; the imposition of planned activity time, ironically intended to alleviate the problems caused by changes in curriculum and assessment has caused resentment among teachers, and feelings of not being valued by administrators, who seem increasingly uninvolved in what teachers are expected to achieve in schools. The resumption of curriculum development and related activities is already provoking accusations of innovation overload and fatigue.

Having argued that the ideological climate in society exerts pressure on schools, and noting the current climate in which they operate, it must be conceded that the comprehensive principle appears to be under increasing threat. Indeed, it may even be that the combined effect of current developments will be such as to make the concept of the comprehensive school unsustainable. The questions to be addressed then are: IS IT REALISTIC TO MAINTAIN ANY OPTIMISM ABOUT THE COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL'S CHANCES OF SURVIVAL? DOES THE COMPREHENSIVE PRINCIPLE RETAIN ANY VALIDITY TODAY? This study has shown that, in the West of Scotland,

progress towards the comprehensive ideal in the period under review has been a slow evolutionary process, not a once-and-for-all reform which can ignore the cultural and ideological forces which impinge on the educational system. The most that can realistically be claimed is that experiences in the past two decades have set the agenda, and it has to be said both that the comprehensive school has not achieved its potential, and that there has been less than wholehearted commitment to the comprehensive principle. It is worth stating that the subject has produced many contradictory claims,⁴⁶ and there is as yet little enlightenment as to what the comprehensive reform has achieved. These contradictory findings among researchers raise interesting questions as to how amenable an issue like comprehensive education is to empirical analysis, if academically respectable analyses of its successes and failure continue to prove inconclusive. How, indeed, does one evaluate all the conflicting evidence? These questions have wider implications for the choice of appropriate methodologies for conducting research in the social sciences. Although it is probably the case that falling school rolls would have caused some reappraisal of current secondary school organisation, Conservative education policies have sharpened the discussion by accelerating the decline of some comprehensive schools. The result is that, at present, there appears no consensus about the purpose and direction of comprehensive education, and no unified vision of what the future holds.⁴⁷ In such circumstances, where undue optimism seems misplaced, it is proposed to conclude this chapter by suggesting several possible scenarios for the development of the comprehensive school in the foreseeable future.

The first is predicated on the view that, as a result of deliberate vilification of the work and perceived outcomes of comprehensive schools

over the past twenty years, steps have already been taken progressively to dismantle the comprehensive system as we have come to know it. No dramatic demise is foreseen, rather a slow war of attrition in which each new policy initiative or education act will undermine another established feature of the system. This view derives from situation in which the state education system has been portrayed as a failure, creating a climate of critical public opinion which is thus disposed to consider alternatives, and so construes current government policy as a rescue attempt. Many recent commentators on the development of comprehensive education make much of its alleged failure. Shaw, for example, asserts that the comprehensive principle has manifestly failed and is, therefore, intrinsically flawed.⁴⁸ Ball, too, argues that the future of the comprehensive school is at the very least in doubt, confronted as it is by a powerful array of forces intent on subverting its rationale.⁴⁹ He further contends that the facts and conditions of British society have tended to militate against the full realisation of equality of opportunity. The findings of this study accord with the views of Chitty⁵⁰ and Barker⁵¹ that the advent of comprehensive school has not enriched the curriculum or educational experience of all pupils, dominated as it has been in its formative years by the academic/meritocratic paradigm of education success.⁵² Thus, a recent study has been able to assert that the rhetoric of comprehensive reform has not been matched by significant changes in the internal workings of schools.⁵³ In support of this view, one case study of a comprehensive school in operation revealed deep internal divisions within it, with different groups of staff offering different versions or definitions of the same school.⁵⁴ Perhaps the most trenchant criticisms in recent writing have come from Ronald Fletcher, who considers comprehensive education to have been a major error of judgement and urges that it be

abandoned forthwith.⁵⁵ He pens a sharp critique of the post-war sociology of education, with its concentration on social class and educational opportunity. In his view, this has resulted in muddled thinking in educational policy making, to the neglect of more central issues, for example, that education is about excellence, and that one of its chief functions is about the civilisation of society. His conclusion is that segregated provision in different kinds of school would improve standards across the board, since there is a fundamental contradiction between the comprehensive principle (with its origins in 'doctrinaire political ideology') and the psychological, social and educational realities of the world.

A central plank of current initiatives to 'rescue' the comprehensive school is what had come to be termed 'the new vocationalism', and includes government funded initiatives like TVEI and the many schemes for Enterprise Education which schools are being increasingly invited to adopt. These schemes place a resurgent emphasis on the vocational aspect of education which has been in decline in Scotland since the failure of the Brunton Report in 1963. They stress the technological, the utilitarian and the relevant, and ostensibly aim to increase the flexibility of the education system and make it more adaptable to the needs of the economy. However, for those who fear the dismantling of comprehensive education, they can be interpreted as an attempt to restructure secondary provision in such a way that education and training are progressively separated. Moreover, by allocating funding to specific policies of this nature, it could be argued that the government is removing from schools some of their scope for curriculum planning, so that increasingly teachers are being asked to deliver educational packages made up by people outside the education service. Certainly,

these initiatives, coupled with mounting pressure to expand work experience for pupils, suggests that the present government is making a conscious effort to plan the transition from school to work in a quite definite way, based on an ideology of manpower planning which seems to favour differential routes and destinations for pupils in secondary education. Anyone who doubts that more far-reaching changes may yet occur need look no further than a recent policy paper to emerge from the influential Adam Smith Institute.⁵⁶ Its principal proposals are that: all schools would become self-governing, funded directly by central government according to the number of pupils they can attract; the abolition of two-tier regional/district authorities; total power would be vested in headteachers as managers of small businesses and to parents through school boards; there would be redundancies among administrators, advisers and support departments like educational psychology and community education, such services being in future 'bought in'. Although it is doubtful if all of these proposals would be accepted as they stand by the Government, they are significant in that they indicate the lines of its thinking on educational policy, and may represent issues for debate on the educational agenda in years to come.⁵⁷ Of particular significance to this study is the fact that the paper's principal author, Douglas Mason, has been quoted as saying that the proposals have been devised 'to correct the tragic errors of the 1960s'⁵⁸ and to put education back on the right road.

An alternative scenario which it is possible to envisage is that the comprehensive system will remain the basis of provision for a large number of pupils, but that it will be noticeably affected by the twin threats of differentiation (already mentioned) and privatisation. This view foresees more parents taking advantage of City Technology Colleges,

'opted-out' schools and the private sector. In extreme cases it might even lead to the beginnings of a two-tier education service, with comprehensive schools catering for less privileged pupils. It also would be a body blow to the concept of a common curriculum. It is, however, also based on the notion that some features of the comprehensive principle are worth rescuing and fighting for, providing local authorities seize the opportunity afforded by school closures to amalgamate schools into viable units. In considering this scenario, it seems prudent to bear in mind that the comprehensive school is still at a transitional stage in its development. Felsenstein⁵⁹ has argued that comprehensive schools have always been cast in the role of newcomers, required to prove themselves, and in addition have had to contend with a plethora of externally imposed changes. In the Scottish context, McPherson and Willms,⁶⁰ point out persuasively in a recent paper outlining the achievements of comprehensive reorganisation, that these have to be seen against a sixty year tradition of fiercely selective schooling which had established much valued senior secondary schools. McPherson has elsewhere stressed that out of this grew shared assumptions about the criteria used for recognising 'good' schools and 'good' teachers, which came to be symbolic of all that was perceived to be best in Scottish education.⁶¹ It should not be forgotten that as novel educational institutions, comprehensive schools had to contend with formidable array of pressures. A recent survey of developing trends in Scottish education based on analysis of the 1981 School Leavers' Survey reminds readers of enduring constraints on the educational system and their effect on innovatory policy initiatives.⁶² Arguing that the concepts of history and structure are of crucial importance, the authors focus on the central role of the school as an instrument of social and occupational selection which has as an

inevitable consequence the emphasis on the acquisition of academic qualifications in an atmosphere of competition. The present study has shown that comprehensive schools in the West of Scotland were no exception in this regard. The authors also make a useful conceptual distinction between 'context' and 'content': allegedly beneficial reforms in the latter (whether of curriculum or methodology) come up against structural obstacles to change in the former, namely the sorting function of the school, and the expressed choice of pupils as they pass through the system.

Nevertheless, recent authors on the subject of comprehensive education have stressed the fact that if comprehensive schools are to continue, there is an urgent need for a redefinition of aims and a concerted approach to tackle aspects that have been neglected in previous years.⁶³ The prevailing message seems to be that comprehensive schools could do much better. This verdict receives some, if cautious, support from the findings of this study. Questioned on the extent to which the advent of the comprehensive school had effected changes in the internal workings of schools, there was an almost unanimous consensus that change had been slow (for the ideological/cultural/management reasons outlined earlier), but several interviewees remarked on the fact that schools had unquestionably changed. Mention was made of the following features: a greater awareness of equality between the sexes in curricular provision; new syllabuses and forms of assessment; a freer atmosphere in classrooms where talk and movement are no longer proscribed; a broader concept of educability among most teachers, a heightened awareness of varying ability levels; increased attempts to make better provision for pupils with learning difficulties; a gradual shift among teachers away from a content approach towards a skills/process approach to the

curriculum.⁶⁴ Bearing in mind the amount of time required to effect fundamental change in education, it must also be said that not all the answers have been found to the successful introduction of these features. The authors who advocate a redefinition of aims also suggest that comprehensive schools could learn from innovative and successful schools. Each author varies in the emphasis placed on the characteristics worthy of emulation, but there is a remarkable unanimity of view about future lines of development: a redefinition of curriculum, pedagogy, methodology and assessment procedures; a need for senior staff to monitor policy implementation (such a high profile managerial perspective must seek to uncover and address issues like values, which are culturally and ideologically determined and which inhibit professional consensus on matters of policy), a need to integrate the curricular and pastoral 'sides' of the school; a collaborative approach from staff on matters of policy and practice; systemised staff training and development; the encouragement of teaching styles and strategies which address the social outcomes of the learning process, and contribute to pupils' personal and social development. Nevertheless, this study suggests that those who favour tackling 'in-school' issues as a means of improving the status quo should not ignore the existence and effect of the cultural/ideological dimension. In considering these developmental aspects of comprehensive schooling, mention should be made of the Centre for the Study of Comprehensive Schools at the University of York. One of its principal aims is to gather and disseminate examples of good practice with a view to improving the education offered by comprehensive schools.⁶⁵

The third scenario for the future development of the comprehensive school in Scotland derives from the possibility that it might prove more

resistant to the assaults being made on it by the education policies of the present government. It could be argued that the Scottish educational system may reject what it sees as the imposition of an education philosophy it finds alien to its culture. On this view, the ideology of the far right, with its exaltation of consumerism and elitism, is held to be inimical to Scottish identity and consciousness. Such a rejection would spring from perceived feelings of Scottish culture being under attack, and be justified by a retreat to elements of the Scottish myth to which allusion has already been made in this chapter. Two elements of relevance to comprehensive education are the Scottish preference for a strong maintained secondary sector, and the belief that schooling should provide pupils with an introduction to a common curriculum and an induction into a common culture. As Gray et al point out,⁶⁶ the Scottish educational system both has acquired a symbolic meaning and a continuity which arouse strong feelings of national identity. When, therefore, it is perceived to be threatened, those who subscribe to the myth selectively invoke those of its elements which are required to support their argument. These ideas have a contemporary relevance in the current debate over the alleged 'Anglicisation' of the Scottish educational system.⁶⁷ Opponents of Government policy, demonstrating a strong sense of national and cultural consciousness, argue vocally that the all-through comprehensive school is culturally suited to Scotland, combining what is unique within its traditions with the needs of contemporary society, and as such should be allowed to continue its development and build on its successes. Proponents of this view argue that current government policy is putting the Scottish tradition of a liberal comprehensive education at stake, and that in the current climate of opinion, in which ideological arguments take precedence over research findings, a return to a segregated selective

system is a distinct possibility.⁶⁸

In this scenario, it is suggested that the all-through comprehensive school would survive in rural areas and some more favoured urban areas; but in inner city areas, the combined effects of falling school rolls and parental placing requests might well result in a system of four-year comprehensive schools with centralised provision for the 16-18 year group either in six year schools or colleges of further education. Those for whom this projected development is plausible can draw comfort from the fact that, despite the questioning of expansionist egalitarian ideologies consequent upon the economic recession of the 1970s, and government policy notwithstanding, there have been no strident voices advocating that secondary provision should be curtailed or reversed. In addition, some commentators who have studied the evolution of the comprehensive school have concluded that its future is not so bleak as its detractors have suggested. A recent Scottish study has demonstrated that the comprehensive reorganisation which followed Circular 600 reduced inequalities of attainment between social classes and increased the average levels of certificated attainment.⁶⁹ Its authors argue that the creation of comprehensive schools has led to a substantial equalisation of formal educational provision and increased access to formal academic qualifications. Indeed, they go further, and assert that comprehensivisation was a necessary pre-requisite for the achievement of the educational gains inherent in many of the changes which followed it. They characterise the early 1980s as 'the high point of egalitarian reform' in Scotland. Weir, too, claims that a distinctive system of secondary education has developed in Scotland in the last two decades, with the six-year comprehensive school at its heart.⁷⁰ He adds that its national curriculum of some breadth should

continue to be pursued with determination in view of increasing evidence that the 12-18 common school can meet the needs of the full range of pupils and of society. In his view, the Scottish comprehensive school is 'on an evolutionary path'. Finally, one commentator, has criticised the strong, anti-vocational currents in secondary schools and blamed them for Britain's poor showing when the products of its educational system are compared with those of Japan and West Germany.⁷¹ Interestingly, he did not see the solution in the destruction of the comprehensive school, nor a return to a selection based on academic ability. Rather, he put the case for a mingling of general education and high quality vocational preparation within the comprehensive system. The view that the upheavals in secondary education over the last twenty years have not been entirely pointless is supported by a recent study of Scottish educational policy making since 1945, which sums up the present situation in these terms:

Nevertheless, the effects of two decades of comprehensive reorganisation cannot be discounted. The salaries, conditions and roles of teachers are more standardised, and are likely to breed resistance to differential treatment for schools, for levels of pupil ability and for areas of curriculum. This has been the thrust of teacher politics at national level since 1918 at least. Local communities, too, have a greater expectation of parity of provision, which is one reason why neither the SED nor the local authorities have been quick to grasp the nettle of secondary closure. Also, the Standard Grade, a national certificate for all pupils, is itself one outcome of the comprehensive drive towards parity of provision and esteem, and it further institutionalises a norm of universalism in provision.⁷²

At present, it is impossible to predict which, if any, of these proposed scenarios will emerge. What is certain is that the educational system in Scotland will undergo far-reaching changes in the next few years, especially if the present administration is returned for a fourth term of office. Hopefully, developments in the first twenty years of comprehensive education have taught important lessons about the amount

of time required to effect fundamental change in education, and draw attention to the key issues which require to be addressed in the endeavour to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

CHAPTER SIX

FOOTNOTES

1. Reference was made to some of the more important works in this genre in Chapter One. Additional supporting arguments are to be found in 'The Cultural Significance of Scotland's Educational System', W.M. Humes in The Scottish Government Yearbook (1984).
2. H.M. Paterson (op cit) in Humes and Paterson (op cit); McPherson and Raab (op cit).
3. The Comprehensive Experiment, D. Reynolds, M. Sullivan, FALMER 1987.
4. 'Who Controls the Curriculum?' M.L. MacKenzie, A.T.R.E.S. Journal, Autumn 1987.
5. Extract from The Definition of Culture, Milton Singer in The International Encyclopaedia of Social Science, Vol. 3, Macmillan and Free Press, 1968, p.528.
6. The authors of Unpopular Education, Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, 1981, draw attention in their discussion of 'culture' to Gramsci's use of the term 'common sense' which he characterised as 'the spontaneous philosophy which is proper to everyone', p.27.
7. The Long Revolution, R. Williams, Chatto and Windus 1961, pp.52-53.
8. Culture and Society 1780-1950. Penguin 1958. Final Chapter.
9. 'Education and British Society' in The Long Revolution (op cit).
10. The predominant values included: authoritarianism, discipline, an obsession with the academic pupils and consequent neglect of the majority, the definition of merit in terms of intellectual capacity, the ethic of individual achievement through hard work, the centrality to the system of the SCE Higher examination and access to the University.
11. In McPherson and Raab (op cit) one interviewee describes Scottish educational culture as being characterised by an 'automatic resistance' to the non-academic (Chapter 15), and the authors give eloquent testimony to the powerful attachment to a bi-partist, meritocratic ethic in post-war policy making.
12. The Long Revolution (op cit) p.125.
13. Of relevance here is the discussion of educational 'myth' in Reconstructions of Secondary Education (op cit). The authors argue that myth serves two purposes: to explain the world and to express values, and important one of which is 'the democratic

- intellect', access to which was provided by educational institutions. (Chapter 3).
14. The Concept and Function of Ideology Edward Shils in The International Encyclopaedia of Social Science Vol. 7, Macmillan and Free Press, 1968, p.66.
 15. Ideologies and Values. M. Skilbeck, Unit 3 of O.P. Course E203.
 16. Skilbeck (op cit) p.7.
 17. Ideology is discussed in Ideology and Discontent, D.E. Apter, London 1964; The End of Ideology, D. Bell, New York 1961; 'Social Objectives for the Seventies', C.A.R. Crosland in 'The Times' 25/9/70; Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society, R Dahrendorf, London 1961; The Political Uses of Ideology, H.M. Drucker, London 1974; Democracy, Ideology and Objectivity, A. Naess, Oxford 1956; Ideology and Society D.G. Macrae, London 1961; Ideology J. Planenatz, Macmillan 1971; The Concept of Ideology, J. Larrain, Hutchison 1979.
 18. Ideology, R. Williams, Appendix B to Units 18/19 of O.U. Course E202. Schooling and Society 1977. Open University.
 19. Ideology. B. Cosin, Unit 13 of O.U. Course E282 School and Society. Open University, 1971.
 20. Ideologies. Patrick Corbett. Hutchinson 1965, p.12.
 21. Unpopular Education (op cit) (Chap. 1).
 22. Skilbeck (op cit) p.23.
 23. McPherson and Raab (op cit) Chap. 9, in which the authors state that the prevailing ideology did not support major initiatives like comprehensive education, and had immense significance for the way the education service was delivered. The influence on many individuals of the Scottish myth, they say, inevitably resulted in few challenges to the ethic of selection by ability.
 24. This point of view is argued in The Sociology of the Comprehensive School, P. Bellaby. Methuen 1977.
 25. McPherson and Raab (op cit) described C600 as a political, not educational document which attempted to rationalise the heterogeneity of secondary provision which existed in 1965.
 26. McPherson and Raab (op cit) Chapter 14.
 27. McPherson and Raab (op cit) Chapter 13. The authors argue that the 'social efficiency' model of secondary education based on segregated provision was deemed by many in Scottish education to be the twentieth century heir to the democratic tradition.
 28. This phrase is used by McPherson and Raab (op cit) (Part V) collectively to describe those individuals who were invited to participate in the councils of state and took key decisions affecting Scottish education. They point out that access to the

policy community and the issues discussed by it were both strictly controlled by the SED.

29. On this point, an interviewee made the following interesting observation:

Directors have a perpetual difficulty caused by their recruitment from schools: should they be educators or administrators? Or both? In my view, they always show the wrong side at the wrong time.

(Interview HM8)

30. 'Professionalism, Professionalism and Control in Teaching', in London Educational Review, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1974.

31. Many theorists point to the fact that major change in the educational system provokes conflict. One way to minimise the effects is to adopt a theory of planned change. One such offers a model with three distinct stages: RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, DISSEMINATION followed, hopefully by a fourth: INSTITUTIONALISATION. Hoyle (1970) has characterised the failure of change to take root as 'tissue rejection'. Many writers stress the importance of taking account of the knowledge, actions and perceptions of the individuals to be affected by the change. Havelock (1971), for example, argues that change is most likely to succeed if there is 'user need' and the participation of those involved. Ideally, change should come from the grassroots and be non-directive. An equally important factor is the type of organisation into which change is being introduced, whether, for example, it is 'mechanistic' or 'organic', to use the terminology of Burns and Stalker (1961). Finally, Miles (1965) has listed innovativeness and adaptiveness to change as characteristic of 'organisational health'. Amongst other well-known works which deal with the management of change are:

Changing Organisations, W. Bennis, McGraw Hill, 1966; The Planning of Change, W. Bennis et al. Holt Rinehart 1966; 'Organisational Change', M. Etzioni, in A Sociological Reader on Complex Organisations. Holt International 1969; The Social Psychology of Organisation, D. Katz, R.L. Kahn, Wiley 1966 (Chap. 13); Planned Change, R. Lippett, J. Watson, B. Westley, Harcourt Brace, 1959; Organisation, J. March, H. Simon, Wiley 1967 (Chap. 7). A more recent notable addition to the extensive literature is Management in Education. O.U. Course E321 (1976) and its associated readers, The Management of Organisations and Individuals ed. V. Houghton et al., and Management in Education: Some Techniques and Systems, ed. L. Dobson et al., Ward Lock 1975. Particularly relevant are the chapters 'The Management of Educational Change', R. Bolam and 'Managing Organisational Change', W. Reddin.

32. Innovatory trends which appeared in the wake of comprehensivisation and were adopted with varying degrees of success in the West of Scotland include: curriculum (monodisciplinary to multidisciplinary); pedagogy (didactic to discovery); classroom organisation (rigid to flexible); pupil grouping (homogeneous to heterogeneous); assessment (single model to multi-mode, and norm-referenced to criterion-referenced); teacher role (director to manager of educational

resources); materials (solely textbooks to worksheets, workcards, audio-visual aids etc).

33. Pedley (op cit) p.24.
34. See Schools on Trial: The Trials of the Democratic Comprehensives, C. Fletcher, M. Caron, W. Williams eds. Open University Press 1985. One of the case studies in the book is of events at Summerhill Academy, Aberdeen, which led to R.F. MacKenzie's dismissal as headteacher in 1974.
35. The Challenge for the Comprehensive School, D. Hargreaves, R.K.P. 1982.
36. Report on Strathclyde Regional Council Education Department by the Institute of Local Government Studies at Birmingham University (1988), summarised in 'The Times Educational Supplement (Scotland)' 20/1/89.
37. Frank Pignatelli, at a seminar in the Education Department at Glasgow University, January 1989.
38. A recent article claimed that Conservative educational policy has captured the high ground of public debate precisely because it has as yet encountered no coherent alternative strategy, only an attack on its ideological underpinning. See 'Mistaken Pursuit of the Tartan Herring', Jack Ferguson in 'The Glasgow Herald', 1/6/89.
39. In his address to the 1989 Conference of N.A.H.T., its General Secretary, David Hart, said:

The challenges of the 1990s will tolerate no egalitarianism and no anti-competitive attitude in any teacher. Such an attitude sells our pupils short and damages the ability of this country to meet the demands that the single European market places upon us ... egalitarianism implies that you level people down. You ignore the simply human basic fact that some pupils are capable of a higher level of attainment than others. Comprehensive education is about helping every child to reach his or her personal level of attainment.

Quoted in 'The Guardian' 2/6/89
40. 'Politics, Ideology and Education', J.A. Mangan in School, Family and Society, Jordanhill College of Education 1988.
41. Unpopular Education (op cit) pp.31-32.
42. What Future Secondary Schools? J. Sayer, FALMER 1985.
43. To judge from reports in the educational press, progress on the creation of these colleges has so far been slow. A substantial degree of local opposition to the notion has come from Labour Councils currently in the throes of trying to close or amalgamate existing schools because of falling rolls.

44. See, for example, 'Education for Democracy, Prosperity and Unit', Prof. F. Coffield in 'The Independent' 15/2/88; 'The New Right's Quest for Control', D. Hartley, in 'The Times Educational Supplement (Scotland)', 12/8/88.
45. 'The Comprehensive Principle Under Threat' C. Chitty in Redefining the Comprehensive Experience ed. C. Chitty, Bedford Way Papers No. 32, University of London Institute of Education 1987.
46. An account of recent research studies on comprehensive schools is contained in 'Why Experts are at odds over Comprehensives', in 'The Independent' 9/9.87.
47. This was a major conclusion of a recent study of educational policy making. See The Reorganisation of Secondary Education, P.H. James. NFER/Nelson 1980. The same point is made in Education and the Political Order, T. Tapper and B. Salter, Macmillan 1978.
48. Comprehensive Schooling: The Impossible Dream? B. Shaw, Blackwell 1983.
49. Comprehensive Schooling: A Reader, S. Ball (ed.) FALMER 1987.
50. Chitty (op cit).
51. Rescuing the Comprehensive Experience, B. Barker, Open University Press 1986.
52. A study conducted in Wales concluded that if it were true that comprehensive schools had 'failed', one explanation could be that they modelled themselves too closely on their selective predecessors. The Comprehensive Experiment (op cit).
53. Unpopular Education (op cit).
54. Experiencing Comprehensive Education, R. Burgess, Methuen 1983.
55. Education and Society: the Promethean Fire, R. Fletcher, Penguin 1984.
56. The contents of the policy paper were summarised in 'Stock Voucher Plans for Schools' in 'The Times Educational Supplement (Scotland)', 13/1/89.
57. In this connection, it is not insignificant that a recent article outlining Mr Michael Forsyth's latest proposed measures was entitled 'Forsyth: the revolution will gather momentum'. 'The Times Scottish Education Supplement' 9/6/89 (my underlining).
58. 'Shock Voucher Plans for Schools' (op cit).
59. Comprehensive Achievement, D. Felsenstein Hodder and Stoughton 1987.

60. 'Equalisation and Improvement: some effects of comprehensive reorganisation in Scotland', A. McPherson, D. Willms, in Sociology, Vol. 20, No. 4, Nov. 1987.
61. McPherson and Raab (op cit).
62. Fourteen to Eighteen: the Changing Pattern of Schooling in Scotland ed. D. Raffae, Aberdeen University Press, 1984.
63. Fletcher, Caron, Williams (op cit); Felsenstein (op cit); Chitty (op cit); Sayer (op cit); Burgess (op cit); Reynolds (op cit); Barker (op cit). A similar plea is made in Comprehensive Schools: Challenge and Change ed. B. Moon, NFER Nelson 1983; 'Countesthorpe in the Context of Comprehensive Development', B. Simon in The Countesthorpe Experience ed. J. Watts, Methuen 1977; Comprehensive Schools Past, Present, Future A. Weeks, Methuen 1986.
64. It has recently been argued that the institutional features of the educational system can change without necessarily altering the educational experiences it offers. To be effective, change must tackle the experience pupils have, and this in turn has implications for teachers' concepts of what constitutes knowledge. See Education, Politics and the State, B. Salter and T. Tapper, Grant McIntyre 1981, Chaps. 3 and 4.
65. C.S.C.S has organised an annual conference since 1980 and publishes a 'Conference Report'. In addition, members receive its periodical 'contributions' and a series of 'mailshots' and newsletters. Recently, it has begun to provide information sheets on specific topics, e.g. T.V.E.I., home/school relations, industry/school links etc.
66. Reconstructions of Secondary Education (op cit)
67. The E.I.S., in particular, has recently mounted a vigorous campaign against Conservative education policy, based on the argument that it will rob the Scottish system of many of its endemic characteristics. The Institute issued its members with a briefing pack, in which Scottish education is described as being 'under threat'. (An alternative perspective on the notion of 'Anglicisation' was recently provided in an article in which the author asserted that the term was a red herring, and argued that Conservative policy was in fact seeking the 're-Scotticisation' of Scottish education to return it to its Knoxian foundations, and remedy the worst features of the progressive tendencies of recent years. See 'Re-inventing the Lad o' Pairts, Maura Hanlon in 'The Times Educational Supplement (Scotland) 24/3/89).
68. See, for example, 'The True Test of Enterprise, D. Weir, K. Houston'; 'The Turtle's turn', and 'Fancy, Logic or Nonsense', B. Boyd in 'The Times Scottish Education Supplement', 23/6/89, 16/6/89, 23/6/89 respectively.
69. McPherson and Willms (op cit)
70. Education and Vocation 14-18, A.D. Weir, Scottish Academic Press 1988.

71. 'Streamed for failure in the name of equality and socialism', John Clare in 'The Listener' 5/6/86.
72. McPherson and Raab (op cit) p.492.

APPENDIX 1

THE GLASGOW SELECTIVE SCHOOLS: CHRONOLOGY OF A CONTROVERSY

- 1967: Despite the issue of Circular 600, the Glasgow Education Committee Convener stated publicly that selective schools would be retained, but a sub-committee had been in existence since 1966 to examine their future role in a comprehensive system. Three Glasgow Councillors were threatened with withdrawal of the whip because of their association with the GLASGOW EDUCATION REFORM SOCIETY which advocated the immediate abolition of selective schools.
- 1968: The Public Schools' Commission recommended the integration of grant aided schools, and the Secretary of State put a ceiling on the amount of Exchequer Grant payable to these schools. The Education (Scotland) Bill was published, which indicated the Government's intention to abolish fee-paying/selective schools, which it saw as inconsistent with the development of comprehensive education. Nevertheless, the Education Committee decided by a large majority (Tory victory over a divided Labour opposition 25 votes to 4) to retain the six local authority selective schools (Glasgow High School (boys), Glasgow High School (girls), Allan Glen's, Hillhead High, Notre Dame High, St Mungo's Academy).
- 1969: Exploiting a dwindling Labour majority and the unwillingness of Roman Catholic members of the Committee to commit themselves on the issue, the Conservative group found a legal loophole, and

introduced fees of £15 p.a. in these six schools for 'social, cultural and recreational facilities'.

1970: The Education Committee continued to defy the Secretary of State on the future of the six schools, in the knowledge that its revised scheme (accepting their compatibility with comprehensive schools) would be rejected when submitted in March. The Labour opposition still remained divided. In May the Secretary of State announced in the House of Commons his intention to introduce legislation to abolish fee-paying/selective schools, a view endorsed by Councillor John Mains, who promised to abolish the six schools if elected at the forthcoming local elections in 1971.

Following the Conservative victory at the General Election in June, the Secretary of State issued Circular 760, introducing permissive legislation giving local authorities freedom to determine the pattern of secondary provision in their areas. For the remainder of the year, Labour Councillors were less than happy with their 'abolitionist' colleagues, who became increasingly virulent and emotive in the media, to the extent that, in Glasgow, at least, the selective issue totally overshadowed the comprehensive one, with a disproportionate amount of attention being paid to the future fate of six schools.

1971: Conservative Councillors (who held the majority on the Education Committee) proposed to restore fee-paying and fix the level at £30 p.a. instead of £15, while Labour Councillors made dire threats about debarring teachers in fee-paying/selective schools from being eligible for promotion in comprehensive schools in the

city. At the May local elections, Labour had a landslide victory. One month later, the Director of Education was asked to draw up a report on the future of the six schools in a comprehensive system. In September, the Education Committee rejected the report, because it was alleged still to contain elements of selectivity. The beginning of the end for the six schools came in December, with the announcement of the Labour Group decision that there would be no further selective intake to the six schools, which were to be phased out in their present form.

1972: Using their freedom under Circular 760, the Labour Group decided that selectivity would end in the six schools from session 1974-75, a decision which won Education Committee backing in March, and unleashed a vitriolic storm of Tory and parental abuse in the media, with accusations of 'doctrinaire socialism' and 'educational vandalism'. The Secretary of State's office was inundated with 3000 letters which adopted a distinctly anti-Labour Group stance, and various prominent groups in society did likewise (e.g. Glasgow Presbytery). Parents at the six schools formed a 'FREEDOM OF CHOICE COMMITTEE'. The parent of a pupil at Allan Glen's School took out a civil action against the Corporation decision to turn his son's school into an area comprehensive, and an interim interdict was granted in his favour. Three of the headteachers of the schools at the centre of the controversy were censured for challenging the Director of Education's authority by writing directly to the Secretary of State, alleging that the Education Committee was in default of the 1962 Education (Scotland) Act. The Secretary of State

delayed the plan to end selectivity, claiming that all plans submitted must meet the requirements of the Education Act.

In May, the Education Department laid the responsibility for ending selectivity on the Secretary of State himself, who responded by serving a default order on the Corporation, and instructed it to arrange for selective intakes to the six schools for session 1972-3 by May 30, with a reminder that the result of a refusal to comply would result in a referral of the matter to the Court of Session. (The Government apparently preferred this course of action to direct intervention by the Scottish Education Department). The Court of Session rejected the Secretary of State's plea for an order, but made an interim one with which the Corporation complied eventually.

Later in June, the Court of Session issued an order requiring the Education Department to effect a selective transfer to the six schools, finding that its decision to discontinue selectivity had no force in law, and interfered both with parents' rights and headteachers' responsibilities. The Corporation appealed unsuccessfully to the House of Lords against the Court of Session ruling.

1973: In March, after several months of apparent defeat for the local authority, an amazing volte-face occurred: the Secretary of State agreed to the Corporation's proposals to end selectivity, in the line with Circular 760 which allowed it freedom to decide its own provision. The Secretary of State vehemently repudiated predictable accusations of having made a U-turn, saying that he had never at any time been against the scheme, and had taken Court Action to prevent his final decision being prejudiced, and

allow him time to evaluate the adequacy and efficiency of the educational aspects of the proposal. The Secretary of State's decision was announced in answer to a House of Commons question. After six years of political and educational wrangle, five of the schools were to become area comprehensives, and the historic High School of Glasgow was to be phased out on the grounds that it had no viable catchment area.

APPENDIX 2

DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE CONDUCT OF THE INTERVIEWS UNDERTAKEN IN CONNECTION WITH THIS RESEARCH

1. Letter of invitation
2. Copies of interview schedules

I do hope you will be kind enough to help me in my endeavours when you can find time. I look forward to hearing from you, and thank you in advance for any help you feel able to give.

Yours sincerely

John Watt
Assistant Head Teacher - Middle School

2A. Questions put to the Directors of Education for Dunbartonshire, Glasgow, Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire.

1. Information about Glasgow's comprehensive plan prior to Circular 600.

- a) What was the source of policy initiatives? How far back can policy sources be traced?
- b) Which groups and/or individuals were involved?
- c) Whose support did they enlist?
- d) Were the moves to introduce comprehensive schools primarily political or educational?
- e) How influential was the 1947 Advisory Council Report?

2. Publication of Circular 600 on 27th October 1965.

- a) Why had comprehensive policy become nationally attractive at that particular moment?
- b) What was the reaction of Glasgow education officials to the content of circular 600?
- c) What difference(s) did the Circular make to the education scene in Glasgow?
- d) How was the policy implemented?
- e) What individual role did the Director of Education play? (Management ethos??)
- f) How did Director of Education relate to the following:
 - (1) Head Teachers
 - (2) HMI
 - (3) Local Politicians
 - (4) The Education Committee
 - (5) C.C.C.
 - (6) Advisers
- g) What relationship existed between local and central government before and after publication Circular 600. (i.e. was it different)?
- h) What were the obstacles to policy implementation? How powerful were they? How were they overcome?
- i) Was the process of implementation altered as it progressed?

3. Groups and Individuals.

- a) What group/individuals played key roles in the implementation

- of policy in Glasgow?
- b) What were the main sources of decision-making?
- c) What was the influence of the Education Committee and its successive Chairman?
- d) What latitude was accorded to Head Teachers in implementing directives?
- e) How did teachers react? What steps were taken to involve/consult them?
- f) How was the introduction of comprehensive education greeted by the general public/parents in Glasgow?

4. Comprehensive Education and the Schools.

- a) What were the immediate implications for schools of the implementation of circular 600?
- b) Did the concept of the 'area school' cause any particular problems in Glasgow?
- c) To what extent was change/reform introduced within schools as a result of circular 600.
- d) What role did teachers' centres/in-service training make? How successful were they in affecting the educational process in schools?
- e) What were the repercussions of the existence of a small group of fee-paying schools in Glasgow?

5. The Comprehensive Principle in Scotland.

- a) How did the idea of the comprehensive school as envisaged in circular 600 articulate with the Scottish educational system and Scottish attitudes to education?
- b) How was the concept of 'equality of opportunity' perceived in Scotland?
- c) How did the implications of comprehensive education fit in with the prevailing views of teachers?
- d) Has the potential of the comprehensive school been properly tapped?
- e) What interpretation was put on the term 'a comprehensive school' by those involved in Scottish education?

Supplementary Questions.

1. What would Glasgow have done if Labour had lost the 1964 Election and Circular 600 had never been issued? Would Glasgow have pressed ahead with its policy of comprehensive schools and possibly become involved in conflict with a Tory Secretary of State?
2. To what extent was the junior/senior secondary split due to lack of space, and to what extent was it SED policy to separate the 'sheep from the goats'?
3. Did the view exist in the Labour Party in Scotland that the selective school was a ladder of opportunity for the able working class child who might be at a disadvantage in a comprehensive school?
4. Could the issue of Circular 600 in 1965 be seen as making Scotland the passive recipient of an English policy (i.e. Anthony Crosland's) which just happened to fit in with prevailing Scottish culture?
5. What is the function of the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland?

2B. Standard Interview Questions.

1. What were the sources of initiatives for introducing comprehensive education in Scotland?
2. Were the moves to introduce comprehensive education primarily educational or political, in your opinion?
3. How influential in spreading ideas about comprehensive education was the 1947 Advisory Council Report on Secondary Education?
4. Why do you think the idea of comprehensive education became attractive in the 1960s?
5. What were the chief implications of Circulars 600 and 614 for schools in the West of Scotland?
6. What part was played in developing comprehensive education in schools by:
 - a) H M I
 - b) Local Politicians
 - c) Education Officials
 - d) Advisers
 - e) The C C C
7. What obstacles, if any, existed to the introduction and implementation of a comprehensive policy of education, in your view?
8. How much latitude were head teachers accorded in implementing comprehensive policies in their schools.
9. How did parents/the general public react to the introduction of comprehensive education, in your experience?
10. Did
 - a) area schools in housing estates
 - b) fee-paying/private schoolsconstitute an obstacle to the introduction of comprehensive education?
11. To what extent was change/reform introduced WITHIN schools as a result of C600 (i.e. in their internal organisation and practices)?
12. What role did Teachers' Centres and In-Service Training play in helping teachers to deal with the implications of comprehensive education?
13. How did - a) head teachers, b) teachers - react to the idea of comprehensive education?
14. To what extent did the advent of comprehensive schools change the previous pattern of Junior Secondary/Senior Secondary schools?
15. What were the main solutions adopted to grouping children according to ability in - a) S1/S2 b) S3/S4?
16. Did the advent of comprehensive schools have an effect on - a) the secondary curriculum b) teaching methods?
17. To what extent did the shift to a comprehensive system cause teachers to scrutinise their ideas and approaches to their work?

18. How did the idea of the comprehensive school as envisaged in C600 articulate with the Scottish attitude to education, in your opinion?
19. How was the concept of equality of opportunity perceived in Scotland?
20. What, in your view, is the definition of a 'comprehensive school'?
21. a) Has the potential of the Comprehensive School been fully realised?
b) If you think not, what have been the principal inhibiting factors?

2C. Questions put to Advisers.

A. COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION

1. a) What were the sources of comprehensive policy initiatives?
b) Which group(s) were the principal advocates of the policy?
c) Were moves to introduce the policy primarily educational or political?
2. Why did the comprehensive approach to education become attractive in the 1960s?
3. What were the immediate implications of comprehensive reorganisation (C660, C614) for Scottish schools?
4. Did the existence of a) fee-paying schools, b) area schools situated in housing estates pose any problem for the implementation of a policy of comprehensive secondary education?
5. What obstacles existed to the introduction of comprehensive education in Scottish secondary schools?
6. a) To what extent did the previous pattern of junior secondary/senior secondary provision change with the advent of the comprehensive school?
b) Were the internal organisational practices adopted in schools in keeping with a comprehensive policy?
7. a) How did the idea of comprehensive school articulate with the Scottish educational system and Scottish attitudes to education?
b) How was the concept of equality of opportunity perceived in Scotland?
8. a) What would be your personal definition of the term 'a comprehensive school'?
b) Do you think that the potential of the comprehensive school has been fully tapped?

B. THE ADVISORY SERVICE

1. To what extent was the creation and expansion of the advisory service a direct result of the introduction of a comprehensive system of education?
2. In your view, what are the main functions of the advisory service with regard to secondary education?
3. What was your professional relationship as an adviser with -
 - a) Directorate Staff (especially the extent of your involvement in major decision-making).

- b) The Inspectorate.
 - c) National Bodies in Scottish Education (CCC, SEB, etc.)
 - d) Head Teachers (especially their reaction to advisory service suggestions.)
 - e) Principal Teachers/Departments (the extent to which your advice was sought and/or implemented.)
4. What were the most common patterns to emerge in grouping children in your subject in - a) S1/S2 b) S3/S4?
5. a) From your experience of schools do you think that comprehensive education has had an effect on - a) the curriculum, b) teaching methods in secondary schools?
- b) To what extent have teachers scrutinised their ideas about and approaches to their work as a result of the introduction of the comprehensive school?
- c) To what extent did teachers keep up to date with new developments in their subject?
6. a) Could you assess the role and impact of Teachers' Centres and In-Service training courses on teachers' thinking and practices?
- b) What part did advisers play in organising such courses?
7. What problems did you encounter in exercising the advisory function in the context of secondary education?
8. Do you think that schools have benefited from having the services of a professional advisory service at their disposal?

- 2D. Questions put to Elected Members/Members of Political Parties at local level.
1. How far back can initiatives to introduce a comprehensive system of education be traced?
 2. Were the moves to introduce it primarily educational or political?
 3. Why did the comprehensive issue become attractive in the mid 1960s?
 4. What part did Elected Members and the Education Committee play in establishing a comprehensive system?
 5. What was the reaction to the new system of
 - a) Directorate staff
 - b) the public parents
 - c) headteachers and teaching staff
 6. What were the immediate implications for schools of circular 600?
 7. To what extent do you think that:-
 - a) the previous Junior Secondary/Senior Secondary pattern was changed?
 - b) change was introduced within schools as a result of the introduction of a comprehensive system?
 8. Did the existence of local authority former fee-paying schools constitute an obstacle to comprehensive policy? Can both types of school co-exist?
 9. Would you agree with the view that established schools with sound reputations were used as testbeds for Labour Party policy?
 10. How influential are elected members with regard to education policy matters?
 11. What is the role of the Directorate staff in matters of educational policy?
 12. How did the idea of the Comprehensive School as envisaged in Circular 600 in 1965 fit in with the Scottish educational tradition?
 13. How was the concept of equality of educational opportunity perceived in Scotland?
 14. Would you agree with the view that members of the Labour Party still favoured selective schools as a ladder of opportunity for able children of humble origin, despite their professed allegiance to the comprehensive ideal?
 15. Did the concept of the 'area school' cause any problems to the introduction of a comprehensive system of education?
 16. What would you see as the major obstacles to the introduction of a comprehensive system of education?
 17. To what extent do you think that the introduction of a comprehensive system of education has caused the Scottish teaching profession to

reassess its aims and approaches?

18. What is the role of politics in initiating educational change?
19. In your opinion, how far should an authority/regional council go in enforcing its public policy statements on education?
20. a) What would be your personal definition of the term 'comprehensive school'?
b) Do you think that the potential of the comprehensive school has been properly tapped?

2E. Questions put to the Directors of the Scottish Curriculum Development Centres

1. What is your opinion of the C C C as a vehicle for promoting curricular reform?
2. Does the decentralised nature of the Scottish Educational system inhibit curriculum development in your view?
3. What was/is the relationship between the Centre and the Central Committee its services?
4. To what extent would it be correct to assume that the Centres were set up in response to changes in education occasioned by the spread of comprehensive education?
5. Could you outline the main functions of the Centres?
6. To what extent did the Centres define policy in relation to fundamental issues in teaching?
7. Who was responsible for identifying areas of investigation for the Centres?
8. How were appointments to working parties made?
9. How successful do you think the Centre was in spreading ideas on curricular reform?
10. Were attempts made to assess the extent of the local/national uptake of ideas?
11. How much was the Centre used as a resource by teachers?
12. Were steps taken by the Centre to help implement developments/experiments in subject teaching?
13. a) How was the Centre affected by the creation of S C D S as part of the new C C C structure in 1976?
b) What was its relationship to C O S E?
c) What was the role of the D S C and the Steering Committee in the new structure?
14. What were the implications of the Rayner Study in 1979-80 for the centre?

COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION

15. What obstacles existed to the introduction of comprehensive education in Scottish schools?
16. To what extent was change/reform introduced within the schools as a result of the adoption of a comprehensive policy (i.e. in their internal organisation and practices)?
17. Did the advent of comprehensive education have a marked effect on

- a) the curriculum b) teaching methods in Scottish secondary schools?
18. How would you assess the role of Teachers' Centres and In-service training in getting teachers to scrutinize their ideas about approaches to their work?
19. What part was played in the changeover by - a) H M I I
b) Directorate Staff
c) Advisers
20. How did the idea of the comprehensive school as envisaged in C600/C614 articulate with Scottish attitudes to education?
21. How was the concept of 'equality of opportunity' perceived in Scottish education?
22. a) What, in your view, are the essential characteristics of a comprehensive school?
b) How was the term 'comprehensive school' perceived by those most closely involved in implementing comprehensive policies?

2F. Questions put to English politicians involved in Labour Party educational policy

1. What aspects of British society of the 1960s were conducive to the consideration of a comprehensive system as an alternative to the tripartite one?
2. To what extent, in your opinion, were the moves to introduce comprehensive education - (a) political (b) educational?
3. How popular within the Labour Party itself was the idea of comprehensive schools? Was it universally accepted as 'a good thing'?
4. What were the sources of initiatives to have comprehensive education made Labour Party policy?
5. Which group and/or individuals were influential in campaigning for the introduction of a comprehensive system of education?
6. What were the aims of the Labour Party in adopting comprehensive education as policy? (i.e. what did it intend to achieve by making the state system a comprehensive one?)
7. Once comprehensive education had become official policy, why was the decision taken to introduce it initially by circular rather than by Act of Parliament?
8. What do you recall as being the main areas of discussion on the subject of comprehensive education among senior Labour Ministers?
9. What were the main reactions in political circles to the announcement in January 1965 that comprehensive education was going to be introduced?
10. What obstacles to the introduction of comprehensive education were you aware of as a politician?
11. Is it accurate to say that the Scottish education system was obliged to follow the English lead on the comprehensive question because it was a major issue of national policy?
12. Were you aware of any opposition to or apprehension about the idea of the comprehensive school from Scottish labour politicians?
13. In your view, how radical a concept was the comprehensive school for the British educational system?
14. In your view what are the essential distinguishing features of a school that calls itself 'comprehensive'?
15. Twenty years on, do you think that the potential of the comprehensive school has been fully realised? If not, what have been the principal inhibiting factors?

2G. Questions put to an educationist directly responsible for organising in-service provision for secondary teachers.

SECTION A

1. What were the reasons for the 'explosion' of in-service courses in the later 60s and 70s?
2. a) Where did initiatives for in-service originate?
b) Who played key roles in these initiatives?
3. What part did N.C.I.S.T. play? Who sat on it? How did it function as a body?
4. Was in-service provision kept under review over the years?
5. Were there any changes of emphasis in in-service provision over the period in question?

SECTION B

1. a) When was the In-service Department established in -----?
b) Whose decision was it to set up the Department?
2. Did the Department have general aims and objectives?
3. How were courses planned (i.e. choice of topics rather than routine admin)?
4. How were contributors to courses selected?
5. How did a) the Directorate b) Advisers c) Her Majesty's Inspectorate relate to the In-service Department and its staff?
6. Do you have any comments on the main types of course offered:
 - 1 day or 1/2 day
 - 1 week local
 - 1 week national
 - evening courses over several weeks
 - courses leading to qualifications?
7. Were any of the courses in Q.6 more 'popular' with teachers than others?
8. Did the In-service Department undertake any follow-up or evaluation of the courses it organised?
9. What was the extent of school-based in-service undertaken by the Department?
10. Was the Department included in Scottish Education Department's planning of the Munn/Dunning development programme (i.e. pre-1984 dispute)?

SECTION C

1. Is it possible to assess the impact of in-service training on schools over the period?
2. To what extent did in-service training help teachers to scrutinise and/or reformulate their approaches to their work?
3. Did teachers (individually or in groups) request the college to organise in-service courses on topics selected by them?
4. What comments do you have on the following frequently-heard criticism of in-service courses by staffroom regulars:
 - i) courses were over-theoretical and 'no use for 3F on Friday'
 - ii) Courses tended to benefit those enthusiasts who attended
 - iii) involvement in in-service was used intentionally by some teachers to secure promotion.
5. What is the relationship between in-service and curriculum development, in your view?

FINALLY

1. What have been the main benefits secured by organised in-service provision over the period?
2. Do you have any criticisms of the general approach adopted to in-service in Scotland?
3. Have any factors inhibited its achieving its full potential?

2H. Questions put to an educational administrator in Strathclyde Region Education Department

1. What is the relationship between DIVISIONS and THE REGION in the administration of the education service?
2. With regard to the professional in the service, where is power/decision-making located - a) in the division b) at region?
3. a) What is the role of Elected Members in education policy making?
b) How important is the political dimension?
c) What is the relationship between elected members and professionals?
4. What are the priorities of the professionals - a) in the division
b) at region?
5. How would you describe the day to day life of the educational administrator?
6. To what extent are matters educational (i.e. curriculum, syllabus, assessment, etc.) the concern of administrators?
7. What is the function of the advisory service in the education system?
8. How do educational administrators view schools and the problems involved in running them?
9. How would you describe - a) decision/policy making
b) co-ordination/planning
c) management
in the education service?
10. To what extent are education administrators influenced by their personal educational philosophy?

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