

**Centre for Conflict Resolution
Department of Peace Studies**

Working Paper 9

**Citizenship Education or Crowd Control?
The Crick Report and the Role of Peace Education and Conflict
Resolution in the New Citizenship Curriculum**

Catherine Larkin

July 2001



**UNIVERSITY OF
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1. Introduction: Schools Curriculum Reform Initiative – Compulsory Citizenship Training by 2002

In the UK, the then Minister for Education David Blunkett, announced that from the year 2002 citizenship education will be a compulsory element of education for children in England and Wales up to the age of 16 years. This directive is based on a number of reports and studies, but primarily relies upon the report of the Advisory Group on Citizenship's final report (1998) known as the Crick Report.¹ The exact content of this new curricular subject, and how it is to be presented by schools, has been left reasonably flexible by the Government. Rather than specifically directing the areas to be taught the Crick Report advocates:

...learning outcomes (that are) more appropriate for Citizenship compared to the somewhat rigid programmes of study of existing National Curriculum subjects, but tight enough for both pupil assessment and external inspection. This approach...gives schools the flexibility to adapt existing programmes and to take into account local conditions and opportunities, thus avoiding any danger of a single, centralised way of teaching citizenship being imposed.²

Upon a closer examination of the Crick Report and the proposed curriculum, however, a different and rather intriguing question presented itself: what does the Crick Report, and thus the Government, mean when it refers to "citizenship", and what are the apparent expectations of the new curricular subject? The case stated in the Crick Report for citizenship to be "recognised as a vital and distinct statutory part of the curriculum, an entitlement for all pupils in its own right"³, is endorsed by the writer. However, it is an assertion of this paper that, at least on one level, the citizenship directive is an attempt to curb perceived, endemic, antisocial and disengaged behaviour of the young people of this country rather than merely to educate them in the workings of the body politic. If indeed this is so, then it is likely that many of these expectations and measures of 'crowd control' will fail to be met. Neither citizenship education nor its many valuable components, including peace education, can hope to be the panacea for existing social problems. It is acknowledged, however, that provided the curriculum is given adequate status, resources, and concern by both the government and individual schools, the outcome is likely to be positive for the individual participants and thus for the community.

Drawing from the Crick Report, this paper will evaluate the relationship between peace education in the citizenship curriculum and the apparent expectations of citizenship education by the British Government. Peace education is a dynamic and exciting area of academic endeavour and practice, which will complement, if not satisfy, many of the stated required outcomes of the new school subject.

¹ Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in Schools, Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, London, 1998.

² *Report of the Advisory Group on Citizenship Final Report*, Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, London, 22 September, 1998 (known as the Crick Report).

Students learn skills relating to empathy, active listening, negotiation and the ability to construct and present reasoned arguments. These attributes are augmented by critical thinking, respect for others and mutual 'difference', and cooperative dispute resolution skills. Acquisition of such knowledge will make a valuable contribution towards the educated and active citizen that is anticipated in the report. The nature of peace education and examples of how it is already being implemented in schools will be discussed in later sections of the paper.

2. What is 'Citizenship'?

The section of the Crick Report *What We Mean by Citizenship* states:

In the *political tradition stemming from the Greek city states and the Roman republic* (italics added), citizenship has meant involvement in public affairs by those who had the rights of citizens: to take part in public debate and, directly or indirectly by shaping the laws and decisions of a state. In modern times, however, democratic ideas led to constant demands to broaden the franchise from a narrow citizen class of the educated and the property owners, to achieve female emancipation, to lower the voting age, to achieve freedom of the press and to open up the processes of government. We now have the opportunity for a highly educated "citizen democracy".⁴

Clearly the second part of the statement intends that the new curriculum will discuss the historical development of democracy and citizenship in Britain, and also detail the accoutrements of representative democracy such as openness and freedom of the press. In order to gain some illumination of the rather circular first part of the definition, the basis of the statement will be investigated more closely.

2.1 The Political Tradition From the Greek City-States and the Roman Republic

One set of ideas and values defining the 'good citizen' has its origins in classical Greece in the period 500-300 BC. This is often called the *civic republican* tradition, which is also linked to an ideal of direct democracy in which each citizen takes part in each political decision. Civic republicanism demands of its citizens that they put the interests of the community above their personal interests. Massey believes that an historical discussion of the origins of Greek 'citizenhood' reveals the first aspect of that concept – that it is ever changing. He goes on to say:

...(that) citizenship is a very complex term, and its definition seems in fact to change from year to year, decade to decade, century to century. Yet one thing remains clear: citizenship implies a profound obligation to identify self with other, self as other--to identify with one's community,

³ *Ibid* at section 3.1.

⁴ *Ibid* at section 2.1.

and hold its interests as dear as one's own (should they conflict), no matter if that community is a town, city, state, or country.”⁵

His comments are reflective of civic republicanism and are based on an examination of the development of ‘politics’ in ancient Greece.

A tension developed between two concepts – ‘rhetoric’ and ‘philosophy’. On the side of rhetoric were the “sophists” who held that the power of legal argument was mighty and that the man who could successfully argue his point was indeed right. To the sophist, the power of argument was all and the one who could formulate the best argument was the most powerful. Truth in the hands of the sophist orator was politicised and rhetoricised: it became a matter of perspective – generally the perspective being one of self-interest for the orator. To Plato, the philosopher, there was no such thing as a ‘relative truth’ and to adhere to such a notion would surely lead to immorality. Plato’s philosophy sought eternal truths that remained constant and operated as a yardstick against which worldly matters may be measured: his answer to a fully politicised theory, such as that posited by the sophists, was philosophical.⁶

In any event the Greek tradition of citizenship was borne out of an extensive discourse between truth and morality, and ‘form’. The nature of this discourse may be seen as the basis for Greek political theory and discussion about law as opposed to justice, which forms one of the stated aims in the Crick Report.⁷ Aristotle, a contemporary of Plato, characterises politics as the most authoritative science. It prescribes which sciences are to be studied in the city-state, and the other capacities - such as military science, household management, and rhetoric - fall under its authority. Since it governs the other practical sciences, their ends serve as means to its end, which is nothing less than the human good.

Even if the end is the same for an individual and for a city-state, that of the city-state seems at any rate greater and more complete to attain and preserve. For although it is worthy to attain it for only an individual, it is nobler and more divine to do so for a nation or city-state.⁸

Greek political theory requires then that citizens put the rights and benefits of and to the community above their own personal situation.

⁵ Massey L. *On the Origin of Citizenship in Education: Isocrates, Rhetoric, and Kairos*, 1997. <http://cicero.smsu.edu/journal/articles97/massey.html> The author is associated with Southwest Missouri State University, which institution, by legislative act in 1995, became Missouri's only institution of higher education with a primary mission in public affairs. Their stated goal of public affairs is to develop citizens of enhanced character, more sensitive to the needs of community, more competent and committed in their ability to contribute to society, and more civil in their habits of thought, speech and action.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Crick Report at section 2.4: “education must also help future citizens distinguish between law and justice. Such a distinction marked the very beginning of political thought in ancient Athens”.

⁸ Fred D. Miller, Jr., *Nature, Justice, and Rights in Aristotle’s Politics* (Oxford, 1995).

There is a second set of ideas and values, which draws on ideas of Roman law developed in the Roman Empire from the first century AD, partly in response to the declining ancient Greek state, but which was fully formulated in 17th century Europe. This is the *liberal* tradition, linked to the ideal of parliamentary democracy, in which citizens elect a representative to look after their interests (rather than each citizen having a direct impact on each vote). Whereas Aristotle saw the citizen as a political being, that took turns in ruling and being ruled, under Roman law the citizen was a legal being with rights and obligations under the law.⁹ The liberal view of citizenship stresses individual rights within a framework of the *rule of law*.

The Romans created a legal code, which they took with them throughout their Empire. The various parts of this Code which drew on Greek and Christian principles jurists was gathered together by the Roman emperor, Justinian, and became known as the *Corpus Juris Civilis*. The Roman code relied heavily upon the concept of 'natural law', which today underpins much of the western debates concerning human rights. Natural law refers to a set of moral principles, which can be understood by all human beings and applies to all humans equally. This idea of natural law was handed down through Roman law and through Christian philosophy and was developed by liberal theorists like Locke in the seventeenth century. This concept encompassed the idea that human beings were equal and could understand the principles of natural law through the light of inborn reason.¹⁰ Over time the idea of natural law was extended to embrace a new but logically related idea: natural rights.

The development of the liberal tradition sees citizens as having not only natural, and then civic, rights but also political ones. For instance, whilst there is an obligation on citizens to pay taxes there is also a concomitant right to ensure that the Government of the day does not unilaterally change the laws relating to this obligation. The best form of government in liberal eyes has therefore been one in which individual rights are safeguarded by constitutional limits on government power.

Traditionally, liberals have tried to ensure that the role of the government, especially in respect of financial matters, has been kept to a minimum. From this position, rises the traditional liberal connection between material wealth and property, and full participatory citizenship rights. There has therefore always been a tension between the formal recognition of individual equality in liberal thought and the emphasis on the rights of property owners. Locke, for example, assumed that property owners

⁹ Pocock, J.G.A. 'The Ideal of Citizenship Since Classical Times'. In: Shafir, G (Ed.). *The Citizenship Debates*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, MN, 1995. Chapter 2.

¹⁰ A dubious notion that has been debated over the ages; not only in legal texts but also in popular literature. See, for instance, Walsh, P. *Knowledge of Angels*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1994 - a work of fiction where such a notion of inborn reason was rigorously tested by officials of the Catholic Church.

should command the labour of the poor. A poor man's only property lay in 'the *Labour* of his body and the *Work* of his Hands'.¹¹ Early liberals tended to assume that property owners were rational and industrious and that owning property protected by the law was the most obvious way in which individuals gave their consent to be citizens of the state. In addition individual property ownership was the basis of the market economy with which liberalism has been closely linked.

The American and French revolutions drew heavily on the liberal branch of politics in their insistence of the rights of individuals to participate in the political process. Although there was much talk in both instances concerning equality and philosophical matters (civic republicanism), the main intent was to invest citizens with inalienable rights and to institute laws preventing the Government from being able, unilaterally, to remove those rights. When the Americans said in their Declaration of Independence, for instance, "we hold these truths to be self evident" they were asserting the doctrine of natural law.¹² Interestingly, the French revolution resulted in each (male) citizen having the right to vote regardless of property or wealth whereas the American Revolution resulted in (white male) suffrage being a function of property wealth.

Neither the Greek nor the Roman philosophy can be seen as 'pure'. Both were influenced by the other and over ensuing centuries different countries took from both or either of them what was necessary and appropriate to their own circumstances. In modern day Britain and most of the Western world, countries engage in a hybrid democracy where there is a combination of civic rights and obligations as formally developed by the Romans, and the philosophy of equality and mutual support as per the civic republicanism of the ancient Greeks. Both systems, the Greek and the Roman, have routinely excluded large parts of society from their definition of 'citizen': women, slaves, and non-national aliens were all excluded and for a time even male suffrage was qualified by land ownership.¹³

¹¹ Locke, J. [1698] *Two Treatises of Government* . Edited by P. Laslett. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1988, pp.287- 288.

¹² Morris, G & Cook, C & Creyke, R & Geddes, R & Holloway, I. *Laying Down the Law: The Foundations of Legal Reasoning, Research and Writing in Australia*, Butterworths, Sydney, 1996, pp.2-3.

¹³ Even though this has now changed in Britain, there are ongoing issues arising from the historical exclusion. Political structures and theories of the same tended to assume that citizens enjoyed approximate equality. In *Citizenship and Community: Civic Republicanism and the Modern World* (Routledge, London, 1990), Oldfield for instance comments very briefly on the problems of ensuring genuine political equality when massive concentrations of economic power impinge on the distribution of political power. The same observation may be extended to other forms of historical political exclusion previously mentioned in this paper. The structure and the laws supporting the structure of our society are inextricably linked with and reflective of its foundations. In relation to this inequality with respect to the position of women. See: Vogel, U. *Is Citizenship Gender-Specific?* In: Vogel, U & Moran, M. *The Frontiers of Citizenship*, Macmillan, London, 1991.

Both of these systems have influenced the development of British beliefs and supporting laws and customs about democracy and what it has meant to be a citizen.

2.2 Marshall's Definition of Citizenship

There was a conscious attempt by the Advisory Group to relate its definition of citizenship to the three elements of citizenship contained in T.H. Marshall's classic definition.¹⁴ Marshall identifies three conceptually and historically distinct elements in citizenship.¹⁵

The first stage is civil citizenship. This encompasses the fundamental liberal rights such as the right to own property, to enter contracts, and to the right to access courts in the event that redress was required. One could define this element of citizenship as "legal" citizenship.¹⁶

The second stage is political citizenship. This element encompasses the right to vote, and to participate representatively in political life. It is a basic and formal acknowledgement of an individual's right to be treated equally in the political system and of the reciprocal obligations that this entails. Although this element embraces the concepts of suffrage and the right to participate, it is much broader than that. Political citizenship also encompasses all the ancillary rights and benefits which make meaningful participation possible: freedom of political speech, the right to move freely through public space, free choice of occupation, equality of opportunity, equal access to income wealth and so forth.¹⁷

The third element is social citizenship. Marshall identifies this final element as being the individual's independent access to the basic social goods provided by the community to its members. Thus access to welfare benefits, and the entire range of welfare services from education to medical treatment form part of this third element.

¹⁴ Kerr, D. *Citizenship and the Revised National Curriculum*. Paper prepared for the Annual Conference of the National Foundation for Educational Research, 6 October 1998. Kerr was a member of the Advisory Group that unanimously presented the Crick report in 1998. Marshall's theory of citizenship is discussed briefly in the Crick Report at section 2.3.

¹⁵ Marshall, T.H. *Citizenship and Social Class*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1950.

¹⁶ See: Berns, Baron, & Neave. *Gender and Citizenship: Materials for Australian Law Schools* [Committee for the Advancement of University Teaching](#) (CAUT), 1996. In these materials, the first strand of Marshall's definition was analysed thus.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

There is general approval in the Crick Report for Marshall's three stated elements of citizenship. However, a greater stress is placed (more than by Marshall himself) on the *reciprocity* of rights and duties, and in the concept of "welfare" being not just a provision of the State but also something that individuals or community organisations are able to provide for each other. Voluntary work is seen in the Report as being a necessary condition of society and democracy.

Marshall argues that in English legal and political life these three stages formed part of a gradual sequential development. The development of civil rights marked the distinction between a feudal society to one of independent, equal persons. Once that was attained, the next logical move was towards universal suffrage and political participation by all, including the ability to fully exercise those political rights and obligations. Such a structure then sets the path towards his third stage, social citizenship, a welfare state where all citizens are able to enjoy the protections of the society in which they live.

Marshall's analysis of citizenship that relies on a linear model of gradually extending rights is seen by some critics to be less than perfect when applied to women¹⁸ and therefore, by implication, members of others groups historically excluded from suffrage. Vogel argues from a feminist perspective that Marshall's account of citizenship, which relies on "all citizens being in direct relation and at an equal distance from the law"¹⁹, is clearly flawed. Particular groups in the community have been routinely excluded from, or marginalised in respect of, citizenship. This historical fact may, and in relation to some groups inevitably will, continue to have an impact on the ability of those groups to exercise their participatory rights of citizenship. A critical analysis of these political striations by students will highlight the fact that the development of 'citizenship' has been neither mono-dimensional nor homogenous and, in varying degrees, and for reasons that are essentially ideological, it remains that way today.

Direct references made therefore to the Greek and Roman traditions of democracy and to Marshall's analysis of the same, within the Crick Report, provide an opportunity for a thorough discourse within schools on the subject. The history and development of democracy is an involved and absorbing one drawing on many different academic disciplines. Comprehensive education about the development of democracy within Britain will certainly form a substantial part of producing the "highly educated citizen democracy" hoped for at the outset in the report. It will be a challenge for the teaching profession to do this but the opportunity to do so now presents itself.

¹⁸ Vogel, U, *op. cit.*

¹⁹ *Op. cit.*, footnote 13, p. 58.

2.3 Voluntary Work and Democracy

Contained under the heading *what we mean by citizenship* in the Crick Report is an emphasis on the necessary nature of voluntary and other forms of community work in a civil society and democracy. It is acknowledged that:

....while volunteering and voluntary service are necessary conditions for full citizenship in a democracy, they are not sufficient conditions. Local communities are not isolated from the state and public policy.²⁰

There are no less than 4 sections in Part 2 of the Report that deal with the necessary condition of voluntary work. There is little by way of explanation for this emphasis on voluntary work except, by implication, the reliance on that part of the Greek tradition of democracy, which places the benefit of the community above that of personal benefit to individual citizens. Interestingly however, the report observes:

This (volunteering and voluntary work) is especially important at a time when government is attempting a shift of emphasis between, on the one hand, state welfare provision and responsibility and, on the other, community and individual responsibility.²¹

Community involvement and mutual assistance is most certainly a part of democratic and caring communities. However, is the rather large emphasis on this aspect of democracy more political than educative, in an era when government appears to find it more difficult, both financially and politically, to provide the amount of welfare support necessary for all groups in the society?

Many of the groups most in need of welfare support are constituted by the membership of those groups historically excluded from enjoyment of full citizenship rights. Deeper understanding of disaffected and needy groups within the society will hopefully increase the amount of voluntary work undertaken, and services available to those groups. It remains to be seen whether compulsory 'voluntary' work will amplify that level of empathy or not. Increased involvement in community matters would be a very positive outcome of any programme. However, there is a tension between making the opportunity to engage in such service more tangible based on education about citizenship, and insisting that such service be undertaken. The first option would be desirable for all concerned and the other, potentially counterproductive to the aims of the citizenship programme.

The related concern is that the requirement to do community or 'voluntary' work is one of the few components of 'citizenship' that will at least give schools a tangible outcome to produce at any OFSTED inspection in respect of this subject. This could mean that schools may use this component of the course –highlighted in the report as being an important part of the course – as a type of 'tick-

²⁰ Crick Report, *op. cit.*, at section 2.5.

the-box' type of option for compliance purposes without any real effort being placed into the context of the service as it relates to citizenship. This may result in a missed opportunity to show students how the concept of service fits in with that of citizenship.

At the end of Part 3, at section 3.19, the report quotes, in full, a submission of the British Youth Council (BYC). This was done on the basis that it was “so robust and well considered ... so well does it sum up the common ground of many submissions...and what we hope to achieve by our recommendations.” After reproducing the BYC vision of citizenship education the report notes, “All that is lacking in this statement by the BYC is the stress on volunteering and learning from and in the local community, and consideration of economic realities, notably taxation”. The notion in the report that the BYC overlooked this consideration because (people or groups) “often forget to state (their) major presuppositions” is surprising and perhaps a little clumsy. An observation at this point is that there is little support provided in the Report for the premise that compulsory ‘voluntary’ work will increase young people’s understanding of the scope of citizenship. *The emphasis in the Crick Report on this aspect is disturbing.* If indeed the citizenship initiative is not ultimately viewed as successful, it will be too easy to lay the blame at the feet of the participants, i.e. the students, rather than at the misconceived idea of the necessary *educative* benefits of community work. In so doing there will be an increased sense of the perceived disconnection, apathy and lack of political interest by young people that is so clearly projected by the Crick Report. This is discussed further in Part 3 of this paper.

Nevertheless the inclusion of the BYC submission furthers the notion of what the report intends when it refers to “citizenship”. A brief summary of that submission therefore, in point form, is useful to include at this point. The curriculum should consider:

- Democracy, Community, Society and Citizenship.
- History, Development and Philosophical Underpinnings of Democracy:
 - Representative Democracy: what it is and how it evolved – and its advantages and disadvantages;
 - Comparative political systems and the importance of global citizenship;
- The Nature of Rights and Responsibilities
 - Rights and responsibilities of belonging to a society. Children and young people’s changing rights and responsibilities;
 - How the law and justice system relates to their rights and responsibilities.

²¹ *Ibid.*

- Difference, Equality, and Change
 - Awareness of community and cultural diversity, including the history of their community and how it stands in relation to national life. This would include an awareness of equal opportunity issues, national identity and cultural differences;
 - How individuals may be agents of change within a community;
 - The factors that lead to exclusion from society including bullying, and why certain groups may choose to 'opt out';
- Practical Skills
 - Practical skills that enable young people to participate effectively in public life;
 - Preparing young people to be able to develop communication, good negotiation, teamwork and discussion skills. It should help them learn to argue cogently and effectively, develop problem solving skills and the ability to make decisions effectively;
- Mechanisms to Allow Young People to Practice their Skills
 - Backing up these acquired skills by mechanisms that enable children to put them into practice, such as the development of school councils.

2.4 Effective Citizenship Education

Having identified the basis for the concept of citizenship, the Crick Report identifies three strands, which are to run through all *effective* education for citizenship. These three strands are related to each other, mutually dependent upon each other, but each needing a somewhat different place and treatment in the curriculum:²²

1. Social and Moral Responsibility: Children learning from the very beginning self-confidence and socially and morally responsible behaviour both in and beyond the classroom, both towards those in authority and towards each other.
2. Community Involvement: Learning about and becoming helpfully involved in the life and concerns of their neighbourhood and communities including learning through community involvement and service to the community.
3. Political Literacy: Pupils learning about the institutions, problems and practices of our democracy and how to make themselves effective in the life of the nation, locally, regionally and nationally

through skills and values as well as knowledge – this can be termed *political literacy*, seeking for a term wider than political knowledge alone.²³

These are expanded upon in the Report. It goes on to say that:

...our understanding of citizenship education in a parliamentary democracy finds three heads on one body: *social and moral responsibility*, *community involvement*, and *political literacy*. ‘Responsibility’ is an essential political as well as moral virtue, for it implies a) care for others; b) premeditation and calculation about what effect actions are likely to have on others; and c) understanding and care for consequences.²⁴

2.5 Summary

The working definition of citizenship as drawn up in the Crick Report cannot be confined to a few descriptive lines. This is appropriate as the concept of citizenship is wide, flexible and dynamic.

- The basis for the description of citizenship is the ancient Greek and Roman traditional political theories: the ongoing tensions between rights and obligations, law and justice, individual and community well being.
- There is reliance placed upon Marshall’s analysis of citizenship – civil, political and social citizenship - albeit with a greater emphasis placed in the report on voluntary work and community service than the simple concept of “welfare” being an instrument of government.
- The parameters placed upon the stated concept of democracy lie in the three strands outlined above – social and moral responsibility, community involvement and political literacy.
- Examples of how the new curriculum may work are detailed in a number of different ways. However the submission of the BYC was reproduced as being in line with the endorsed recommendations of the Crick Report.

3. The Role of Peace Education and the Acquisition of Positive Dispute Resolution Skills in Citizenship Education

Peace education curricula today generally include instruction on conflict resolution, co-operation and interdependence, global awareness and social and ecological responsibility, and continue to reflect the desire to improve the conditions of human society.

²² *Ibid* at section 2.10.

²³ *Ibid* at section 2.11.

In the 1980s, within the context of the cold war dominating international politics, peace education emphasised the preservation of the earth itself. Peace education at this time was viewed with suspicion by many in authority and was seen in some quarters as being anti patriotic. Nonetheless, during this time, peace programmes concerned themselves with the nature of warfare, violence and conflict, as well as the preservation of the earth. Apart from the anti-nuclear notion, peace educators also concentrated on environmental responsibilities. In this decade religious leaders across the religious and denominational spectrum spoke of the necessity of ecumenical and co-operative methods to stem the immorality of nuclear war, and for people to consider alternatives to violence and to embrace peaceful coexistence.²⁵ At the end of the cold war in the late 1980s and early 1990s the focus was how best to resolve conflict by non-violence. The emphasis was placed squarely on increasing mutual understanding and empathy with the intention of a peaceful co-existence. The 1990s also saw a proliferation of educational programmes with the focus on increasing knowledge about peace – both in the personal and greater communities - respect for others, and a tolerance for those who are different.

Peer Mediation and Conflict Resolution Skills

Currently, programmes of peace education provide practical applications for peace and transformative conflict resolution in a modern life. Within an increasing number of schools throughout the world peace education, often in the form of conflict resolution skills and the implementation of peer mediation schemes, is present. Peer mediation has been acknowledged in the Crick Report as fitting within the initiative for citizenship education. It involves individual students acting as mediators and becoming involved in conflicts among their peers. Teachers are involved for support and also to ensure that students do not mediate issues that are more properly dealt with by staff, or in some circumstances, the police. The results of a well supervised peer mediation programme are extremely positive. Teaching people to deal constructively with conflict is an integral part of peace education. In learning about constructive conflict resolution methods children learn empathy, increased communication skills, co-operation and respect for each other. In so doing, children learn to think for themselves and to be able to look for the answers to problems co-operatively. They also learn to be able to negotiate and respond creatively to conflict. Such programmes of peace education and conflict resolution skills are being employed in post war torn countries. For example, schools in Croatia have been successful in helping the reconciliation process between ethnic groups. As one school director said:

We enjoy disputing, arguing and being stubborn about our attitudes. And we are proud as well for we know how to fight. However, what we are not skilled at – and there is a skill for that

²⁴ *Ibid* at section 2.12.

²⁵ Johnson, M. *Trends in Peace Education* Eric Digests, Bloomington, 1996. Ref. ED417123.

– is peaceful problem solving. For us in school, it would be a main score to master the skill of peaceful problem solving: how to attack the problem and not the person.²⁶

A programme of peace education has been instituted in primary and secondary schools to teach students about conflict, empathy and listening skills. In Croatia there is also incorporated into the peace programme, trauma counselling and information. Children are taught positive conflict resolution skills to put these new skills into action and to learn how to live with peace and not war.

Peace education looks to the nature and origins of violence and its effects on both the victim and the perpetrator. It also aims to equip people in the search for alternative, non-violent methods of conflict resolution. This includes equipping students with *personal* conflict resolution skills.

3.1 Elements of Positive Conflict Resolution Methods.

From the outset students learn that conflict is a normal and natural part of life. It is not necessarily negative and nor will it necessarily lead to violence.²⁷ The challenge is to teach people how to deal constructively with conflict and hopefully in a way that will transform the participants and teach them something not only about the other person's perspective but also about their own.

The process of mediation is as follows:

3.1.1 Role of the Mediator

The mediator is an impartial third party who ensures as far as possible that there are no power imbalances being exploited during the mediation process. Mediators provide a context in which both parties have the opportunity to speak and be heard by the other party/ies. The mediator may sometimes offer suggested outcomes to the conflict but is not an arbitrator and will leave the final resolution up to the parties themselves. In so doing, the parties remain in control of the issues, and are responsible for, and therefore 'own', any outcomes.

²⁶ UNICEF, Croatia <http://www.unicef.org/media/mediaplanner/a12.htm>. Accessed 15.12.00

²⁷ This is a necessary comment to include as in many schools there is the undertow of violence as a result of conflict. Whether actual or imagined, violence is viewed as the appropriate method of dealing with conflict. A recent survey conducted by CRISP (Conflict Resolution in Schools Programme) under the auspices of the Leicestershire Mediation Service, within 4 schools and 600 Leicestershire students concluded the following: 60% of students said there was a fight every week; 30% of students said they saw extortion of money or goods every week; 81% of students witnessed name calling – often a catalyst to violence – every day; 72% of students said there was rumour spreading – a catalyst to violence – every week. 45% of teachers surveyed believed that 45% of conflict situations resulted in violence – including verbal violence and 74% of those teachers felt that students were in need of conflict resolution skills. From the student perspective although 82% want to help other students who were the object of name calling, gossip or actual violence they felt too uncomfortable to do so for fear that the actions may be turned on themselves. These results may be geographically skewed, but the statistics cannot be ignored. CRISP www.leicestershiremediation.co.uk 7th floor, Epic House, Charles St Leicestershire LE1 3SG ph. 0116 253 2900.

3.1.2 Process of Mediation

Mediation can take many different forms, drawing from philosophical and procedural bases. The mediation process described below is just one of many. It has been found useful when applied to peer mediation schemes in schools.

- Each disputing party will have a time set aside at the beginning of the process to explain their side of the conflict. This is an uninterrupted time during which the first party talks and the mediator and other party listens. At the end of this, the other party is encouraged to do likewise, and to state their perception of the conflict in a similarly uninterrupted fashion.
- The parties are encouraged by the mediator to concentrate not only the actual problem that brought about the conflict but also on the reasons that they feel aggrieved by the dispute. There is, thus, a focus on the *needs* of the parties rather than on their stated *positions*.
- After each party has made their initial statement, the mediator attempts to engage both parties together in a constructive dialogue where the conflict is viewed as a common problem, whereby it is to their mutual advantage to resolve it. The disputants are encouraged to 'deal with the problem not the person'. This process is aimed at increasing empathy between the parties and is designed to lead disputants to an understanding of both sides of the problem. It is a reality that many problems are not based as much on 'truth' as on 'perceptions' and an appreciation of those perceptions may lead the parties to a greater chance of resolution.
- The mediator then assists the parties to focus on exploring options for a mutually beneficial (win-win) resolution of the conflict. The mediator assists them by focusing the negotiations on real issues and needs.

In addition to all of the skills required to effectively participate in such a process, reaching a solution by mediation encourages the parties to appreciate their own ability to solve their conflicts and also to accept responsibility for solving their own problems.

For students who learn the elemental skills of mediation – such as active listening, empathy, creativity, and responsibility for their own conflict and decisions – peace education is already well underway. When the mediation process is undertaken with a peer mediator inside of a well run peer mediation scheme, the benefits accrue to both the mediator and to the parties which then reflects onto the school as a whole.

3.2 Essential Elements to be Reached by the end of Compulsory Education as Noted by the Crick Report and Contained in the National Curriculum, that Relate to Peace and Conflict Resolution Skills

The recommendations of the Crick Report set out essential elements to be reached at the end of compulsory schooling as a result of citizenship education. At the end of Key Stage 4 (16 year olds) this includes an understanding of concepts such as:

- Co-operation and Conflict;
- Equality and Diversity;
- Fairness, Justice, the Rule of Law, Rules, Law and Human Rights;
- Freedom and Order;
- Individual and Community; and,
- Rights and Responsibility²⁸

Some of the linked essential skills and aptitudes to be attained at the same stage are:

- Ability to make a reasoned argument – verbally and in writing;
- Ability to co-operate and work effectively with others;
- Ability to consider and appreciate the experience and perspective of others;
- Ability to tolerate others' points of view;
- Ability to develop a problem solving approach;²⁹

All of the listed essential elements to be attained through citizenship education may be found in the process of peace education through mediation and positive conflict resolution. Although positive conflict resolution skills and peace education cannot be a panacea for the ills of society, in exactly the same way that provision of a citizenship educational course in schools cannot, effective teaching of these skills and concepts has several benefits to both the individual and the community – many of which have been enumerated above.

4. Expectations of the New Curricular Subject

We aim at no less than a change in the political culture of this country, both nationally and locally: for people to think of themselves as active citizens, willing, able and equipped to have an influence in public life and with the critical capacities to weight evidence before speaking and acting; to build on and to extend radically to young people the best in existing traditions of community involvement and public service, and to make them individually confident in

²⁸ *The National Curriculum for England 1999*. QCA London; at Crick Report *op. cit.*, p. 44.

²⁹ Crick Report, *op. cit.*, p.44.

finding new forms of involvement and action among themselves. There are worrying levels of apathy, ignorance and cynicism about public life. These, unless tackled at every level, could well diminish the hoped-for benefits of constitutional reform and the changing nature of the welfare state. To quote a speech by the Lord Chancellor earlier this year... 'We should not, must not, dare not, be complacent about the health and future of British democracy. Unless we become a nation of engaged citizens, our democracy is not secure.'³⁰

This powerful statement displays just exactly how much hope is pinned on this new curriculum initiative. Part 3 of the report commences with the restating of a positive case for citizenship to be a 'vital and distinct statutory part of the curriculum an entitlement for all pupils in its own right', with which no argument is taken by this writer. Citizenship, like mathematics and literacy is unlikely to be learned by 'osmosis'. Effective, balanced, informative discourse on the nature of, and the engagement with, active citizenship is indeed necessary to bring about this desired result.

4.1 The Apparent Basis for the Expectations of Citizenship Education.

It is the stated reasons upon which the report bases its claim for the necessity of citizenship education that are disquieting. The impression gained after a reading of sections 3 through to 11 of Part 3 of the Report is that citizenship education is required in schools because of the disinterest, criminal tendencies and apathy among young people in general throughout Britain. It details young people having a low rate of participation in the voting process, which to the committee was seen as an indicator of alienation and cynicism.³¹ Other such indicators listed by the committee, without making a distinction between any of them, were truancy, vandalism, random violence, premeditated crime and habitual drug taking. It is acknowledged within the report that it was difficult to judge how much was real increase (compared with earlier years and periods), and 'how much is justifiable public intolerance of things once taken more or less for granted'³² This latter comment clearly indicates the opinion of the committee.

No doubt these social issues including those relating to multicultural issues as mentioned at section 3.15, are of concern to everyone. However, it appears from the report that many of the problems of today's society are the 'fault' of the community's young people and that the way to 'remedy' this is by the provision of citizenship education.

Crick documents results of a report commissioned in 1996 by Bernardo's, stating that young people did not seem to support political parties as much as in past years and how overall political knowledge was low³³ The alternative view was also outlined in the report, that the face of politics is changing and that

³⁰ *Ibid* at section 1.5.

³¹ *Ibid* at section 3.5, 3.6.

³² *Ibid* at section 3.6.

³³ *Ibid* at section 3.7.

young people were today more likely to join single-issue pressure groups rather than political parties. This phenomenon was dismissed as being necessarily negative and a sign of the decline of young people's interest in the democratic process instead perhaps of one view of the changing face of society. Pressure groups are an essential part of a democracy. It is conceded that educating young people well about the roles of political parties within the system can only be of benefit to them and indeed *may* cause the trend to veer in a different direction, although nothing is certain. Change as a concept cannot be effectively judged as either 'good' or 'bad' without further evidence about the effect of that change.

A DEMOS pamphlet discussed at section 3.8 outlines a growing disrespect for parliament and mistrust in society's core institutions among young people leaving a minority support of 15% for the way that national government works. The apathy documented in the DEMOS pamphlet was countered by details of a further study completed in 1996 that indicates that typically people do not vote until they are older and when they have more interest in property, taxes and the education of their own children³⁴ However, at section 3.10 of the report the committee makes this comment:

Perhaps we need make only two comments on this complex question: firstly, that the truth could well be somewhere between the historic shift argument and that things are much as they ever were; and secondly that even accepting (the) suggestion that things may not be getting dramatically worse, they are inexcusably and damagingly bad and could and should be remedied.

On the whole, the stated need for citizenship education seems to be a negative, almost fearful one, tinged with what appears to be fear for the very foundations of British democracy. There are seeming concerns that an entire generation has opted out of politics and engaged citizenship. There are further concerns about the measures of apparent widespread antisocial disengagedness spanning from lack of interest in political issues, low voting records and growing disregard for the mechanisms of democracy, to habitual drug taking, premeditated violence and general lawlessness. The problems of the society have been laid squarely at the feet of young people and the 'solution' put forward is the provision of citizenship education in schools.

Much more appears to be at stake than the proper education of young people about active citizenship. The problems documented in the report associated with British youth are great - as indeed are the expectations placed on the success of the new citizenship curriculum. If the hefty expectations placed on the introduction of citizenship education fail to 'cure' the documented ills there is the danger that this may, at least partially, result in throwing the curriculum itself into disrepute and undermine the acknowledged good that could flow from this new subject.

³⁴ *Ibid* at section 3.8.

4.2 Some Concerns About Implementing Citizenship Studies in Schools

Some of the complexities and contradictions of these aspects and historical bases of democracy have been outlined above, with no assertion that they form a complete list of issues to be discussed within this subject. Citizenship is, however, a multifaceted topic that will require specialist knowledge and a great deal of preparation on the part of schools and teachers. There are, obviously, teachers for whom less additional preparation for this topic would be required – namely those already teaching politics and history and other subjects involving the legal process. Citizenship however encompasses more than these structural subjects and, quite properly, it is not the intention of the government to put all the additional strain and responsibility for teaching citizenship on these teachers. Consequently, it will be a challenge to schools to introduce citizenship education well, and to present it in a manner that broadens and deepens young people's working knowledge of the subject. This does not lessen the extremely worthwhile nature of the topic, but to bring any credit to the subject and to the expectations of the authors of the initiative it is essential for it to be successfully presented. Otherwise there is a possibility and, indeed, a fear that citizenship will be viewed as being boring and irrelevant – arguably and, based on anecdotal evidence, in the same category as PSHE (personal, social and health education) or RE (religious education) - not only by students but by teachers as well.

The demands placed on schools in Britain have been increasing since the 1980s and the introduction of any new compulsory subject is likely to cause consternation. Nonetheless many schools and teaching professionals will likely welcome the content of the new subject and will find that they have already incorporated large elements of it into other curriculum subjects. Notwithstanding, as stated in the report much more is expected of the new subject than that which is already provided. Guidance and suggested methods of introducing the new subject as well as incorporating it into existing subjects is the topic of some detail in sections 6 through 10 of the report. These suggestions appear extremely comprehensive and are augmented in the national curriculum document. It will obviously require increased effort and or training, and in some cases, the acquisition of new teaching staff. As acknowledged in the report:

Schools can only do so much. They could do more, and must be helped to do so; we must not ask too little of teachers, but equally we must not ask too much.³⁵

The introduction of the new initiative has been introduced with the knowledge of the increased pressure that this will place on schools and in the belief that this added pressure will be able to be borne. It is admitted in chapter 5 of the report that additional resources will be required to enable this new subject to be properly integrated into the existing curriculum. Such resources will need to include

initial teacher training, ongoing in-service teacher training, and also the purchase of physical resources such as books and other resource materials. Additional academic resources, such as the suggested online and actual directory of resources and relevant contacts for teachers nominated³⁶ in the report, have been provided to assist schools to better prepare for the introduction of this new subject. £12.2M has been allocated by the Department for Education and employment (DfEE) to implement Citizenship and PSHE courses in schools throughout Britain with £5M specifically allocated to the teaching of citizenship in secondary schools³⁷ Much of that money will be allocated to external agencies in order that they can produce materials and courses to assist schools with the subject matter and delivery of this new topic. Whilst the involvement of such outside agencies will be invaluable the emphasis remains squarely on the schools themselves to deliver this course as it is emphasised in the report that citizenship education be a school – wide concern and that, wherever possible or reasonable, it should dovetail with as much of the rest of the curriculum and it can.³⁸

It is recommended in the report at section 5.9.3 that ‘teachers be encouraged and supported to take responsibility for their own professional development in this area’ whilst also stating that ‘sufficient good quality training is to be made available’ for them to be able to do this. There is no doubt that a tension exists between requiring teachers to undertake further training, and relying upon their professional discretion as to the best way and time to do this. It is submitted, however, that although only 5% of the overall curricular time has been allocated to citizenship education, this chosen manner of ongoing training for teachers not only increases the pressures placed upon teachers to take responsibility for this necessary task, it also lessens the quality control over which core parts of the new course are absorbed by teachers, if not students.

Without proper training, and proper incentive for schools to send their teachers on training courses, it is unlikely that many teachers will be currently equipped to undertake this type of education. The attention to the amount of funding and training that will be made available by schools to teachers and to the subject is likely to be linked to the degree of compliance required by the curriculum. *Given those compliance requirements³⁹ it is the prediction of this writer that there will be barely sufficient regard given to this new curriculum.* This is not to denigrate schools or teaching professionals but merely to reflect the reality that schools are already overburdened with other compulsory curricula, particularly those involving numeracy and literacy. It seems unlikely that they

³⁵ *Ibid* at section 1.9 (b)

³⁶ *Ibid* at section 5.10.3

³⁷ DfEE Press Release 13 April 2000 (most up to date release re citizenship funding at time of writing).

³⁸ Crick Report, *op. cit.*, particularly at section 6.3.1, but also at sections 1.10, 2.11, 3.2, 3.19, 4.6, 4.7, 5.3, 6.3.2, and chapters 7, 8, 9

will either feel able or inclined to allocate to this new subject, that has been allocated 5% of the overall curriculum time, the necessary amount of time and training that will be required to make the programme a success.

It will be possible to measure objectively some aspects of citizenship such as civic and political knowledge and an appreciation of the history and development of such matters. All of these issues can be assessed in a variety of ways already put into practice in schools and monitored by OFSTED. However the measure of 'political literacy', which is promoted strongly in the report, is going to be rather more difficult to measure. One of the associated outcomes of a subject like citizenship is that it will be very difficult to ascertain the impact that it may or will have on students' lives or activities outside of the school. For the most part any benefit, or indeed detriment, will be largely intangible and it will be impossible to say whether the stated aims of the Crick Report will have been achieved. Indicators of the effectiveness of the new programme such as the level of youth crime rate, apparent levels of political or social involvement are equivocal and thus not useful. Although indicated in the report as being the basis of the need for citizenship education any change or rigidity in associated statistics cannot be attributed to the provision of citizenship education as there are too many factors impacting on these and other such socio – political – economic - legal problems.

5. Conclusions

- The initiative to introduce citizenship education into British schools should be strongly supported.
- If the outcomes of such a programme include: a more educated and engaged citizenry; people becoming more interested in their individual communities and the nation as a whole; citizens obtaining a working knowledge of the rights and obligations bestowed and imposed upon members of a democracy and; a greater overall understanding of the machinations of the Westminster political system, then the result will be laudable and extremely positive.
- If citizenship education fails to increase the number of community welfare workers, and decrease juvenile crime rates, crimes associated with poverty and dependence on illicit drugs, levels of graffiti, and association with single-party politics – as it surely will - then the problem will not be with the *concept* of citizenship education in schools.

³⁹ As outlined in part 5 of the Crick Report, *op. cit.*, and expanded upon in chapter 6. Also contained in *The National Curriculum for England 1999*, QCA, London.

- For this very valuable and positive citizenship initiative to have a positive measure of success it is submitted that the expectations of it need to be more realistically drawn, and its introduction into schools needs to be in such a manner that its status matches the real importance of its content and projected benefits.