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THE RELATION BETWEEN IDEOLOGIES AND POLICIES IN THE DEBATE ABOUT
COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOLS 1944-1970.

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Submitted for the degree of Ph.D.

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PREFACE

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SUMMARY

The thesis analyses the relation between the ideologies of the Labour and the Conservative parties and their respective policies in the debate about the comprehensive school during the period 1944-1970. It is primarily an attempt to test the thesis of the inevitable connection between ideology and politics, and to examine the process of ideological adaptation in each of the two parties, using the specific case study about the comprehensive school debate.

Part One deals with presuppositions which have to be clarified before the analysis of the case study can take place. Chapter One is an examination of certain theories of ideology and a presentation of the framework and method adopted. In Chapter Two the method is demonstrated in the wider context of justifying the choice of the comprehensive school debate as the object of the case study. Chapter Three attempts to examine the psychological, educational, and sociological arguments in the literature concerning secondary education. The professional arguments from 1944 to 1970 are divided to three temporal phases and the purpose is to present the professional background against which the two major parties formed their educational policies. Part Two analyses the relation between Labour's ideology and policies from 1944 till 1970, by using the tools supplied by the framework (the distinction between fundamental and operative ideology and all that is connected with it). Chapter Four shows how by 1951 the comprehensive principle was adopted into Labour's fundamental ideology

as part of the ways and means to achieve equality, although on the policy level the Labour Ministers pursued and justified the tri-partite policy. Chapter Five examines how the Labour party in opposition adapted its policies according to the comprehensive principle as formulated in the fundamental ideology in order to diminish the gap between fundamental ideology and policies. It also shows that the party's dislike of such a gap resulted later on in a change (though unacknowledged by the party) in the meaning of the comprehensive principle itself. This time the change occurred in the fundamental ideology so as to adapt it to a change on the policy level, required by technical prescriptions. Chapter Six shows how the party seized the first opportunity to return to the orthodox interpretation of the comprehensive principle, and that all its policies from 1964 to 1970 were devised in the light of the comprehensive principle as defined in the fundamental ideology.

Part Three examines the interaction between ideology and policy in the Conservative party in regard to the comprehensive school issue. Chapter Seven shows that the Conservative interpretation of the 1944 Education Act was primarily a result of the party's desire to preserve elitism, tradition and diversity. Chapter Eight finds that the Conservative party, in its continuous defence of the tri-partite system, defied new professional arguments for a long time. The tri-partite policy, the rejection of the comprehensive principle and the limitations of the reforms in secondary education during 1951-1962 are shown

to be the result of the party's adherence to the traditional interpretation of its fundamental ideology, and of its desire to preserve the principles mentioned above through its educational policy. Up to 1962 harmony existed between the Conservative party's fundamental ideology and its policies. From 1962, as a result of change in policy caused by an accumulation of factors, a gap developed between the party's fundamental ideology and policy. Chapter Nine examines how the party first overcame this gap by introducing a change in its fundamental ideology. It introduced such a change in its fundamental ideology which enabled the party to stop attacking the comprehensive principle as such, and to attack instead Labour's methods of implementing it. Finally it shows how the traditional interpretation of the party's principles triumphed and how the policies were reversed simultaneously.

The Conclusion draws together the strands of analysis and presents a comparison between the two parties both on the ideological and on the policy level. It examines the nature and reasons of the consensus, which has been shown to exist only on the policy level. Several modifications or elaborations of the framework are suggested in the light of the findings of the case study. The main general assumptions with which the case study started are re-examined and among others, the basic one, i.e., the continuous connection between ideologies and policies in the comprehensive school debate, is reaffirmed. Finally,

theoretical and practical implications drawn from the case study are presented. Some modifications to generally accepted assertions about the nature of British politics are introduced, and more emphasis on instrumental questions as well as a greater authority in the policy making process for professionally equipped people is advocated.

PART ONE

PRESUPPOSITIONS

CHAPTER ONE: THE FRAMEWORK

In this chapter I intend to present the conceptual framework which I shall use while examining the relations between the ideologies and the policies of the two major parties in the debate about the comprehensive school, from 1944 till 1970. My aim is to find a definition and theory of ideology which will serve the purpose of my research, i.e., a tool to enable me to analyse the relations between ideologies and policies within each party and between the two parties, and to arrive at conclusions about ideological change in each party and to compare this to ideological change in the other party.

The thesis attempts to link conceptual analysis with the examination of a concrete case study. I do not intend to present a new conceptual analysis of ideology but to select a suitable conceptual framework, knowing that this may require modifications in the light of its use in this particular case.

The question of what an ideology is has been considered by many writers. It is obvious that their views in general, and those with which I shall deal, will differ mainly because of their varying definitions of ideology. Thus a full explanation of what the user means by "ideology" will be needed in each case. Only then will it become possible to present a clear picture of the various opinions; what is common to them, and where and why they differ. Ideology has for long been invested with a multiplicity of meanings. Because of this

variety of meanings it is tempting to reject the concept of ideology altogether, or to use it only on the basis of a stipulative definition which restricts its meaning closely. But I agree with M. Seliger that such an approach would be artificial. Admittedly the concept of ideology is not a clear one but it has been present in Western intellectual debate about politics for at least a century, and it has not been meaningless or useless. As Seliger says, ideology has circumscribed, throughout, sets of attitudes and ways of behaviour which can be observed in the real world. Also the meanings attached to ideology are important, as language itself is a part of human behaviour. By looking at the specific attitudes and behaviour, on which the concept has always been predicated, it is possible to check the adequacy of the connotations associated with ideology¹⁾ and to arrive, by conceptual analysis, at a more precise definition of ideology within the context of its history and usage.

At this stage it is already clear to me that such a definition is found in M. Seliger's theory. In fact I propose to work primarily from M. Seliger's analysis and definition. But before presenting his theory I find it necessary to discuss some other theories concerning ideology in order to show why they cannot serve my purpose. I do not intend to present a comprehensive picture of the literature dealing with ideology, nor even part of it. My purpose is to present two

1) M. Seliger, Ideology and Politics (Manuscript, Jerusalem Oct, 1969), ch. I, pp. 1-2.

theories of analytical philosophers, one of a sociologist, and also some theories which can be included under the heading of "modern political science".

A. Theories of Ideology

When dealing with the relation of political philosophy to ideology, it is characteristic of English analytical philosophers first to distinguish between classical political philosophy and the analytical philosophy of politics. While classical political philosophy is in part also ideology, analytical philosophy of politics is not.

In his introduction to Political Philosophy, A. Quinton states that the old works of philosophy contained at the same time both factual and descriptive accounts of political actions and institutions which may be termed "Political Science", together with recommendations about the ideal ends that political activity should pursue and about the way political institutions should be designed in order to serve these ends, which may be called ideology.²⁾ In the same manner P.H. Partridge in his "Politics, Philosophy, Ideology", maintains that classical political theory, as in the works of Plato, Aristotle, Hegel etc., has usually been a mixture of different kinds of inquiry or speculation: philosophical, sociological and

2) A. Quinton, "Introduction", in A. Quinton (ed.), Political Philosophy (Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 1.

ideological.³⁾ These two writers share the view that ideology forms a part of classical political philosophy.

Quinton proceeds to distinguish between classical political philosophy, political science and ideology. While the first two are disciplines of study, with different aims and methods, the third - ideology - is not. Political science, according to him, is concerned only with facts and description. Analytical philosophy of politics is concerned, among other things, with distinguishing political science from ideology, and with clarifying contested or central concepts in both fields. Both analytical philosophy of politics and political science aim at more or less objective knowledge, the first about political language as used both in political science and in ideology, the second about the various facts of political life. Analytical philosophy of politics, thus understood, can be applied as a critical discipline both to political science and to ideology.

Ideology, as opposed to both political science and analytical philosophy, "...prescribes ends for government. It lays down certain ends as those to be pursued through political activity and through political institutions".⁴⁾ That is, ideology is distinguished from both political science and analytical philosophy not merely because it is evaluative, but because its values are the kind of values that call for action.

3) P.H. Partridge, "Politics, Philosophy, Ideology", in A. Quinton (ed.), op.cit., p. 33.

4) A. Quinton, op.cit., p. 14.

The task of analytical philosophy of politics in regard to ideology is to clarify the concepts of such political ends as justice, equality, liberty. Analytical philosophy, in short, can serve as a method to clarify in a critical way classical political philosophy, political science, the language of ideology and analytical philosophy itself.⁵⁾ For Quinton analytical philosophy, political science and ideology are distinguished from each other. They are different modes of thinking, while classical political philosophy combined political science and ideological thinking at the same time. It seems to me that Quinton himself fails to apply the method of analytical philosophy while dealing with the concept of ideology. The result is that ideology emerges as one dimensional - evaluative only. This view can not stand, as the examination of ideologies as they really are proves it to be wrong. That is the reason why Quinton's theory cannot serve my purpose.

Up to a certain point, P.H. Partridge's arguments in "Politics, Philosophy and Ideology" resemble those of Quinton. He too distinguishes between modern political thought and classical political theory which "...has usually been a mixture of different kinds of inquiry or speculation... philosophical, sociological, ideological."⁶⁾

5) See Appendix, note no. 1.

6) P.H. Partridge, op.cit., p. 33.

Political philosophy is defined by Partridge as the mode of thinking whose task is to exhibit what is common between the social and other spheres of reality. Ideological thinking is defined as a "...form of political thinking in which the emphasis falls neither on philosophical analysis and deduction, nor on sociological generalisation, but on moral reflection - on elaborating and advocating conceptions of the good life, and of describing the forms of social action and organisation necessary for their achievement."⁷⁾ I find the definition of political philosophy too narrow as it excludes many works which are considered to be political philosophy but which lack this characteristic. (For example Locke's Two Treatises on Government or Mill's On Liberty and Representative Government).

The definition of ideology however is fuller than that presented by Quinton. In addition to the moral or evaluative dimension, Partridge stresses that in ideological thinking there exists also a descriptive dimension. This difference between Quinton and Partridge accounts for their different opinions as to the nature of modern political science, and results also in the correct conclusion of Partridge that one cannot speak about un-ideological politics in Western democracies. For Partridge, because ideological thinking is not one dimensional (evaluative), but two dimensional (descriptive and evaluative), the sharp line drawn between modern political science

7) *ibid.*, p. 34; see also p. 35.

as descriptive and ideological thinking as evaluative only, is invalid.

Partridge concentrates mainly on the analysis of the theories of Schumpeter in his Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy, and Dahl in his Preface to Democratic Theory, and points out that although the recent tendency in political science is "...to be most interested in the existing machinery of democratic systems" and "...to lay the foundations of an empirical science of politics", nevertheless the "...present trend is also critical: it expresses an ideological or philosophical standpoint of its own, an inclination to accept as inevitable or at least as more rational than any alternative, the broad types of organisation, the distribution of rights and roles, the methods of adjusting existing interests, which have by now come to define democracy in the Anglo-Saxon democracies."⁸⁾ Thus he rejects the description of modern political science given by Quinton and other social scientists such as Schumpeter and Shils, as being only factual or purely descriptive and explanatory. The method of justification has changed (empirical research) but the justification is there nevertheless.⁹⁾ According to Partridge every mode of thinking which justifies some forms of political action is ideological even

8) *ibid.*, p. 52.

9) *ibid.*, p. 42. See Appendix, note no. 2.

when the ideological elements are not as obvious as in the Fascist or Communist ideologies.

Partridge, in short, recognizes the fact that every form of politics, including pragmatic politics, is connected to ideology: "It can be argued that the politics of 'incrementalism', of bargaining and adjustment, of the pursuit of limited objectives, can itself operate as it does only because of the strong and wide ideological consensus that happens to rule in these societies."¹⁰) The trouble is that Partridge supplies no tools which can enable one to test this general observation in a particular case, as he does not go profoundly enough into the issue of the components of ideologies, and the process of ideological change.

Partridge's view of modern political science as an ideology is shared by D. Apter in his "Ideology and Discontent - Introduction", Apter himself being one of the modern political scientists. Yet, while Partridge regards modern political science as an ideology justifying democracy, Apter calls it "the ideology of science" which justifies a society structured according to intellectual ability. Both agree that modern political science is not free from value-orientation but disagree as to the nature of this ideology: the character of the society it justifies.

10) P.H. Partridge, op.cit., p. 43.

According to Apter the term "ideology" has come to be regarded as a "cloak for shabby motives" such as a rationalization of the pursuit for power. There are historical reasons for the identification of ideology with an extreme kind of ideological thinking. Such a conception of ideology started in the late forties and early fifties especially because the terror of Nazism and Communism brought about a distrust of ideologies. Such an approach to ideology, however, is an emotional one, and perhaps it might be said that this approach is an ideological view of ideology. Because of the existence of this tendency from the mid fifties to identify ideology with fanatical "world views" like Nazism or Communism, Apter, like many others who reject this notion of ideology, finds it necessary, in the first place, to present his definition of ideology.

Apter, like Partridge, rejects the identification of ideology with a particular kind of ideological thinking. He defines ideology in the following way: "It links particular actions and mundane practices with a wider set of meanings and, by doing so, lends a more honorable and dignified complexion to social conduct."¹¹ Ideology is the link between action and fundamental beliefs and thus it helps to make more explicit the moral basis of action. Nothing is said by Apter about the character of the fundamental beliefs. They do not have to be extreme, and so Liberalism too can be regarded as ideology.

11) D.E. Apter, "Introduction: Ideology and Discontent", in D.E. Apter (ed.), Ideology and Discontent (Glencoe, 1964), p. 16.

Apter observes that modern ideologies in the Western World have changed in recent years. They lost their utopian character and the obvious use of evaluative and persuasive language. They became disguised. What he probably has mainly in mind is what he calls "the ideology of science". I would be very reluctant to make such a generalisation as the Black Paper No. 1 for example uses strongly evaluative and persuasive language. It might be said that Apter's description of the "ideology of science" is to some extent influenced by his own beliefs. Consequently he says that the ideology of our modern Western society is the belief in democratic progress through the application of science, including social science, to human affairs.¹²⁾ I have again serious doubts whether this generalisation is applicable at all to Britain and even to the United States.

Apter's approach is a functional one, analysing ideology according to the functions it performs: psychological, social, and political. First he points out the psychological and social functions of ideology within the social culture, and afterward he describes how these functions help to support the ruling élite and to justify the exercise of power. The social function of ideology is to bind the community together through the "world view" presented by the ideology.¹³⁾ The psychological function is connected to the social

12) D.E. Apter, op.cit., p. 17.

13) (For example Sorel's usage of the general strike myth was meant to provide a feeling of solidarity among the workers.)

one. By providing a "world-view" which gives answers to the question of the individual's place in the world, and in his specific society, ideology helps the individual to understand who he is and why he exists. This function of ideology is of special importance for young people who are at the stage of searching for their identity. Government, in result, is regarded by the community, and by each individual separately, as the body whose task it is to achieve or maintain the desired order, and the usage of power becomes legitimized.

This functional approach has its merits if the task is to study how a certain ideology performs these functions. But I can not see how this functional approach can help one to decide whether or not ideologies influence policies, and to what extent. To answer this question a different approach is needed.

Nor can G.A. Almond and G.B. Powell's theory in Comparative Politics be helpful in this respect. First, they identify ideology with a rigid and closed set of roles of conduct,¹⁴⁾ thus excluding the legitimacy of any inquiry about the relationships between ideologies and policies in a "secular political culture" such as Britain. They artificially distinguish between three kinds of political culture: traditional, ideological and secular.

Traditional political culture is characterized by diffuseness of orientation. The roles of the polity are not differentiated from

14) G.A. Almond and G.B. Powell, Comparative Politics, A developmental approach (Boston, 1966), p. 61.

the societal roles. The norms of conduct are rigid and derive from custom. In the ideological political culture the individual develops a specific set of political orientations, but fails to develop the open bargaining attitudes associated with full secularization. There exist explicit, rigid and closed set of rules of conduct, spelled out by ideology. The ideology provides an inflexible image of political life, closed to conflicting information, and offering a specific explanation and code of political conduct for most situations. Therefore, for Almond and Powell, the various forms of communism and clericalism are in the modern world the prime examples of ideological political cultures.¹⁵⁾ The secular political culture is characterized by a pragmatic and empirical orientation, which is an open orientation, as it enables parties and other groups to present their interests, to bargain and to reach some sort of compromise.

Two wrong observations are immediately apparent. First, open bargaining attitudes do not have to be connected with secularization. Second, not all forms of clericalism are rigid.

I have presented here only those characteristics given by Almond and Powell which are of interest to the present discussion.

15) *ibid.*, pp. 61-62.

According to this theory Britain belongs to the third category: it is a secular political culture. Yet I do not suppose that there can be much disagreement about the fact that in Britain the Labour party and the Conservative party do have ideologies, and that these ideologies have some bearing on undertaken or advanced policies. One concludes therefore that pragmatic politics do not exclude the existence of ideologies as influential in the political process. The weakness of Almond and Powell's theory as regards ideology and its relation to political cultures makes it impossible to classify all of them under three categories.

As a result their analysis of ideology is very superficial, as their own categories demand a restricted definition of ideology in order that the classification will "work". Simple observations of every day politics show that ideology cannot be confined to a specific political culture. Indeed they themselves are bound to recognize that in the Western Democracies also ideologies play a part.¹⁶⁾ Thus while speaking about specific political systems, they themselves find their own categories too abstract. As for the functions performed by ideologies they mention the same functions as Apter, yet in order to be able to speak of an ideological political culture as opposed to a secular political culture they confine these functions of ideologies

16) *ibid.*, p. 108.

to times of trouble and fear.¹⁷⁾ Again simple observation denies this assertion: ideologies did and do emerge also in peaceful times when the political system is responsive and open to change.

C. Geertz criticises this tendency to identify ideology with a rigid and extreme doctrine. He proposes, therefore, to deal with ideology by using an analytical framework within which it is possible to deal with figurative language.¹⁸⁾ Geertz arrives at the conclusion that ideology should be handled as "...an ordered system of cultural symbols rather than in the destination between its social and psychological contexts."¹⁹⁾ If ideology is treated according to the "interest theory" approach or by the "strain theory" approach the result is a restricted view of ideology. According to the "interest theory" approach ideology is seen as a mask or weapon used by the ruling élite to legitimise the usage of power and to cover the furtherance of their interests under the guise of respectability. According to the "strain theory" approach ideology should be regarded as a remedy for the alienated personality and the need for ideology should be seen as a warning that something is wrong.

In the works of Werner Stark, Shils and Parsons ideology is a

17) *ibid.*, p. 61.

18) C. Geertz, "Ideology as a Cultural System", in D.E. Apter (ed.), *op.cit.*, p. 57.

19) *ibid.*, p. 49.

concept loaded with negative meanings. It is restricted to extreme doctrines and is therefore inapplicable for example to Liberalism. If there were an agreement to use the term ideology only for such doctrines then, says Geertz, the authors would have to find a new concept for the political belief systems of the Western Democracies. But there is no such agreement. At the same time that Bell writes about the end of ideology in the West there appear books which use the term ideology while speaking about the belief-systems of American businessmen or about the political belief-system of the American citizen (for example R. Lane).

The question cannot therefore be dismissed as merely a semantic one. When Bell writes about the end of ideologies in the Western Democracies, because he identifies ideology only with an extreme political belief system, he really thinks that the politics in America are un-ideological and fails to see that pragmatism is also associated with a political belief-system. Every attempt to deal with ideology in an evaluative way results in false and restricted conclusions about ideology. The case becomes even more dangerous when social scientists couple social and personality system analysis with this evaluative concept of ideology - before the study begins some kind of negative connotation is already there such as ideology as false consciousness or as a weapon to gain power. For example, the "interest theory" has its roots in Marxism, which in trying to study the social determinants of ideology, presupposes that all

men's ideas are a reflection or an expression or a result of their social commitments. This view is superficial as this determined causal connection is regarded as very weak by psychologists. Ideas can and do exist which are not conditioned by the social origin of their holders and perhaps the working class Tories can serve as an example. As this "interest theory" presupposes also that social action is fundamentally a struggle for power, another superficial conclusion about the nature of ideology arises: ideology is a weapon to gain power. The result is that the less dramatic functions of ideology are neglected.

Geertz is in search of an analytical framework which will enable him to understand ideology in an unevaluative way. He attempts to study ideology as a cultural system whose character is determined by the nature of the relationship between the socio-psychological stresses that incite ideological attitudes and the elaborate symbolic structures which form the linguistic tool through which the ideological attitudes are given a public existence.

For my purpose Geertz's analysis of ideological language is his most constructive contribution. According to him it is distinct from philosophical language as it is a language of metaphors or at least of attempted metaphors.²⁰⁾ The usage of metaphors is helpful as it enables to explain an unknown situation by analogies drawn from known

20) *ibid.*, p. 58.

fields. The language of ideology is emotive as it aims to promote concrete social or political action. Yet ideology, for Geertz, is not only a political or social belief-system but also a cultural belief-system (probably religion would also be considered by Geertz to be ideology).

This is the main reason why I cannot use Geertz's analytical framework. A concept of ideology which includes all belief-systems which help the individual to orientate himself is too broad for my purpose. I am interested in the specific characteristics of a political and social belief-system. On the other hand his framework is too narrow for my purpose, as he is mostly concerned with ideological language. However this analysis of ideological language is useful and only one modification is needed. While I agree that symbolic and emotive language is a characteristic of ideological arguments, I do not think that this is a necessary characteristic. That is, it is possible to find ideological arguments which do not use symbolic or emotive language.

B. M. Seliger's Theory

1. The Over-All Picture

I shall now present those parts of Seliger's theory which are of major importance for my research.

Seliger defines an ideological a belief system and an action in

its name,²¹⁾ meaning political and social action. Ideology posits and justifies a distinct conception of society and the ways and means to establish and maintain it through a specific political system.²²⁾ Ideology is not confined to a specific kind of political and social belief system. Ideologies are sets of ideas that aim to preserve, amend, uproot or rebuild a given social and political reality.²³⁾ In every case where beliefs are involved concerning the character of a society, as it is or should be, these sets of beliefs, provided they form a coherent configuration of thought and speech, are ideologies. Ideology is not less linked to politics than all politics are linked to ideology. The reason is that ideology requires politics in order to implement the moral principles it advocates, while political decisions are at one stage or another related to moral principles.²⁴⁾ It follows that pragmatic politics too are ideological.

True, in a political culture enjoying a high degree of consensus the controversies are distinguished by flexibility. Yet as long as it can be shown that the consensus, or the compromise, is reached because it is in accord with fundamental principles, the compromise is ideological. Indeed, pragmatic bargaining, like the acceptance of

21) M. Seliger, op.cit., ch. I, p. 2.

22) ibid., ch. II, p. 22.

23) ibid., ch. I, p. 3.

24) ibid., ch. I, p. 2; see Appendix, note no. 3.

the rules of the game in Britain is related to the fundamental beliefs. Everything, even if it is a simple question of fact, which is determined by reference to fundamental beliefs is ideologically-determined.²⁵⁾ Even a battle of interests cannot be divorced from ideology, as within the political debate the interests will be always justified, at some stage, by moral principles.²⁶⁾ That is, politics, even if regarded only as an aggregation of interests cannot be described as unideological. No aggregation, let alone association, of interests, nor any compromise between them, can be achieved or can last for a reasonable period without the eventual invoking of moral norms.²⁷⁾ Ideology and politics are also linked through factual knowledge; as such knowledge is a part of every ideology, exactly as it is a part of political decisions.

In respect of all their constituent elements (descriptive, analytical, moral prescriptions, technical prescriptions, ways and means of implementation and rejections),²⁸⁾ ideologies are not only opposed to or different from each other. This results, in what is called by Seliger, ideological pluralism; in each ideology elements can be found which prevail in another ideology.

25) *ibid.*, ch. II, p. 37.

26) *ibid.*

27) *ibid.*

28) See detailed description in my ch. I, p. 25.

The definition of ideology, says Seliger, should be such as to cover every belief-system which guides and defends political and social action. The definition should be applicable to political and social belief-systems, whether they are revolutionary, reformist or conservative in outlook.²⁹⁾ Indeed the definition presented performs this function. Thus not only are Communism and Fascism ideological belief-systems but also Liberalism and Conservatism, as the last two also contain justification of a certain order, which might be the existing order.

It follows from the definition (of ideology) that ideologies are concerned with change - they are either committed to gradual change, fighting against change or demanding a radical change. That is, if we take precisely the concept of "change" as characterizing ideological thinking, we reach the conclusion that all politics are connected with ideology. The reason is that there is no political debate that is not centered around change: either striving toward change or trying to resist change. Even if politics is seen as a market the "movement" will be the process of bargaining and the "change" will be the object of the bargaining. All political and social conflicts centre around change, and in every case beliefs are involved that guide action or inaction. With each set of beliefs goes the use of all the paraphernalia of the game of politics.

29) M. Seliger, op.cit., ch. II, pp. 20-23.

As for the classification of ideologies according to the criteria of extremists, moderate and conservative, no ideology is classifiable by its contents alone. The distance between the vision and the reality in a concrete case in a given situational context is the measure of extremism and radicalism, if by extreme and radical we mean what as yet has not existed and is opposed to the existing order.³⁰⁾ (For example Liberalism in Czechoslovakia would be an extreme ideology while Communism would be extreme in West Germany.) In other words the extremeness of an attitude should be defined in regard to the general climate of opinion in a certain stage. Thus the Black Paper published in 1969, which is undoubtedly ideological, can be described as extreme, as the goals it advocates, as far as secondary education is concerned, are far removed from the general climate of opinion in Britain in 1969 as regards secondary education. Conservatism, thus, can be not less radical than Socialism.

To sum up, ideology is involved in every attitude towards change which guides and justifies a certain political and social action.

Seliger adds the following qualifications:

- 1) In political life, the interest of single ideological statements derives from their being part of a system of beliefs.

30) *ibid.*, ch. II, p. 22.

The term belief-system is applicable, generally, both to the loose contexts in which ordinary men place information and invest it with meaning, and to the set of beliefs of the leaders of group opinion. Seliger states that for the purpose of his examination he will deal only with ideologies as they are shaped by political thinkers and as they are handled by those who are responsible for the politics of an organised action-unit, particularly of parties, or of a group within them.³¹⁾ In R. Lane's terms, Seliger deals with the "forensic" and not with the "latent" ideology.

2) The frame of reference becomes unduly widened for purposes of classification and verification if each and every belief-system is regarded as an ideology, and not only those which guide organised social action or analyse it for the sake of guiding it. While Weltanschauung is perhaps best understood as the reflective view of life according to which an individual behaves, the term is usually allied with ideology. The weltanschauung presented by an ideology is a framework for beliefs that have immediate relevance for social and political action.³²⁾

Perhaps here is the place to explain why ideology, as a set of propositions that have immediate relevance for social and political action and are more or less consistently held by a group, should not

31) *ibid.*, ch. II, p. 24.

32) *ibid.*

be regarded as too broad a definition for purposes of actual examination. As M. Seliger says, it is true that the belief system held by a certain group can reflect compromise among its members or can represent mainly one influential sub-group's view. Yet the conceptual unit of "party ideology" is justifiable not only from the above mentioned methodological point of view. After all, as Seliger says, the various groups within the party are held together precisely by the affirmation of fundamental principles which form the official party ideology. The formation of the party's fundamental principles - the party's official ideology or doctrine - goes together with the formation of the party, and therefore this official ideology requires accommodations between the constituent members or groups, and this is what brings into ideology logically conflicting constituents.³³⁾

2. Structure and Two-Dimensionality

In order to make possible a concrete examination of the relations between ideologies and policies, Seliger speaks specifically about the components of ideology and introduces the distinction between the fundamental and operative dimensions of ideological argumentation. This also makes it possible to understand the phenomenon of bifurcation within the ideology, the process of ideological change, and the phenomenon of ideological pluralism.

³³⁾ *ibid.*, ch. II, pp. 25-26.

Every political decision is a result of end-means calculations in terms both of moral norms like justice, equality etc., and of norms of expediency, prudence and efficiency. These are two different kinds of "oughts", yet in ideology both tend to take on the form of prescriptions. The difference between the two kinds is that technical prescriptions are more directly derived from facts and from the analysis of facts - they rely on the description and analysis of a given situation and its possibilities. The moral norms also rely on the description and analysis of facts, but they represent a value-judgment on the facts, and this value-judgment may be opposed to the technical norms and may prevail over them.³⁴⁾ Since a belief includes both what one thinks to be true and what one thinks to be false, ideology includes also the rejection of other principles and valuations.

The interacting components of ideology are therefore:

D - description

A - analysis

P(m) - moral prescriptions

P(t) - technical prescriptions

I - implements, i.e., the ways and means of implementation

R - rejections.³⁵⁾

34) *ibid.*, ch. II, p. 28.

35) *ibid.*, ch. II, p. 30.

The order in which Seliger presents the components is significant. It suggests that one first describes phenomena, then analyses them and finally decides according to moral norms and in the view of the technical possibilities what to do and what not to do about them. In reality the moral prescriptions may influence the description and the analysis, and the choice among technical possibilities. This "falsifying" influence is present in some cases, but it is not a necessary phenomenon. What can be regarded as of general validity is the fact that the P(m) has a good measure of centrality. This is true especially as far as the fundamental dimension is concerned, and this brings me to Seliger's distinction between two dimensions of ideological argumentation.

The bifurcation of the above mentioned ideal type structure of ideology begins when it comes to every day politics, and the means suggested before are questionable from a realistic point of view, and the carrying out of the goals is put into question.³⁶⁾ In shaping specific policies in the light of prevailing circumstances, no party has ever succeeded to avoid commitment to lines of action which are irreconcilable, or doubtfully related to the fundamental ideology.

Through observing ideological arguments in day-to-day politics,

36) *ibid.*, ch. V, p. 2.

Seliger arrives at the conclusion that two dimensions or strands of ideological argumentation exist in reality within every ideology - the fundamental and the operative. In each all the components of ideological thought are activated, yet with different emphasis. All the six components described before combine in any ideological argument, yet the combination is put forth in two forms or as two dimensions of argumentation which interact and intersect. The fundamental dimension determines the final goals and the grand vistas in which they will be realised, and these fundamental moral principles are set above the principles that actually underly policies, in order to guide them.³⁷⁾ As said before, the moral prescriptions represent a value judgment on the facts and in the fundamental dimension this value-judgment may be opposed to the technical norms and may prevail over them. In this dimension empirical claims (tested or not) protect commitment; they influence the conception of the fundamental goals and serve as criteria for the ways and means of implementing them.

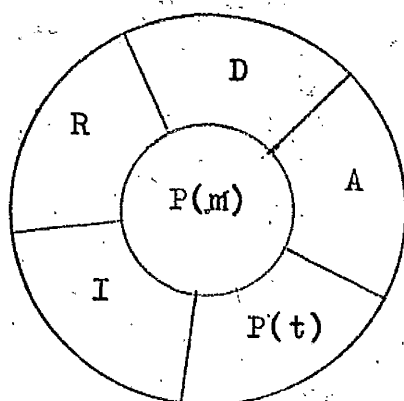
Aside from what continues to be maintained in principle in the dimension of fundamentals, a line of argument develops, the purpose of which is to justify the policies actually devised or executed by a party. This is the operative dimension. As mentioned before, in each of the two dimensions all the components of ideology are presented,

37) *ibid.*, ch. V, p. 1.

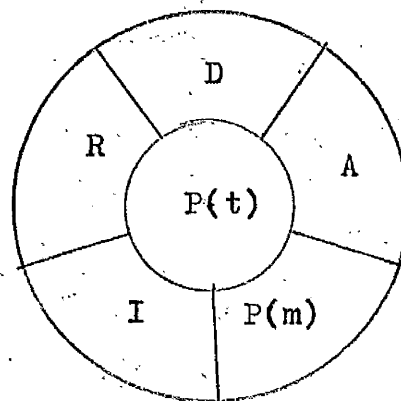
yet with different emphases. In the operative dimension description and analysis exact greater influence through the consideration paid to the norms of expediency, prudence and efficiency - the P(t). These sometimes share in and sometimes replace the centrality accorded predominantly to moral prescriptions in the fundamental dimension. They serve also as an excuse for compromises with the fundamental principles.³⁸⁾

This difference between the fundamental ideology and the operative ideology³⁹⁾ is illustrated by Seliger in the following way:⁴⁰⁾

Fundamental Dimension



Operative Dimension



Explanation of abbreviations: D - descriptive, A - analyses, P(m) - moral prescriptions, P(t) - technical prescriptions, I - implements, R - rejections

38) *ibid.*, ch. V, p. 1; see also ch. II, p. 28.

39) Seliger calls the fundamental and the operative dimensions also fundamental and operative ideology.

40) M. Seliger, *op.cit.*, ch. V, p. 2.

Whatever the extent to which policies conform with the fundamentals, operative ideology denotes the arguments in favour of the policies actually adopted by a party.

3. The Relations between the Two Dimensions

The ideal case, says Seliger, is that in which there is complete correspondence between the two dimensions and there is a relationship between the principles of each dimension, i.e., the principles of the operative dimension are related to each other without inner contradictions and related to their counterparts in the fundamental dimension in which again the principles are related to each other. Yet the prevailing situation is that in which some principles in the operative dimension correspond to their counterparts in the fundamental dimension but some do not, i.e., vertical differences exist. These vertical differences may result in horizontal differences as well, i.e., in a conflict between principles on the same level.⁴¹⁾

In other words, Seliger claims that differences in both the vertical and horizontal directions are unavoidable in any ideology of a party in power or having a chance of coming to power. In the beginning it is assumed that there is a harmony between the two dimensions. The need to devise operational decisions reveals the conflict between the fundamental and the corresponding devised operative principle which

41) *ibid.*, ch. V, pp. 15-16.

it had previously been assumed was derived from the fundamental dimension. The attempted realisation of a principle in the fundamental dimension by a devised corresponding principle in the operative dimension shows unexpectedly that the results do not correspond to the principle in the fundamental dimension; or that expediency makes it necessary to replace the principle in the operative dimension which corresponded to a principle in the fundamental dimension, with another principle which is in conflict with the principle in the fundamental dimension.⁴²⁾ This creates a conflict between the fundamental and operative dimensions, i.e. a vertical conflict. A conflict can also emerge in the horizontal relationship, as the principle in the operative dimension, which does not correspond to the principle in the fundamental dimension, conflicts with the rest of the principles in the operative level which are still consistent with their counterparts in the fundamental dimension. If an attempt is made to create a relationship in the operative dimension by changing another principle, this again will result in a vertical conflict, and so on. This unlimited process is not a necessary one, but deviations from fundamentals are a universal phenomenon and therefore, in order to retain coherence, ideologies require change by way of readapting their components and dimensions to each other.⁴³⁾

42) *ibid.*, ch. V, pp. 15-17.

43) For the schematic exemplification see *ibid.*

Soliger sums up this point by saying that it follows that principles collide with their counterparts in the other dimension, as well as with each other in the same dimension in two cases: either a policy is adopted which contradicts the fundamental principle or the attempt to implement the principle results in unforeseen consequences that contradict the principle.

4. Directions of Ideological Adaptation - Ideological Change

The adaptation of ideologies to changing conditions, to facts previously falsely evaluated, or to unforeseen consequences of the realization of principles, may take two main directions: readapting the operative principles to the original specifications of fundamental principles, or readapting the specifications to what is actually done and changing the counterpart fundamental principles accordingly. It is possible to safeguard the original tendency of the fundamentals by putting greater emphasis on other specifications of fundamentals and by strengthening their operative counterparts, so as to counterbalance the deviation from one fundamental or from one set of fundamentals.⁴⁴⁾ The restoration of coherence in the two main directions of adaptation may take place simultaneously.⁴⁵⁾

Yet it is necessary to remember that sometimes there is an

44) *ibid.*, ch. V, p. 21.

45) *ibid.*, ch. V, p. 23.

evasion of adaptation which is caused by sticking to traditional fundamental principles even if no policy in their spirit is pursued. It is one thing, says Seliger, to describe the possibilities of adaptation; the readiness of the party to undertake the adaptation is another.⁴⁶⁾ Therefore Seliger also treats the attitude to change as it is in practice. For example in the western type of democracy the consensus is neither complete nor new. In Britain what is new is the growth of substantial agreement on social and political ends even among the committed rank and file.⁴⁷⁾ The growth of consensus is an ideological change and not a movement towards non-ideological politics, as the policies remain dependent on basic convictions of the party. In other words, there remains a connection between the normative components in the operative dimension and the fundamentals. This connection contributes its share to the differences between parties however alike their policies may be. Every party wishes to be identified with certain fundamentals however contradictory they are to the real policies.⁴⁸⁾ A party wishes to make no more concessions over its traditional or readapted fundamentals than are prescribed mainly by two necessities: a) to attract the minimum of non committed voters who tilt the scales b) to keep the maximum of its committed

46) *ibid.*, ch. V, p. 24.

47) *ibid.*, ch. VI, p. 15.

48) *ibid.*, ch. VI, p. 19.

members and voters. A party is often forced from within to jeopardize the possibility of winning in order to keep the unity of the party i.e., the coalition of not so easily reconcilable interests and the not uniformly interpreted ideological commitments. The agreed tolerable equilibrium between principles and interests sustains the party's unity.⁴⁹⁾

So far, in western democracies, the parties have explained their attitudes in the light of their commitments to their fundamental principles, and hardly ever without reliance upon them. This preserved their identity in spite of the overlap of their operative ideologies to which their policies attest. When there is a consistent change in orientation (as policies show) and no change of fundamentals or of their specifications, the party lays itself open to the charge of dissimulating ideological change or of ideological double talk.⁵⁰⁾

The manner, and perhaps to a lesser extent, the degree, of responding to the challenge of ideological change and of acknowledging it after the event, depends on whether or not the party views its ideology as embodied in holy writ.⁵¹⁾ Socialist parties find it difficult to revise basic fundamentals of their creed, especially in a straightforward manner. On the other hand Conservative ideologies are not

49) *ibid.*, ch. VI, pp. 20-21.

50) *ibid.*, ch. VI, pp. 22-23.

51) *ibid.*, ch. VI, p. 25.

prevented by their pre-industrial origins from moving with the times. The principles which occur in their official party pronouncements have been developed by a number of classical writers who were neither founders nor leaders nor even official ideologues of a party.⁵²⁾

Change evolves first on the operative level and usually is restricted to this level for a long time. When the deviation is acknowledged it can be explained as a temporary concession to specific circumstances. If it is too massive it is often presented as a transitory measure necessary to pave the way for achieving the ultimate goal more quickly. If such measures persist and bring about others that leave the ultimate goal remote, the party emphasizes those specifications of fundamentals which permit the creation of balance between acknowledgment of change and continuity. If the adaptation of the fundamentals according to the operative dimension is unavoidable, the adaptation need not always be devious.⁵³⁾

In western type democracies the relationship between the two dimensions of ideological argumentation of each party is connected with the relationship between the ideological dimensions of the other party/parties. The nearer a society gets to the once disputed goals the more its politics become concerned with technicalities of

52) *ibid.*, ch. VI, pp. 26-27.

53) *ibid.*, ch. VI, p. 28.

economic growth and the smaller become the differences between the policies which are carried out by different parties. The difference between the operative dimensions of the parties becomes smaller while the tension within each party between its operative and fundamental dimensions becomes greater. This posits the challenge of ideological change and a readaptation, in some direction, between the dimensions has to take place.⁵⁴⁾

To say that politics and ideology are tied to each other is not to assert that there is no politics except pure ideological politics. All party politics are guided by ideology, but guidance is not provided exclusively and consistently by goals and methods sanctified once and for all. A party cannot help underwriting measures that contrast with its professed aims and values. As a result, party politics tend to become multi-ideological rather than un-ideological. Judgment, appraisals and actions prevail which are justifiable by more than one ideology.

These are the basic points in M. Seliger's theory which subject to modifications constitute the framework of this research.

In British politics there is a broad consensus about the realisation of some of the goals of the Welfare State, which is manifested mainly in the actual policies proposed by the two parties, and thus

54) *ibid.*, ch. VI, pp. 29-31.

in the two operative ideologies. Yet this does not mean that even if the same policy were adopted by the Conservatives and by Labour, this policy would be in a similar relation to the fundamental principles of each of these parties. The difference between the fundamentals of the two parties continues to exist, and at the same time there remains a connection between the two dimensions within each of the parties. This of course means that there are also differences between the two parties on the operative dimension. Indeed, the existence of this difference is manifested even in those policies dealing with matters enjoying a high degree of consensus, and especially in the way these policies are justified by each party. In Britain, in spite of the acceptance of the roles of the game, there is still a basic difference between the fundamental ideologies of the two major parties, the parties themselves being, of course, adjusters of ideologies. The difference, as stated earlier, is smaller in the operative dimension, as the demands of reality force the two parties to act sometimes in a similar way. This can cause a gap between the fundamentals and the operative dimension within each party. The degree of the discrepancy within each party between the two dimensions, depends on the issue involved.

The degree of the consensus in the fundamental dimension between the two parties, the degree of the consensus in the operative dimension, and the relation within each party between the fundamental and operative dimensions - all these are questions which can be answered,

even if only partly, by analysing the debate about the comprehensive school. By using the concept of these two dimensions, one is enabled to understand some interesting phenomena in British politics. Furthermore, the usage of these two dimensions will prevent me from reaching misleading conclusions about the influence of ideologies on policies. For instance, if it is found that at a certain stage of the debate, Labour policy was not in accord with its fundamentals as manifested in the party's official ideology (which is the adjustment of the ideologies of the groups within it), this does not necessarily mean that the decision was influenced solely by technical considerations. As for the process of adaptation, it might take the two directions mentioned before. What is indicated here is a two-way interaction and not one-way influence: the influence of the fundamentals on actual policy and the influence of actual policy on the fundamentals. I would add to Seligson by saying that each influence indicates a different kind of political drive. The first indicates the wish to preserve the ideological character of the party, a reluctance to change the ideology as it was once formulated. The desire is to maintain constantly the same principles in order to show that the fundamental ideology expresses eternal truth. The second direction of change indicates a political drive to "go with the times", to achieve the most efficient policy possible even if the price is the destruction of the fundamental ideology of the party, or putting it into question. In reality the two drives co-exist and the conflict

between them determines the character of ideological change. In both cases survival is a goal by itself. The question is whether the conditions for survival are regarded as "keeping to the fundamentals", or as "reacting to the new demands".

It remains, of course, to be seen when, in the specific case of the comprehensive school debate and policy, a deviation of policy from the fundamentals results in a change of the policy itself; and when it will result in the reshaping of the fundamentals.

The comprehensive school can be regarded as a part of the fundamental ideology of the Labour party from the moment that in the official ideology, that is in the official publications of the party, one finds an assertion that the comprehensive school is one of the ways to achieve the goal of a more equal society.

C. The Method

The question now is how can the theoretical framework of Seliger help to distinguish, on the basis of content analysis, between ideological and non-ideological arguments. I do not think that it is possible here to exercise strict methodology and what I am about to propose is a more or less loose methodology. After dealing with the most important methodological question i.e., the distinction between ideological arguments and non-ideological ones, I shall proceed to explain the method by showing how it works. This will be done in the broader context of

justifying the whole undertaking.

Non-ideological factors, for my purpose, are identical with professional factors such as educational, psychological, fiscal and administrative factors. In Seliger's terms all these can be included under $P(t)$ - technical prescriptions. However the mere definition of $P(t)$ is not enough for my purpose as professional factors can stand by themselves and then the argument will be defined as purely professional argument, or can be a part of an ideological argument in the fundamental or in the operative dimension. This is to say that the mere existence of professional considerations does not mean that the decision taken or the attitude adopted is unideological.

The following specifications are therefore needed: When professional factors of any kind are related to the $P(m)$ s, while the decision or position is being defended or justified, the argument is ideological. The relation of the professional factors to the moral prescriptions can take various forms: the professional factors can be presented as a whole and then connected to the moral prescriptions; or the professional factors can be falsified or presented only in part, in order to make them correspond to the moral prescriptions.

As the theoretical description of the fundamental and operative dimensions shows, the $P(t)$ s carry less weight in the fundamental

dimension and more in the operative dimension in which more attention is paid to facts and to the analysis of facts. Yet also in the operative dimension they are connected or related to the P(m)s, even if only to part of the moral prescriptions. If it appears that no relation can be achieved, a justification of this deviation from the fundamentals is given.

A purely professional argument will, then, be identified when the professional factors form the whole of the argument and are not related, and no attempt is made to relate them, to the moral prescription of a certain ideology.

Three ideal types of argument can be constructed:

a. Purely Professional Argument

Psychological factors

Educational factors

Sociological factors

Fiscal factors

Administrative factors

argument in support of policy x

(The order in which these factors are presented can vary in real life from argument to argument. There is no necessity for all the professional factors to be present within one argument. They can all be present, or some or one only).

b. Moderately Fundamental Ideological Argument

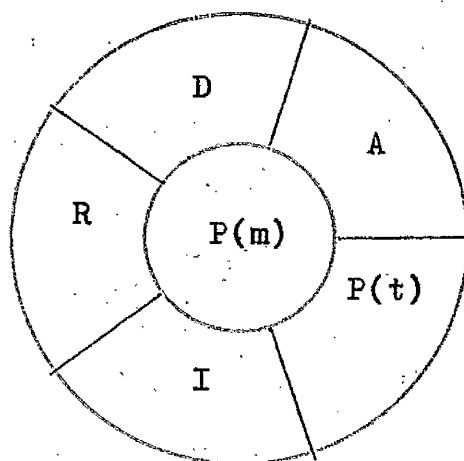
a) Professional factors

b) Moral prescriptions

argument in support of policy y

(The relation between the professional factors and the fundamental moral prescriptions within the argument is such as to give absolute centrality to the professional factors yet at the same time an attempt is made, either successfully or not, to relate these professional factors to the moral prescriptions. This is a very similar relation to that of the P(t) to the P(m) in the operative dimension. See illustration in p. 28.).

c. Purely Fundamental Ideological Argument



argument in support of policy z.

(Identical to the relations between the P(m) and the P(t) in the model of fundamental ideology. Yet this can sometimes be the case in operative ideology.)

These three ideal types are operative because they are not historically bound to a specific situation or to a specific society. They can help to decide, while analysing a specific argument, to which of the three types it belongs.

At the empirical level my method has been a common-sense historical method. Such a method could cover more ground than

would have been possible if a quantitative content analysis technique would have been used.⁵⁵⁾ A short comment about the material I have used, is in place here.

Party ideology, fundamental and operative, is explicitly created and formed more or less within party organisation. It can be found in what is called by Ralph Helenius the "literary undervegetation" of the parties.⁵⁶⁾ This includes programmes of principle, action programmes, pamphlets, leaflets, speeches, party conferences, debates in the House of Commons, publications of the Department of Education and Science (previously the Ministry of Education), and all other official publications. Both fundamental and operative ideologies of the same party can be found in the same document, for example in an election manifesto. Only very few documents include fundamental ideology only.

55) On the "case study method" see Conclusion, p. 466.

56) R. Helenius, The Profile of Party Ideologies (Scandinavian University books, 1969), p. 8.

APPENDIX

1) To say that the sole function of contemporary philosophy is to clarify concepts, is in my opinion to do an injustice to the existing contemporary philosophy. The prescriptive element in political philosophy is not dead. The difference between contemporary and classical political philosophy is mainly that of approach. The contemporary theories are not all-inclusive and deal instead with political life through central concepts, yet the purpose is not linguistic only but also prescriptive.

2) The complexity of the question: Can political science be neutral? is dealt with, in a chapter of this title by R.A. Dahl himself in his Modern Political Analysis.¹⁾

Dahl distinguishes roughly between two opposing positions: Empirical Theorists and the Trans-Empirical Theorists. In spite of their different positions, Dahl claims that both sides agree substantially on the following propositions:

- a) The values, interests and curiosity of the investigator influence his choice of topics.
- b) It is impossible to establish criteria of importance and relevance entirely from empirical knowledge.

1) R.A. Dahl, Modern Political Analysis (Foundation of Modern Political Science Series, 1963), p. 101.

a) To aspire to an objective analysis of politics presupposes that one values truth.²⁾

The real questions are, according to Dahl, not whether logically one can separate between what "is" and what "ought to be", but whether they are separable in political matters and whether facts and value ought to be separated in political analysis.³⁾

The Empirical theorist will state that he has moral values, but in order to apply them to political alternatives one must first know what is likely to result from choosing one alternative or the other. "We do not apply morality in a vacuum; we apply our moral standards to the world of events. Hence it is important that so far as humanly possible we correctly understand what goes on in the world of events."⁴⁾

How would, then, Dahl have responded to Partridge's presentation of his theory? Would he deny that he deals with the factual problems of democracy in order to perfect democracy through understanding it? Surely not. Dahl would possibly state that his values are democratic in nature and that this probably motivated his study of democracy. But he would probably stress that his values did not bias his empirical findings. Whether this is indeed the case, can be tested by applying the analytical critical approach to Dahl's theory and by comparing his findings with other findings in the same field.

2) -ibid., p. 102.

3) -ibid., p. 104.

4) -ibid., p. 106.

3) Partridge, although his main interest is to show the existence of the "ideological impulse" in contemporary political science, maintains the same view about the inseparability of ideology and politics. This follows directly from his definition of ideology.⁵⁾ Indeed, Dahl, Lane and Converse, who deal with the developed political system of the United States, agree that American politics is not divorced from ideology. On the contrary, Dahl states in Modern Political Analysis, that political actions, like any other human actions, consist in making decisions - in choosing between alternatives. This includes answering evaluative questions such as: What kind of political culture is the best, and what are the best policies for the government to prescribe and enforce.⁶⁾ Making a decision is influenced by some kinds of appraisal, among which is the value one assigns to the consequences of each alternative.⁷⁾ Broadly speaking "...one's decisions are influenced by the way one appraises the world and one's place in it."⁸⁾

In other words, most of political decisions can be traced to some moral principles. Even tactical decisions are usually related to moral values even if only to make them appear more respectable.

5) P.M. Partridge, op.cit., p. 34.

6) R.A. Dahl, op.cit., p. 94.

7) ibid., p. 95.

8) ibid., p. 94.

This is not to say that there are no political decisions which do not depend on moral prescriptions.

R.E. Agger, D. Goldrich, B.E. Swanson in their The Rulers and the Ruled add the dimension of ideology to "community power studies". While showing the wide ideological variations between U.S. communities, their general conclusion is: "Political ideology was found, somewhat unexpectedly, to be of major importance in the politics of all four communities."⁹⁾ Ideology was an important factor in "ordering" a series of variations in the politics. They close the first chapter with the suggestion "...that the great ignorance about political ideology in the United States at the community, state, and national level of government and politics should be reduced by additional research."¹⁰⁾

9) R.E. Agger, D. Goldrich, B.E. Swanson, The Rulers and the Ruled (London, 1964), p. 4.

10) *ibid.*, p. 22.

CHAPTER TWO: JUSTIFYING THE UNDERTAKING

I want to emphasize at the outset that it is not important for my purpose whether the parties were the major factor influencing the direction of debate and policy. Nor am I interested, in the present context, in the question who were the influencing factors. My aim is, as stated in the first chapter, to analyse the relations between the ideologies and the policies of the two major parties concerning the issue of the comprehensive schools.¹⁾ This means examining the arguments within the parties and between the parties on the national level. Such an undertaking could throw light on the general question: do we witness in Britain the phenomenon which is called by some writers "un-ideological policy" or are all policies influenced by ideology in one way or another.

To examine this question in the context of the debate on the comprehensive schools should be both instructive and difficult because, in the field of education, values naturally underlie educational (i.e., professional) arguments. For example, the educational argument that comprehensive schools will tend to raise the leaving age by pupils' own choice is supported by the moral assumption that each person should develop his capacities and acquire as much knowledge

1) R. Helenius, op.cit., p. 23, says, for example, that his intention, while analysing the profile of party ideologies, is to "...point to the main arguments presented in the debate...". To lay stress upon whether ideological views exist or not and what is their character.

as he possibly can. Yet I shall try to show, using the criteria presented before,²⁾ that it is possible to distinguish between ideological and professional arguments.

As far as the debate about the comprehensive schools is concerned, we find in current writing various assumptions on the character of the debate and on the part ideology plays in it. According to a brief side remark made by W.J.M. Mackenzie, while speaking about the deficiencies of the "input-output" theory of the political system, the decisions taken in 1955-1965 in Britain about the structure of secondary education and other major matters, were characterized by the fact that "...things seemed to happen not because of positive demands and supports, but because of a passive sense that something or other had to happen, even though no powerful organised force cared much what it was to be."³⁾

Indeed a thesis written on the part played by pressure groups in the debate on comprehensive schools confirms Mackenzie's assertion as regards the part played by pressure groups.⁴⁾ In the contacts between organised interest groups and the Ministry of Education the topic of comprehensive schools appears to be almost excluded. The

2) See my Chapter One, pp. 38-41.

3) W.J.M. Mackenzie, Politics and Social Science (Penguin, 1967), p. 110.

4) I.G.C. Foxwick, Organized Opinion and the Comprehensive School, Ph.D. thesis (Manchester University, July 1968).

bigger organised groups such as the N.U.T. did not want to assume responsibility on the more "abstract" questions and so remained mainly neutral, and the smaller groups (especially the N.E.F. and the Joint Four), who held strong views on the matter of comprehensive schools, had a very small impact as pressure groups on the central government. According to the same thesis, organised groups have played only a subordinate role at the level of local government also. Yet I am concerned with a different question. It is not enough, for my purpose, to be able to describe the positions taken on behalf of the comprehensive schools issue. Neutrality, for example, as manifested by most organised groups, is not necessarily synonymous with an un-ideological policy. A neutral position on a certain question can be a reflection of a scale of values within a certain political ideology. For example, a neutral attitude of Socialists in Attlee's time towards the question of comprehensive schools could be a result of a belief that the problems of housing and industry were more important at that time. This would follow logically from the Labour ideology of trying to achieve an egalitarian society. The limitation of financial resources inevitably resulted in a scale of priorities which could be at the same time in accord with the party's ideology. In order to achieve the "new society" it could be assumed, rightly or wrongly, that the problem of material inequalities had to be solved first before anything else was done. In the meanwhile, then, it could be concluded that it was better to take no definite position concerning comprehensive schools. There were, of course, other

reasons for Labour's support at that time of the tri-partite system; these reasons being also connected with the party's ideology. For example the belief in the validity of the eleven plus could make the tri-partite system look as the realisation of "equality of opportunity", if not of the "class-less society".

I propose to examine the influence of ideologies and of professional factors of various kinds on the policies of the two major parties.

According to some comments about educational debates and policy, the debate on the comprehensive school is popularly believed to be of an ideological nature. The advocates of comprehensive schools are sometimes described as "the apostles of classlessness through comprehensivization",⁵⁾ or "those egalitarians".⁶⁾ Some brief examples will suffice at this stage.

In his comment on the debate on comprehensive schools in the party Conferences in 1968, Mr. Stuart MacLure criticised the approach of both major parties by pointing out that in both cases simplified political philosophies underlay the attitudes and decisions. That Mr. MacLure does not find this desirable is outside our concern. The illuminating fact is his conclusion that for Labour Tawney is still the guide. And that: "No matter what the motion says, the debate is

5) The Times Educational Supplement, 25 Oct. 1968.

6) A Black Paper: Fight for Education, C.B. Cox and A.E. Dyson, (eds.), (The Critical Society, June 1969), pp. 7, 8, 43, 46.

about equality and privilege....For Conservatives education turns out to be about getting on in a competitive society. Charitably interpreted, this means social mobility. In conference hurlyburly it more crudely emerges as gaining and preserving class advantage."⁷⁾

Each party's position towards comprehensive schools has then to be seen as influenced mainly, if not solely, by ideological factors and not by professional criteria, as defined in the first chapter. Sir Edward Boyle, too, interpreted his party's attitude towards the educational question in terms of ideology. He described the Conservatives' attitude as "Conservative dogmatism" and opposed it to what he defined as "the sensible view educationally", adding "I am sorry if this is not sufficiently right wing for some or left wing for others."⁸⁾ Although he tries to oppose his "educational" approach to the ideological one of the party, it can be argued that Sir Edward's arguments themselves were not purely professional. As the framework shows, all political debate involves ideology, yet I have tried to establish, following Seliger, that there are two types of ideological argument: purely fundamental ideological argument and moderately fundamental ideological argument, (moderately means less centrality to the fundamental P(m)s). Sir Edward's arguments can

7) Spectator, 18 Oct. 1968. (S. Maclure is the editor of Educational Documents (London, 1968) and has been the editor of Education since 1954).

8) Spectator, 18 Oct. 1968.

be classified as moderately fundamental ideological arguments. Presumably while criticising the party he equated an un-educational approach with an extreme ideological approach. This equation is invalid as an ideological argument can be less extreme, more influenced by educational considerations and yet remain ideological. Sir Edward's arguments give centrality to professional arguments but these nevertheless are connected to such fundamental P(m)s of the Conservative party as diversity, freedom of choice and freedom of action, within the limits of the 1944 Education Act, to the local education authorities.

Lord Butler, in his The Responsibilities of Education says, in the same spirit, that the policy of secondary education seems sometimes to put more value on equality than on scholarship. Such a statement surely reflects the ideological beliefs, though not extreme, of Lord Butler himself as "scholarship" stands not only for an education of a certain type but reflects the belief in "quality" versus "equality". (Lord Butler was the main figure behind the 1944 Education Act, which proclaimed for the first time "secondary education for all", yet left the practical interpretation of this broad principle quite vague. The result was that the 1944 Act was more likely to be interpreted in the tri-partite way which favours better education for the most able, that is in separatism according to ability.) Again, Lord Butler's arguments can also be described as moderately fundamental ideological arguments.

The Black Paper no. 1: Fight for Education published by the

editors of the Critical Quarterly, Professor C.B. Cox and Mr. E. Dyson on 13 March 1969, is composed of polemical essays against progressive ideas in education in all forms. In fact, as Stuart Maclure says "...what it amounts to is a restatement in current terms of the familiar Conservative views of education."⁹⁾ In other words, although educational arguments can be found in the Black Paper, the underlying tone is that of the radical Conservative ideology fighting Labour values. For example, in the first article Mr. Angus Maude writes "Taking a long view, we must conclude that the most serious danger facing Britain is the threat to the quality of education at all levels. The motive force behind this threat is the ideology of egalitarianism."¹⁰⁾ According to him the Labour government, in the name of social justice sacrifices quality for equality. Social justice, as interpreted by the Labour ideology, means equality and thus the lowering of the level of studies. The result of the application of the ideal of equality in education will be mediocrity while the real ideal is meritocracy.

Maude and the other writers of the Black Paper claim that ideology threatens the standard of education. Ideological motives influence educational policy instead of academic criteria. Yet, what they really are saying is that Socialist ideology influences educational

9) The Observer, 23 March 1969; The Spectator, 14 March 1969.

10) A. Maude, "The Egalitarian Threat", in C.B. Cox and A.E. Dyson, (eds.), op.cit., p. 7.

policy instead of Conservative ideology. A brief examination of some of the articles in the Black Paper will be enough to show this. Very few educational and psychological data i.e., professional factors are presented in the fight against the comprehensive school. Instead, the centre of argumentation is the praise of another ideology i.e., that of merit and quality as opposed to that of equality. In the introduction there is an attempt to face some of the real arguments presented by the advocates of "going" comprehensive. The editors are aware of the fact that any criticism of the comprehensive system as it functions at present, will be answered by one argument: the comprehensive schools cannot be expected to achieve what they really can achieve while they have to compete with grammar and public schools which "cream off", in the existing system the best pupils and the best teachers. The answer given by the editors is that if the comprehensive schools are superior they should, in the existing system, attract suitable pupils and staff.¹¹⁾

However, this is a weak answer from the professional point of view, as it would be very naive to expect a new type of school to gain relatively quickly the prestige which for a very long time has been the monopoly of the public and grammar schools. The status of the public and grammar schools is a sufficient reason to attract the best pupils and staff. This is bound to have some effect on the

11) "Letter to Members of Parliament", in C.B. Cox and E. Dyson, (eds.), *op.cit.*, p. 3.

quality of many comprehensive schools. The problem, therefore, is not as simple as the editors of the Black Paper are trying to present it. The simplicity of their approach is undoubtedly a result of their extreme ideological position toward the question.¹²⁾ The arguments presented by Angus Maude are also only partly true. He speaks about "the egalitarians" as if there were no differences of opinion within the egalitarians, and he never mentions any names. His accusation, which purports to be a descriptive statement but is really an indictment, that "In the name of equality of opportunity the egalitarian seeks to destroy or transmogrify those schools which make special efforts to bring out the best in talented children"¹³⁾, is very general. A brief look at Crosland's The Conservative Enemy, shows a somewhat different approach and an awareness of the function performed by the public schools. Crosland's criticism of the public schools is twofold: a) the admission to the public schools is not only according to merit and thus offends the fundamental of equality of educational opportunity in the weak sense (b) the methods and curriculum of the public schools are outdated and do not fit the demands of the new reality in Britain. Accordingly he suggests reforms which are meant to turn the public schools into institutions which will be able to educate a new type of elite.¹⁴⁾

12) Black Paper no. 2 and notably no. 3 become more professional and less extreme.

13) A. Maude, op.cit., p. 7.

14) C.A.R. Crosland, The Conservative Enemy (London 1962), pp. 174-180.

Maude says that "It is a long, slow and expensive business to raise the standards of all institutions to those of the best; in his impatience the egalitarian takes the alternative course of levelling down the higher standards towards a uniform mediocrity."¹⁵⁾

Is this the case in reality? Do not some of the comprehensive schools strive to achieve the same standards as those of the grammar schools? Is the view attributed by Maude to "the egalitarians" their real view? Or is it the view of a tiny extreme minority? If we look again at what Crosland has to say in regard to the reforms of secondary education a different picture emerges. The reforms concerning the public schools, suggested by him, are by no means what Maude claims them to be. Crosland is speaking about a gradual change precisely because he is aware that the whole process of changing the educational system in Britain is a complex and expensive one. His aim, (at least that is what he says), is never to lower the standards of good existing schools but to help the State sector to reach a higher standard. As for the public schools, he suggests as a first step the guaranteeing of 25% free places for State-aided pupils. This should rise, in his opinion, to 75%, "...the ultimate objective being 100% competitive entry, regardless of whether the children had previously been to State or private schools."¹⁶⁾ How can this view be

15) A. Maude, op.cit., p. 7.

16) C.A.R. Crosland, The Future of Socialism (New York, 1963), p. 194.

reconciled to another of Maude's accusations that "...the egalitarian complains bitterly of the excessive 'competitiveness' of the conventional system of education..."¹⁷⁾ Maude seems to suggest that the egalitarian opposes the idea of competition in general. In reality what many Socialists complain about is not the competition as such but a competition in which other factors, such as money, carry weight.

Moreover, Maude's language brings to mind immediately Burke's attack on the French Revolution for aiming to level down the upper classes. The old Tory ideology underlines all Maude's arguments. He calls the egalitarian philosophy a "philosophy of emotional prejudice". To me it seems that his arguments can be described in the same manner. He speaks of Labour's policy as aiming to treat all children in the same way, thus neglecting the more able. It is true that recent evidence shows that the advocates of the comprehensive schools are beginning to turn against streaming within the comprehensive schools. Yet, meanwhile non-streaming is adopted mainly in the first year. As for later stages, only few comprehensives go for non-streaming and only in certain subjects. These changes within the comprehensive schools are, at least partly, a result of the professional evidence that teachers' expectations can have considerable influence on the child, and the lack of evidence that an able child

17) A. Maude, *op.cit.*, p. 7.

will suffer in a mixed-ability class. Had Maude wished to make a substantial point he would require to face this professional evidence and if possible to present contradictory evidence. He does not do anything of the kind and his argument remains within the sphere of generalisations unsupported by professional evidence.

Donald McLachlan in his article "Newsom Fiasco Helps the Public Schools" also regards the supporters of comprehensive schools as being one united group motivated by egalitarian theory and jealousy of the rich.¹⁸⁾

R.R. Pedley in "Comprehensive Disaster" attacks the policy for total reorganisation of secondary education on comprehensive lines, by mixing educational arguments with his own set of Tory values. The result is that the later overshadow the former. He builds his whole argument on the Tory "world view", that a nation's fate is dependent only on the talented. The old Tory belief in the naturalness of inequality is very obvious in his article. For example, he takes for granted the validity of the eleven plus and completely ignores new psychological data. His use of language is very emotive since he has to persuade in spite of contradictory evidence. This is a good example of the usage of emotive and symbolic language in ideological arguments. For instance he says: "But, we are told, social unity is all. The comprehensive school, by bringing together children from all

18) D. McLachlan, "Newsom Fiasco Helps the Public Schools", in C.B. Cox and E. Dyson, (eds.), op.cit., p. 43.

social backgrounds, will be a major instrument in achieving that Utopia of equality where the Duke lies down with the docker and the Marquis and the milkman are as one,"¹⁹⁾

Obviously the Black Paper no. 1 is meant to fight Socialist values in the name of "what is right educationally", but in fact does so in the name of "what is right according to the extreme Tory ideology". The problems raised are real problems but the way in which they are presented connotes extreme ideological views. Professional arguments are used when they can fortify the P(m)s and ignored or abused when they speak against the P(m)s. A complete centrality is given to the moral prescriptions.

Ideology in general can and does contain true observations. This applies also to purely fundamental ideological arguments i.e., when centrality is given to the P(m)s. But in the case of purely fundamental ideological arguments the danger of falsifying true observations is greater and the Black Paper is a good example. It is extremism in that the P(m)s presented are distant from the present reality and the falsifying elements are a result of the selective attitude towards professional arguments, the criterion being their correspondance to the P(m).

The result in the case of the Black Paper, is that the real nature of the problems is obscured. The real difference between the

19) R.R. Podley, "Comprehensive Disaster", in C.B. Cox and E. Dyson, (eds.), op.cit., p. 47.

Socialist and the Conservative is not simply "equality versus quality" - "élite versus mediocrity". The Labour party certainly does believe in the necessity of an élite. They differ in their opinion as to the character of the élite needed and as to the ways it should be recruited and educated.

Such purely fundamental ideological arguments as are found in the Black Paper, are by no means the monopoly of the Conservatives. Not less ideological was Mr. Short's reaction to the Black Paper. He attacked its authors with the accusation that the real issue behind the lurch toward reaction was élitism versus egalitarianism, authoritarianism versus democracy.²⁰⁾ Instead of attacking the Black Paper on educational grounds Mr. Short, too, chose to use purely fundamental ideological arguments, thus presenting the whole fight as ideological: the Socialists' values versus the Conservative values. No wonder, then, that Mr. Maude's reaction to Mr. Short's attack was again in the form of purely fundamental ideological argument. That is why many educationalists, both those who favour and those who oppose the comprehensive school, condemned all concerned for closing their eyes to the real issues involved.

The belief that most people see the comprehensive school issue through ideological spectacles is expressed also in Miss Ford's remark: "Many people believe that a lot of what is wrong with our

20) The Times Educational Supplement, 11 April 1969.

present system of secondary education will be put to right as soon as we have replaced the remaining segregated secondary schools by comprehensives. They know that the case for such reorganisation on purely academic grounds is still arguable. But they see the social arguments as unassailable.... On this belief the government is now proposing to bring legislation to impose the comprehensive reorganisation of secondary education.²¹⁾ It was precisely because it is claimed that comprehensive schools are judged mainly on the basis of their possible contribution to the realisation of certain social values, that Miss Ford undertook to verify or disprove the belief that the comprehensive school will contribute to the achievement of a more egalitarian society. Whether her sceptical conclusions are valid or not is at the moment beside our purpose.²²⁾ What matters is that both those who advocate comprehensive schools as a step towards a classless society, and those who remain sceptical about the ability of comprehensive schools to achieve this aim, put forward mainly arguments based on moral prescriptions and are less concerned

21) New Society, 10 Oct. 1968.

22) It is of interest, though, to point out that other works about the social relations in secondary schools, reach the same conclusion. D.H. Hargreaves in Social Relations in a Secondary School (London, 1967), deals with the social relations in Lusley secondary modern school, and reaches the conclusion that social separation in the school is a result of segregation according to ability. On the other hand Robin Pedley, The Comprehensive School (Penguin, 1969), presents an entirely different picture of the social relations in a comprehensive school.

with professional considerations. There seems to be a great deal of agreement about the fact that political doctrines overshadow the discussions about the comprehensive school. James D. Koerner claims that the real issue involved in the debate about comprehensive schools is the degree of power that should be exercised over education by the central government.²³⁾ Accordingly, and bearing in mind what he calls "educational grounds", he concludes that the proposed policy "to go entirely comprehensive" is ill conceived as: a) the political culture in Britain is against forcing a certain policy on the LEAs, as generally it opposes compulsory policy from the centre b) the statistical evidence which is used to prove the necessity of the comprehensive system, can be interpreted differently.²⁴⁾

At the same time Koerner too stresses the point, that actually the debate has turned to be what he calls a "political debate" between different sets of normative values of the parties. The attempt to achieve "parity of esteem" between the types of schools established after the 1944 Act, has failed because from the beginning it had no basis in reality. "To many Britons today, this lack of parity or equality in schools bespeaks a lack of social equality as well. And this is the heart of the Comprehensive controversy. Although many educational arguments are adumbrated to support or refute the policy

23) J.D. Koerner, Reform in Education (London, 1968), p. 48.

24) *ibid.*, pp. 44-45.

of the Labour party of going comprehensive, the quarrel is really an old one about equality.... Britain still suffers, not so much from economic injustice, which has been lightened by the Welfare State, as from what Arthur Koestler once called the psychological apartheid between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.... One of the contradictions of British society is that, having led the way for much of the world toward religious and political equality, England should have been so tardy in realising the same goal in its social being...".²⁵⁾ The inequalities in the British society are now more subtle and can escape the eye of a visitor. But for many Britons, living in the society, "...the educational system is seen...to be the principal remaining barrier to equality, and the comprehensive school is seen as the principal means for surmounting that barrier...."²⁶⁾

Social inequality then, great or small, real or imagined, turns the discussion over comprehensive schools into political channels.²⁷⁾ He concludes by saying that the quarrel over the egalitarian society and whether or not it can be achieved by comprehensive schools, continues to-day in Britain and will probably continue for many years, whatever actual policy will follow.

25) *ibid.*, pp. 42-43.

26) *ibid.*, p. 43.

27) *ibid.*, p. 45.

I have tried to show by these previous examples that whatever the real problems are, there is place to claim that the debate is also of an ideological nature. There is thus ample ground for raising the question to what extent the comprehensive schools are judged by criteria derived from the parties' fundamentals. In other words, whether the decisions and positions taken depend on the ideology of the specific group concerned, or on professional factors. Whether the arguments used are ideological (purely fundamental i.e., centrality given to the P(m)s, or moderately fundamental i.e., centrality given to the P(t)s but they are still connected to the P(m)s), or whether they are purely professional.

As pointed out before, it is difficult to distinguish in the educational field between educational criteria and moral criteria because these tend to be interwoven. Nevertheless, with the help of the criteria suggested before, it is possible to distinguish between ideological arguments and purely professional ones. For example, an attitude opposing the comprehensive school will be described as ideological if the arguments can be shown to be based on the desire to preserve certain fundamentals such as quality; the liberty to choose among various kinds of education; the naturalness of inequality and consequently the necessity of having different kinds of schools for different types of pupils. A professional approach will consider whether comprehensive schools might lower the level of achievement of the more able pupils, regardless of their

social background, or will stress the difficulties in having a personal approach in a big school the result of which can be an inferior education for all the pupils. A moderately fundamental ideological argument will stress professional factors but will link them to certain P(m)s.

It can perhaps be argued that the mere fact that at some stages of the debate, we may find both Socialists and Conservatives on the same side of the fence proves that the comprehensive school issue is not an ideological one. However the fact that in Britain both major parties share to some extent some beliefs on the fundamental level, and a high degree of consensus exists on the operative level when certain issues are concerned, does not mean that the issues enjoying consensus are divorced from the parties' ideologies, even when the policies are identical. We can have, hypothetically, both an extreme Socialist and an extreme Conservative opposing the comprehensive school although on different grounds. The Socialist may oppose comprehensive schools for ideological reason if he reaches the conclusion that they do not lead towards the social situation envisaged. The Conservative, on the other hand, will oppose comprehensive schools precisely because, and if, he sees in them a step towards a "classless society".

In conclusion, from this short preliminary discussion emerges the fact that there is at least a prima facie case for going into the question whether, and if so, to what extent, the two parties

take their stand in the debate on the comprehensive school issue on ideological grounds.

The time period dealt with will be from approximately 1944 to 1970. This choice is bound to be at least a little arbitrary as the roots of the problem go deeper into the past. Yet for my purpose it seems to me that the period after the 1944 Education Act is the most significant. The question of the comprehensive school emerged before 1940, yet it became important and controversial only after the application of the 1944 act. Since 1944 there has been no major Educational Act dealing with the reorganisation of secondary education.²⁸⁾ An examination of the period from 1944 may discover at least part of the reasons for the changes of attitudes towards the comprehensive school and throw some light on the roots of the debate about the 1970 Education Bill. During this period, as I hope the case-study will show, the question of comprehensive schools went through various different phases which at first glance seem inconsistent.

Although in practice the Comprehensive Schools took root during the period of 1953-62, the issue became a part of national policy only as late as November 1964 when Michael Stewart, then Labour's Secretary of State for Education and Science, announced in the House of Commons that a conversion to comprehensives was to be the national

²⁸⁾ The Education Acts of 1946, 1959, 1962, 1967 and 1968 (no. 1 and no. 2) deal also with secondary education but only with specific problems and not with basic changes.

policy. Stewart's successor, Anthony Crosland, took the next practical step a few months later and issued in July 1965 Circular (10/65) to all the LEAs in Britain requesting them to submit plans for converting all their secondary schools into comprehensive schools. Another Circular (10/66) followed, which made it clear to the LEAs that no funds would be allocated for projects which did not accord with the proposed transition to a comprehensive secondary system.

That the application of the comprehensive policy did not go smoothly is obvious. More than four years passed from Mr. Crosland's Circular (10/65) till the announcement in 1969 of Labour's intention to reorganise secondary education on comprehensive lines and to produce a major education Bill which would redefine secondary education. From the time of Mr. Short's announcement until now the debate about the comprehensive school not only did not die but became louder and more bitter.

CHAPTER THREE: THE PROFESSIONAL ARGUMENTS

Before I come to analyse the arguments of the two major parties it is essential first to present the professional arguments concerning education in the period 1930-1970. Only then will it be possible to see what part of the parties' arguments are professional i.e., to what extent did the parties rely on professional arguments. Using the three ideal types suggested before, this means to ascertain whether the parties' arguments were: a) purely professional b) professional considerations forming an important part of the argument but there is always an attempt to connect them to moral fundamental principles. When this is impossible there is either a justification of the deviation from the moral principles or the moral principles are being redefined c) professional arguments are only peripheral and complete centrality is given to moral principles.

Presenting professional arguments in the field of education is a-priori open to one great difficulty: that of asserting conclusively the "professionalism" of the arguments or theories. The reason is basically twofold: first, a question such as "environment versus heredity" is by its nature emotionally charged; especially so after the second world war. Thus the relative quiescence of the heredity doctrine from the mid 1940s till the end of the 1960s is due mainly to the general disrepute of all heredity arguments. As for the environmental school, which began to gain momentum from the mid 1950s, this too originates in many cases from a strong wish to refute the

heredity school and to establish instead the validity of a more egalitarian theory about man's intelligence, or in other words of the plasticity of man.

The second difficulty in determining the "professionalism" of the arguments lies in the nature of the object of inquiry: man. Whether it is the hereditary factors that are the object of inquiry, or the influence of environment on the individual, in all cases knowledge is far from being advanced, far less conclusive. The obscurity in this field is still very considerable.

To sum up, although the two schools are not "floating in the air", the evidence which exists, genetic, psychological and sociological is very inadequate, and our specific problem becomes more complicated because of the obscurity surrounding intelligence itself.¹⁾

Thus it should be borne in mind that when I am presenting the professional arguments, I am only giving a description of the prevailing professional arguments without commenting on their professional validity. Even undertaking such a task presents a difficulty. The

1) On the emotional and ideological nature of the heredity versus environment debate and of the difficulties of establishing relevant findings, especially as far as the heredity school is concerned, see Prof. Liam Hudson, "IQ: The Effect of Heredity and environment", The Times, 7 Nov. 1970; on the ideological nature of the social science research concerning education see also Joan Davies, "Education and Social Science", New Society, 8 May 1969. The tone of the debate is reflected in two successive articles "Intelligence - The New Puritanism" by J.P. White, T.E.S., 24 Oct. 1969, and "Environment - The New Dogmatism" by H.S. Eysenck, T.E.S., 12 Dec. 1969. Revealing also are the two Black Papers and the Jensen Report and the debates they aroused.

literature is enormous and there is no scope in this thesis to deal with it comprehensively. But in order to present as objective a description as possible, it is essential to avoid relying on a certain group of scholars only, and to try and present the main arguments of the two schools including the counter-findings within each school.

In any case, what concerns me is what people considered the professional arguments to be, rather than the validity of the professional arguments themselves. Nevertheless one would expect politicians involved in educational policy to be able to see fallacies, oversimplifications or unproved generalisations. If in a certain period a certain party bases its arguments on obviously weak or outdated professional arguments there are reasons for it. These reasons will be dealt with while examining the arguments of the two major parties.

The professional discussion revolves mainly around the following questions:

- 1) Is there such a thing as "innate general cognitive ability", which is fixed and unchangable and can be defined by the intelligence tests at the age of eleven plus?
- 2) Is it possible to determine at the age of eleven plus the type of school suited to the child, according to his abilities and aptitudes?
- 3) Do the comprehensive schools, compared to the tri-partite system, "level up", or do they "level down"?

Each of these questions contains, of course, sub-questions. Crudely

it is possible to divide the period 1920-1970, as far as the professional arguments are concerned, into three phases. The first from the 1920s till the early 1950s. The second from the early 1950s till the end of the 1960s. The third from the end of the 1960s to the present day.

A. Phase One

As the reports of the Hadow,²⁾ Spens³⁾ and Norwood⁴⁾ Committees and the White Paper on Educational Reconstruction 1943 show only too well, the prevailing professional arguments in the 1920s the 1930s and the early 1940s were those of the psychological school deriving mainly from the writings of Francis Glatton and Cyril Burt. Francis Glatton belonged together with C. Spearman to the pioneers. In 1892 F. Glatton spoke about the classification of men according to their natural gifts. According to C. Burt, Glatton was the father of the idea of studying individual characteristics by strict scientific techniques - by standardized measurement, experimental tests and mathematical analysis of the data obtained.⁵⁾ In 1921 Cyril Burt

2) Report of the Consultive Committee of the Board of Education, "The education of the Adolescent", H.M.S.O., 1926.

3) Report of the Consultive Committee of the Board of Education on Secondary Education, H.M.S.O., 1938.

4) Report of the Committee of the Secondary Schools Examination Council on Curriculum and Examination in Secondary Schools, H.M.S.O., 1943.

5) C. Burt, "The Structure of the mind", in S. Wiseman, (ed.), Intelligence and ability (Penguin, 1967), p. 193.

first suggested that an individual native scale was needed in Britain.

This psychological school regarded "intelligence" as the dominant mental factor or as "a mental trait of fundamental importance", which is mainly hereditary, and believed in the possibility of measuring it by means of intelligence tests. In Burt's words: "By intelligence the psychologist understands inborn, all-round intellectual ability. It is inherited, or at least innate, not due to teaching or training; it is intellectual, not emotional or moral, and remains uninfluenced by industry or zeal; it is general, not specific, i.e., it is not limited to any particular kind of work, but enters into all we do or say or think. Of all our mental qualities, it is the most far-reaching; fortunately it can be measured with accuracy and ease."⁶⁾ In his article in defence of the concept of intelligence C. Burt tried to show that converging lines of inquiry furnished strong prescriptive evidence for a mental trait of fundamental importance. The three variable attributes, by which this mental trait could be defined were: general, intellectual and innate. "We thus arrive at the concept of an innate, general cognitive ability."⁷⁾ The concept "intelligence" was used in order to avoid repeating the

6) C. Burt, Quoted from D. Rubinstein and B. Simon, The Evolution of the Comprehensive School 1926-1966 (London, 1969), p. 12.

7) C. Burt, "The Evidence for the Concept of Intelligence", in S. Wiseman, (ed.), *op.cit.*, p. 265.

long definition. Burt concluded by defending the three propositions by using statistical evidence.

Yet the argument is not so simple. In many places Burt said that individual differences in intelligence are determined by genetic factors merely to a marked extent. On average, within a specific context of society and time, 75%-80% of the individual's "intelligence" is determined by heredity and the rest by environment. This means that there can be children in whose case environment plays a greater part than 25-30% in forming their "intelligence".

The intelligence tests are used to estimate intelligence as defined by Binet and others who first introduced the term, i.e., "innate cognitive ability", and the percentages quoted above are a result of assessments of these tests by Burt. No general formula could be given, according to Burt, to indicate the contribution of heredity versus environment to "actual mental efficiency" in varying types of environment.³⁾

The influence of the innate general factor is greater during early childhood. Therefore, although the part of environment is not ignored by Burt, the differences between individuals' intelligence, as measured by the intelligence test at the age of eleven plus

3) See C. Burt, "Intelligence - Burt replies to Duane", T.E.S. 13 March 1970; and Peter Hewell, "Professor Sir Cyril Burt - Profile", T.E.S. 10 Oct. 1969.

are claimed to be mainly innate.

This innate general cognitive ability, as opposed to environmental factors, is fixed and immutable and can be thus measured at the age of eleven or twelve as although the actualization of the intelligence i.e., reaching the cognitive ceiling will develop in time, the intelligence itself will remain fixed from this age. As far as the environmental factors are concerned, because of their relatively small influence it is safe to assume that generally they will not cause a basic change in the individual's intelligence in later years.

Although Burt was very careful not to overstress the dominance of "intelligence", it was clear that for educational purposes "intelligence", according to him, was of primary importance. "The degree of intelligence with which any particular child is endowed is one of the most important factors determining his general efficiency all through life. In particular it sets an upper limit to what he can successfully perform, especially in the educational, vocational and intellectual fields. Nevertheless intelligence is by no means the only factor.... At every stage heredity and environment, genetic constitution and postnatal influences are continually interacting."⁹⁾ Though, as said before, Burt claimed that a general formula for the

9) C. Burt, "The Evidence for the Concept of Intelligence" in S. Wiseman, (ed.), op.cit., p. 281.

contribution of environment is nonexistent, nevertheless his statistics from results in different environments resulted in the 25-30 per-cent, quoted before. Similar conclusions were reached by Sir Ronald Fisher, J.B.S. Haldane and Prof. Darlington. Emphasis should be placed on the fact that Burt and his followers, as distinct from C. Spearman and his followers, believed in the existence of other abilities beside intelligence, and they never claimed to be able to find out by means of the intelligence tests the child's aptitudes and other abilities apart from the "innate general cognitive ability". Yet they claimed, as has been seen, that this ability was the most important of all mental qualities in determining the individual's cognitive ceiling and thus his performances in all capacities. The age of eleven plus was regarded as one in which the "innate cognitive ability" can already be measured.

Thus Burt while appearing before the Hadow Committee in 1926 advocated special schools for the more intelligent. At the same time his theory¹⁰⁾ made him oppose the conclusions of the Norwood Committee that there are three types of children who require three different types of secondary education. The three types were according to the Norwood Committee:

a) "...the pupil who is interested in learning for its own sake, who

10) Cyril Burt, "The Education of the Young Adolescent: the Psychological Implications of the Norwood Report", British Journal of Educational Psychology Nov. 1943, vol. XIII.
Cyril Burt, "Selection for Secondary Schools", D.J. of E.P., 1947 vol. XVII.

can grasp an argument or follow a piece of connected reasoning, who is interested in causes,... who is sensitive to language as expression of thought... he is interested in the relatedness of related things, in development, in structures, in a coherent body of knowledge. He can take a long view and hold his mind in suspense; this may be revealed in his work or in his attitude to his career."

b) "...the pupil whose interests and abilities lie markedly in the field of applied science or applied art...."

c) The pupil who "...deals more easily with concrete things than with ideas. He may have much ability, but it will be in the realm of facts.... His mind must turn its knowledge or its curiosity to immediate test; and his test is essentially practical."

The schools suitable for these three types respectively are the secondary grammar school, the secondary technical school and the secondary modern school.¹¹⁾ According to Burt these premises were false, as the only measurable thing was the innate differences of "intelligence" and not of aptitudes, aptitude being defined as "A combination of abilities and the other characteristics, whether native or acquired, known or believed to be indicative of an individual's ability to learn in some particular area."¹²⁾ And the

11) "Report of the Committee of the Secondary Schools Examination Council on Curriculum and Examinations in Secondary Schools (The Norwood Report)", quoted from J. Stuart MacLure, (ed.), Educational Documents (London, 1968), pp. 201-203.

12) Ray.C. Phillips, Evaluation in Education (Ohio, 1968), p. 86.

conclusions of the Norwood Committee speak of the possibility of finding out at the age of eleven plus not only the "innate cognitive ability" but aptitude.

The popularity of intelligence tests was due to the fact that they were assumed to be more objective than the achievement tests which were being used. In contrast to the intelligence test, the achievement/attainment test is designed to measure the extent to which a person has achieved something - acquired certain information or mastered certain skills. It was assumed that the attainment tests were biased against the working class as their results were greatly determined by the influence of the child's environment. While the intelligence tests were believed to give "...an indication of innate ability as distinguished from present scholastic performance which may reflect different degrees of educational opportunity and encouragement."¹³⁾

The earliest intelligence test is that of Binet and Theodore Simon (1905). It was Binet who introduced the concept of mental age.¹⁴⁾ Revisions of the Binet Scale were made in 1907 and again in 1911. In 1936 the current revision of the Stanford - Binet Scale was

13) R.E. Vernon, (ed.), Secondary School Selection A British Psychological Society Enquiry (London, 1957), p. 8; see also A.M. Kazamias and B.G. Massialas, Tradition and Change in Education (Englewood, 1965), p. 156.

14) A mental age is the age for which a given score on an intelligence test is average or normal.

published. It achieved greater objectivity in scoring with improved procedures for computing intelligence quotients. The second scale used in Britain is the Wechsler scale published in 1936. The third scale used in Britain is not American but British - the Raven's Matrices. The British scale is different from the two American scales in that it is entirely non-verbal.¹⁵⁾

With the introduction of the intelligence tests the principal methods of tests used by the various local education authorities were:

1. Attainment tests in English and Mathematics.
2. Primary teachers' assessments: the records and the reports of these teachers.
3. Intelligence tests.
4. An interview in marginal cases.¹⁶⁾

All these methods, with variations from one local authority to another, constituted what is known as the eleven plus examination. The professional arguments of phase one were for years transmitted through teacher training. The possibility to measure intelligence at eleven plus was believed for years. Yet the belief was based mainly on loose talk and action.

15) R.G. Phillips, *op.cit.*, pp. 27-30; Peter Watson, "The New I.Q. Test", New Society, 22 Jan. 1970.

16) R. Pedley, *op.cit.*, pp. 15-16 School (Penguin, 1969), pp. 15-16.

B. Phase Two

The 1940s witnessed the beginning of doubts as to the validity of the eleven plus examination and the segregation of pupils in three different types of schools. Yet only from the beginning of the 1950s did the sociological research related to education become the "supplier" of the new prevailing professional arguments. To these was added new psychological research which strengthened the sociological findings. The research about the eleven plus continued but a greater stress was put on educational research as a whole and not merely, as in the pre-war years, on research into psychological testing.

1. "Intelligence" and the Eleven Plus - The Shaping of the Criticism

The main attack on the prevailing tri-partite system stemmed from new findings regarding the theory of the innate intelligence. The so called environmental school, composed of sociologists, psychologists and educationalists, started to produce findings which pointed out the weaknesses in the innate intelligence theory, by which the existing tri-partite system was being justified. The environmental camp attacked the conception that environmental factors play only a small part in the development of the child's intelligence. It stressed the wastage of ability which was shown to be the result of the existing tri-partite system and strived to show the plasticity of man. It fought against the fatalistic notion that better schooling could not develop the child's intelligence beyond his, so called, innate

intelligence. In short, it tried to explain the lower I.Q. of the working class children as a result, not of hereditary or innate factors, but predominantly as a result of environmental factors.

The first step was the discovery of the direct relationship between social class and the composition of secondary modern and grammar schools. A.H. Halsey and L. Gardner took a sample of 700 boys aged 13 to 14 in five secondary modern schools and four grammar schools in Greater London. They found out that the majority of the pupils' fathers in the secondary modern school were manual workers, while in the grammar school this social category represented at the most 6.9 per cent. On the other hand sons of middle class parents formed only a small minority in the secondary modern schools.¹⁷⁾ This finding by itself actually says nothing beyond pointing to the strong relationship between social class and success in the eleven plus. The innate intelligence camp could explain this phenomenon simply by saying that working class children have lower IQ. because the I.Q. is mainly hereditary and their parents obviously had a low I.Q., otherwise they would not be manual workers. Halsey and Gardner probably were aware of the possibility of such an explanation but for them, egalitarian in aspiration, this was unacceptable. They stipulated a different explanation: the intelligence tests favour the

17) A.H. Halsey and L. Gardner, "Selection for Secondary Education and Achievement in Four Grammar Schools", British Journal of Sociology, March 1953.

middle class children not because they have a better inherited intelligence, but because of environmental factors.

The fact that such a relationship between social class and the composition of secondary schools had been found, called for a bigger survey. The Central Advisory Council for Education made use of a survey to discover the class composition of grammar schools following the abolition of fees. The Report on "Early Leaving" (1954) made a sample of grammar schools. The schools were then required to divide their pupils into groups representing three equal divisions of their original intake arranged in order of merit in the local education authorities' selection test, and a fourth group consisting of later transfers from secondary modern schools. The academic records of the pupils were also traced. The same pupils were classified also according to the nature of their fathers' occupation: professional and managerial; clerical; skilled workers; semi-skilled workers and unskilled workers. The next step was to find out what relation had the social background to:

- a) chances of admission to a grammar school.
- b) a successful career in it.

The conclusions were: "...by the time the local education authorities hold their allocation-examination at 11 the children of certain social groups have as a whole begun scholastically to outstrip those at the other end of the scale, and that the same process is continued among

those selected for grammar schools during their time there."¹⁸⁾
 This conclusion could be interpreted simply: those who do better at eleven plus continue to do better at the grammar school. As those from professional and managerial homes formed the majority of those successful at eleven plus they also form the majority of those who stay on for sixth form. But the findings showed that the case was not so simple. Many pupils who do well at 11 do less well at 16 and vice versa. This was again analysed in relation to parental occupation. The comparison of pupils' achievements, at the beginning and end of their grammar school life, in relation to their social background showed that: "The improvement between 11 and 16... is most common (amounting to 48.3 per-cent,) among those from professional and managerial occupations, while the corresponding deterioration which has caused many who were placed in the top selection group at 11 to be found by 16 in the lowest academic categories is most common among the children of unskilled workers (54.0 per-cent) and semi-skilled workers (37.9 per-cent)."¹⁹⁾

That this was not due simply to the high proportion of early leaving in the last two social groups was shown by the close relationship between the schools' estimate of their pupils capacity and the general pattern noted before. The main two findings of the

¹⁸⁾ Report of the Central Advisory Council for Education (England) entitled "Early Leaving", 1954, in S. Maclure, (ed.), op.cit., p. 234.

¹⁹⁾ *ibid.*, p. 235.

Report concerned the children of semi-skilled and unskilled parents: a) from 16.000 children, who in 1946 entered grammar schools throughout England from such homes, 9.000 failed to get as many as 3 passes at O level and b) 5.000 left before the end of their fifth year.²⁰⁾ As far as the children of unskilled workers are concerned they achieved so little that they had also to be considered separately. The following points about this category were made: a) the low rate of entry from the unskilled workers' homes. Some 5.000 children from unskilled workers' homes "... who might have been expected, if the yield from unskilled workers' homes were the same from other homes, to enter grammar schools in England in 1946 did not qualify for admission."²¹⁾ b) High rate of academic failure among those who did. Two thirds left without as many as 3 passes in O level. At a higher level the wastage was even more marked: only one in 20 obtained 2 Advanced passes or entered for 2 Advanced subjects.

The final conclusion of the Committee was that they were impressed by "...the far-reaching influence of a child's home background."²²⁾ Yet, the report itself did not show that it was the social background, as opposed to the heredity elements, that influenced the failure and early leaving of the working class children. It only confirmed, on a large scale, the close relationship between

20) *ibid.*, p. 237.

21) *ibid.*, p. 237.

22) *ibid.*, p. 238.

social background and success both in the eleven plus and in grammar school. The question to be investigated now was: what are the factors embodied in the social background that influence educability. Is it heredity that counts, or other non-hereditary factors in the social background or both. Consequently sociologists started not only to produce surveys about the relationship between social class background and educational opportunity, but to find out and to analyse the major social influences on educability, as against the heredity theory.

In 1956 J.E. Floud and A.H. Halsey carried out a study of the grammar schools in two contrasting areas: the prosperous South West Division of Hertfordshire and the industrial county borough in Middlesbrough. They found that "If by 'ability' we mean 'measured intelligence' and by opportunity access to grammar schools, the opportunity may be said to stand in close relationship with ability in both these areas...."²³⁾ From this they deduced that in very many places in England the chances of children at a given level of ability to enter grammar schools are no longer dependent on their social origin. Yet, the probability that a working class child will get to a grammar school is not strikingly different from what it was before 1945. In 1931 - 1941 rather less than 10 per-cent entered selective secondary schools, in 1953 12 per-cent.²⁴⁾ That is to say

23) J.E. Floud, (ed.) and A.H. Halsey Social Class and Educational Opportunity (London, 1956), p. 139.

24) *ibid.*, p. 143.

that there are still marked differences in the chances which boys of different social origin have of obtaining a place in a selective secondary school. The reason is the social distribution of measured intelligence. Floud and Halsey go on to explain the causes of this social distribution of measured intelligence. Their conclusions are about the features of environment that determine measured intelligence. As measured intelligence is closely related to the results of the selection procedure, it is relevant also to the problem of the influence of environment on intelligence test scores.

They claim that material features are of importance only when the standard of living is very low. When there is a high minimum degree of material comfort the case study shows that success or failure is not determined by the material factors, as there are also marked differences between pupils of the same material background and it is not always the richer who is more successful in reaching the grammar school. The factors that influence the success/failure are:

- a) The size of the family. A child from a large family has less chance of entering the grammar school.
- b) The education, attitude and ambitions of the parents contribute either to suppress the child's interest in learning or to push him forward.
- c) The middle class character of the grammar school creates a problem for the working class child who succeeds in entering the grammar school. He has not only to prove himself in his performance, but to get used to

a new set of values.²⁵⁾

Further research was carried out during the 1950s and the 1960s and with it the criticism of the eleven plus examination increased. Brian Simon wrote in 1957 that the entering of secondary modern schools' pupils for external examinations showed that some of them can reach a standard of achievement as high as, or higher than, many grammar school pupils.²⁶⁾ This pointed, at least, to a big margin of error in the eleven plus and consequently to wastage of ability. The modern schools still came under the old elementary code as far as staffing, size and equipment were concerned. They were well below the standards of the grammar schools. The leaving age was 14 and they lacked the aspiration of the possibility of future university education. Thus pupils who went to these schools almost never reached university.

If the assumption that a great percentage of modern school pupils could succeed as well as grammar school pupils was correct, then there was indeed a great wastage of ability. The task of investigation was undertaken by the Central Advisory Council and its findings were published in its report entitled "15 to 18" (The Crowther Report). The two important surveys in the Crowther Report are The Social Survey and The National Service Survey. The two surveys deal with some common

25) *ibid.*, p. 148.

26) Brian Simon, (ed.), New Trends in English Education (London, 1957), p. 9.

questions and the following are some of the findings that concern our present discussion:

a) Types of school attended by child in relation to the occupational group of the father.²⁷⁾

"The main point to notice is that the two surveys offer a complementary picture in terms of the home background ... of the pupils and the composition of the maintained schools. In both surveys, boys from homes of skilled workers form nearly half the school population in both categories of school analysed - the grammar and technical on the one hand and the modern and all-age schools on the other hand. In both surveys, likewise, boys from the homes of semi-skilled or unskilled workers are much under-represented in the composition of the selective schools, proportionally to the size of the parental occupation group from which they come. Likewise they are over-represented in membership of the non-selective schools. The converse is true of boys from professional or managerial homes, who have far more than their proportionate weight in the case of selective schools and far less in other schools."²⁸⁾

This strengthens further the findings presented before.

27) "15 to 18", Report of the Central Advisory Council for Education (England), H.M.S.O. (London, 1960), vol. II, pp. 11, 12, 114, 130.

28) ¹⁶¹"15 to 18", Report of the Central Advisory Council for Education (England), H.M.S.O. (London, 1960), vol. II, pp. 11, 12, 114, 130.

b) Length of school life in relation to parental occupation of the pupil. 29)

The findings agree with those in the "Early Leaving" Report.

c) Reasons for early leaving in grammar and technical secondary schools, as stated by the pupils themselves.

The Social Survey found that it was a combination of several factors.

They are according to their importance:

- 1) Because they wanted or needed to earn money.
- 2) Wanted to start working.
- 3) A suitable job was offered.
- 4) Lack of academic ability.
- 5) Because their friends were leaving.
- 6) Because their parents wanted them to leave. 30)

Interesting is the fact that the direct influence of parents seems to be of small importance. This can, perhaps, be accounted for by the fact that the pupils themselves could not, or did not want to, distinguish between their own motives and the influence of their home on their decisions.

A final point of interest, which brought new evidence to the degree of wastage of ability, is found in The National Service Survey.

29) *ibid.*, pp. 17, 127, 132-133.

30) *ibid.*, pp. 24-27.

The sample of recruits was divided according to the assessments of their capabilities by the Basic Training Unit to six groups and they were compared both to the social background and to the school leaving age. The most striking finding is that of the second order of ability: 1.188 recruits out of the 1.834 had left school at the minimum age and about half of them had fathers from the skilled workers group. This shows (as Table 5 p. 127 confirms) that the group of skilled workers' sons are much nearer, as far as school is concerned, to the other manual workers groups than to the other groups. As far as the wastage of ability is concerned "It is not unreasonable to infer that if they had stayed longer at school there would have been a considerable yield."³¹⁾ J. Floud in "Reserve of Ability" agreed with the findings of the Growth Report about the reserve of individual ability in children of working class fathers.³²⁾ This points to the fact that the eleven plus examination has a large margin of error which the existing system of transfer cannot counter-balance.

In 1962 another study on the reasons for working class children's early-leaving age in grammar schools was done by B. Jackson and D. Marsden. They studied the school lives of 88 working class children and 10 middle class children. The study is similar, in a way, to that

31) *ibid.*, p. 116.

32) J. Floud, "Reserve of Ability", Forum vol. III no. 2, 1961.

of Floud and Halsey, yet it elaborates the favourable social factors influencing the education of working class children. The authors chose a place which enjoyed a long period of local prosperity and high employment and, like Floud and Halsey in 1956, they concluded from their study that the material factors were not enough in themselves to release large number of working class children for the sixth form. This was in line with the national picture documented by previous research.³³⁾ Jackson and Marsden made a sample of 88 working class children who had passed the final grammar school examination. Contrary to most other researchers they studied the successful and not the failures. The common characteristics of the 88 children's backgrounds were: small families; the family living near a successful primary school which was influenced by middle class parents; over a third of the parents had connections with the middle class and shared some of its aspirations, part of the other two thirds of the homes also came from the uppermost levels of the working class. "Our whole discussion went to suggest that behind the majority of the 88 children was a home where, for different reasons and in different ways, considerable pressure was put upon the children to do well, and to survive at school."³⁴⁾ Conversely, the working class children, who lack the advantages mentioned above, find it difficult to stay in a

33) Brian Jackson and Dennis Marsden, Education and the Working Class (London, 1962), p. 189.

34) *ibid.*, p. 190.

grammar school especially so because of the middle class character of the grammar school. To this can be added the findings of M. Young and P. Willmott that in East London, in a borough inhabited by working class families, highly intelligent children who had received scholarships to enter grammar schools refused to accept because of the pressure of the sub-culture in which they live against the middle class culture of the grammar schools.³⁵⁾

As for the fact, that more middle class children score well in measured intelligence, Jackson and Marsden comment that what this means is yet hard to know. What they do say on this subject amounts, though, to an attack upon the heredity explanation: "... no one is in a position to state that middle class children are inherently more intelligent than working class. The argument is open. Of course the case for a strong influence of inherited ability is well-argued, and is being continually reshaped and refined as it meets new criticism. But the hypothesis that intelligence is distributed at random between the different social classes, and that any measured difference is due to environment not birth, is quite as strong."³⁶⁾ What is certain, according to Jackson and Marsden, is that because the intelligence issue itself is obscure, reliance on measured intelligence can be a

35) M. Young and P. Willmott, Family and Kinship in East London (London, 1957), ff 146; see also a later study by R. King, Values and Involvement in a Grammar School (London, 1969).

36) Jackson and Marsden, op.cit., p. 211.

grievous mistake. The tragedy is that: "The tests are, unfortunately, immensely useful to bureaucracy. Thousands of complex human situations are vastly simplified: situations that were better recognized and left as complex."³⁷⁾

More specific attacks on the intelligence tests are the following. Measuring intelligence means in many cases measuring verbal dexterity. Large-size working class families are characterized by "verbal restriction".³⁸⁾ This point is elaborated in Basil Bernstein's "Language and Social Class", in which he shows how working class speech moves into description while middle class speech moves towards abstract conceptions.³⁹⁾ The child's verbal dexterity is thus greatly hindered in working class families, and this has a direct bearing on the child's success in the intelligence tests which, to the exclusion of Raven Matrices, have a great emphasis on verbal dexterity. Vernon had made criticism on the same lines, saying that the intelligence tests are probably too verbal in form and become largely a test of ability to read the instructions and questions.⁴⁰⁾

This is to say that the intelligence tests are not, as was

37) *ibid.*, p. 213.

38) J. Nisbett, Family Environment - A Direct Effect of Family Size on Intelligence (London, 1953).

39) B. Bernstein, "Language and Social Class", British Journal of Sociology, vol. XI no. 3, 1960.

40) P.E. Vernon, (ed.), *op.cit.*, p. 95.

assumed, objective. As any other test, which is made by men, it is bound to reflect to some extent a certain culture. Indeed, Brian Simon claimed that the eleven plus tests as a whole are actually grammar school entrance tests.⁴¹⁾ But even the validity of the intelligence tests as part of grammar schools entrance tests was opened to criticism. Though intelligence tests probably measure intelligence of some kind, it was found that those who score highly in intelligence tests can fail in the grammar school. This means that the intelligence measured is not necessarily identical with an ability to study in a grammar school. Factors such as will-power, industriousness, persistence and ambition are not measured, and psychologists became more and more aware of the importance of these factors. For example, N.J. Entwistle claims that intelligence is merely one factor correlating with scholastic success. Social class is one predictor; another is "academic motivation" which is a personality rather than an intellectual trait. Yet, interestingly enough, he found that the non-intellectual determinant of school attainment, "academic motivation", is not closely related to social class.⁴²⁾

It can be claimed, of course, that these characteristics, mentioned above, if they exist, should manifest themselves already at

41) B. Simon, (ed.), New Trends In English Education, p. 11.

42) N.J. Entwistle, "Academic Motivation", The British Journal of Educational Psychology, vol. XXXVIII part 2, p. 181.

the age of eleven plus and should be found in the teachers' valuations of the pupils in the primary school. However, the findings about the great number of late developers, and about success at eleven plus and failure in grammar school, point, at least, to the conclusion that whatever is measured in the intelligence test and in the eleven plus in general, is not fixed and immutable. Consequently doubt is cast on the notion of "innate intelligence", as "innate" meant also fixed and unchangable. Surveys carried by P.E. Vernon and J.C. Daniels, showed that the I.Q. of pupils change: they rise and decline. As D. Rubinstein and B. Simon put it: "One of the main arguments in support of the view that tests measured innate intelligence had been that I.Q. scores for the same child normally did not change. Evidence that they did, and in the way described [Vernon and Daniels], indicated that it was not innate intelligence that was being measured and showed (as Vernon put it) that 'modern schools' (together with the home environment from which modern school pupils come) provide a poorer stimulus to general intellectual development than do grammar and technical schools (and grammar school pupils' homes).... It was, then, in a new situation that the British Psychological Society set up a special working party composed of most of the leading educational psychologists in the country to consider and report on Secondary School Selection (1957). This led to a significant modification of earlier theories as to the nature of "intelligence", on the basis of which streaming and differentiation had been recommended by psychologists

to the Hadow and Spens Committees before the war."⁴³⁾ While the Spens report relied on the then prevailing psychological assumption that it is possible in most cases to predict with some degree of accuracy the ultimate level of a child's intellectual powers, now the psychologists claimed that intelligence is partly a result of environmental stimulation.⁴⁴⁾ Additional data, casting doubt on the stability of intelligence as measured by the intelligence tests, can be found in R. Pedley. He shows that in the comprehensive school children who otherwise would have gone to a modern school succeed well in the O levels and he brings examples of late developers.⁴⁵⁾ The same claim, that early examinations are a bad guide to academic potential, is made by Dr. Rhodes Boyson, headmaster of Highbury Grove School. His study of 33 boys who entered the school in 1961 - their success in the O and A levels and their I.Q. as measured at eleven plus, showed that a boy with a low I.Q. of 109 successfully applied to a university, while 5 boys with an I.Q. of 130 or over, all left with poor O level results. He also shows that in many cases there is a great improvement in the sixth form. His conclusion is: "These figures reinforce the view that no one can at the age of eleven forecast with accuracy

43) D. Rubinstein and B. Simon, op.cit., pp. 64-65.

44) Ibid., p. 65.

45) Robin Pedley, op.cit., pp. 105-115.

eventual university entrants or even O level successes."⁴⁶⁾

The intelligence test was the main target of criticism in the 1950s and the 1960s, precisely because it was assumed before to be the only objective test possible. The attacks succeeded in showing the weaknesses of the intelligence tests and as a result some local education authorities abandoned them. Yet, even the most fierce opponents admitted that after all, as far as working class children are concerned, the intelligence test is more objective than the other methods of selection.⁴⁷⁾ The other methods used for selection were criticised very strongly. The attainment test in English and Mathematics was claimed to be affected by home and environment. Some parents spend hours helping their child to read while at the other extreme there are parents who violently prevent their children from reading and some are indifferent. Attainment is also affected by health, attendance at school and the qualities of the teacher. As for teachers' assessments, they depend very much on the individual teacher and a mistake at a certain point can prove fatal. A child who is put in a low stream in the primary school needs a very strong will-power to overcome the sense of failure and to pass to a higher stream. The interview method is unsound, as the candidates are already ranked close together and the interviewers tend to be influenced

46) Rhodes Boyson, "Early Exams are Bad Guide to Academic Potential", T.E.S., 13 Dec. 1968.

47) For example, R. Pedley, *op.cit.*, p. 17.

by fluency of speech, dress and manner, all of which are influenced by the social background of the child.⁴⁸⁾

But, as has been shown, the main attack was aimed at the whole theory of the measurable innate intelligence, as this theory was the main justification of the tri-partite system. The main arguments were: the concept of intelligence is still obscure; that whatever the intelligence measured by the tests was, it was no predictor of future academic attainment; that the intelligence test itself was not objective but culturally determined; that the measured intelligence was not fixed and unchangeable and therefore also not innate; that it was influenced by environmental factors. The conclusion was therefore that the theory can not provide a basis for classifying children into three different types of school at the age of eleven plus.

Some of the criticisms were level-headed while some were underlined by a tone of bitterness. An example of the first kind is the following statement: "This examination has been used to assess the intellectual capacities of primary school graduates, in order to allocate them in the three types of secondary schools. Although this function has contributed to a more objective method of screening and a more equitable method of student allocation, environmental and family factors continue to play a part in a child's chances of success in

48) *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

such examinations and, thereby, of his entrance into certain types and levels of education."⁴⁹⁾

Another more or less moderate conclusion is that of J. Vaizey: "...measuring intelligence is complicated.... intelligence is made up of a number of factors, some of them inherent and others acquired by learning from the very moment of birth. The differences brought about by environment are considerable, and greatly effect the differences in measured ability.... Majority of psychologists call it a result of accumulated cultural impoverishment. But differences will remain even if children have the same advantages."⁵⁰⁾

A bitter attack is made by Edmund King. He uses the example of the intelligence test to demonstrate what harm can be caused to the whole educational system, in the present decision making process concerning education, when one relies on hypothesis. "The elaboration of intelligence tests led to some remarkable doctrines about the intelligence quotient (IQ). Educational thought was trapped by these hypotheses and techniques. For quite some time in English educational circles the nimble handlers of statistics and the manipulators of tests in vogue were the only 'respectable' authorities on education,

49) A.M. Kazamias and B.G. Massialas, op.cit., p. 156.

50) John Vaizey, Education for Tomorrow (Penguin, 1966), p. 53.

and quickly possessed themselves of leading professorial chairs.... Sociological influences on 'intelligence' were ignored."⁵¹⁾ This indeed gives a picture, if somewhat generalised one, of the enormous influence of the innate intelligence camp in the 1930s and the 1940s, and therefore also explains the obstacles which the environmental school had to overcome till it gained influence.

Concurrent with such criticism, the sociologists, psychologists and educationalists were trying to find ways to overcome the weaknesses of the intelligence tests and the whole eleven plus and tri-partite system. Most agreed that a selection of some kind at a certain age is educationally necessary. The problem was how to eliminate the negative aspects of selection, to take into account the new findings about the influence of home and environment in general, and to avoid wastage of ability. Two main possibilities offered: to abolish completely selection at eleven plus or to replace the existing methods of selection by new ones. The most acceptable method, for those who did not want to abandon all selection to secondary schools, was the Thorne scheme. This scheme operates in a given system and each junior school headteacher, in the autumn term has to arrange his leavers in a merit order. Each school has a quota based on the average numbers sent to grammar school in previous years. The two children above and below the quota limit are interviewed by a

51) H.J. King, Comparative Studies in Educational Decision (London, 1968), p. 107.

panel of teachers to give even more flexibility. J. Vaisey, after concluding that there is no watertight method of selection, also advocated a very similar procedure.⁵²⁾ The Plowden Report said that it was impressed by the merits of the Thorne scheme and advocated its usage for the local education authorities who did not abolish selection.⁵³⁾ Yet again a research done on the effects of social factors, under the Thorne scheme, by A.G. Leaf showed that the social effects are much the same: the middle class benefits.

Meanwhile, additional research on the influence of environment and home on educability was carried out. Two of the most interesting investigations are by J.W.B. Douglas: The Home and the School and All Our Future (with J.M. Ross and H.P. Simpson).⁵⁴⁾ The first dealt with the experience of primary education and the eleven plus. The second traced the records of 720 children to the time they leave school at 15 or enter the sixth form. The first reached the conclusion that the unequal opportunities stemmed from deficiencies in the homes and the schools and from the illogical and patchy distribution of grammar school places. The second study verified the predictions set in the first study that the same deficiencies will influence the opportunities

52) J. Vaisey, op.cit., p. 56.

53) Report of the Central Advisory Council for Education (England) entitled "Children and Their Primary Schools" (The Plowden Report), H.M.S.O. (London, 1967), vol. I, p. 155.

54) J.W.B. Douglas, The Home and the School (London, 1964); J.W.B. Douglas, J.M. Ross and H.P. Simpson, All Our Future (London, 1968).

of the children at the second stage of their education also. Moreover, the environmental influences acting on the development of the boys and girls at the first stage of their school careers have been reinforced by those acting at the next. Attainment - what the children can actually do as a result of education - tends to differ more widely between social groups than between measured intelligence. This is true both for reading and mathematics. Another factor is the standard of the school. Working class children attending good secondary schools did better than working class children with the same IQ who went to worse secondary schools. Environment, parental aspiration and standard of school all contribute to the success or failure and to the leaving age.

The important finding was the indication of the importance of the school. Indeed, already before these studies the role of the schools in poor areas began to be stressed. Already in 1963 the Newsom Committee's Report "Half Our Future" devoted a chapter to education in the slums.⁵⁵⁾ The Plowden Report in 1967 made the plea for Educational Priority Areas and recommended the appointment of a departmental committee to consider its problems. It also recommended involving parents in the education of their children. The professional findings regarding the idea of E.P.A. and parental participation will be discussed in phase three.

55) Report of the Central Advisory Council for Education (England) entitled "Half Our Future" (The Newsom Report), H.M.S.O. (London, 1963).

2. The Question of Segregation

Of course the attack on the validity of selection at eleven plus is an attack on segregation as well, as the eleven plus is the justification of, and the instrument by which, segregation is carried out. Yet, the whole concept of segregation into three different types of secondary schools was attacked for other reasons as well.

It was a common argument that the tri-partite system was not built on the theory of the innate intelligence, but that it had actually already existed, though not under identical names, before the 1944 Education Act and the innate intelligence theory was only used to justify it. It was easier, from the administrative point of view, to have three different types of school than to reorganise the whole secondary education on different lines.⁵⁶⁾

The notion of three different types of secondary schools, suiting three different types of children, was more unanimously attacked than the concept of innate intelligence. Burt himself, as I have shown in phase one, condemned this segregation as artificial and contradictory to psychological findings; as it was based on the assumption that it is possible, through the eleven plus, to classify children not only according to their intelligence but also according to their aptitudes.

56) For example see Jackson and Marsden, op.cit., p. 213 and B. Simon, (ed.), New Trends in English Education, p. 10.

In the 1950s the psychologists came up with further arguments against segregation into "academic", "technical" and "practical" secondary education. They claimed that it is one thing to select at some point according to intelligence, and another thing altogether to allocate by means of the eleven plus according to abilities and aptitude.

P.E. Vernon and E. Huxon reached the same conclusion, one basing it on experience in Britain and the second on experience in Sweden: practical aptitudes cannot be psychologically assessed with certainty and at an early age. Early differentiation, as practiced in England, is educationally wrong. At a later stage different abilities and aptitudes require different treatment, but certainly not as early as the age of eleven.⁵⁷⁾

The existing arrangements for transferring from one type of school to another were attacked as inadequate for two main reasons. First, experience in England showed that practically this was very difficult. Second, even when a pupil was transferred from a modern to a grammar school, a difficulty arose for the pupil as his previous studies in the modern school did not prepare him for a grammar school education - he came inadequately prepared. Although "parity of condition" was promised to the three types of schools, it never existed

57) P.E. Vernon, op.cit.; E. Huxon, "Educational Structure and the Development of Ability" in A.H. Halsey, (ed.), Ability and Educational Opportunity (O.E.G.S., 1961).

in reality. The standards of the modern schools remained far below those of grammar schools in as far as buildings, equipment and staffing were concerned. The local education authorities favoured always the grammar schools and the best teaching force preferred to teach in grammar schools.

This brought up the question of wastage of ability which the country could not afford. The demands of the new economy could not be satisfied by the tri-partite system. It was claimed that Britain was lagging behind in world competition and progress mainly because of general failure of social inventiveness. If Britain is to become a competitive exporter it has to make a substantial leap forward in all knowledge and use of science and technology among all classes and all ability groups.⁵⁸⁾ The new economy will require a skilled and flexible labour force. "It follows, therefore, that basic education will need to be more thorough and more general. The economy does not need more apprentices to a particular trade; it needs more people who are sufficiently highly educated to learn quite complicated new methods some years later....It is doubtful, too, whether there is any sense in having rigid division of the academic system by 'ability' (as measured by IQ) because the needs of the economy will be for a range of skills drawn from people of all degrees of ability...."⁵⁹⁾ All this points

58) J. Vaizey, op.cit., pp. 28-31.

59) ibid., p. 30.

to a less rigid division of the secondary education. Specialization should start as late as 17 if this is possible.

The twofold argument against segregation, can be summarised in J. Vaisey's words "... dividing children up according to 'types' not only shows a misguided attitude towards the children, a mistaken idea of their differing abilities, but is quite inappropriate to our modern economic needs..."⁶⁰⁾

Moreover, the writing of Jean Piaget had great influence on British psychologists who began to treat academic and practical abilities not as two antithetical abilities but as two complementary ones. Indeed, in practice the good modern schools and the grammar schools became more and more similar as far as educational direction is concerned. External examinations were introduced in the modern schools and the trend was to provide also for A levels though in practice only few secondary modern schools went to A level. The grammar schools, on the other hand, modernised their curriculum and included technical and practical subjects as well. Thus the tri-partite system itself worked against the division imposed on it.

Beside criticising the theory of innate intelligence, the eleven plus as a whole and the tri-partite principle, the professional world turned to another question as well: A study of the pros and cons of comprehensive schools.

⁶⁰⁾ *ibid.*, p. 48.

3. The Comprehensive School

Generally speaking the main professional objections to the comprehensive school were the following:

- a) If a comprehensive school is to have a reasonable sixth form it has to have around 1,600 pupils. Such a size was regarded as too big for cultivating child-teacher relationships and individual treatment.
- b) There is as yet no conclusive evidence that the less able children will benefit from a common education with more able children. The competition might be to their disadvantage rather than to their advantage.
- c) By catering for all ranges of ability the more able pupils may suffer, as the studies will have to be suitably adjusted to the average ability group which forms the majority. This will result in a mediocrity.
- d) The comprehensive schools in Britain are very young and there is no sufficient evidence from which to conclude whether they are educationally successful or not. More time and more experiments are needed.

The proponents of comprehensive schools, on the other hand, pointed out the advantages of these schools as compared with the disadvantages of the eleven plus and the tri-partite system, and tried to answer all the objections mentioned above. The research about the comprehensive school in the 1950s and especially in the 1960s is amazing in its quantity, although the first comprehensive

study appeared only in 1968⁶¹⁾ providing factual description of comprehensiveness in secondary education as it existed in 1965/1966. Yet, in the 1940s there was still confusion regarding the nature of the comprehensive school. To clarify the matter the Ministry issued circular 144 in June 1947. A comprehensive school was defined as being intended to cater for all the secondary education of all the children in a given area without an organisation in three sides i.e., "academic", "technical" and "practical".⁶²⁾

The main arguments of the proponents of the comprehensive school have been the invalidity of the eleven plus and other methods of selection and segregation at an early age, and the shortcomings of the existing tri-partite system with which I have dealt before. To these were added other professional arguments contesting the accusations made against comprehensiveness. Because the comprehensive schools will be big they will have more staff, more equipment and thus more opportunity to provide for a wide variety of courses to suit different abilities and aptitudes. The problem of the sixth form could be solved in two ways: either the number of pupils staying for the sixth form will increase, as less ability will be wasted and fewer pupils will leave the school at an early age, which could also mean that the size of the school might possibly become smaller, as

61) T.G. Monk, Comprehensive Education, N.F.E.R. (London, 1968).

62) Later in Circular 10/65 the variations of possible orthodox and interim organisation of G.S.s were outlined.

the annual intake necessary to provide for a decent sixth form will diminish. Alternatively, it would be possible to establish sixth form colleges for pupils of several local comprehensive schools. It was also pointed out that size by itself is not fatal, as the best public schools and grammar schools (Eton, Harrow, Manchester Grammar school) are also very big. As for the problem of child-teacher relationship, this can be solved by organising the school academically and socially. For example dividing the school into houses with special tutors.⁶³⁾

The mixture of different abilities, it was claimed, provides stimulus to the average pupil. Thus the comprehensive school will "level up" the standards and will avoid the wastage of ability. This argument was supported by psychological work done in the U.S.A. on the impact on average pupils of studying together with more able children. It was also based on experience in England. Pupils, who otherwise would have been studying in a secondary modern school and would leave at an early age, tend to stay longer in a comprehensive school. The feeling of being a failure diminishes and the ambition of these children increases. For example, the interim report on the first project undertaken by the Birmingham Educational Development Centre shows a remarkable increase in the number of children staying on at non-selective secondary schools. In a preface to the report, the

63) D. Rubinstein and B. Simon, op.cit., discuss the academic and social organisation, pp. 74-85.

project's chairman, Miss A.H. Aston, says that each year the number of pupils of all ability ranges choosing to stay at school beyond the statutory school-leaving age, steadily rises.⁶⁴⁾ Educationalists and psychologists concluded, as has been seen in the previous sub-chapter, that a common education at least in the first years of secondary education is the only way to avoid mistakes in the evaluation of pupils and thus the only way to avoid wastage of ability. Such a common education can be provided in a comprehensive school. As for later segregation this can be done in the comprehensive school with a maximum of flexibility, as even after the segregation it is easy to transfer a pupil from one stream to another. If the "setting" method, and not the streaming method, is used then each pupil can be classified to different groups of ability in different subjects according to the development of his abilities and aptitudes. The whole problem of coaching in the primary schools, which distorts the education provided in them, will disappear. B. Simon says: "The chief advantage of comprehensive school, which takes all the children from a certain area, is that it makes it possible to reduce the emphasis on selection and differentiation and to place education in the centre of the picture."⁶⁵⁾

As for the danger that the more able children will suffer, the

(64) "More Stay on in Birmingham", T.E.S., 24 Oct. 1969.

(65) B. Simon, (ed.), New Trends in English Education, p. 13.

advocates of the comprehensive school pointed out that experience in several schools shows that this is not the case. For example, in a comparison of comprehensive, grammar and secondary modern schools, done by Miss Alice Griffin, she found that comprehensive schools of between 900 and 1,150 pupils in the Midlands, formed a stimulating environment for children of all levels of ability. Her conclusion was that the brightest children in comprehensive schools appear to hold their own with those in grammar schools in both the difference in intelligence and difference in English attainment scores.⁶⁶⁾ Another indication that the comprehensive schools "level up" and do not "level down", can be found in the study of Ted Tapper on adolescent aspirations in different types of secondary schools. The interesting point is the comparison of the aspirations of the top streams of the all-in comprehensive schools and the local education authority grammar schools. In the grammar schools the working class adolescent did not have the same level of aspirations as his fellow middle class pupils. In the top stream of the all-in comprehensive school, on the other hand, there was complete parity. In the second stream of the all-in comprehensive both middle and working class pupils in it had higher aspirations than their equivalents in the selective schools.⁶⁷⁾

66) Alice Griffin, "The Effects of Comprehensive, Grammar and Secondary Modern Schools", Comprehensive Education, no. 10 autumn 1968 pp. 11-13.

67) New Society, 15 May 1969.

Although the Comprehensive School Committee claims that there is already much research and knowledge about comprehensive schools, nevertheless the facts that the comprehensive schools have a short history, and that there are variations from one comprehensive school to another, makes it impossible to reach general valid conclusions.

The research done by the N.E.F.R. (1968) shows precisely this. It gives a factual account of the organisation of comprehensive schools in 1965-1966 based on a postal questionnaire to 385 schools, 331 of which have replied. The report had a cold reception in professional circles because there is little in it that is actually of use in order to assess the success of the comprehensive schools. Indeed, A. Grosland, the Secretary of State for Education, who was responsible for the project, resisted pressure for a comparison between comprehensive schools and a selective system (like the Stockholm Research). With nearly every English comprehensive creamed off by grammar schools it could not have been a valid comparison. Indeed, some quarters claimed that what is needed is a research on comprehensive schools in the U.S.A.⁶⁸⁾ The N.E.F.R. shows the differences between the schools which are named "comprehensive". Some are actually not comprehensive in so far as they do not have even a single year of completely mixed ability groups. In many, selection of some kind is still practised. Of the all-through type schools,

68) See the Comment in T.E.S., 25 Oct. 1968.

103 - 43 per-cent - were in competition with grammar schools, and 70 of the 103 received a lower proportion of the top ability pupils, by at least 5 per-cent, than the locality would suggest. The heads of the schools surveyed consider that the semi-skilled and unskilled worker groups are over-represented and the professional and clerical worker groups under-represented.⁶⁹⁾

These facts illuminate the difficulty of doing conclusive research on the merits of the comprehensive school. Nevertheless such attempts have been done and the most famous one is that of Julianne Ford. She tries to evaluate the educational and social arguments advanced to support the comprehensive schools. In this chapter I am concerned only with her evaluation of the educational arguments. She examines the following hypotheses:

a) That the comprehensive school will allow more able children to come forward than the selective system, as the element of finality attached to the modern school will be abolished. Miss Ford claims that this argument is not yet proved and stresses that the role of home and environment in the development of ability and talent is more important than the role of the school. Moreover, the streaming system inside the comprehensive school does not encourage the development of talent more than it is encouraged in the selective system. Her conclusion is

69) T.G. Monk, op.cit., pp. 30-31.

that the solution lies in abolishing streaming inside the comprehensive school.

b) That early selection, as practiced in the tri-partite system is more inhibiting of talent than the later selection in the comprehensive school. Her conclusion is that a change of the age of selection cannot produce big results as far as working class children are concerned. The main factors which influence the advance of children are home and environment. The working class child comes to the comprehensive school with a disadvantage arising from the influence of the home and environment and also from the lower quality of the primary school he attended.

c) That children who would otherwise go to a secondary modern school, by going to a comprehensive school widen their horizons as far as the future occupation is concerned. She finds that the horizons have not been notably raised.⁷⁰⁾

It is obvious that Miss Ford's conclusions contradict other studies mentioned before. To my mind the explanation for the existence of contradictory findings about comprehensive schools is very simple. In each case the conclusions, especially in studies which concentrate on a small number of comprehensive schools, depend upon the comprehensive schools which are the object of inquiry. Obviously

70) J. Ford, Social Class and the Comprehensive School (London, 1969). See also J. Ford, "Comprehensive Schools as Social Dividers", New Society, 10 Oct. 1968.

the conclusions will be different when the comprehensive school is a new one i.e., established only recently by combining a modern school and a grammar school, and will be different when the school exists for a long period. Thus, exactly as it is impossible to generalise from any of the studies mentioned before, so it is also impossible to regard J. Ford's conclusions as applicable to all the comprehensive schools. Indeed, all the research done so far on comprehensive schools should be, to my opinion, regarded as fragmentary. There is insufficient evidence to speak in general terms.

C. Phase Three

From the end of 1969 the vociferous debate about "heredity versus environment", which was suppressed for the last 20 years or so, started again. The cause might have been the announcement of the last Labour Government of its intention to introduce a Bill enforcing comprehensive education. The two Black Papers contributed much to the heat of the discussion, not so much by their content as by the reactions they aroused. Sir Cyril Burt's refined views were presented to the public again, and Prof. Jensen introduced to the professional world and to the public his study on heredity elements and their influence on the intelligence of white and coloured children. The extreme unprofessionalism of the two Black Papers and the whole highly emotional tone of the discussion are distressing and cloud whatever valid professional arguments there are. Some professional data can, however, be extricated. This can be attributed

mainly to the sober contributions such as those presented by L. Hudson, P.E. Vernon and Lord Butler, who succeeded in introducing a note of sanity into the discussion.

Sir Cyril Burt's article, in the second Black Paper, claims that educational levels are lower now than in 1914. He bases this conclusion on the findings that standards of reading, writing and arithmetic among ten to eleven years old children in London schools have dropped since 1914. Yet, he says that there has nevertheless been a significant improvement since 1945, although he notes a marked falling off in clarity, factual accuracy and in respect for evidence and logic. He blames psychologists, such as Piaget and his followers, for this decline, as they are those who claim that reasoning does not develop until the age of eleven or later, and that during this primary stage the chief aim should be to develop imagination, self-expression and creativity. Sir Cyril concludes that the findings show a definite limit to what children can achieve, which is set by the limitations of innate capacities, and no improvements in the quality of their education can affect the genetic composition of a large and stable population. This view was defended by H.J. Eysenck and by Prof. Jensen. As Eysenck says: "Individual differences in intelligence are determined by genetic factors to a marked extent,... and the very voluminous research done...and summarised so ably by Jensen in his monograph published by the Harvard Educational Review, has shown this statement to be amply justified, and has further given it some

degree of quantitative precision,"⁷¹⁾

P. Lynn, also in Black Paper Two, claimed that children of working class parents are "innately" less intelligent on average than middle-class children. For him, the mere fact that working class children score less in intelligence tests, means that intelligence is hereditarily determined. He claims that the close relationship between low scoring and social class is ignored, and one is bound to wonder how come that he ignores all the research done on this subject. All these conclusions about the innate intelligence did not, of course, remain unchallenged. Mr. Douglas Pidgeon, deputy director of the National Foundation for Educational Research attacked Sir Cyril's article on the falling in the standards in the "Three Rs". He criticised Sir Cyril's figures for being based on unscientific experiments. The main point is that the samples have been taken from Inner London. A recent literacy survey showed that this area is now far below the rest of the country, while in 1914 the old L.C.C. was above average. As for the heredity argument, Mr. Pidgeon says that Sir Cyril's assessment of the hereditability of intelligence, took no account of the interaction between heredity and environment.⁷²⁾

Prof. L. Hudson, speaking about the colloquium of the British

71) H.J. Eysenck, "Environment - the new Dogmatism", T.E.S., 12 Dec. 1969.

72) T.E.S., 6 Feb. 1970.

Research Association on race and intelligence following the Jensen Report, pointed out the simplifications in both the heredity and the environmental approaches: "Both interpretations are almost certainly gross over-simplifications but at present neither can be proved or disproved.... Twenty years ago, even I O, most psychologists assumed that they could use IQ tests to measure 'basic' intelligence, rather in the way that they might measure the height of a giraffe.... This view is now largely abandoned; and the tests are seen as devices of more limited usefulness. They will sort large groups of people roughly into the more or less 'bright'. Future doctors, for example, usually have higher IQs than future manual labourers. And test scores correlate quite well with school marks, especially among younger children. But they do not tell us which of two doctors... is the more likely to do their work well. Even the most conservative psychologists now concede that intelligence is turning out to be a complex phenomenon, and that all forms of test will tend to favour the more middle-class, white, or obedient child at the expense of his black, working-class, or more self-willed contemporary. These snags ignored, the problems of separating hereditary and environmental interpretations of intelligence remain daunting. To achieve any such resolution we shall have to bring the child's genetic endowment under experimental control; also all those environmental influences that impinge on him from the moment of his conception. At present,

needless to say, we can do neither..."⁷³⁾ Further points made by him are about the confusion between heritability and "teachability". Heritability tells us nothing about "teachability". The underlying fallacy is the assumption that because a human quality is inherited it cannot be modified. Conversely, that if it is acquired from experience, it is always open to change. Both beliefs are arbitrary.

P.E. Vernon tried to show the relationships between intelligence and genetic and environmental factors. He claims that there is no such entity as a single fixed ascertainable intelligence. Probably, said Vernon, there is innate genetic intellectual potentiality, but it is untestable. Operative intelligence results from the effects on this potential intelligence of biological, social, cultural and educational factors.⁷⁴⁾

As for the assumption that children can be classified, according to tests at eleven, into three different types, this is now definitely rejected by most psychologists, sociologists and educationalists. Meanwhile, a new intelligence test is developed in Britain with the intention of meeting many of the objections against intelligence tests, and taking into account the recent work on intelligence. This test will include in its content only material which is certain to be

73) Liam Hudson, "IQ: The Effect of heredity and environment", The Times, 7 Nov. 1970.

74) P.E. Vernon, Intelligence and Cultural Environment (London, 1969).

strongly rooted in the real life-experience of those who will have to use it. The test will give, instead of a single score, a "profile of cognitive abilities" (reasoning ability, verbal ability, spatial ability, number ability, memory, ideational fluency).⁷⁵⁾ It is reasonable to assume, though, that when this test will be published there will be criticism of it, mainly on the basis of the desirability of intelligence testing itself and on the basis that not enough is known about intelligence for any definition to be adequate. In addition, although the scale includes creativity items, it may be claimed that too little emphasis is placed on the implications of Piaget's work.

In any case it is clear that the knowledge about intelligence is still limited and confused. But the environmentalists will have to take issue with the new assumptions of the intelligence camp, and one can only trust that the two will try to co-operate in the future.

The question about the kind of secondary education needed is also not yet solved. Some claim that the solution is the comprehensive school, others advocate some kind of selective system. The debate about the merits of the comprehensive school among professionals is going on. In almost every case the view is influenced also by the humanitarian considerations of the educationalist, the psychologist or the sociologist, not to speak of ideological

75) Peter Watson, "The New IQ Test", New Society, 22 Jan. 1970.

influences. Rarely one hears an opinion such as that of Lord Butler, who acknowledges the positive results of comprehensive schools but claims that more experiments and time are needed in order to enable the professional world to reach general conclusions.

In every-day reality the comprehensive schools have come to stay, yet the differences among them are large. Educationalists, sociologists and psychologists tend, more and more, to agree that the best way is to have un-streamed comprehensives, at least as far as the first two years are concerned. A research was carried out for the N.F.E.R. by Mrs. Joan Barker Lunn, on Streaming and Non-streaming (1970). She found out that the bright children perform equally well in streamed and un-streamed schools. That is to say, the bright children do not suffer in a non-selective school as they are not held back by their duller classmates. The argument for non-streaming rests upon the findings that children of average and below average ability, were more satisfied and more willing to participate when working in non-streamed schools. Moreover, it was found that streaming favours the middle class not because of their greater ability but because of the teachers' bias against working class children. Prof. Hilde Himmelweit, whose study is part of a ten year follow-up of 600 boys in London grammar and secondary modern schools, has found a very weak correlation between ability, as measured by intelligence tests, and streaming. Her conclusions are more critical of the streaming method, than those of the N.F.E.R. study. She regards streaming as a part of

an educational system which is geared to training for failure. The whole selection method, whether in primary or secondary schools, is meant to throw out of the race many children at a very early stage. A child who is put in a low stream regards himself as a failure and this influences his future performances.⁷⁶⁾

Research concerning comprehensive schools is connected with research on Educational Priority Areas and on questions such as parental involvement in the education of their children. No agreement has as yet been reached on these questions. For example, research into the problems of E.P.A. could really start only after the E.P.A. policy started to operate. It was then discovered that there are problems, which the Plowden Report did not envisage:

- a) The hope that school can change home attitudes may be over ambitious.
- b) The problem of families who do not want or cannot cope.⁷⁷⁾
- c) The structure of job opportunities: how can schools educate children for opportunities which are not there to be taken.⁷⁸⁾
- d) Does compensatory education work when the other social and environmental factors remain the same?
- e) Does closer parent-teacher relationship ensure educational advance?

76) New Society, 23 Oct. 1969 and The Observer, 1 Feb. 1970.

77) Sir Alec Clegg, and B. Megson, Children in Distress (Penguin, 1969).

78) This follows O. Bank's thesis in Parity and Prestige in English Secondary Education (London, 1955).

All these questions and many other are now the focus of research. Some, like A.H. Halsey, national director of the Social Science Research Council's research project on educational priority areas, believe that the fight against poverty must start in school. Others, like Anne Corbett, have their doubts whether the whole conception of E.P.A. can work.⁷⁹⁾

As a summary, it is only possible to say that the dominant professional argument in phase one focussed on the innate intelligence theory. In phase two the stage was almost completely overtaken by the environmental camp. In the third phase the heredity camp re-emerged with more refined conclusions and the hot discussion started again. The focus of specific studies by sociologists, psychologists and educationalists, has shifted from phase to phase as every new experiment opened the door to new hypotheses and problems which had to be studied.

If it is very difficult, if not impossible, to summarise all the professional arguments, it is at least possible to see, from the description given in this chapter, what was the general professional background against which the two major parties formed their educational policies.

79) Anne Corbett, "Are E.P.A.s Working?", New Society, 13 Nov. 1969; E. Goodacre, School and Home, N.F.E.R. (London, 1970).

PART TWO

THE LABOUR PARTY

CHAPTER FOUR: LABOUR IN GOVERNMENT, 1945-1951

A. The Character of the Labour Party and its Fundamental Ideology

The literature on the Labour party indicates in a way the ideological pluralism in Labour's fundamental ideology. While all the authors¹⁾ who will be mentioned agree that the Labour party was from its beginning a federation of interests and ideals, the interesting points are: a) the somewhat different presentation of the influence of various Socialist ideologies on Labour's fundamental ideology; b) the agreement about certain fundamental moral principles as characterising Labour's fundamental ideology.

Let me start with what seems to enjoy agreement: the federal or coalition structure of the party.²⁾ The founding of the Labour party was due predominantly to an urge of the Trade Unions to get labour representatives in Parliament who will work for labour's interests. In 1900 the Labour Representation Committee was formed. The goals of

-
- 1) My purpose is rather to show how the different nuances in the literature indicate the ideological pluralism, than to comment upon the validity of each author's arguments.
 - 2) See for example: B. Crick, "Socialist Literature in the 1950s", The Political Quarterly Special No. The Labour Party, July-Sep. 1960, p. 370; R. Miliband, Parliamentary Socialism (London, 1961), pp. 13-17; S.H. Beer, Modern British Politics (London, 1965), pp. 109-125; R. McKenzie, British Political Parties (London, 1955), pp. 424-570; R. Rose, "Parties, Elections and Tendencies in Britain", in R. Rose, (ed.), Studies in British Politics (London, 1967).

the infant Labour party reflected, on the whole, the interests of conventional Trade Unionism. It was seeking first of all to protect the unions and to promote social reform compatible with capitalism and with the Radicals' piecemeal social reform. Its goal was not to build a completely new society. The party worked for the aims and demands of the working class which were purposely not defined at the time. This was in a way a compromise achieved between the Trade Unions and other Socialist groups, the most important of which were the Independent Labour Party, The Social Democratic Federation and the Fabians. Each represented a somewhat different theoretical Socialism. In 1932 the S.D.F. withdrew and the Fabians assumed an attitude of "benevolent passivity" towards the party. The I.L.P. ceased to be a constituent body of the Labour party in 1932 and the Socialist League, more or less, took its place till 1937.³⁾ The party created in 1900 avoided committing itself to Socialism in spite of the fact that members from the Socialist groups, especially from the I.L.P., had positions of power. The reason was simple - the balance of power was overwhelmingly inclined towards the Trade Unions and thus the limited objects of the Trade Unions remained the objects of the Labour party for a long time. The party, in those years, continued the tradition of the Lib-Lab and the W.U.C. and before the First World War the party still refused to adopt a programme in spite of the continuous pressure of its Socialist

3) R. Miliband, op.cit., p. 15.

Wing. The goals remained defined simply as "the interests of labour". According to S.H. Beer this period of Labour's life is not unideological but: "The bulk of the party, in short, shared a general frame of thought and values within which it carried on its politics of interest, and this perspective could still be fitted into the ideology of Liberal Radicalism."⁴⁾ Therefore "When the party did adopt Socialism, this represented not a shift from interest politics to ideological politics, but a basic change in ideology".⁵⁾ B. Crick offers the summary that the Labour movement "...was a remarkable wide coalition of both interests and ideals, held to-gether by a common sense of injustice arising from the monopoly of power held by the Conservative and Liberal parties. To some, of course, this sense of injustice was or became a quest for some ideal justice; but to most working class leaders justice simply meant 'getting their due', getting a fair share of representation and influence in Parliament and Local Government."⁶⁾

The Labour party, and the Labour movement, never ceased to be a coalition of interests and of various conceptions of Socialism. Questions arise: was the party, and the movement, ever Socialist, and which of the various rival Socialisms, within the movement, had the greatest influence on the new party's fundamental ideology? The interesting

4) S.H. Beer, op.cit., p. 124.

5) ibid., p. 125.

6) B. Crick, op.cit., p. 370.

thing, as I have indicated in the beginning, is the existence of various answers to these two questions. To the first question, B. Crick replies categorically: The Labour movement has never been Socialist.⁷⁾ H. Miliband's thesis is that from the beginning the dogmatic commitment of the Labour party to parliamentarism damaged its Socialist character. The damage was a continuous process which gained strength in the years after the 1951 defeat. Miliband's criticism is that Labour's Socialism was never revolutionary either in its methods or in its aims. It accepted the Parliamentary system and it did not strive towards a complete nationalisation. In other words, Miliband criticizes Labour for not adopting Marxism. Beer, on the other hand, distinguishes between Labour's ideology before 1918 and after. According to him in 1918 the party made the final decision that committed it to Socialism and a Socialist programme. He calls the generation from 1918 till the end of the 1940s "The Socialist Generation", and those who continued afterwards in this tradition are termed by him "fundamentalists".

As for the second question: "What type of Socialism influenced the Labour party's fundamental ideology", B. Crick agrees with H. Pelling and P. Poirier that within the rival Socialisms, the evangelical style of the I.L.P. was far more influential than either Fabianism or, to an even lesser degree Marxism.⁸⁾ That Marxism had only a very small

7) *Ibid.*, p. 371.

8) *Ibid.*, op.cit., p. 370.

influence is an agreed fact, yet as regards Fabianism versus I.L.P. Socialism, M. Shanks thinks differently. According to him in normal circumstances, from the early days of the party, the Fabian element predominated over, what he calls, the Utopian wing.⁹⁾ Beer concludes that the Socialism adopted by the party in 1918 was derived both from the I.L.P. and from Fabianism.¹⁰⁾ D.G. MacRae argues that the traditional ends of the Labour party were derived mainly from Utilitarian Liberalism and British Hegelianism.¹¹⁾

Very briefly, what are the differences between the various Socialisms associated with the Labour? The most extreme left wing, which is actually composed of various lefts such as Marxist, "Libertarian" and shop floor militants, opposes the existing form of society and aims to replace it by a complete abolition of private ownership and the establishment of total nationalisation. It takes from Marxism its belief in the inevitable polarization of the capitalist society, which has to result in a class war which will bring about the classless society in which all forms of alienation (whatever this means) will disappear. It contains almost a religious belief in the future and sees revolutionary means as unavoidable and dictated by the

9) Michael Shanks, "Labour Philosophy and the Current Position", The Political Quarterly, Special No. The Labour Party, vol. XXXI, no. 3, July-Sep. 1960, p. 243.

10) S.H. Beer, op.cit., p. 150.

11) D.G. MacRae, "The Ideological Situation in the Labour Movement", The Political Quarterly, Special No. The Labour Party, vol. XXIV, no. 1, Jan.-March 1953, pp. 83-87. MacRae's view of theory is rather complementary to Beer's view of organisation.

dialectical development of history. The Evangelical Socialism, that of the I.L.P., was characterized by its emphasis on charity, reform and community spirit. It accepted the parliamentary system but with great misgivings. It had an almost feverish belief in the future. It strove to find means of escape from the limitations imposed by the parliamentary system and pressed for more radical reforms. Fabian Socialism, influenced by the Liberal Utilitarian philosophy, accepts the ultimate aim of the classless society, but seeks to achieve this by working through the existing system of society. Instead of revolutionary means it stands for reforms carried through the parliamentary system, thus pursuing always immediate limited objectives which can be realised within the existing framework. It concentrates on the near future rather than on the final goals and strives to improve the existing structure of society in order to achieve the good society, rather than to abolish the existing society and build a new one. The later works of the Webbs, in which they imposed Marxian categories on the Socialism they advocated before, is an exception to the Fabian piecemeal empirical Socialism which denounces revolutionary means and stresses the need for reforms to improve the existing society. The emphasis on immediate rather than ultimate reform is reflected in the Fabians' writings which exhibit fragmentation as the aim is to clarify in every instance a specific problem. The Fabian approach enables the group to shift its emphasis according to the needs of the day created by changes in the society. For example, in the 1950s, after the

Labour government, the central issue of nationalisation was replaced by other methods of social engineering such as education. The lack of passionate belief in the future makes the adaptability easier and the emphasis is on using existing diverse means to solve concrete problems. The focus of attention changes according to the new situation: what was learned from previous experience is assimilated and applied to new problems. If one way shows itself to be inexpedient, it can be easily replaced by a different route. As Fabianism believes in the possibility of changing society through the existing framework, it gives high priority to political values: if one wants to achieve reforms to improve society it is of importance to secure power for Labour. Thus tactical questions are regarded as important and form an integral part of the scale of priorities.

The fundamental ideology of the Labour party is really the adjustment of all these types of Socialism. Like any other ideology, Labour's ideology consists of a pluralism of ideals which are formed into a more or less consistent doctrine. This consists of a group of direct and indirect value-sentences or appeal-sentences which refer to moral and technical norms in relation to both beliefs and disbeliefs and factual statements. The doctrine, (i.e., ideology), is a belief system insofar as it is invoked to guide and justify the concrete action of a group organised in order to preserve, reform or destroy a given order. Thus it is not surprising that it is difficult to decide categorically which of the various Socialisms had given birth

to the Labour party ideology. In addition, the different answers to this question and to the question whether the Labour party was ever Socialist, are determined by the dimension of ideology which is being analysed by the writer; whether it is the fundamental or the operative dimension which he has in mind. If one judges Labour's ideology according to the operative dimension i.e., according to the arguments used to support actual policies while they are formulated or executed, one can reach one conclusion, while if one looks only at the fundamental dimension i.e., the official version of the party's final aims and the ways and means of achieving them, one reaches a different conclusion. In both cases the conclusion is only partly true, as Labour's ideology, like any other ideology, contains the two dimensions which interact and which can be in complete harmony with each other, partly in contradiction (harmony concerning certain principles and disharmony concerning others), or in complete contradiction. The contradicting views presented before, as regards Labour's ideology, show the importance of treating the party ideology as consisting of the two dimensions and emphasizes the importance of the assumption about ideological pluralism.

The Labour party ideology has no "sacred book" in which all the answers can be found. It is indeed, in the fundamental dimension and in the operative dimension, an adjustment of ideals of various conceptions of Socialism whose origins lie, as in every case, in the meta-fundamentals i.e., in philosophy and religion. The various types of Socialism discussed before have been influenced by Christianity to a

greater or a lesser extent (and indeed also Marxism contains Christian elements), while Liberal Utilitarianism and British Hegelianism influenced mainly the Fabian type of Socialism. The fact that Labour has an official fundamental ideology which is an adjustment of various ideals does not mean that there are no ideological differences within the party. The contrary is true. The fundamental ideology is able to unite the party but in order to do so it has to be a compromise which means that virtually none of the various Socialisms finds its full expression in the fundamental ideology. Add to this the fact that the operative ideology is influenced greatly by the needs of the day and by tactical political considerations and it becomes obvious that the more radical Socialisms, within the party, can find much to dislike in the operative ideology. Indeed, the Labour party is characterized by a continuous ideological dispute and the ideological differences divide the party vertically. In other words, not only is there a dispute between the various Socialisms and the operative dimension of Labour's ideology, but also between the various Socialisms and the fundamental ideology, particularly as far as the specification of the ways and means is concerned.

For a long time it was thought that the more left militants were to be found among the Constituency Labour Parties, while the Trade Unions represent the right wing of the party.¹²⁾ Recent research

12) R. McKenzie, British Political Parties, 2nd edition (London, 1964), p. 505; R. Miliband, op.cit., pp. 110, 173.

however points out that this view is a simplification and is largely mistaken. Already Miliband pointed out that the orthodox Trade Unions' leaders never spoke for the whole Trade Union movement and that some Constituency Parties supported the leadership against its critics in the left.¹³⁾ Martin Harrison says: "The Unions have never been as thoroughly unprogressive - nor the local parties as fanatically left-wing as popular legend decreed. Obviously the constituencies are on balance to the left of the unions, but the overlap is considerable. This overlap is one reason why the two wings have held together through all the Party's internal upheavals."¹⁴⁾ R. Rose, while analysing the ideologies of Constituency Parties, came to the conclusion that the description of the Constituency Parties as a force constantly pressing extremist views upon national party leaders is false.¹⁵⁾ The factional dispute divides the constituencies as well. E. Janosick's analysis supports the Harrison-Rose thesis that the politics of the Constituency Parties cover the spectrum of the Labour party politics, and adds that the attitudes of the constituency leaders depend on the electoral strength: a weak constituency is usually left of party policy while a strong constituency is usually in accord with party policy.¹⁶⁾

13) R. Miliband, op.cit., p. 320.

14) M. Harrison, Trade Unions and the Labour Party Since 1945 (London and Detroit, 1960), pp. 236-239.

15) R. Rose, "Political Ideas of English Party Activists" in R. Rose, (ed.), Studies in British Politics (London, 1967).

16) E. Janosick, Constituency Labour Parties in Britain (London, 1968), pp. 27-58.

If one uses, at the moment, only the right-left continuum¹⁷⁾ and disregards other dimensions such as "secular-religious", the Labour party as a whole is placed on the left side of the right-left continuum of British politics, but within, it is divided into right, centre and left groups. This division is vertical i.e., the spectrum of right-left in the Labour continuum, is found in the Constituency Parties, in the Trade Unions and although the P.L.P. is usually in the centre or right of centre, factions exist not only among back-benchers but sometimes among the front benchers as well. The fundamental ideology of the Labour party has, thus, to be regarded as a collection of adjusted ideologies and this is one of the reasons that kept the various groups united. To achieve unity, Labour's fundamental ideology contains principles which are acceptable, if not identical, to the various ideologies within the party. This, of course, does not mean that, as has been mentioned, there is always an agreement about the fundamental dimension, or that the operative dimension is acceptable to the various ideologies inside the party, as the operative dimension in many cases, as has been pointed out before, deviates from the fundamental one.

Here I am interested mainly in the fundamental dimension of

17) The "right-left" continuum itself is multi-dimensional in the sense that it includes positions on various questions such as: "inequality"- "equality"; "quality"- "quantity"; "decentralisation"- "centralisation"; "private enterprise"- "common ownership", etc.

Labour's ideology in general, while the next stage will be to analyze the formulation and change of these P(m)s and their specifications which concern education. In order to present the fundamental ideology of Labour I have to rely on the party's official publications. Most of these contain side by side fundamentals and statements about actual policies and their justification i.e., operative ideology. The Labour party very seldom discussed fundamentals separately and documents such as the party programme of 1918 and "Labour's Aims" 1959, are very rare. Methodologically this means that the fundamentals have to be elicited from the various official publications, from Party Conference debates and from debates in the House of Commons.

The fundamental dimension, which determines the final goals and the grand vistas by which they will be realised, includes the following components:

1+2) A description and analysis of society.

3) The moral prescriptions which form the party's ethical goals and their specifications.

4) Implements i.e., the ways and means to achieve the goals and specification of the ways and means.

5) Technical prescriptions (for example financial, administrative or professional considerations).

6) The beliefs rejected by the party.

Centrality, in the fundamental dimension, is given to the moral prescriptions (P(m)s). This means that the description, analysis and the choice between technical possibilities or reliance on professional findings can be prejudged by the moral principles, but are not necessarily so.¹⁸⁾

In 1910 the Labour Party formulated the party programme entitled "Party Objects". The most important and well-known clause is no. 4: "To secure for the producers by hand and by brain the full fruits of their industry, and the most equitable distribution thereof that may be possible, upon the basis of the common ownership of the means of production, and the best obtainable system of popular administration and control of each industry or service" and clause 5: "Generally to promote the Political, Social, and Economic Emancipation of the people and more particularly of those who depend directly upon their own exertions by hand or by brain for the means of life."¹⁹⁾ The fundamental of common ownership which was itself a compromise achieved by bargaining²⁰⁾ became later the centre of dispute in the party. Clearly, in the 1910 programme, "common ownership" is part of the ways and means to achieve the objects of "most equitable distribution

18) This is according to M. Seliger's theory. See my Chapter One, pp. 24-29.

19) "Party Objects", 1910 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 82.

20) It included nationalisation and also old coops, new Guild Socialism, and the syndicalist wing of the T.U.C.

thereof that may be possible". But the emphasis is laid on the economic aims although the clause mentions also political and social emancipation those are left without any specification. Neither is there an analysis of society or any mention of rejected beliefs. The centrality given in this document to common ownership is probably the reason why common ownership came to be regarded by 1958 not merely as an implement but as a goal in itself, while in 1918 it was not a goal in itself. The whole document is very general and taken by itself says very little about the fundamental ideology of Labour. Other official publications must be examined in order to have a complete picture.

"Socialism, in truth, consists, when finally resolved, not in getting at all, but in giving; not in being served, but in serving; not in selfishness, but in unselfishness; not in the desire to gain a place of bliss in this world for one's self and one's family (that is the individualist and capitalist aim), but in the desire to create an earthly paradise for all.... Yet it may be better simply to say with William Morris that Socialism is fellowship, and that fellowship is life, and the lack of Fellowship is death."²¹⁾ In the opening of the Labour Party Conference 1924 Ramsay MacDonald said: "...the aim of Socialism is to get at the hearts of men, because we cannot survive

21) The Meaning of Socialism (London, 1919), pp. 226; 229-230. As a matter of interest the word "Socialism" does not appear in the Constitution itself.

unless we discover how to produce the willing worker and not merely the man who toils for reward.... Men live by their generousities, by their loyalties, not by their interest, and their self-regarding impulses."²²) Labour's fundamental ideology rejects, thus, the view of man as motivated by self-interest and selfishness and the individualistic competitive society built on such a concept of man. It posits the object of making man what he can be - unselfish and motivated not by greed but by altruism. In order to achieve this the existing capitalist society must be changed, as it is the society that moulds man. Instead of a competitive atomistic society a community based on fellowship should be established. The fellowship will be manifested in all forms of human relations. In the economic sphere competition, work for profit and private ownership should be transformed to co-operation, work for use and common ownership. This change of society is simultaneously an end and a means to another end - unfettering man from the egoistic motivation imposed upon him by the existing society, and freeing his generous impulses.

The specifications in the economic sphere are as mentioned before. In the social sphere this means introducing co-operation and building a society in which there will be no exploitation and no class barriers. A society in which the human being will be able to actualize his potential, not in spite of social and economic

22) 1924 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 108-109.

obstacle, but with the help of the community, which will regard every individual as an end in himself and thus as deserving all the opportunities of developing himself. "What the working class movement stands for is obviously the ideal of social justice and solidarity, as a corrective to the exaggerated emphasis on individual advancement through the acquisition of wealth. It is a faith in the possibility of a society in which a higher value will be set on human beings and a lower value on money and economic ends."²³⁾ In such a society the final goal of Labour's ideology will be realised - equality. As G.D.H. Cole said: "Socialism is an imaginative belief that men, however unequal they may be in powers of mind or in capacity for service, are in a really significant sense equal...."²⁴⁾ The "really significant sense" in which men are equal is based on the consideration of every man's uniqueness. It is an ethical outlook, that while men differ profoundly as individuals in capacity and character, they are equally entitled, as human beings, to consideration and respect and thus they should: "...be equally enabled to make the best of such powers as they possess."²⁵⁾ The P(m) of equality is justified also on utilitarian grounds. By helping each individual to reach his maximum development, society at large will benefit: "...the well-being

23) R.H. Tawney, Equality (London, 1954), p. 40.

24) G.D.H. Cole, The Simple Case for Socialism (London, 1935), p. 16. See also G.D.H. Cole, A Guide to the Elements of Socialism, The Labour Party (London, 1947), pp. 3,5,6,26.

25) R.H. Tawney, op.cit., pp. 46;47.

of society is likely to be increased if all its members...may be equally enabled to make the best of such powers as they possess."²⁶⁾ The inequality rejected is not that of personal differences but that of social and economic environment. What has to be done, i.e., the ways and means are: "...because men are men, social institutions - property rights, the organisation of industry and the system of public health and education - should be planned, as far as possible, to emphasise and strengthen not the class differences which divide, but the common humanity which unites them."²⁷⁾ Thus education is regarded as one of the means through which equality and social justice can be realised.

Indeed, although in the years up to the mid-forties the most stressed implement in the fundamental dimension was "common ownership", education, as an implement to achieve the final goal, was also of importance. It was declared that to acknowledge the differences between human beings' capacities is one thing, but to pass a judgement of superiority and inferiority and further to favour the first and neglect the second, is a different matter. The whole psychological concept of innate differences in intelligence which can be measured found its place in the specifications of the implement of education, and in the concept of equality itself. Thus Tawney said,

26) *ibid.*, pp. 46-47.

27) *ibid.*, p. 49.

28) *ibid.*, pp. 57-58.

clearly under the influence of G. Burt: "...to criticise inequality and to desire equality is not, as is sometimes suggested, to cherish the romantic illusion that men are equal in character and intelligence. It is to hold that, while their natural endowments differ profoundly, it is a mark of civilized society to aim at eliminating such inequalities as have their source, not in individual differences, but in its own organization.... the fact is that quite apart from differences of environment and opportunity, individuals differ widely in their natural endowments and their capacity to develop them by education, is not open to question..."²⁸⁾ If the specifications in the fundamental dimension of Labour's ideology had not taken into consideration the psychological claims of Burt and followers, surely education as a means in the fundamental dimension to achieve equality in society at large by first establishing equality of educational opportunity, would have been treated differently. Equality of educational opportunity would have been interpreted in what Crosland called later "the strong sense of equality", rather than in "the weak sense" in which it was presented. That is to say it would have been claimed that the causes of differences between individuals could be eliminated by establishing equality of environment and consequently equality of educational opportunity would mean the same education for all. Moreover, as the relationship between education and other factors is not

²⁸⁾ *ibid.*, pp. 57;47.

one sided, even when all other factors causing inequality have not yet been abolished, education should be equal in order to hasten the transformation towards equality in general. However, the conception of education as a way to achieve equality and the classless society has been influenced in the fundamental level of Labour's ideology, at that stage, by the professional arguments of phase one and shaped accordingly.

Education as a means of social engineering to achieve equality requires first equality in education itself. This was interpreted, in the sphere of secondary education, as providing an equal start by eliminating whatever influence the environmental factors had, and then of providing equally thorough but different types of education for different individuals. That is, to achieve equality of educational opportunity, the educational system should be adapted to the requirements of the different innate abilities of children, but the access to the different types of secondary education should be only according to ability and not according to social status or income. To this was added the belief that once the transformation of society starts the scale of values will be changed. No longer will one type of secondary education enjoy a greater respect than the other. In Labour's own terminology "equality of esteem" in secondary education will follow "equality of provision". The second could be quickly achieved by providing the same conditions for the various types of schools, while the first will come as a result of the change in

society which will free the generous instincts in men. Some in Labour even believed that equality of esteem will come as a direct result of equality of provision.

In 1922 the Labour party set out its "General Objectives" concerning secondary education: "...the development of public secondary education to such a point that all normal children, irrespective of the income, class, or occupation of their parents, may be transferred at the age of eleven-plus from the primary or preparatory school to one type or another of secondary school, and remain in the latter till sixteen."²⁹) This universal secondary education was stated as the "general objective" which should guide Labour's policy: "...it is the end towards which policy should be directed."³⁰) Obviously secondary education for all was seen both as one manifestation of the principle of equality of opportunity, and as a means to achieve in the long run a classless society, and the existing system of education was accordingly regarded as one of the main sources of immobility and rigid class division. The specification, in the fundamental dimension, of universal secondary education was "...to enable all, even the poorest children, to obtain not merely some, but the best education they are

29) "Secondary Education For All: A policy for Labour" edited for the Education Advisory Committee of the Labour Party by R.H. Tawney (London, 1922), p. 7.

30) *ibid.*, p. 77.

capable of."³¹⁾ Again, this meant at that stage allocation to different types of secondary education according to ability and not according to social factors. Equality of educational opportunity in the secondary stage was thus interpreted as: a) some form of secondary education for all b) obtaining places in grammar schools according to ability and not according to other factors. It is of course obvious that this was based on the belief of the existence of innate intelligence which can be measured at eleven-plus, and that different types of children need different types of secondary education to enable them to develop their specific abilities and aptitudes.

In 1940 the Party Conference declared that its main objective in secondary education was to make it not a privilege reserved for a minority of children. "We propose, therefore, so to reshape the educational system as to bring within reach of all children and young persons, irrespective of parental income or occupation, the opportunity for the fullest development of their powers. Because we refuse to perpetuate a vicious class distinction in the training of the national mind, our aim is a unified system of education through which all children can pass."³²⁾ This is very vague indeed, as it can be interpreted either in the same sense as the previous statements, or as

31) S. Webb, "On Educational Reform" in G.B. Shaw, (ed.), Fabian Essays in Socialism, The Fabian Society (London, 1931), p. 51.

32) "A Socialist Great Britain; A Declaration of Policy by the Conference of the British Labour Party" (London, 1940), p. 150.

a demand for equality of educational opportunity in the strong sense.

The specification of the P(m) of equality of opportunity, as applied to education, could and indeed was interpreted either as implying three different separate types of schools, or as implying one school - in one site - which included the distinctive three types, i.e., the multilateral school. Yet, moral considerations, as distinct from the professional arguments of phase one which allow the two interpretations, made the party decide in the fundamental dimension in favour of the multilateral school. The multilateral school according to the specification of equality was claimed to be the correct interpretation as, while it took into consideration the professional arguments of the different innate abilities which require different types of secondary education, it served as a social mixer as well and thus promoted equality. In 1942 the Labour Party Annual Conference gave official party support to the multilateral school. Harold Clay moved the resolution on behalf of the N.E.C. for "...the development of a new type of multilateral school which would provide a variety of courses suited to children of all normal types."³³⁾ In this speech he said: "We advocate the application of the common school principle. We believe that it is sound that every child in the State should go

33) 1942 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 141.

to the same kind of school."³⁴⁾ The T.U.C. agreed to this in 1942 and called for wide experiments with the multilateral school.

On the other hand it was also possible to justify the tri-partite system on the basis of the same P(m) of equality, as it was believed and thus claimed, in the beginning, that the three types of school will enjoy parity of esteem educationally and socially. Indeed, only if this claim of "parity of esteem" could be proved true, was it possible to continue to defend the tri-partite system according to the fundamental ideology of the party. Thus, although the party was in fact committed to the multilateral school it was ready to accept the tri-partite system provided that social and educational parity could be achieved between the three types of school.

The discussion on the fundamental level from 1940 till 1951, was characterized, as far as secondary education is concerned, by an attempt to define what system of secondary education is in accordance with "our Socialist beliefs". What was learned from experience was related to the fundamental P(m)s and accordingly rejected or accepted. In the Conference and in the House the fundamental moral principles were invoked whenever the question of the organisation of secondary

34) *ibid.*, p. 142; Harold E. Clay was a key figure in the Transport Workers' Union. Member of the N.F.C. in 1941-1942. Chairman of London Labour Party, President of the Workers Education Association and a member of the Central Advisory Council for Education. (Labour Party Press Cutting Service, Transport House).

education arose. The whole discussion was marked by a great deal of confusion. The speakers sometimes expressed contradictory views and sometimes used the term "common school" to refer to the multilateral school, while the school they really had in mind was the comprehensive school and sometimes schools with all the characteristics of the comprehensive school were labeled as multilateral schools.

Let us now examine closely the arguments concerning secondary education in the fundamental dimension in the years 1944-1951.

B. The Comprehensive Principle and the Fundamental Dimension

(1944-1951)

As have been noted before, in 1944 all the interpretations in the fundamental dimension of secondary education were strongly based on the assumption about the different innate abilities which require different types of education. The question was: three separate schools or one school with three distinct sides. The professional arguments of phase one were as yet not questioned, and experience was to show which of the two interpretations was in harmony with the fundamental P(m) of equality: the multilateral school in which children of different social background are mixing together or the tripartite system with assumed parity of esteem. Thus although the party gave an official support to the multilateral school in 1942, the N.U.C. passed in its Annual Conference in 1944 a resolution asking the Board of Education "...to ensure that there should be parity of conditions in respect to premises, amenities, staffing, and

the size of classes in every type of school."³⁵⁾ The 1944 Education Act itself, in contrast with the White Paper of 1943 and the Spens and Norwood Reports, did not give any directive whatsoever as to the organisation of secondary education on the tri-partite lines or on the multilateral basis. Years later in the 1959 Annual Conference Miss A. Bacon claimed that this was a result of Labour's pressure against any commitment to the tri-partite system in the 1944 Act. The Act said only that the schools have to be "...sufficient in number, character, and equipment to afford for all pupils opportunities for education offering such variety of instruction and training as may be desirable in view of their different ages, abilities, and aptitudes..."³⁶⁾ Thus, legally, both interpretations: the tri-partite and the multilateral, were possible.

During the debate on the White Paper in the House of Commons Mr. Sexton presented the party's official commitment to establish secondary education which will be in accordance with the P(m) of equality. The White Paper, said he and Mr. Arthur Greenwood, should be judged according to the final goals: to abolish the "two nations", and to realise the "equality of educational opportunity".³⁷⁾ This means, they claimed, establishing secondary schools on the multilateral

35) Quoted from D. Rubinstein and B. Simon, *op.cit.*, p. 25.

36) Education Act, 1944, H.M.S.O. (London, 1944), Clause 8 (I)(b), p. 5.

37) Hansard, vol. 385. p. 1938.

principle and raising the school-leaving age. The reason given at this early stage by Arthur Greenwood against the tri-partite system is interesting: the impossibility of judging with finality a child's ability at the age of eleven.³⁸⁾ However, in the same debate another Labour M.P. spoke about the tri-partite system as the actualization of equality of educational opportunity. There will, he said, be three types of secondary schools but all with the same prestige.³⁹⁾

In the discussion on the Bill itself, which was carried on while Labour was in the coalition, nothing was said by Labour M.P.s about the multilateral principle. Criticism was made of the fact that the Bill does not include the public schools, but the tri-partite system was seen as the correct way to achieve equality. Equality of educational opportunity means that access to all schools should be on the ground of merit.⁴⁰⁾ There is thus nothing wrong with the tri-partite system provided, as Liddell said "...that all the new secondary schools should be regarded as of equal status, socially and educationally and that there should not be discrimination. Public opinion should be mobilized to help the parents to appreciate the need for children to receive that type of education which fits them individually."⁴¹⁾ What

38) *ibid.*, p. 1939.

39) *ibid.*, p. 1894.

40) Hansard, vol. 396, p. 234.

41) *ibid.*, p. 284.

a contrast to Greenwood's attitude in 1943; and Mr. Greenwood himself in the debate on the Bill refrained from saying anything about the multilateral school. Instead he spoke about the need to raise the school leaving age, to provide more teachers and buildings in order to achieve "...a full equality of opportunity for all, getting rid of class distinctions and realising, in the sphere of education, the principles of democracy to which we are pledged and for which we are fighting this war."⁴²⁾

The discussion about the Act in the Party Conference 1944 was very much on the same lines. Criticism was passed mainly on the failure to provide free secondary education for all and on the failure to include the public schools in the state-system and thus to open them to all children according to their abilities. The main inequality of an educational system said Dr. G.B.H. Joad is that "...what decides upon which of those two ladders [preparatory schools and public school; primary school and state secondary school] a boy shall set his foot, is neither the propensity nor the ability to profit by education, but the possession by his father of a balance at the bank."⁴³⁾

Secondary education for all will thus be realised if, as Mr. H.E. Clay for the N.E.C. summarized the discussion, a) the school leaving age will be raised to 16 in the near future b) fees are abolished in all schools or least, in those

⁴²⁾ *ibid.*, p. 406.

⁴³⁾ 1944 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 103.

that receive money from public funds.⁴⁴⁾ If these conditions are met and there will be a parity of esteem between the schools, the tri-partite system is the way to achieve equality in education and ultimately a more equal society.

This indeed was at that time the accepted interpretation of the fundamental moral principle of equality of educational opportunity. But as the specifications of the fundamental depended on "what really happens" and there was slowly growing doubts about the parity of esteem, the tendency to specify equality of educational opportunity as embodied in the multilateral school became stronger and stronger. Therefore all those who defended the tri-partite system as not deviating from the fundamental dimension's P(s), stressed the phrase "parity of esteem", or "equal educational and social standing" over and over.⁴⁵⁾ A period of confusion and search for the meaning of equality of educational opportunity in secondary education followed. The 1945 Conference tried to specify what according to the party's fundamental ideology should be the requirements in secondary education. One resolution urged "Newly built secondary schools to be of the multilateral type wherever possible" and at the same time asked for the reduction of the size of classes in secondary modern schools

44) *ibid.*, p. 185.

45) See "Advance in Education", Labour Discussion Series No. 15 (London, 1947), p. 6; also "Speakers' Handbook (1948-49)", The Labour Party (London, 1949), p. 339.

in order to achieve parity of conditions.⁴⁶⁾ Miss Alice Bacon, for the N.E.C. declared that "...as far as secondary education is concerned we favour the multilateral schools where children are educated in one building."⁴⁷⁾ Clearly the party still agreed to the principle of different types of education on professional grounds, but, though not very consistently, it defended the case of the multilateral schools because of their social advantages. The Minister, Ellen Wilkinson, and others continued, as shall be seen in detail in the next sub-chapter, to claim that the "Socialist faith" was actualized in the tri-partite system. But the accumulating evidence helped the opponents of the tri-partite system, in the name of the same P(m) of equality, to show that the tri-partite system did not achieve parity of outcome and that as a result the schools became first, second and third class schools, a fact which strengthened class barriers instead of weakening them. But the whole discussion, which centered mainly around the continuous circulation and usage of the pamphlet "The Nation's Schools" by the Minister, both in Conference and in the House, revealed that nobody at that stage had a clear idea of what equality of educational opportunity meant. "The Nation's Schools", issued by the previous Minister, contained two paragraphs which were furiously attacked by Labour M.P.s and delegates. The paragraphs stated that it seemed desirable to reduce the number of grammar school

46) 1945 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 126.

47) *ibid.*, p. 123.

places available in the near future and clearly interpreted the 1944 Act on tri-partite lines. Moreover, the language used gave a strong impression that the mass of the children who attended secondary modern schools were inferior. In Parliament Mr. A. Creech Jones and Mr. Cove attacked the Minister for circulating the pamphlet. Criticism was aimed mainly at the suggestion of reducing the number of grammar school places. They claimed that the opposite was needed, in the name of the fundamental ideology of Labour. Mr. Creech Jones said: "Otherwise we shall find that our professional classes will come mainly from the grammar school type, and these schools recruited from a particular stratum of society."⁴⁸⁾ Mr. Cove followed: "I thought I was helping to put on the Statute book... an Act which would give an extended secondary education, commonly called a grammar school education."⁴⁹⁾

It appears, from this, that the two Labour M.P.s mentioned above, accepted the principle of tri-partitism and objected only to reducing the number of grammar school places. They were actually advocating the pre-war ladder principle of the Webbs'. But a year later in June 1946, while again attacking E. Wilkinson on the matter of "The

48) Hansard, vol. 411, p. 1321; Creech Jones was an M.P. for Shipley division of Yorkshire from 1935 to 1950, and for Wakefield from 1954 to 1964. Among other things he was Executive member of the Workers' Education Association and of the British Institute of Adult Education. (Labour Party Press Cutting Service, Transport House).

49) Hansard, vol. 411, p. 1334; W.G. Cove was from 1922 President of the National Union of Teachers. (Labour Party Press Cutting Service, Transport House).

Nation's Schools", Mr. Cove did again attack the clause about the reduction of grammar school places as contrary to the "Labour Party philosophy, programme and policy",⁵⁰⁾ but at the same time he attacked the tri-partite principle itself advocating the multilateral school. "Second, I want to know whether she subscribes to the general outline and philosophy embodied in this statement that there are three groups and strata of capacity..."⁵¹⁾ And his final question was "Does the Minister subscribe to the provision of multilateral schools? She is supposed to be in favour of them. This is Labour Party Policy. The Party stands by the promise to develop multilateral schools."⁵²⁾ The pamphlet was a compromise with Toryism and now was the time to repudiate it.

All these arguments show the confusion concerning the fundamental dimension i.e., the specification of equality in the field of secondary education. Cove spoke in one breath about three conflicting things:

- 1) more grammar school places within the tri-partite system.
- 2) transformation of the tri-partite to multilateral schools.
- 3) disbelief in the existence of three types of children.

Points 1 and 2 might perhaps be reconciled as by establishing only multilateral schools, with their three distinct sides, there will be

50) Hansard, vol. 424. p. 1831.

51) *ibid.*, p. 1833.

52) *ibid.*, p. 1833.

more grammar school places as grammar school could mean a type of education inside a multilateral school and not a separate school. But the third point should mean not only the abolition of the tri-partite system, but of the multilateral as well, because the multilateral schools too were based on the assumption of three different kinds of education suiting three types of children. By rejecting the existence of three types of children he was actually advocating the comprehensive school.

The same confusion, while trying to justify the different organisations of secondary education on the basis of the same moral principle - equality - was expressed in the well-known debate about "The Nation's Schools" in the 1946 Conference. Mr. Cove on behalf of the National Association of Labour Teachers (N.A.L.T.) moved a resolution asking the Minister to repudiate the pamphlet and "...to reshape educational policy in accordance with Socialist principles."⁵³⁾ And again, while speaking about the pamphlet, he revealed the same confusion as in Parliament: "It is a thoroughly reactionary document.... It divides the common mass of our children into three broad categories. It says that we already provide too many grammar school places.... All through the years the policy of the Party has been secondary education for all.... Why should we deny our children the chance of having grammar school education?"⁵⁴⁾ The resolution was seconded by

53) 1946 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 191. The emphasis is mine.

54) *ibid.*

J.W. Raisin who said: "My Party wants the Conference to give some thought to the desirability of ensuring that our educational system is really based on Socialist lines."⁵⁵⁾ On the classification of children according to their ability he said: "...this is not altogether sound Socialist philosophy. We think that it is more desirable that there should be regard for character than for technical, scientific or any other kind of ability.... We think...that there should be very little distinction indeed between the three educational systems."⁵⁶⁾ Again, this is self-contradictory. If you oppose the categorization of children why then have three educational systems? And if the three educational systems ought not to be, according to Socialist faith, distinct, why have them at all? It is evident that the Hon. Member still believed in the three different types of children but found this of less weight than the common human element which, according to him, should be emphasized by Socialists.

More coherent was Miss M. Herbison. She stated bluntly that Conference was asked to vote "...against the segregation of our children into three different types of schools", as such a segregation "...is a complete reversal of everything for which the Labour movement have struggled in education."⁵⁷⁾ Segregation means negation of

55) *ibid.*,

56) *ibid.*, p. 192.

57) *ibid.*, p. 193.

equal opportunity as the psychological basis upon which it is founded is wrong: "We are told that at this very early age of eleven plus we shall know what are the aptitude and the ability of children. It is a complete nonsense to suggest that one would know that at eleven plus." The solution is therefore "...sending every child to the common secondary school."⁵⁸⁾ This will prevent differentiation, vocational training and a creation of a new class distinctions based on intelligence or brains. At that time there were almost no professional arguments repudiating the arguments of phase one and therefore she could not say with more detail what was wrong with the eleven plus. She was basing her views mainly on observations and common sense. The only question is, of course, the meaning she attached to the title "common school". Again this is very vague, as the term was used before to describe both the multilateral and the comprehensive school. But if she did not use the correct name, her arguments were consistent and advocated the comprehensive school as only in this type of school was there no segregation of children into three types of secondary education.

The Minister continued to defend the tri-partite system on the basis of equality as well. She claimed that the tri-partite system was the only answer to equality of educational opportunity as children are of different abilities and aptitudes and the three types of school

⁵⁸⁾ *ibid.*

are not first, second and third class secondary schools, as "...actual facts make for equality."⁵⁹⁾ Wilkinson's acceptance of the theory of the three types of children was in harmony with the specifications in the fundamental dimension which were influenced by the professional argument of phase one. The party still believed in this till the 1946 Conference and even in this Conference views were mixed. Yet from all the confusion Labour's commitment to the multilateral school became more emphatic in the 1946 Conference. Mr. Cove's resolution was passed in spite of the objections of the Minister and the N.E.C. - one of four cases during the years in which Labour was in government when Conference voted against the P.L.P. and the N.E.C. This meant that the Party Conference had decided to change the specifications of equality concerning secondary education despite the wish of the Minister and the N.E.C. But this was only the first step of the change, as although it was decided that equality of educational opportunity would no longer be interpreted as equal though different types of secondary education, the party did not yet make up its mind exactly how this could find expression in the organisation of secondary education, because there was complete confusion in the party as to the meaning of multilateral and comprehensive. As has been shown already, some of the speakers while recommending the multilateral school had in mind something more similar to the comprehensive school, and the

59) *ibid.*, p. 189.

name "common school", which was used very frequently in those years, was applied to both types. As far as the comprehensive school principle's relation to the fundamental dimension is concerned, 1946 was a turning point. The change in the specification of the fundamental of equality concerning education took shape slowly but continuously during the years 1947-1951.

In the 1947 Conference the confusion between multilateral and common school or comprehensive school still reigned. While it was clear that the party no longer specified equality of educational opportunity as three different types of education suiting different types of children, the party was not yet clear about the alternative it was advocating. For example, the resolution moved by W.H. Hennessy said: "This Conference draws attention to the fact that on four occasions during the last five years it has passed resolutions emphasizing the need for the rapid development of a new type of multilateral or common secondary school, taking a complete cross-section of children of secondary school age without selection, and providing a comprehensive curriculum suited to children of varied capacities and tastes. It calls upon the Minister to review the education system in order to give real equality of opportunity to all the nation's children."⁶⁰ While the name used was multilateral or common school, the description, which omitted specifically any mention of the three distinctive

60) 1947 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 198.

sides, grammar, technical and modern, did not suit the multilateral school but the comprehensive school. Mrs. Freda Corbett's words reflected the same confusion in terms. While criticising the eleven plus and the creaming process it involved, she said: "Our policy is to educate children in multilateral schools."⁶¹⁾ At the next moment she used the name comprehensive school for the same type of school.⁶²⁾

The resolution mentioned above was carried. The comprehensive principle has become more emphatically a part of the specification of the fundamental moral principle of equality of educational opportunity, but the name comprehensive school was still used only accidentally. The names multilateral and common school were used, but it is very clear indeed that the party did not mean the multilateral school any longer, as the multilateral school was also based on the division of children into three types, though they were to be educated under the same roof; this belief was rejected by the party in the 1946 Conference and the rejection was reaffirmed in 1947 with greater conviction, derived from the observation of the use of the eleven plus and its consequences. Indeed, some members of the Labour party realised that from 1946 the comprehensive school has become part of the specifications in the fundamental dimension. In the House, in July 1948 Mr. Morley, while attacking the Minister Mr. Tomlinson, said: "Can the Minister

⁶¹⁾ *ibid.*, p. 202.

⁶²⁾ *ibid.*

say what steps his Ministry are taking to encourage the formation of comprehensive secondary schools....seeing that that is part of the programme of the Labour Party and the T.U.S.?"⁶³⁾ Miss A. Bacon and Mr. Cove supported him.

In the Annual Conference that followed, two resolutions, of Derbyshire North and of the N.A.L.T., spoke about affirmation of the principle of the common school, although still with some confusion. Although the name comprehensive school was not used in the resolutions it was clearly implied in them. The N.A.L.T. resolution stated: "That Conference is of opinion that all Secondary Schools should be free to develop Grammar School and Technical High School courses without any limitation as to the percentage of pupils in any area taking such courses."⁶⁴⁾ In other words, this was a suggestion for the simplification of the transformation of secondary modern and grammar schools into secondary comprehensive schools, although all the terminology used was very confused. Indeed the speaker herself said after moving the resolution: "All of us who are Labour members of Local Authorities do wish to try to implement Party policy and to

63) Hansard, vol. 453, pp. 1375-1376. The emphasis is mine; R. Morley was an M.P. for Ichen and Southampton, and a member of the Federal Council (South of England) of National Federation of Class Teachers in the years 1922-1932. He was a schoolmaster by profession. (Labour Party Press Cutting Service, Transport House).

64) 1948 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 156.

develop comprehensive schools. The only way in which we can do it at the moment is by broadening the curriculum of the Grammar school or of the Modern school."⁶⁵⁾ This is an example of how the technical possibilities are explored in the fundamental dimension and how afterwards the decision is taken in the light of the P(m) of a method of realising the moral principle. The specification of the P(m) of equality was clearly stated by Mr. R. Prentice: "There should be no more of this snob value attached to certain schools. We do not want it to be possible in the future for people to walk into certain jobs because they have been educated at a certain kind of school, because there is some sort of value attached by other people to that school. If we are going to have secondary education for all, let it be equal education."⁶⁶⁾ But confusion as to the character of the comprehensive school was still widespread. The same Mr. Prentice, who spoke of "equal education", finished by describing the comprehensive schools as "...schools at which boys and girls receive Grammar education, Technical education and Modern Education side by side, then they will all have gone to the same school, and they will be able to say that they had a Secondary Education which simply differed in the type of

65) *ibid.*, The emphasis is mine.

66) *ibid.*, p. 157. R. Prentice was a candidate for East Ham North and M.P. since May 1957. During the years 1964-1966 he was a Joint Minister of State for the Department of Education and Science. (Labour's Election Who's Who, 1970, pp. 93-94).

education they had."⁶⁷⁾ What an irony! Now the name comprehensive school is being used to describe what is really a multilateral school. Mr. Harold Clay, who summarised the discussion, was aware of all the confusion and actually was not clear himself about what was meant by the common school. He wisely asked therefore: "If Conference will agree that in principle the resolutions are adopted and that we are not committed in detail, we shall be very happy to accept this."⁶⁸⁾ This course of action was agreed upon.

Confused views were still heard in Parliament in 1949, but the party was becoming clearer on the issue. One of the troubles was that professional research in sociology, education and psychology did not yet fill the gap created by the doubts cast on the basis of experience upon the professional arguments of phase one. In addition both experience and research about comprehensive schools themselves was limited, which is perhaps the reason why the comprehensive school were defended and advocated at this stage mainly because of its social egalitarian character, with small attempt to fortify the arguments by using professional considerations. In Parliament the following arguments for the comprehensive school were used: 1) "The comprehensive school would take all children aged eleven to eighteen from one area into the same school under the same roof." 2) "A comprehensive school

67) 1948 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 157.

68) *ibid.*, p. 160.

would solve the question of prestige, because all the children would attend the same school." 3) "It would promote social solidarity", since boys and girls from different social backgrounds would come to know each other.⁶⁹⁾

The social character of the comprehensive school was and remained the real main reason for its adoption by Labour's fundamental ideology, but the lack of professional arguments not only made the case weaker, it also called for confusion between the comprehensive school and the multilateral school, as the last also had the social merit of educating children under the same roof. Labour was also trying at that stage to indicate the educational advantages of the comprehensive school but this was based mainly on personal experience and observation. As R. Morley and Mrs. Florence Paton said: "The comprehensive school is the policy of the Labour Party as laid down at successive Conferences....there lies in that method of teaching and education the only method by which class distinctions will be eliminated from the education and public life of this country."⁷¹⁾ The promotion of the comprehensive schools mainly on the basis that they contributed to a more equal society or to the diminishing of class barriers continued throughout 1950 and 1951 and a few examples will suffice. In 1950

69) Hansard, vol. 466. p. 2050.

70) *ibid.*, p. 2051.

71) *ibid.*, p. 2057. Mrs. F.B. Paton was a teacher and a member of the N.U.T. She was M.P. for Rushcliffe Divisional Labour Party in the years 1945-50. Afterwards she was the candidate for Clarenton and in 1955 informed that she will not contest the division again. (Labour Party Press Cutting Service, Transport House).

Mr. Peart said in the House: "If in a school we have bright boys playing with boys who are not so bright, sharing common studies, games, dramatics and so on, we shall tend to break down more of the social barriers which were created in the old system."⁷²⁾ Similarly Mr. G. Thomas said: "I agree about the desirability of the comprehensive school, which will break down social barriers and wipe out a great deal of the snobbery which exists between the various types of schools in the same town."⁷³⁾ Some professional arguments were used as well but they were mainly, as has been said, limited to personal observations of the tri-partite system, the difficulties of transfer and the inefficiency of the secondary modern. The great reliance on professional arguments was still to come following the Research Reports of phase two, which became of significance from the beginning of the 1950s. Labour was yet not clear even on the question of the inner organisation and curricula inside the comprehensive school. It opposed segregation within technical, grammar and modern, schools or sides; and the general, though vague, tendency was to regard the organisation inside the comprehensive school as based on some kind of division to classes with curricula varied according to the age,

72) Hansard, vol. 474, pp. 2010-2011. Mr. Peart was a schoolmaster, M.P. for Workington since 1945, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food 1964-1968 and Lord Privy Seal Apr. 1968 - Oct. 1968. (Labour's Election Who's Who, 1970, p. 92).

73) Hansard, vol. 477, p. 1911.

aptitude and abilities of the children. What is, however, clear is that by 1949 not only did the fundamental ideology of the party include the principle of the comprehensive school, but this was finally acknowledged and given currency; three years before, in 1946, although the comprehensive school was the only type of secondary school in accordance with the specification of equality of educational opportunity this was not yet clear to the party and the spade was not called a spade.

In "Labour Believes in Britain" it was declared: "In the development of secondary education comprehensive schools will be encouraged wherever possible."⁷⁴⁾ This was repeated in "Labour and the New Society".⁷⁵⁾ In October 1950 the Conference passed the following resolution: "This Conference calls upon the Government to implement the Labour Party's declared policy of the comprehensive school, in secondary education...."⁷⁶⁾ After the Conference the N.E.C. invited a Sub-Committee to prepare a report on secondary education. The report was published by the N.E.C. in June 1951 entitled "A Policy for Secondary Education" and it gave the final authorisation of the comprehensive principle in Labour's fundamental ideology as part of the implement of education to achieving the final goal of equality. From

74) "Labour Believes in Britain", the Labour Party (London, 1949), p. 21.

75) "Labour and the New Society", the Labour Party (London, 1950), p. 15.

76) 1950 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 223.

1950 the importance of education as a part of the ways and means, in the fundamental dimension, became more and more important.

It is perhaps worth while to emphasize again that till 1950 the change in the fundamental dimension from the specification of equality of educational opportunity as embodied in the tri-partite system to the comprehensive school, which invoked desertion of the professional arguments of phase one upon which the first specification was based, depended largely on observations about the mal-functioning of the eleven plus and the tri-partite system (especially the modern school) and on the few experiments with comprehensive schools. Facts and alternatives were observed and judged in the light of the final goal of Labour's fundamental ideology and accordingly one system of secondary education was rejected and another took its place in Labour's fundamental ideology. Experience and consequent rejection of the professional arguments of phase one played an important part but it was not simply the change in attitude to the eleven plus and the tri-partite system that brought about the change in the specification of education as a means to achieve equality in the fundamental dimension. The decisive factor was that these observations, examined in the light of the fundamental ideology of the party, showed the inconsistency between the tri-partite system and the fundamental ideology of Labour. Once there was doubt whether children can be classified at the age of eleven and that it is possible to establish parity of esteem between the three types of schools, it became impossible to regard the

tri-partite system as an implement of achieving equality of educational opportunity. The party, as far as the fundamental dimension was concerned, wanted planning which would be consistent with the moral principle of equality. Thus the definition of equality of educational opportunity in the fundamental dimension had to be changed if the fundamental dimension had to remain consistent. Indeed since in this period the tri-partite system enjoyed the support of most teachers' organisations, who from 1944 turned against the multilateral school and abhorred the comprehensive school, and in view of the vast literature in support of the tri-partite system, one is bound to see how much centrality was given to the F(m) of equality in Labour's fundamental ideology, as only such a centrality can explain the change in the fundamental dimension in spite of all opposition. It indeed was a radical change as the general climate of opinion and the opinion of those concerned with education (including administrators) was inclined in favour of the tri-partite system. It is true, of course, that during these years some local authorities, the most important of which are London, Coventry, Oldham, Reading, Bolton, Middlesex and the West Riding, chose to reorganise their secondary education on the "one school" basis. But they were the minority. In addition the professional arguments of phase two which supported the comprehensive school and attacked the tri-partite system were virtually non-existent. In spite of all these the change in the fundamental dimension was done and Labour committed itself, as far as its fundamental ideology

is concerned, to the comprehensive principle in order to actualize in and through secondary education the P(m) of equality. The fact that in view of all the U.S. evidence, Labour still thought of the comprehensive school as egalitarian, shows how the fundamental ideology over-rode instrumentalism.

C. The Actual Policy: Justification and Relation to the Fundamental Dimension (1944-1951)

Despite the uncertainty concerning the fundamental dimension during the first years of Labour government, it became, as I have tried to show, clear that from 1946 the party as a whole understood "equality of educational opportunity" in the secondary sphere to imply the multilateral or the common school and not the tri-partite system because of the social implications. From 1946 onwards the question was whether the party really committed itself to the multilateral or the comprehensive school. I have tried to show how from the confusion between the multilateral and the comprehensive schools the final commitment to the comprehensive principle gradually emerged and received its final authorisation on the fundamental level in "Policy for Secondary Education".

It is now my purpose to analyse what happened during these years in the level of policies. The question is: did the policies of the Labour government during these years undergo a change corresponding to that which occurred in the fundamental dimension of Labour's ideology. If not, how were the deviations of the policies from the

fundamental dimension justified and what were the causes of the deviations. Although I have chosen to separate the discussion of policies in the period 1944-1951 from the discussion about the contemporary changes in the fundamental dimension, it should be borne in mind that this separation is methodological only and was done to show the sharp contrast between the fundamental dimension and the level of action in these years. I found this method desirable while dealing with that period as the policies pursued by the Education Ministers did not, as shall be seen, correspond at all to the process which went on in regard to the fundamental ideology.

The 1944 Education Act made it possible to reorganise secondary education either on multilateral or on comprehensive lines as well as on tri-partite lines. Nevertheless, from the beginning it was obvious that the first Labour Minister of Education Miss E. Wilkinson, chose to defend the tri-partite system as the general rule. The first indication of her intentions was that she continued to circulate "The Nation's Schools" published by the former Conservative Minister of Education. Unlike the 1944 Act, and very much like the White Paper on Educational Reconstruction of 1943, "The Nation's Schools" showed a very clear commitment to the tri-partite system and was very much in line with the Norwood Report's recommendations. Labour exercised pressure against a commitment to the tri-partite system in the 1944 Act and succeeded, yet the first Labour Minister accepted "The Nation's Schools" as the correct interpretation of the 1944 Act. The purpose

of this pamphlet was to define the ways, means and methods of achieving the aims stated in the Act. Its basis was the conclusions of the Norwood Report about the existence of three types of children for whom three different types of secondary education are required. "These three broad types, now at very different stages of development, are intended to meet the different needs of different pupils...",⁷⁷⁾ or as the pamphlet said in another place: "The varying abilities and aptitudes the wishes and the future requirements of the pupils."⁷⁸⁾ Although the pamphlet mentioned a "common aim and some common elements" in the three secondary schools, it was indeed only lip service, as the so called "common element" amounted to little in practice.⁷⁹⁾ Not only did "The Nation's Schools" defend the tri-partite system taking for granted that different children need different types of secondary education, not only did it see some kind of examination at eleven plus as unavoidable, it also assumed an inferior level to be appropriate for the mass of children who would go to the modern secondary schools. The secondary modern school "...will provide the secondary education of the majority of the nation's children....It has to be remembered that in these schools will be a considerable number of children whose future employment will not demand any measure of

77) "The Nation's Schools" Pamphlet no. 1, Ministry of Education, H.M.S.O. (London, 1945), p. 13.

78) *ibid.*, p. 12.

79) *ibid.*,

technical skill or knowledge":⁸⁰⁾ their work will be automatic and the task of the modern school is to teach them to find satisfaction in life outside work. This made it clear that for the mass of children who will go to the secondary modern the doors to future opportunities will be closed. Thus the secondary modern was actually presented as perpetuating the class structure by providing labour for industry. The same notion underlined the suggestion to cut in future the number of grammar school places: "Indeed, it is reasonable to suggest that it might with advantage to many children be somewhat reduced, without prejudicing recruitment to the careers for which it gives the most suitable preparation....For a large majority of children the most suitable secondary education will be provided in the modern school."⁸¹⁾ The most class-biased sentence was that for the majority of children types of education other than that of the grammar school "...are probably far better adapted to their real aptitude, and more closely related to the world in which they will be living."⁸²⁾ This also of course emphasized the vocational training in the modern schools. In addition the pamphlet, while stating the need for various experiments, attacked the multilateral school. It did outline the attractions of this type of school: avoiding selection and offering

80) *ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

81) *ibid.*, p. 14.

82) *ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

the great social advantage of bringing together children of different types. Yet at the same time the pamphlet listed at length the disadvantages of the multilateral school: size; insufficient emphasis on the individual pupil; selection within the school and the difficulty of achieving a balance between the three forms of secondary education. Yet the main argument against the multilateral school was actually the desire to leave the grammar schools intact, as the claim is made that past experience shows that the best schools educationally are those with a limited and defined aim, such as the grammar schools.

All these points in "The Nation's Schools" made it indeed a document in sharp contrast with the fundamental dimension of Labour's ideology. Whether equality in secondary education meant secondary education under the same roof or whether it meant grammar school places for all gifted working class children, made no difference as far as the relation of the pamphlet to the fundamental ideology of Labour is concerned, as both notions were attacked in the pamphlet. The N.A.L.T. comment on "The Nation's Schools" summarises the point: "It seems obvious that a Labour Minister of Education could not accept such a viewpoint since: 'Labour is committed to educational equality both on democratic and on socialist grounds' (Labour Party Speakers Handbook, 1945)."⁸³ E. Wilkinson was bitterly attacked on P(m) grounds, as has already been shown in the previous sub-chapter.

83) Labour Party Research Memoranda, R.D. 323/Oct. 1949, p. 2.

in the 1945 Conference and in the House for continuing to circulate the pamphlet. It was claimed that her policy deviated sharply from the fundamental dimension of the party's ideology. In the House in July 1945 she defended herself by relying on the professional arguments of phase one in their crude popular form. She said that her aim was "...to educate children according to their ability and aptitude."⁸⁴⁾ Secondary education, she said, does not and should not mean grammar school education for all. Indeed, except for a minority, the party did not claim at that time that secondary education for all must mean grammar school education for all. The criticism of the Minister for circulating the pamphlet referred to: a) the presentation of the modern school in the pamphlet as an inferior type of secondary education suiting inferior children and leading to inferior jobs. b) the intention of reducing the number of grammar school places, which meant in real terms that fewer working class children would receive grammar school education. c) the basically negative attitude towards the multilateral school.

I have already analysed these arguments while dealing with the fundamental dimension. It is enough to point out here that these three arguments against the pamphlet and so against the Minister's policy, though reflecting two different concepts of equality of educational opportunity, rested on the moral principles of the party's

⁸⁴⁾ Hansard, vol. 424, p. 1809.

fundamental ideology, the violation of which brought about the criticism. The only way open to the Minister to justify her policy was to deny the existence of inequality between the three types of school: "I want to underline that I do not accept any idea that there ought to be different grades of secondary education."⁸⁵⁾ She gave no direct reply to the criticism concerning the reduction of grammar school places. Instead she stressed the value of the modern school. As for the third criticism, concerning the multilateral school, she acknowledged the social advantages of these schools but claimed that they were outweighed by educational disadvantages the most important of which was the size of these schools. E. Wilkinson saw the tri-partite system, providing there was equality of conditions, as the answer to equality of opportunity in secondary education as "My aim has been to see that no child shall be debarred through lack of means from taking a course of education for which he or she is qualified..."⁸⁶⁾ This was indeed the pre-war notion of secondary education for all, but this notion has been abandoned by the party and a different notion of equality of opportunity emerged, as the attacks on the Minister's views in Conference and in the House show only too well.

In the 1946 Conference the Minister was again attacked for taking

85) *ibid.*, p. 1810.

86) *ibid.*, p. 1813.

responsibility for "The Nation's Schools", and the criticism was again aimed at the three issues mentioned before. Wilkinson, while agreeing in the end that certain paragraphs in the pamphlet should be changed, continued to justify the tri-partite system on the same lines as she did in Parliament. She saw no contradiction between the moral principle of equality and the tri-partite system. Equality in secondary education, she elaborated, means selection according to ability. Segregation in three types of school is necessary because of the different abilities and aptitudes and transfer is possible in case of error. The three types of school are not first, second and third class schools: "They are settled by seeing that the actual facts make for equality."⁸⁷⁾ If the material conditions are the same, and the quality of teachers, then the three types enjoy equal status. And it is, she said, her intention that this parity of esteem will prevail. She denied that any of the schools provides vocational training and finished by saying: "So much, then, for this problem of class distinction in education."⁸⁸⁾ It is clear that her arguments, both in Parliament and in Conference, were based on the over simplified psychological arguments of phase one as expressed by the Norwood Committee. Accordingly, equality of opportunity in secondary education is the elimination of all factors but ability as determined by

87) 1946 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 189.

88) *ibid.*

the eleven plus. Her objection to the multilateral schools was also based mainly on professional arguments. All her arguments justifying her policy, which deviated from that formulated in the fundamental dimension, are arguments typical of the operative dimension of ideology. The centrality is given to professional arguments which are connected, or purport to be connected, to the fundamental P(m)s. Indeed Mr. Lionel Elvin while defending the Minister, described her aim in the following way: "The purpose behind what Miss Wilkinson said was to get educational diversity with social equality."⁸⁹⁾

Despite the attempt of Mr. H. Clay to make Conference reject the motion urging the Minister to repudiate the pamphlet, the motion was carried. As this was a rare case during the period Labour was in government, it shows that Labour took seriously its commitment on the fundamental level to the principle of the multilateral or the common school, and wanted to see it implemented. The Minister, however, did not take Conference's resolution seriously. She never really repudiated "The Nation's Schools" but merely did not republish it and actually continued to justify its content except for the paragraphs which insinuated class distinction in education. In circulars and answers to repeated questions in the House about her policy towards the multilateral schools, she made it clear that she did not object to

⁸⁹⁾ *ibid.*, p. 194.

experiments but that she did nothing to encourage their development.⁹⁰⁾ Her policy, despite all the criticism, remained basically that which was outlined in "The Nation's Schools".⁹¹⁾ Wilkinson was very careful to give the appearance that the sole criteria which guided her actions in regard to the multilateral schools were educational. Yet it cannot escape any observant eye that she was at the same time very much concerned with the fate of the grammar schools and without admitting it openly she tried to safeguard their future by arguing that a multilateral school should not be established where it could endanger other existing schools.⁹²⁾ Her last publication (which appeared while Tomlinson was the Minister) was Pamphlet number 9 "The New Secondary Education" which was to replace "The Nation's Schools". In the forward Wilkinson outlined again her case for the tri-partite system as the only solution to actualize equality of educational opportunity for children who differed in their abilities and aptitudes. Obviously her belief in the Norwood Committee recommendations was not shaken in the least during the years. Or more correct she gave the impression that her belief was not shaken. Yet one of her beliefs, upon which her justification of the tri-partite system on moral grounds largely rested, was apparently affected: the belief in the possibility of

90) See Hancard, vol. 426, p. 66.

91) See Circular 90, Ministry of Education, H.M.S.O. (London, 1946).

92) See Circular 73, Ministry of Education, H.M.S.O. (London, 1945).

achieving equality between the three types of schools by providing parity of conditions. In the 1946 Conference she emphasized that this was possible, but experience showed beyond any doubt that conditions did not and could not make for equality. This fact was so obvious to everybody that even if Wilkinson wanted to deny it she could not have done so, and so while speaking about the parity of esteem she said: "Can that be any more than a phrase - even if buildings and size of classes are equalized - unless there is some parity of social esteem for the vocations to which the children go from the schools?"⁹³) This realization did not, however, negate her belief that society's scale of values could undergo and was undergoing a change. She stated that the British people are learning the hard way how important are the technical and auxiliary professions. Thus, although parity of esteem cannot be achieved merely by creating parity of conditions, it is becoming a reality because of the change in the values attached to professions. Wilkinson either believed, or desired to believe, in the possibility of achieving parity of esteem as otherwise the whole argument that the three types of secondary schools are equal, if different, and thus provide equality of educational opportunity, would have collapsed. She just could not afford to admit, even to herself, that the parity of esteem was more or less a utopian dream.

On the whole "The New Secondary Education", except for the

93) "The New Secondary Education", Pamphlet no. 9. Ministry of Education (London, 1947), p. 4.

emphasis, which was not based on any facts, that the tri-partite system does not mean the perpetuation of class education, differed very slightly from "The Nation's Schools". Again the case for tri-partitism was stated. The advice given by the Minister about the ways in which the various needs of children of secondary school age may best be met corresponded to the Conservative policy as outlined in "The Nation's Schools". The new pamphlet dealt at greater length with the "common features of secondary schools", but these common features again amounted merely to administrative provisions and to very general advice about how to educate children.⁹⁴⁾ The terminology differed from that of "The Nation's Schools": terms such as co-operation, community feeling etc. were used but basically there was nothing new. On the multilateral or the bilateral schools the pamphlet said: "In some places where conditions are favourable the best way of carrying out the new plan may be to combine two, or three types of secondary education in one school. Current controversy on this subject has shown the disadvantages, as well as the obvious advantages, in such an organisation."⁹⁵⁾ A long list of educational considerations followed, which showed the caution and suspicion with which the Minister regarded these schools.

The pamphlet was published by J. Tomlinson, who succeeded

94) *ibid.*, pp. 13-19.

95) *ibid.*, p. 24.

B. Wilkinson in 1947. Tomlinson made his position clear in Circulars 142 and 144. In Circular 142 he stressed the vague common aim of the three types of schools: to develop the whole person.⁹⁶⁾ In Circular 144 the Minister made it clear that he welcomes "...a variety of approaches to the new problem of secondary education for all; he appreciates to the full the social and other benefits expected from the more comprehensive types of organisation, and he is only concerned to ensure that all such plans are consistent with sound educational principles and practice and that the best existing standards will be maintained and indeed raised."⁹⁷⁾ He went on to say that the approximate size of the comprehensive school will have to be 1,500 - 1,700 and that in order not to harm the community spirit of the school suitable arrangements should be made. His sceptical opinion regarding multilateral and comprehensive schools was revealed in the following remarks about these schools: "...the arrangements should be such that the provision made for the pupils is not less favourable to them than it is or could be under a tri-partite system."⁹⁸⁾ Clearly he regarded the tri-partite system and especially of course the grammar schools as the best educational institutions and really advocated multilateral or

96) Circular 142, in Ministry of Education, Circulars and Administrative Memoranda, H.M.S.O. (London, 1948).

97) Circular 144, in Ministry of Education, Circulars and Administrative Memoranda, H.M.S.O. (London, 1948), p. 1.

98) *ibid.*, p. 3.

comprehensive schools only for rural areas where the establishment of three schools was impracticable.

The party was not satisfied by the slight concessions made in the new pamphlet and regarded it, quite rightly, as deviating from the fundamental dimension of Labour's ideology. All the criticism heard in the 1947 Conference was on these lines. The Bristol composite resolution summarised well the attack on Tomlinson which was a repetition of the attack on Wilkinson. "This Conference urges the Minister of Education to take great care that he does not perpetuate under the new Education Act the undemocratic tradition of English secondary education, which results in all normal children born into well to do homes being educated together in the same type of school, while the able children in working class families are separated at the age of eleven from their less gifted brothers and sisters. This Conference draws attention to the fact that on four occasions during the last five years it has passed resolutions emphasizing the need for the rapid development of a new type of multilateral or common secondary school, taking a complete cross-section of children in secondary school age without selection, and providing a comprehensive curriculum....It calls upon the Minister to review the educational system in order to give real equality of opportunity to all the nation's children."⁹⁹⁾ In spite of the confusion in the arguments that supported

⁹⁹⁾ 1947 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 198.

the resolution it was clear that the party wanted to end selection and segregation and to establish a secondary common school, as only such a secondary education was in harmony with the basic fundamental - equality.

The resolution was carried with the support of the N.E.C., yet Tomlinson continued to pursue the policy of defending the tri-partite system as outlined in "The New Secondary Education" and Circular 144. He voiced his concern for the grammar school's future, which was already revealed in Circular 144, in Parliament while speaking on the secondary grammar schools: "This has been going on in many places for a long time and this is the basis of secondary education for all,... it is not a question of all receiving the same kind of education, but rather of receiving the kind of secondary education which is suitable to their ability and capacity."¹⁰⁰) Again the grammar school is defended on the basis that it had existed for long and proved successful.

The deep gap between Labour's commitment on the fundamental level and the policies pursued by the Minister, evoked an unsuccessful attempt to explain the Minister's actions in "Advance in Education". The authors of this pamphlet tried to show that the Minister's policy was in line with the 1944 Education Act and with Labour's fundamental

¹⁰⁰) Hansard, vol. 443. p. 1052.

ideology, yet right at the beginning they made a statement which did not reflect Labour's position in 1947. They took for granted the necessity of providing three different types of education. The question, they said, is whether to do it under one roof or in three separate schools. They continued with the claim that there is nothing in the provision of the three separate schools which contradicts equality as "Every type of school or course for the 11 to 16 age group, must be given equal educational and social standing."¹⁰¹) This was even a more optimistic and less realistic view than that expressed by E. Wilkinson in the forward to "The New Secondary Education". The authors did mention the comprehensive school but actually spoke only of the multilateral school controversy. Their conclusion was that the right policy was to experiment only with these schools, in view of the "debit side". That the view expressed in this document expressed the view of a minority only was clearly seen in the 1947 Conference.

From 1948 the attacks on the Minister centered around his policy towards the comprehensive school. This was a direct result of the diminishing confusion regarding the fundamental level. In mid 1948 the Minister was attacked for refusing to let South West Middlesex proceed with a large experiment with comprehensive schools, and for approving only of the establishment of two comprehensive schools which

101) "Advance in Education", by H.D. Hughes and G.O. Miller, Labour Discussion Series no. 15 (London, 1947), p. 6.

did not threaten existing grammar schools. Tomlinson justified this decision by saying that his policy was directed by educational considerations: "To secure the experiment the staff and parent must sympathize."¹⁰²⁾ But the true reason was his great concern for the grammar school.¹⁰³⁾ He was as eager as before to defend the grammar schools and apparently closed his eyes to the fact that in order to have a real experiment with comprehensive schools it is essential to abolish the grammar schools in the area as otherwise they would cream off the best pupils and thus in part at least, invalidate the experiment. Tomlinson continued to pursue the cautious policy of allowing experiments with multilateral and comprehensive schools only in places where grammar schools were not endangered. He was careful not to show antagonism towards the comprehensive school but he certainly did nothing to encourage the development of the comprehensive school, which was already a part of Labour's fundamental ideology. The party clearly was not content with this "experimental" policy. It demanded positive encouragement. In July 1948 Mr. Morley asked the Minister in Parliament what steps his Ministry are taking to encourage the formation of comprehensive secondary schools "...seeing that that is part of the programme of the Labour Party and the T.U.C.?"¹⁰⁴⁾ Tomlinson's

102) Hansard, vol. 451, p. 1208.

103) In his local base Labour councils were making a drive to establish new grammar schools.

104) Hansard, vol. 453, p. 1375.

reply was characteristic: "I think I can say that I have not taken any steps to encourage local authorities to put forward a certain type - comprehensive, technical or any other schools. What I have asked is that they should consider those forms of organisation in the best interests of the development of education and submit their plans."¹⁰⁵⁾ As all the Ministerial pamphlets stressed that the main advantages of the comprehensive schools were social, while educationally there were a lot of considerations against them, Tomlinson's reply actually meant discouraging local education authorities from forming plans for comprehensive schools.

The language of the Minister, with the years, became more guarded and disguised - his policy unchanged. In 1948 he admitted rejecting five projects for comprehensive schools.¹⁰⁶⁾ In the 1948 Conference resolutions were moved and passed with the approval of the N.B.C. to encourage comprehensive secondary education. The Minister was accused on the grounds that, although the pamphlet "The Nation's Schools" had been replaced, Her Majesty's Inspectors who were his direct representatives in the various areas "...are still endeavouring to implement that policy that we have repudiated."¹⁰⁷⁾ The Minister, not only did not encourage local education authorities to plan new comprehensive

¹⁰⁵⁾ *ibid.*, p. 1376.

¹⁰⁶⁾ *Hansard*, vol. 458, p. 209.

¹⁰⁷⁾ 1948 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 156.

schools but "There has been no encouragement from the Ministry for the Modern School to develop academic courses."¹⁰⁸⁾ Only in the late 1950s modern schools in good areas succeeded in establishing O level streams and voluntary education till 16.

Tomlinson remained unmoved by the opposition of the Conference, the N.E.C. and the T.U.C. and continued to pursue the same policy as before. In 1949 he said in Parliament that at least five additional years of small scale experiments with comprehensive schools are needed before any conclusions about their educational achievements can be reached. All the social arguments in favour of the comprehensive school did not change his policy which remained based on the professional arguments of phase one and he therefore continued to claim that the only way to achieve equality of opportunity in secondary education was on tri-partite lines. It was pointed out to him that even parity of conditions was not achieved and that even when there would be parity of material conditions "...we still shall not secure parity of esteem between the three types so far as the general public is concerned, and it appears to me, and to an increasing number of others, that the solution of this difficulty lies in the establishment of comprehensive secondary schools."¹⁰⁹⁾ Tomlinson did not shift his position. In 1950, in answer to Miss A. Bacon's argument that by

¹⁰⁸⁾ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁹⁾ Hansard, vol. 466, p. 2050.

encouraging comprehensive schools it would be possible to abolish the eleven plus with its large margin of error, he replied laconically that his policy was to encourage all kinds of schools. Even if the professional objections against the eleven plus were correct it would be going too far to ask local education authorities to revise their plans on comprehensive lines.¹¹⁰⁾ This was supplemented by the already familiar statement: "In this time of change when we are attempting to apply this new principle of secondary education for all, I believe it is necessary for experiments to take place."¹¹¹⁾ On the objections against the eleven plus he said: "Who is to say 13 is going to prove better than 11?"¹¹²⁾ and continued to stress that the real solution lies in raising the standards of the secondary modern schools so that they will become something as good as grammar schools, though in a different way.

This was Tomlinson's position till Labour went into opposition. The fact that Tomlinson approved the London School Plan does not contradict the general conclusion concerning Tomlinson's position towards comprehensive schools. The L.C.C. plan was approved primarily because of the special position of the L.C.C. Moreover, till 1954 no grammar school was threatened except Wandsworth grammar school which was to

110) Hansard, vol. 475, p. 1373.

111) *ibid.*, p. 1972.

112) *ibid.*

become comprehensive, yet its head was a supporter of the comprehensive school. Thus the L.C.C. plan dated 1947, which originated in the L.C.C.'s resolution in 1935 - (immediately after the L.C.C. was won for Labour) - to end selective secondary education, was ratified. However, very little was actually done till 1951.

Although his policy did not change in spite of the repeated attacks in Conference and in the House and from other quarters such as the N.A.L.T. and the T.U.C., Tomlinson felt obliged to defend his policy. This he did in a Memo to the Home Policy Committee. His main justification for rejecting certain comprehensive plans was on educational grounds. Educationally, he claimed, the policy in Circular 144 was the soundest possible. Grammar schools were needed for the bright children who will not receive the same standard of education in a sixth form inside a comprehensive school. As for social considerations, the tri-partite system does not create a class division as graduates from secondary modern schools can enter black coated professions.¹¹³⁾ Although Tomlinson tried to show that his policy was directed by educational considerations and that it was in line with the P(m) of equality, one is bound to wonder, in view of his arguments and of his policy during the years, whether he was really motivated mainly by educational considerations. Prima facie the main reasons for his and for Wilkinson's policy were administrative and

113) Labour Party, Research Memoranda R. 5/July 1950.

other technical considerations. The need to rebuild bombed schools and to provide for more schools in view of the increasing population and the raising of the statutory leaving age to 15 in 1945, and the fact that already before 1944 most local authorities had organised their secondary education on the tri-partite line make an overwhelming case for tri-partitism on P(t) grounds. Neither Wilkinson, nor Tomlinson could afford to explain that they pursued a tri-partite policy mainly because of such considerations, which in fact were never voiced. But it was possible for them to pursue this line, dictated by administrative technical considerations mainly, and at the same time to claim that they were doing the right thing educationally, because of the professional arguments of phase one in their crude form. The fact that both Ministers argued all the time on the basis of the crude popular professional arguments of phase one makes it legitimate to enquire how two intelligent people did not see the oversimplifications of the Norwood Report, unless they wanted to accept its conclusions.

Wilkinson can perhaps be granted the benefit of doubt, as, during the years when she was the Minister the belief in the three types of children was still widely held. I question whether the same can be said of Tomlinson. One almost gets the impression that if Tomlinson maintained some belief in these professional arguments it was largely because he averted his eyes from almost all contradictory professional and factual evidence. In short, it does not seem to me to be a shot in the dark to claim that administrative considerations made him cling

to the justification supplied by the Norwood Report. Moreover, his great concern over the future of the grammar school shows his attachment to the pre-war attitude that secondary education for all merely meant opening the doors of grammar schools to able working class children. The best hope for a working class child is to get into a grammar school. This attitude characterized in the post-war years Labour party grass-root especially in the North where Labour-controlled local education authorities were fighting for their new grammar schools - the symbol of their success. This can perhaps account for what at times seems to be actual hatred, on Tomlinson's part toward the comprehensive schools. In fact, both Wilkinson and Tomlinson were, in the question of the grammar schools North-West people in their bones. It is indeed an irony, but certainly not uncommon in politics, that Labour Ministers who are supposed to bring in fresh air and revolutionary ideas prove to be conservatives in outlook and aspirations. They trusted old institutions and ideas and mistrusted new ones.

The widening gap between the fundamental dimension of Labour's ideology and the policies of the Ministers affirms once more the relatively small influence of Conference on policy making while Labour is in government. This fact explains how it was possible for such a gap to develop and to continue to exist. The gap between the fundamental ideology and the policies produced, as I have tried to show, a similar gap between the fundamental and the operative dimensions of ideological arguments. The two Education Ministers justified their

policies, which deviated from those formulated in the fundamental dimension, by using the type of argument which I called, (following M. Seliger,) "moderately fundamental ideological argument" or "operative ideological argument". That is to say, centrality was given to professional and other technical considerations and within the argument these were shown to be connected to the party's moral principles. There was always an attempt to show how the policy was connected to the fundamental dimension of the party's ideology.

The party left government with a full commitment to the comprehensive principle in the fundamental dimension. The comprehensive school became part of the specifications of the ways and means of achieving equality in the fundamental dimension, and a final authorization was given in "Policy For Secondary Education" in 1951. On the level of action, as has been shown, the Minister remained a defender of the tri-partite system till the party left office. It remains now to be seen how Labour dealt with the gap between the fundamental ideology and the level of action. Theoretically speaking, the fact that the party was defeated and went into opposition should make the task of adaptation easier.

CHAPTER FIVE: LABOUR IN OPPOSITION 1951-1964

A. Changes in Labour's Ideology from 1951

Labour went into opposition in 1951 with an official commitment to the comprehensive school principle in the fundamental dimension of its ideology. Yet this commitment had yet to be consolidated and at that time the whole sphere of education was not regarded by the party as of central importance. In the election Manifesto of 1950 the comprehensive school was not mentioned and had a minor place in the Manifesto of 1951. This was largely due to the discrepancy between the educational policy pursued during 1945-1951 on the one hand, and the resolutions of Conference on the other hand. The influence of the P.L.P. on the Manifestos is crucial and so the Manifestos expressed the views of the P.L.P. rather than those of Conference. Both these aspects: the importance of education in general and the place of the comprehensive principle not only in the fundamental dimension but also in formulated policies, were going to change in the coming years. Yet before further examining the question of the comprehensive principle in Labour's ideology and policy, it is necessary to say some words about the disputes and changes concerning the whole fundamental ideology of the Labour party in the years following the 1951 defeat.

In 1951 the party was in a different position from 1944. Its years in office had shaken the beliefs of many members in some of the fundamentals. A gap between the policies and the fundamental dimension

was created in most spheres. The Election Manifestos both in 1950 and 1951 were a compromise around which the party could fight united. However immediately after the defeat the compromise broke down and the ideological dispute concerning the fundamental P(m)s became more acute. This pattern, of compromise before an election and of sharp ideological dispute after each defeat, was to characterize the Labour party till its return to power in 1964. The interest in the ideology was always much more acute when the party was in opposition. As various authors point out, the pattern mentioned above was inevitable since both the federative character of the party as regards interests and ideals, and its organisation which was built to suit the federative character, give scope for the expression of different ideas but are inadequate for reaching clear-cut decisions. As far as the fundamental dimension is concerned the decisions ought to be made by Conference. Yet the issues discussed in Conference are decided usually by the N.E.C. which consists almost always chiefly of members who belong at the same time to the P.L.P. Thus the N.E.C. is usually close to the views of the P.L.P., especially when Labour is in power. When Labour is in opposition Conference gains importance in the balance of power. Nevertheless the final decision of Conference itself is usually close to that of the P.L.P. as it enjoys the vote of most Trade Unions. When Labour is in power Conference very rarely votes in defence of resolutions which are against the N.E.C. and the P.L.P. When Labour is in opposition a larger number of resolutions which go against the

P.L.P. are passed but still in most cases the Conference's final decisions correspond to that of the P.L.P. But the fact that in the majority of cases Conference accords with the P.L.P. does not mean that the minority views in Conference can be ignored completely. It is dangerous to ignore them, and therefore compromise is essential. As for the nature of the compromise itself, both Miliband and Beer came to the same conclusion: the Labour party cannot find lasting unity in compromise. "In a party like the Labour Party, and an electoral system which greatly discourages political fission, appeals for unity through compromise are always likely to meet with much support, and to appear as the epitome of commonsense and political wisdom. At the same time, such appeals overlook the fact that genuine compromise between revisionists on the one hand, and Socialist purposes on the other, is impossible.... All that such a compromise can do is to provide a temporary lull in a battle to be resumed so soon as actual programmes and policies come to be discussed."¹⁾ This is Miliband's view. Beer, after showing the ideologism of both Fundamentalists and Revisionists, reaches the same conclusion as Miliband: because all factions in Labour agree that a party can be effective only if there is some underlying agreement on its principles "...then indeed that party will not be able to find lasting unity in compromise."²⁾

1) R. Miliband, op.cit., p. 345.

2) S.H. Beer, op.cit., p. 239.

The whole period from 1951 provides evidence which supports these conclusions. The party as far as the fundamental dimension is concerned was caught inside this magic circle of dispute, compromise, dispute compromise etc. The Revisionists, first led by H. Morrison and afterwards by H. Gaitskell, tried throughout the period to incorporate the lessons of Labour's experience while in government into the fundamental dimension. They were no less motivated than the Fundamentalists, by a desire to provide the Labour party with a fundamental ideology, but they did not believe that the old principles should remain intact if the party was to remain a Socialist party. Socialism, they claimed, was about equality and the ways and means of achieving this goal could and should be changed according to experience. Experience has shown that one could achieve equality through humanized capitalism i.e., the welfare state and the managed economy. There was no need to cling nostalgically to the old Party Objects of 1918, which gave centrality to the means of common ownership. Other methods of social engineering could be more adequate than common ownership. Transforming society through economy was not the only way to actualize the moral goals of Socialism. Sociology took the place of economy. Education gained the importance attributed before to economic measures. "For their contention was precisely that public ownership was merely one of various means to Socialist goals."³⁾

The Fundamentalists, on the other hand, stood firmly against the notion of "consolidation" and a shift from common ownership as for

3) *ibid.*, p. 236.

them it had central significance. "It was an indispensable condition and a major expression of a radically transformed economy, society, and culture."⁴⁾ They wanted more nationalisation and a continued centrality for economics. The difficulty of the Fundamentalists was to reconcile the old principles with the new reality of the welfare state. The difficulty of the Revisionists was to produce almost a new fundamental ideology. The element common to both was the almost passionate desire to have one fundamental ideology. The ideological battle between the Fundamentalists and the Revisionists was carried on through publications and in Conference. The Labour party as a whole was very reluctant to give up its traditional principles and could not afford to scrap publicly its central myth of common ownership. Thus Gaitskell's attempt to abolish Clause IV failed and aroused the antagonism of the Conference and the N.B.C.

The Revisionists wanted to modify the myths, the Fundamentalists to preserve them intact. The task of the Revisionists was thus, in a way, more difficult as they had to persuade the party to readapt its fundamental principles, and because an open acknowledgement by the party of such a course was obviously unimaginable, as Gaitskell's attempt shows, they had finally to use tactics by which they actually modified Clause IV without the party having to acknowledge that a change had been effected.

4) *ibid.*, p. 237.

The Fundamentalists also found themselves in a difficult position as it became more and more obvious that if Labour were to return to power some kind of adaptation of old principles to the new reality was unavoidable. The battle between the two factions was not merely about the pace of change but about the essence of Socialism. Thus the whole period is characterized by "rethinking" of a particular kind.

In 1950 R.H.S. Crossman, who belonged to the Bevanite group, wrote "Socialist Values in a Changing Civilization", and in 1952 "Toward a Philosophy of Socialism". His main point was that the present period was characterized by the questioning of values, while in the 19th century values were unquestioned and the only problems were of means. Crossman did not have any positive answer. He supplied no new philosophy of Socialism, but he questioned some of the old beliefs trying to show the fallacies of the concept of the economic man, of the inevitable collapse of capitalism and of the inevitability of progress. Capitalism can be adapted and can survive. Socialism is not the answer to the inefficiency of capitalism but is more moral than capitalism.⁵⁾ Crossman shifted the emphasis from economic achievements to the moral values of dignity, security and responsibility. Why, asked Crossman, was not "...the ideal, the pattern of values", i.e., equality and classless society achieved in spite of

5) R. Crossman, "Socialist Values in a Changing Civilization", Fabian Tracts no. 286, The Fabian Society (London, 1950), p. 7.

Labour's actualization of the Fabians' blue prints?⁶⁾ Are there perhaps things which the economist did not think about? It is time, said Crossman, to recognize that there are aims which more nationalization and centralisation will not realise. To achieve these things: fair shares which are remote from strict statistical equalitarianism, and to prevent the rise of a managerial elite, one has to achieve an educated democracy. The mean to be used is the educational system and not any economic measures.

Crossman, typical of Socialist writers of the 1950s, did not provide an all-embracing analysis of society, he merely asked the question "what has Labour to do now" and gave some indications of direction. The same question was put by Attlee in 1952. In "Towards a Philosophy of Socialism" Crossman again asserted that Labour lost the sense of direction in the end of the 1940s. A confusion arises "...as soon as we seek to relate our practice to our Socialist ideals."⁷⁾ The problem was how to adjust the fundamental and the operative dimensions to each other. The Fundamentalists wanted more socialisation while the right wing wanted consolidation. Neither of these provided the answers. There was a need for a new map, said Crossman, as Labour cannot exist without principles which challenge the status quo and guide action. Pragmatic social reform was no

6) *ibid.*, p. 11.

7) "Towards a Philosophy of Socialism", in R. Crossman, (ed.), New Fabian Essays (London, 1952), p. 3.

longer adequate. The role of Fabianism had concluded as the reforms were realised. It was time to sit back and reflect, to examine the party's explicit and implicit principles of action and to appraise the facts of the new situation. Yet, though Crossman was speaking of the need for a whole-scale analysis of society, in the tradition of Tawney or Laski, he himself never attempted it. But, as was noted before, the Socialist literature of the 1950s was characterized by fragmentation. The Bevanites did not produce any new philosophy of Socialism. Their line remained to attack the Revisionists' approach and to defend feverishly common ownership and other old principles, in spite of such exceptions as Crossman. Nor did the Revisionists, despite many publications, produce any comprehensive analysis of society with new interpretation of Socialism. Their writings, as a whole, remained fragmental i.e., dealing each time with some specific problem. An exception to this was Crosland's "The Future of Socialism" published in 1957. In this book he attempted to analyse the nature of the change in capitalism, the problems that this posed to British Socialism, and what form British Socialism must take as a result. As B. Crick says, the weakness in "The Future of Socialism" lies in the prescriptive part, i.e., in Crosland's statements about Socialist aims in relation to social change and to the future of the Labour party.⁸⁾ Crosland based Socialism on the moral principles of equality and

8) B. Crick, op.cit., p. 362.

social justice. From this he deduced the rest of the programmes. It is not clear exactly what Crosland means by equality. He wavers between equality of opportunity in a weak and a strong sense. The differentiation between the weak and the strong sense of equality is interesting and helpful. The trouble is that Crosland was not consistent in his approach while he applied these concepts to concrete problems. In "The Future of Socialism" Crosland actually did change the old principles, but he denied doing so. Three years later in "Can Labour Win" Crosland said: "The discussion of party image has nothing to do with fundamental principles...."⁹⁾ Yet, while listing the basic Socialist values he did not mention common ownership. His suggestions, which he classified as mainly tactical, were actually substantial. I doubt very much whether the Left Wing in Labour could have accepted the Socialist values outlined by Crosland without fortifying them with emphasis on common ownership which would actually change the whole concept of Socialism advocated by Crosland.

The compromise achieved each time before the elections, and in most of the resolutions of the Conference, was usually close to the right of the centre i.e., to the Revisionists. But they never had their way completely as the example of Clause IV shows. Again the problem was solved by compromise embodied in the statement adopted by the W.E.C. on 16 March 1960 on Clause IV and approved by the Party

9) A. Crosland, "Can Labour Win", Fabian Tracts no. 324, The Fabian Society (London, 1960), p. 14.

Conference in 1960. Without acknowledging a change in the fundamental dimension it is nevertheless present: social and economic objectives can be achieved only through an expansion of common ownership substantial enough to give the community power over the economy.

The official publications of the party, excluding those which defended one or other of the two sides, reflected compromise and though, as has been mentioned before, they were closest to the right of the centre, they were expressed in a general manner so as to permit of different interpretations. A greater emphasis was given to other means of social engineering than the economic means. In "Facing the Facts" the Socialist faith is described in the following way: The basic beliefs of the democratic Socialist faith are simple and self evident. "We believe in human fellowship. We believe that our development as individuals is incomplete unless we can play our part in the society and institutions around us.... We believe in social equality. We believe in the dignity of man. We believe in equality of opportunity.... We believe in equality...because it widens the human personality. We believe in democratic freedom. We believe that everyone has a right to political liberty. We believe in freedom because it gives man the responsibility that his personality demands. We believe in economic democracy. The exploitation of man by man is morally wrong and economically inefficient. Human beings are entitled to decent standards of living. This is our Socialist faith. These are the principles that must guide us in the task ahead."¹⁰) Great

10) "Facing the Facts", an interim statement of Labour's Home Policy, the Labour Party (London, 1952), p. 1.

stress is laid on the ethical aspects of Socialism such as equality, fellowship and social justice, and much less centrality given to economy. One is tempted incidentally to ask why it is, if the Socialist faith is as self-evident as claimed, that factions inside the party cannot agree about the meaning of this Socialist faith.

The emphasis on equality, because of the Revisionists' assertion that Socialism is about equality, and that the ways and means to achieve it can be changed found expression, for example, in "Towards Equality, Labour's Policy for Social Justice". Common ownership is placed among other manifestations of the classless society which are not regarded as less important: "...equal chance for the nation's youth,... a fair division and a planned expansion of the nation's wealth; the right to work; the elimination of poverty; common ownership; control or dispersal of economic power;...".¹¹⁾ Accordingly the welfare state is seen as progress toward the goal of equality. But the welfare state "...has carried us only part of the way"; the society "...is felt to be a class society... opportunities are far from equal...".¹²⁾ The main trouble is, therefore, the inequalities remaining and henceforth the statement deals with "...the causes of contemporary inequalities", and then outlines "...the steps that must

11) "Towards Equality, Labour's Policy for Social Justice", the Labour Party (London, 1956), p. 3.

12) *ibid.*

be taken if we are to advance further toward a Socialist society."¹³⁾ This is, by and large, a great change from Clause IV, as far as centrality is concerned. Socialism is about equality and the ways and means ought to be such as to abolish the existing inequalities. Thus education assumed a most important place in the fundamental ideology and was placed side by side with the changes in the economic system of capitalism. If the existing inequalities are to be abolished Labour has to change the economic and the educational systems.¹⁴⁾ This document was evidently greatly influenced by the Revisionists' interpretation of Socialism but it could be acceptable to the Fundamentalists as well, as common ownership was not omitted.

Another good example of a statement of compromise, though closer to the right of the centre as the previous one, is "Labour in the Sixties". The N.E.C., it was stated, rejected the dilemma that confronts Labour: whether to sacrifice principles or to lose elections, and stated that it believed in a "Socialist Victory".¹⁵⁾ Nevertheless the whole document is pervaded by the realisation that an adaptation of the old principles to the new reality is needed. There is an attempt to adapt the solutions to the needs of the day without, however, acknowledging any change in the old principles. "Signposts

¹³⁾ *ibid.*

¹⁴⁾ *ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁵⁾ "Labour in the Sixties", the Labour Party (London, 1960), p. 3.

for the Sixties" stressed also the need for economic planning and fair shares. There was no talk about total common ownership and instead five different forms of common ownership were suggested and an indication was given of situations to which common ownership or mass control by the state should be extended. These economic objects were mentioned side by side with a comprehensively democratised school system.

In the Manifesto of the 1964 election, that brought Labour back to power, the final goals were listed as: the ending of economic privilege, and the creation of real equality of opportunity. Britain can achieve these provided it resolutely wills three things: "The mobilization of its resources within a national plan; the maintenance of a wise balance between community and individual expenditure; and the education of all its citizens, not merely a small section of them, in the responsibilities of this scientific age."¹⁶⁾ Again we find the typical compromise before elections which lies closer to the views of the centre. The Manifesto put the drastic changes in education in first place. It begins as follows: "The imperative need for a revolution in our education system which will ensure the education of all our citizens..."¹⁷⁾ Clearly the importance of education has increased considerably from 1950-1951 when it occupied a negligible

16) "Let Us Go with Labour for the New Britain", 1964 Manifesto, the Labour Party (London, 1964), p. 3.

17) *ibid.*, p. 1.

part of the Manifestos. This change, as I indicated before, resulted from a decline of the importance of the economic sphere and the rise of other methods of social engineering, especially education. Interestingly enough, both Devanites and Revisionists agreed about the importance of education. Crossman had already said in 1950 that the recognition of the importance of education is vital. "It is complete nonsense to talk about equality of opportunity until you have equality of educational opportunity."¹⁸⁾ Only by establishing equality of educational opportunity can the menace of the managerial elite be avoided. Crosland attributed in 1957 major importance to education in his discussion about equality. He demanded equality of educational opportunity in order to avoid "too much éliteness", and too great a detachment and remoteness of those better educated from the rest of the population, and finally in order to avoid wastage of ability and the feeling of frustration created by an educational system based on ability selection.¹⁹⁾ In education, said Crosland, the limited or weak sense of equality of education i.e., access to the grammar schools according to ability, is not sufficient. What is needed to achieve the final goals of Socialism is equality of educational opportunity in the strong sense i.e., the same kind of secondary education.²⁰⁾

18) R. Crossman, "Socialist Values in a Changing Civilization", p. 14.

19) R. Crosland, The Future of Socialism (New York, 1963), p. 165.

20) *ibid.*, p. 169.

B. The Comprehensive Principle in the Fundamental Dimension and in the Policies: The Interaction

As has been mentioned before, Labour left government with a commitment to the comprehensive school, as a specification of the means to achieve equality in the fundamental dimension, while on the policy level Labour Ministers continued to pursue a tri-partite policy to the end. Thus a gap existed between the fundamental ideology and the policies, and consequently between the fundamental and operative dimensions of ideological argumentation. Moreover, even as far as the fundamental dimension is concerned, much had still to be done to consolidate the Labour party around the comprehensive principle.

In opposition the fundamental and the operative dimension became more closely connected as debates in Conference were both about the comprehensive school as a part of the fundamental dimension, and about the implementation of the principle, i.e., about formulation of policies. The power of Conference, as has been said before, was stronger when Labour was in opposition. This power structure inevitably influenced the debates, the resolutions and the party publications. Whereas when Labour was in office it was possible to leave a large gap between a commitment to the comprehensive principle in the fundamental dimension and the actual policies including the arguments justifying them, in opposition the picture was changed. There was no longer a question of Ministers who could defy Conference. Policy

formation was much more an integral and effective feature of Conference, and the P.L.P. was more dependent on Conference and could not afford to formulate policies without some support from Conference. In short, Conference exercised in this period not only an influence on the formation of the fundamental dimension but also on the formulation of policies. Within Conference too, the various lefts also had more power as it was more dangerous to ignore their views both on questions concerning principles and on questions concerning policies. Theoretically it was possible to achieve a harmony between the fundamental dimension and the policies in either of the two following ways: by changing and readapting the policies to the principle of comprehensive school in the fundamental dimension, or by changing the principle in the fundamental dimension in accordance with the policies. One of the purposes of this sub-chapter is to examine how the party closed the gap. Another purpose is to examine the arguments justifying the principle in the fundamental dimension and those justifying the policies (which M. Seliger calls operative ideological arguments), in order to see the place of professional arguments within these two types of ideological arguments, and indeed whether there were any purely professional arguments. At the same time I shall analyse the relation between the P(m)s and other P(t)s, beside the professional arguments, such as electoral considerations etc.

As concluded in Chapter Five, the final authorization for the commitment to the comprehensive school as part of Labour's fundamental

ideology is found in "A Policy for Secondary Education", which was based on proposals of the Conference in 1950, prepared by a Sub-Committee of the N.E.C. and presented by the N.E.C. to Conference in 1951. Although chronologically the document belongs to the time when the party was still in power, it summarised the position of the party regarding the place of the comprehensive schools in the fundamental dimension when Labour left office. It consists of a strong attack on the tri-partite system based mainly on social arguments supplemented by educational considerations. The strong relation between education and "social philosophy" is stated in the beginning and the connection of education to the moral principles is described in the following way: "The principle of equality of educational opportunity is inherent in a social democracy."²¹) Socialism is concerned with the "whole man". Spiritual, or character development is of equal importance to mental growth. Thus even without any other consideration it follows from Labour's fundamental moral principles that to stress mental development only, a concept upon which the eleven plus and tri-partitism were based, is morally wrong. Moreover, the changed nature of society demands broad education not only for the few but for the masses as well. Combine the two moral arguments: the individual's well-being and the society's benefit (a utilitarian argument) and the conclusion is: "It is our view that the tri-partite system of

21) "A Policy for Secondary Education", the Labour Party (London, 1951), p. 3.

education does not provide equality of educational opportunity, and is, therefore, out of line with the needs of the day and with the aspirations of Socialism."²²⁾ It is interesting to note that the argument of "the needs of the day" forms such an important part of the justification of the attack on the tri-partite system. In a later stage this argument will be used more and more. It reflects, of course, also the concern of the party to present its fundamentals as dynamic and not fossilized. The main faults of the tri-partite system are: it is class divided and it is outdated as it reflects the social structure of the 19th century. Both arguments are clearly social and connected with the P(m) of equality. The chief merit of the comprehensive school is consequently mainly social. In the comprehensive school "...all children over eleven could be taught under one roof and could find their own level."²³⁾

Two factors which characterize the tri-partite system are attacked: segregation and selection. Already there is a separate attack on each. Yet the main target was, at that stage, selection. This point is interesting. The attack on selection was already supported, in addition to social considerations, by educational, sociological and psychological arguments strengthened by everyday experience, while the attack on segregation was still overwhelmingly

22) *ibid.*, p. 4.

23) *ibid.*, p. 5.

a question of P(m), i.e., of social considerations regarding equality. The argument against segregation was based in the main on the social effects of segregation - creating in a few pupils a feeling of superiority and in the rest a feeling of inferiority. Other factors were the uneven distribution of grammar school places, and the difficulty of transfer. Grammar schools resisted accepting children after two years in a secondary modern school and there was also the question of creating vacancies. The intense parental and local hostility to transfer down limited the scope to transfer up. (This was the main reason for the introduction of O level in secondary modern schools). The final argument against segregation was the fact that parental choice, emphasised by the 1944 Education Act, was not fully effective as far as the majority of parents were concerned.

The attack on selection was based on the following professional arguments: a) the doubt cast by recent research on the possibility of predicting future development at eleven plus. In other words, the new conception has taken root that the development of children is not equal at any set age. b) the fact that the tests can take no account of staying power. c) the misleading effects of coaching during primary school years.

Thus, the arguments listed were, in the case of segregation, based on P(m) and on some professional considerations, and in the case of selection on professional considerations. Yet, even in the second case the attack was not merely professional as the professional arguments

were linked to moral principles. The final sentence, before the document goes on to discuss the comprehensive school, was: "The comprehensive school avoids all the above educational disadvantages and grave social injustices."²⁴⁾ The professional arguments and experience point out to the educational disadvantages which are at the same time in contrast to the moral principle of equality of opportunity. It is interesting, though, that already at this stage in 1951, the attack on the tri-partite system relied heavily on professional arguments. One is almost tempted to conclude that the party simply grasped with eagerness the first results of the surveys without waiting to check their validity, merely because they supported so nicely the moral argument against selection and segregation. That is to say that professional arguments were being used to strengthen what was basically a case based on moral principles. The object was to present a more objective case in order to achieve a more convincing effect. The second point to be noticed, as I said before, is that most of the fire was, at that stage, directed against selection, while in later years the target became segregation. Presumably the reason was the logical assessment of the necessity to shake first the belief in the eleven plus, which was deeply rooted in all sections of society due to the great impact of the psychological arguments of phase one. "A Policy for Secondary Education" presented for the first time a

24) *ibid.*, p. 8.

definition of the comprehensive school in order to end the terrible confusion regarding the multilateral and the comprehensive school.

"The comprehensive school caters for all children through a system based on a central core of subjects common to all, from which branch classes in specialised subjects taken according to the desire, aptitudes and capacities of the children."²⁵⁾ This is the comprehensive school as it should be. Other requirements, such as a sixth form in each comprehensive school, the size of the sixth form, the size of the school, were defined with elasticity thus leaving room for variations. Again on the question of academic organisation only one thing was stated categorically: "The first two years would be diagnostic years, in which the curriculum would be at first a continuation of primary school with the possible addition of a foreign language, in the first year. From the diagnostic years a picture of aptitude and capacity should emerge."²⁶⁾ From then onwards two alternatives were brought as examples: A. "curriculum pattern" which will be partly cross-setting to suit the abilities of pupils B. complete "cross-setting". The social organisation should be based on some kind of division into houses and tutors, the purpose being to provide individual guidance.

This defines the comprehensive school, as a specification of the ways and means to achieve equality in the fundamental dimension. Yet

25) *ibid.*, p. 9.

26) *ibid.*, p. 11.

the document dealt not only with the comprehensive school as part of the fundamental dimension, but with the ways and means to implement it, i.e., with actual policies by which the principle should be actualized. The following points were made: Usage of old buildings by readapting them until it will be possible to build new schools. Examples were given of how this could be done: the two diagnostic years from 11 to 13 could be housed separately as a lower school or a combined sixth form could be established for several comprehensive schools. This solution was advocated only for cases where no other solution is possible. The change over will not be accompanied by abolishing, through statutory means, the fee paying schools. It was assumed that they will vanish as more and more parents will send their children to comprehensive schools. Neither will the change be accomplished by forcing local education authorities. "The local autonomy should be preserved. It would be wrong to impose a pattern of education upon local authorities."²⁷⁾ Local authorities will require simply to be exposed to more information and persuasion.

Those last two points indicating what should not be done, are of great importance for two reasons: first, it shows clearly that at the level of policy the party was not ready at that point to touch the independent schools or to encroach upon the freedom of local authorities, even if this meant, as it did indeed mean, slowing down the

²⁷⁾ *ibid.*, p. 15.

process of change and not establishing a universal system of comprehensive education. Therefore, although the policies suggested went a long way to implement the comprehensive principle, they did not go the whole way. A gap between the fundamental dimension and the policies remained. Arguments were brought to justify this gap between the policies and the full commitment of the party to the comprehensive principle in the fundamental dimension. As mentioned above it was claimed that with the establishment of comprehensive schools the fee paying schools will wither away, and that the freedom of the local authorities was also a fundamental principle.

These two questions of independent schools and the freedom of local education authorities, precisely because they created a gap between the policies and the fundamental dimension, became later the centre of debate. "A Policy for Secondary Education" finishes, typically, with restating the purely fundamental ideological aim of the comprehensive schools: "...creation of an educational system which will give equality of opportunity and status to all."²⁸⁾

The same arguments that appear in "A Policy for Secondary Education" were presented in Parliament in 1952. Miss A. Bacon stressed that, according to professional argument "Is it not clear that there is no satisfactory method of selecting children at the age of eleven for different types of secondary education, and would not the Right

²⁸⁾ *ibid.*, p. 15.

Hon. Lady agree that the only right method is to ensure comprehensive schools?"²⁹⁾ Labour in Parliament constantly tried to emphasize the professional arguments and stood firmly against the interference of the Minister with the plans of local authorities. They expressed their views strongly on the question of Kidbrooke comprehensive school, accusing the Minister of fabricating the resistance to the plan in the area and of pursuing the general policy of allowing the establishment of comprehensive schools only in areas where selection existed, which would sabotage them. In spite of the emphasis on professional arguments the issue of the comprehensive school became evidently a party issue. This was to sharpen in the coming years. Labour's literature shows indeed that despite the usage of professional arguments, Labour was promoting the comprehensive school primarily because it supplied the key to a classless society, and also because in education itself it led to equality of educational opportunity. In Margaret Cole's words: "...I do not believe that any Socialist can call any educational system Socialist or even democratic which does not bring children together in a common school life, whatever their parents' income or previous history. If there is any other system in operation, it may have any merit you care to ascribe to it, but it is not Socialist."³⁰⁾ M. Cole mentions also the educational advantage

29) Hansard, vol. 497. p. 631.

30) M. Cole, "Education and Social Democracy", in R. Crossman, (ed.), New Fabian Essays, op.cit., pp. 108-109.

of comprehensive schools and deals with the problem of size, but these are of secondary importance as the above quotation shows. According to her, if you have, hypothetically, one system of secondary education which is better educationally but non-egalitarian, and another which is less good educationally but egalitarian, Socialists should support the second. Professional arguments are secondary to the P(m)s, which are the reason for the integration of the comprehensive school into the fundamental dimension of Labour's ideology. Interestingly, M. Cole, while speaking about policies adopted a line similar to that in "Policy for Secondary Education". She rejected the exercise of coercion on local education authorities and was against instant suppression of the grammar and public schools. She justified this gap, between the final goals and the policies she advocated, by describing the policies as necessities resulting from a period of transition. The following is a typical justification for a deviation of policies from fundamental principles: "The question of segregation or non-segregation is ultimately a question of principle, on which compromise is not possible. But we are very far from the ultimate stage, and it is certain that compromise, in the sense of several co-existing systems will remain for a considerable time to come."³¹⁾ Policies are influenced by the fundamental dimension which gives the direction but are moulded by circumstances, which

31) *ibid.*, p. 110.

can mean only partial fulfilment of the fundamentals or even a complete deviation from them. Therefore in most cases, when in fact the policies do not correspond exactly to the fundamental dimension, there will arise the necessity of justifying the deviation, (as M. Cole does,) by emphasizing the technical limitations which reduce an un-compromisable principle to a policy of compromise. This compromise is presented as only a stage toward the final goal. That is to say, the P(t) is the reason for the compromise, but the compromise is justified also as a necessary stage for the achievement of the fundamental P(m).

The 1952 Annual Conference repeated the inclusion of the comprehensive principle in Labour's fundamental ideology. Nobody spoke, at this Conference, against the comprehensive schools yet the fact that Labour Constituency Parties did little for the implementation of the principle, even in Labour controlled local authorities, speaks for itself, and the gap between commitment and action did not remain unnoticed. The composite resolution moved by Mr. Leonard Cope, stressed this point of the discrepancy between the party's commitment on the national level and the implementation of the policy by the various local education authorities. Mr. J. Johnson, seconding the resolution said: "The position with regard to comprehensive schools is a most peculiar one. Everybody is in favour of it. But with very few honourable exceptions nobody is doing any thing about it. It seems to me that you come here, you vote for resolutions dealing with

comprehensive schools and you have reservations at the back of your minds which prevent you from getting on with them in your localities. What are the reservations?...First you have been bamboozled by those who refer to the size of comprehensive schools. Secondly there is the problem of standards."³²⁾ This indicates that most of the representatives attending the Conference had inner doubts, because of professional considerations about the merit of the comprehensive schools, which were reflected on the policy level. While, as Socialists, they could not refrain from supporting the comprehensive school for its social advantages, when it came to action professional arguments were stronger than purely moral principles. (Perhaps the fact that they had to make choices about their own children increased their hesitation). It was, thus, necessary first of all to persuade the Labour members themselves as to the educational grounds, if policies were to be in harmony with the fundamental dimension. This is the explanation of the growing emphasis on professional arguments, as they were vital to influence on the policy level. If on the fundamental level it was enough to justify the comprehensive school by the egalitarian creed, on the operative level this obviously was not sufficient. Therefore most of the arguments in 1952 no longer stressed the social benefits of comprehensive schools in the main, as these were already taken for granted, but emphasis was laid on the educational advantages, and on

32) 1952 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 174.

the ways and means of implementing the principle. The moment the comprehensive principle had to be translated into policies, the most important issues became: a) how to "sell" the idea to Labour itself and to the public at large. b) in view of the existing conditions to find ways to transfer secondary education to comprehensive lines.

Both questions belong clearly to the sphere of policy, and the arguments justifying the suggestions that followed constitute the operative dimension of ideology. In the 1952 Conference the following suggestions were made: a) "Labour groups throughout the country should be informed directly of the decisions of Conference."³³⁾ It should be explained that questions of size should not constitute a problem as the public schools are also large. The abler children will not suffer since for subjects such as mathematics children would be separated. But the speaker who outlined the professional merits of the comprehensive school did not merely present a purely professional argument. He connected the professional arguments to the moral principles: "If we can have the children co-operating together for a mutual purpose - the improvement of their education - then, and only then, are we going to have a firm democratic basis for the extension of a Socialist society."³⁴⁾ b) As for the ways and means the main proposal was moved by Dr. E.C. Webb. His suggestion was clearly a

33) *ibid.*, p. 174.

34) *ibid.*

compromise. He said that in order to abolish selection at eleven "...experiment with various patterns of secondary schooling, including its division into two stages, the first of which shall be in a comprehensive school"³⁵⁾ should be carried out. The speakers who followed, Mr. T.J. Marsh and Mrs. Margaret Potter, stressed their commitment to the comprehensive school but emphasised the difficulties of implementing it: the opposition of the Tory Minister of Education, the scarcity of money and the problem of the public schools. The arguments were again very confused and Miss A. Bacon, speaking for the N.E.C. had to make clear what the "division into two stages" meant: "...I understand that they feel that in some rural areas there will not be sufficient children to maintain a sixth form of a proper size in a comprehensive school, and what they would like to have is schools in some rural areas up to the normal school leaving age of fifteen, and then one school for a larger area for children from 15 to 18 years of age."³⁶⁾ When interpreted in this way the suggestion deviated only a little from the comprehensive principle in the fundamental dimension, but as the suggestion was very practical, in view of the conditions described, the small deviation could be ignored. It is important to remember that A. Bacon, for the N.E.C., accepted this suggestion in 1952 only in the above mentioned interpretation:

35) *ibid.*, p. 175.

36) *ibid.*, p. 176.

"Therefore, on the understanding that the resolution means my interpretation of it, we are prepared to accept it."³⁷⁾

The future lines of the debate on comprehensive schools were formulated according to Miss A. Bacon's summary of the discussion. "Nearly all of us believe in the principle, but as time goes on and as we develop our educational system along existing lines it will become more and more difficult to change from those existing lines to a policy of comprehensive schools.... But even if we get all the buildings we desire, even though we get all the teachers we desire, I believe there is still a great deal of educational reform which Socialists would still wish to carry out, because we must have in mind the two sides of the problem, the practical side of buildings and teachers and so on, and the other side of educational reform which we in Labour wish to carry out.... I urge you, therefore, to pass all these resolutions, but to go back to your Constituency Parties and see that your local authorities put into operation, or try to put into operation, some of the things we have passed here this morning."³⁸⁾

Labour was indeed confronted in the operative level with an abundance of problems which entailed arranging a scale of priorities, devising those ways and means by which it would be possible, at the

37) *ibid.*, p. 176.

38) *ibid.*, pp. 176-177.

same time, to implement the comprehensive principle as it was formulated in the fundamental dimension, and to carry this through in the then prevailing conditions. In turn, this required: persuading the local education authorities including labour controlled ones; providing a period of transition in which the problems of teachers, buildings etc. should be tackled; devising a policy against that of the Tory Minister, and, in the event of Labour's returning to office, deciding how to behave toward those local authorities which would refuse to co-operate.

All these practical questions had to be solved with regard to the F(t)s and in the light of the comprehensive principle as formulated in the fundamental dimension. To effect this the N.E.C. set up a social services Sub-Committee. It reported in March 1953, criticising the lack of any challenging policy in "Let Us Face the Future" and in the 1951 policy statement. It again attacked the tri-partite system mainly on social lines and stated that the party had to change the secondary education; not only do Socialist principles demand it; electorally a policy which showed how to do away with the gross inequalities of the present school system could win a great deal of popularity.³⁹⁾ Interestingly, the actual proposals for the transference of the tri-partite system into a comprehensive system relied on the resolution proposed by Webb in the 1952

39) Labour Party, Research Memoranda, R. 240/March 1953.

Conference: Junior comprehensive school till the age of 15 and a Senior school from 15 to 18. The snag in this proposal was that it did not interpret Webb's resolution in the same manner as A. Bacon did and therefore not on the grounds on which it was approved in the 1952 Conference. It is obvious that while the Junior Comprehensive was to be nonselective, the Sub-Committee meant the Senior School to be an elitist institution in practice, if not in theory, as a child's transfer to a different Senior School would be encouraged much more by middle class parents than by working class ones. The N.E.C., despite this, accepted the Sub-Committee's conclusion and included it in "Challenge to Britain" published in 1952 and brought before the 1953 Conference. The attraction of the two-tier system was that it avoided selection and segregation at eleven at the same time as it resolved the problem of big comprehensive schools while providing a way by which existing buildings could be utilized. The question remains: is this system compatible with the comprehensive school principle in the fundamental dimension, or does it deviate too much from it and thus from the P(m) of equality.

The 1953 Conference debate was centered around this question. The policies were discussed in light of the fundamental dimension. The chairman's speech stressed the ethical goals of Socialism and the importance of education as a mean to achieve the equal society: "...our Socialism is a moral rather than a material faith, and...the challenge of our times is as much ethical as economic. Our belief in

equality does not mean that we merely wish to secure a more equal distribution of man's worldly goods.... We believe that it is only in a more egalitarian society that human beings can live a full life, that they can have the fullest opportunity of developing their talents and their personalities."⁴⁰⁾ The importance of the P(n)s, and the necessity that policies should be in harmony with them was emphasized by James Griffith who opened the debate on "Challenge to Britain". He said: "...for our party a programme is not something to forget and discard, but a mandate to carry out and a chart of action to implement."⁴¹⁾ The programme should be judged according to its adequacy, practicability and finally "...will the programme when carried to fruition take us a stage nearer to the goal, that new social order which it is our major purpose and objective to establish."⁴²⁾

The educational programme should, therefore, be judged on practical lines and on its relation to the fundamental dimension. In other words: the ways and means to implement the comprehensive school principle should be judged according to their practicability and according to their relation to the principle of comprehensive school education as formulated in the fundamental dimension.

The original section on secondary education in "Challenge to

40) 1953 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 84.

41) *ibid.*, p. 85.

42) *ibid.*, p. 86.

Britain" attacked the eleven plus examination for professional reasons which were connected to moral principles: a) it may be possible at this age to pick out the exceptionally bright or exceptionally backward child, but the vast majority are not in either of these categories. b) the number of grammar school places vary geographically. "Such discrimination is both unfair and educationally unsound. It can only be ended by doing away with the segregation of children into grammar, technical and modern schools."⁴³⁾ The action suggested was: "Labour will abolish the eleven plus examination, because it is convinced that all children would benefit if, between the ages of eleven and fifteen, they shared the facilities, both social and academic, of one secondary school."⁴⁴⁾ Because of shortage in new buildings local education authorities will be encouraged, wherever possible, to start the reorganisation without waiting for new buildings. "We, therefore, propose that the new secondary schools should cater for children up to the statutory school-leaving age, and those who remain at school after fifteen would move on to high schools."⁴⁵⁾ In order that lack of means will not become a cause for leaving at fifteen a standard allowance will be paid to those in need by the central government. "Our aim is to end privilege in education..."⁴⁶⁾

43) *ibid.*, p. 75.

44) *ibid.*, p. 75.

45) *ibid.*

46) *ibid.*, p. 76.

Two-tier system, with a break at fifteen, was suggested because of practical reasons and justified as leading toward the end of privilege in education. This is what the document claimed. However, the proposal did not appeal to the majority of Conference delegates and it was argued that by adopting the two-tier system the principle of comprehensive schools as formulated in the fundamental dimension would not be implemented. Such policy would create a gap between the fundamental dimension and the level of action. Again, hypothetically, the party could choose one of the two possibilities if it wanted to eliminate that gap: pursue the two-tier policy and change the principle in the fundamental dimension, or pursue only such policy which is in harmony with the principle.

Evidently Labour chose in the 1953 Conference to follow the second course. The composite amendment moved by the M.A.L.T. emphasized that the two-tier system cannot be regarded as the only way of organising comprehensive schools. "The new Secondary Schools, catering for all children attending school between the ages of 11 and 18 may be organised in a variety of ways, depending on local wishes and circumstances..."⁴⁷⁾ "We believe" said Mr. Norman Morris "that the scheme that they have put forward is one way only."⁴⁸⁾ The main argument against one scheme was to safeguard the local authorities'

47) *ibid.*, p. 167.

48) *ibid.*, p. 168.

freedom of action, which proved necessary as the experiments in London showed. But there should be no dubiety: all methods have to be "...within the principle of comprehensive education in the secondary stage."⁴⁹⁾ A much stronger rejection of the two-tier suggestion was contained in the amendment moved by Mrs. Chaplin. While the N.A.L.T. amendment regarded the two-tier system as in accord with the comprehensive school principle (although probably in the 1952 interpretation), Mrs. Chaplin, voicing the majority Labour view, thought differently: "Now we, alongside many other Parties and many people interested in education throughout the country were extremely distressed to see the proposal in 'Challenge to Britain' for a break in secondary education at the age of fifteen. We have advocated always that education should be in one common school for all children up to the time of leaving, This proposal in 'Challenge to Britain' is something entirely foreign to that conception."⁵⁰⁾ She advocated other ways of utilizing various buildings such as a junior school for children of the ages 11 to 13, when socially the younger children will still meet the older. The main objection to the break at 15 was that it established a senior school which will have an élitistic character. As has been mentioned before, in practice such a break would mean that a lot of children, especially from working-class families, who might

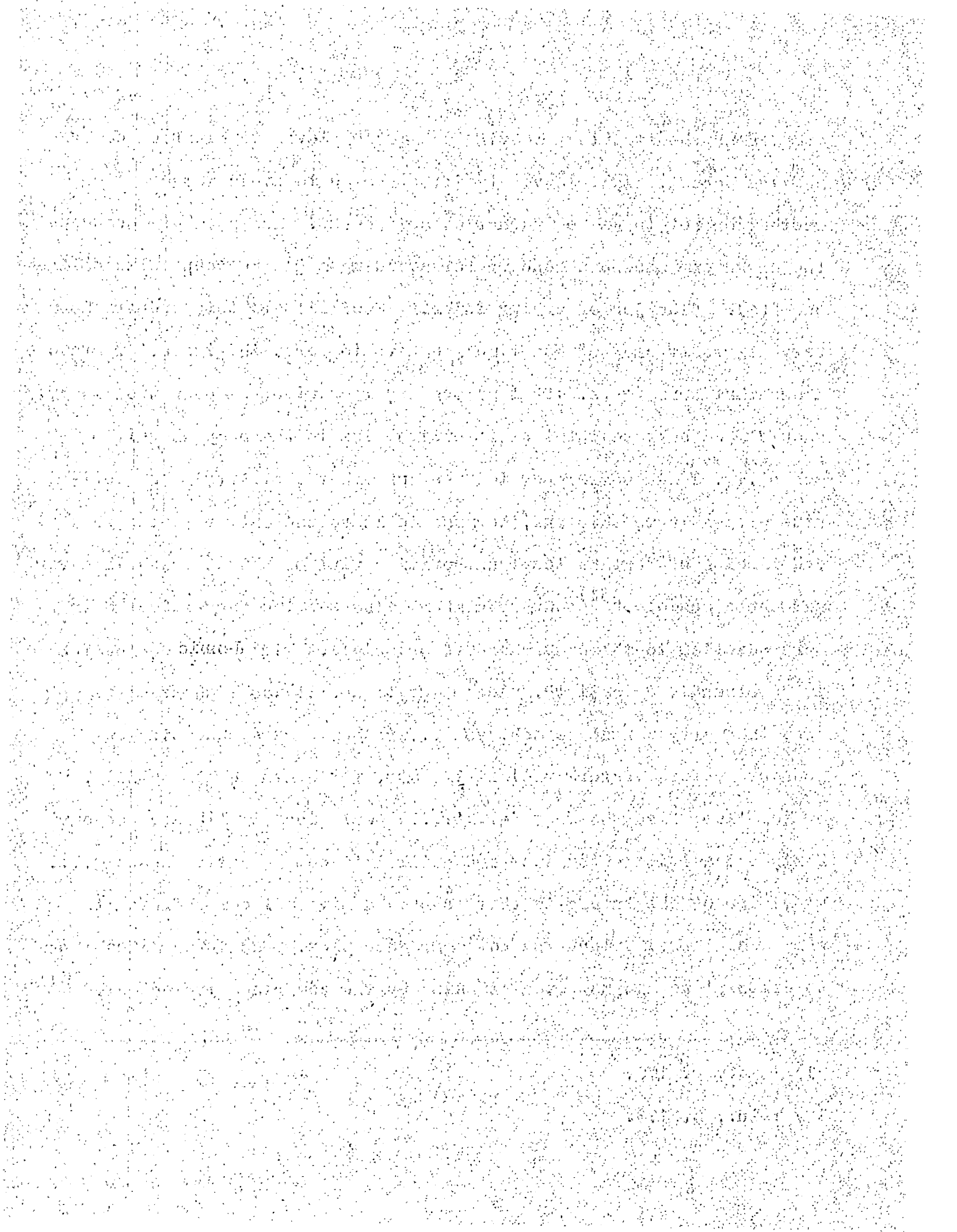
49) *ibid.*

50) *ibid.*, p. 170.

stay after the statutory leaving age in an eleven to eighteen comprehensive school, might leave at fifteen so as to avoid the decision whether or not to go to another establishment. The speaker seconding the amendment showed a concern for avoiding a gap between policies and the P(m). "The job of trying to bring Socialism to this country is a very difficult one and sometime you have to force the issue. Therefore I ask that Conference, if it passes any resolution on education today, should make sure that the basis of its aims is the comprehensive school.... I ask Conference to make sure that the Party makes definite proposals to this end, because to leave the matter to the whims and fancies of certain local authorities will mean that we shall never get these schools."⁵¹⁾ Other members also saw the suggestion as in contradiction to the comprehensive principle. Miss Jennie Lee called it "profoundly defeatist". According to her it was a question of what the party wanted to achieve "...whether we are educating our youngsters for a future Socialist state, for a managerial society, or for 'long live the Tory Party'....I would ideally like to see our Party put all its enthusiasm and skill into comprehensive schools.... My vision of the future is that we should give all our children the same social environment and not segregate them. But in our 'Challenge to Britain' we are not even standing by the comprehensive school."⁵²⁾

51) *ibid.*, p. 170.

52) *ibid.*, p. 173.



A clear pattern emerges: the greater the centrality given by the speaker to Socialist principles, the stronger his objection to the break at fifteen. Other considerations were carried in mind but the overriding factor were the moral principles. Thus the solution to the practical problem of organising comprehensive schools in spite of the shortage of buildings should be: to utilize the existing buildings but only in a way that does not deviate from the comprehensive principle as a specification for the achievement of equality and as an institution for the promotion of fellowship. Mr. A. Deakin described the reaction of many administrators to the break at fifteen as "dis-may", and asked the N.E.C. to re-write this section.

There were, of course, minority views which also attacked the paragraphs regarding secondary education in 'Challenge to Britain', but these were on opposing grounds: they claimed that the proposals were too radical. Mr. A.H. Yates asked "...to allow for experiment in a wide variety of school, including comprehensive schools, to suit local needs." And contrary to the party's official commitment to abolish all kind of selection at eleven plus he argues that "We will introduce alternative methods of selection instead of the eleven plus examination."⁵³⁾ The proposals of this minority were based on professional arguments linked to the pre-war notion of equality of educational opportunity: the danger to the standards of education for the

53) *ibid.*, p. 168.

working class children if there were to be an immediate changeover. The elimination of grammar schools would mean that those working class children who do enter grammar schools in the tri-partite system would lose this opportunity. This was again the pre-war concept of equality of educational opportunity and a number of local education authorities remained faithful to this concept. For the minority, abolishing grammar schools meant closing the doors of university to working class children. Working class children will have to go to comprehensive schools while middle class children will be able to go to public schools.

Both majority and minority tried to show that their suggestions were based on the correct interpretation of equality of educational opportunity. But clearly, from these two interpretations of equality, the stronger one, i.e., the same secondary education for all and not merely equal opportunity of access to grammar schools, was the one adopted by Labour. The minority's interpretation was regarded as false as the party was on the whole thinking along the lines of the professional arguments of phase two, which showed that access to a grammar school according to ability, did not abolish inequality as ability was conditioned largely by environmental factors. Thus, although the discussion was supposed to be only about policies, it turned out to be also about the fundamental principles as they were invoked through the discussion about policies. In view of the apathy of local authorities and because of professional doubts about the

1. The first part of the document is a letter from the President of the United States to the Congress, dated January 3, 1862. It is a very long letter, and it contains a great deal of information about the state of the country at that time. The President talks about the war with Mexico, and about the situation in the South. He also talks about the economy, and about the need for more money. The letter is written in a very formal style, and it is very long. It is a very important document, and it is one of the most important documents in the history of the United States.

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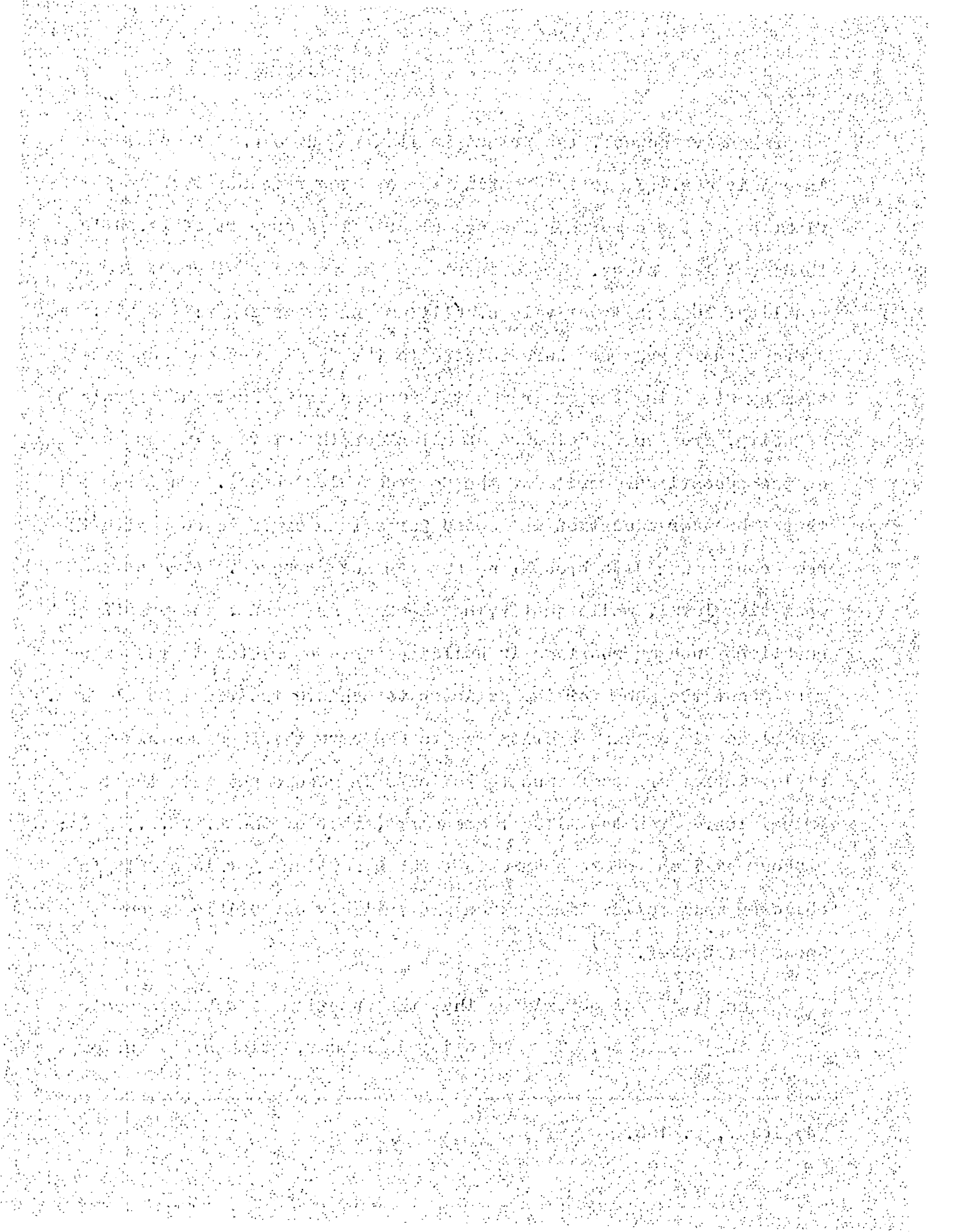
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comprehensive school, the principle itself had to be defended, and so indeed it was. It is interesting to note the reasons given in justification of the comprehensive school principle as part of Labour's fundamental ideology. Predominant was the familiar argument for equality: abolishing privilege, élitism and promoting fellowship. The professional arguments were related to the moral ones and supported them by stressing the environmental factors as against the effects of heredity, from which followed an attack on the eleven plus and emphasis on the educational merits of the comprehensive school. The argument that a broader education is needed for all in order to cope with the new economy was also brought up but was not stressed. Also on the operative level, while justifying the ways and means, the practical questions such as shortage in buildings were connected to the argument about the need for the policies to achieve the final moral goal. The basic aim of the majority was to preserve the fundamental principles intact and to formulate policies in accordance with these principles. Even the mildest amendment, that of the N.A.L.T., said: "Labour will therefore ensure that the education of this country's children will follow lines which are entirely compatible to our Socialist belief."⁵⁴)

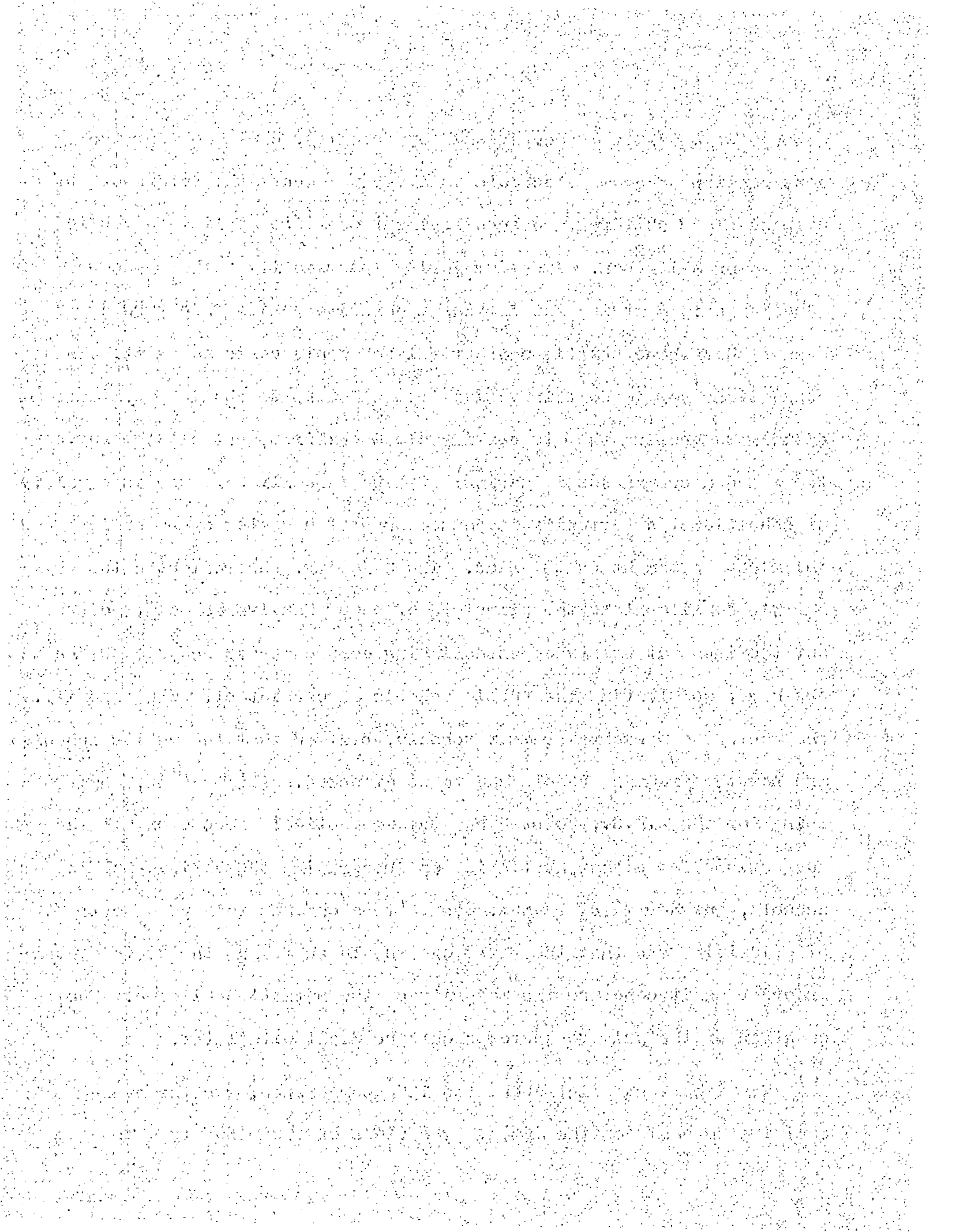
Thus it is not surprising that the question of public schools gained in importance. If a minority in Labour, sticking to the old

54) *ibid.*, p. 166.



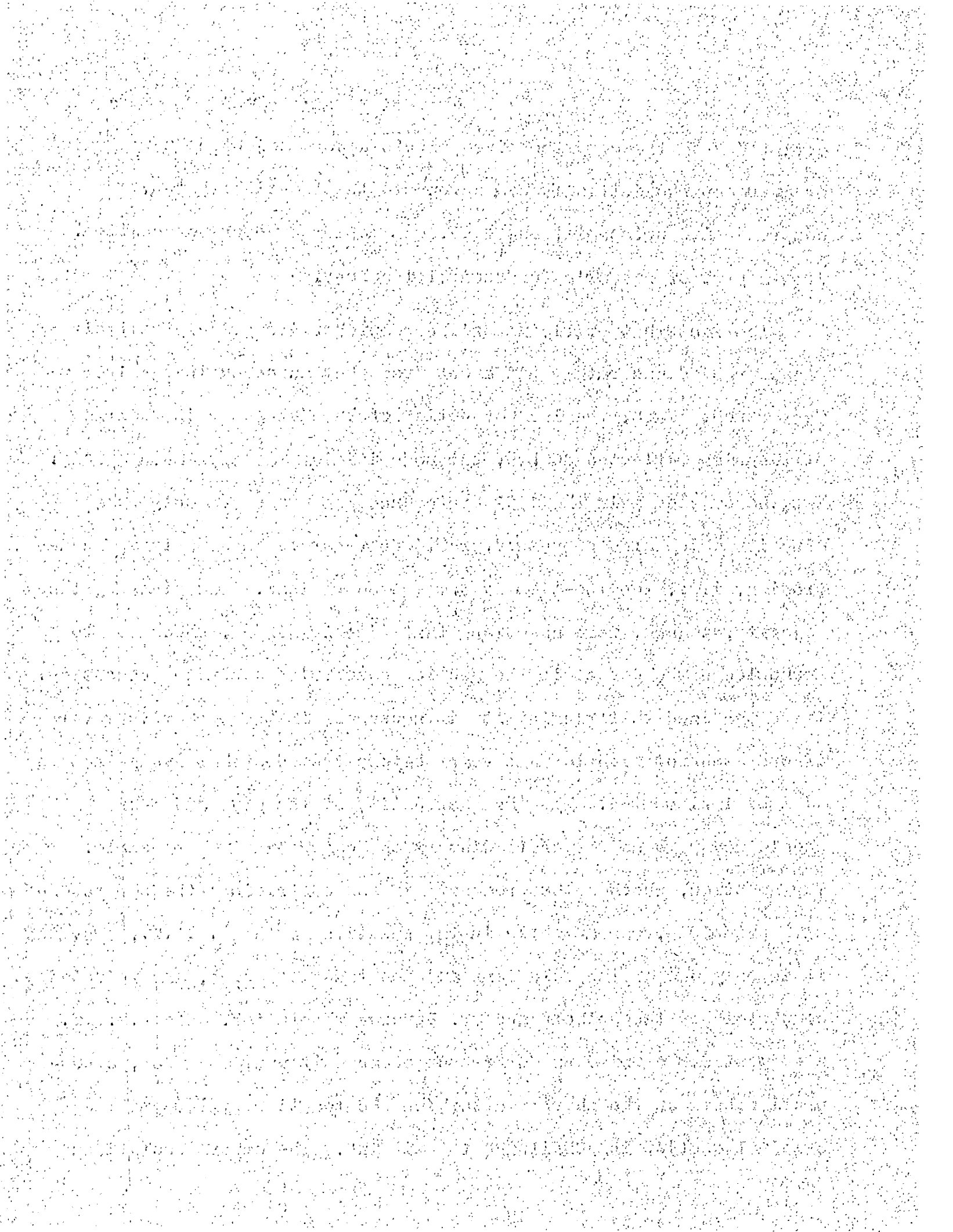
concept of equality of educational opportunity, could ask for the continuation of grammar schools in order to secure the future of able working class children, no such argument could be applied to public schools of all kinds. Indeed majority and minority alike condemned "Challenge to Britain" for lacking a definite policy which would ensure that these "bastions of privilege" would cease to exist. The suggestions how to do this varied from a demand to abolish them immediately to opening them to working class children; but all the suggestions had a common justification: if Labour really believes in equality of educational opportunity it cannot support a system of education which can be bought by the rich. The majority, who reflected the party's commitment to the principle of comprehensive schools, pointed out the incompatibility of establishing comprehensive schools on the one hand, and leaving the public schools almost intact. The minority, who wanted to preserve grammar schools, claimed that the public schools and not the grammar schools had to be attacked. Alice Bacon, summarising for the N.E.C., pointed out the impractical aspects of all the suggestions for either abolishing or integrating the various public schools, but her main argument was that Labour has to have a scale of priorities and that the first one should be to put the state system in order as it concerns the majority of the nation's children. The question of the private sector should be dealt with later.

The important point about the 1953 Conference, was the overwhelming emphasis on the P(m)s. The views of the minority which



deviated from the comprehensive principle were rejected sharply also by A. Bacon who initially had agreed to the two-tier system. The comprehensive principle, she said, was no longer open to question. It was part of Labour's fundamental ideology.

The fact that criticism on the comprehensive principle itself was expressed was rather different from what happened in the 1952 Conference. Then, the lack of action of the delegates in their constituencies reflected doubts, but no criticism was expressed openly. Yet the criticism in the 1953 Conference was expressed only by a minority which also condemned, what was regarded as a policy of compromise, i.e., the two-tier system as too radical. The views of the majority, though, were so strong that finally Miss A. Bacon had to acknowledge the defect in the section concerning secondary education. She emphasized that flexibility is necessary in the operative level if one does not wish to wait years before the comprehensive principle will be implemented. But the flexibility of the ways and means should never go so far as to distort the comprehensive principle. The question, whether the break at fifteen contradicts the comprehensive principle, was answered in the negative by the N.A.L.T., provided it is only one of the solutions and not the single one, and rejected completely by the Holborn and St. Pancras resolution. The N.A.L.T. amendment was carried by Conference because it was, in a way, a compromise between the sharper attack on the two-tier system and the original section in "Challenge to Britain". The other resolutions



were defeated. Yet, this did not solve the problem, concerning the break at fifteen, as a lot of delegates certainly felt that this form of organisation was not compatible with the principle of comprehensive education.

As a result of the debate in Conference, "Challenge to Britain" was republished later in 1953 and the section on secondary education was changed. It became longer and more radical. The professional arguments, while related to the P(m)s, were further elaborated as it was felt that Labour itself, although convinced about the social arguments, had yet to be persuaded on professional grounds in order that the candidates could translate into action within their localities their commitment to the comprehensive principle in the fundamental dimension. Another change was the replacement of the previous section dealing with the two-tier system by the following statement: "Labour will abolish the practice of selection at eleven plus for different types of school because it is convinced that all children would benefit if during the whole of the period of the secondary education they shared the facilities, both social and educational of one comprehensive school."⁵⁵) In order to leave to the local authorities freedom of action, within the principle of comprehensive schooling and to enable them to use old buildings, it was stated that although the best solution was the establishment of one school catering for all children

55) "Challenge to Britain" a statement of policy as approved by the Party Annual Conference, the Labour Party (London, 1953), p. 21.

between 11 to 18, "When this will cause unavoidable delay in putting the comprehensive principle into operation, the local authorities will be encouraged to house a comprehensive school in two or more buildings grouped according to age."⁵⁶⁾ Thus the two-tier system was to be used only when a greater danger than a break at fifteen faced the comprehensive principle.

The power of Conference in this instance is obvious. The changes introduced in "Challenge to Britain" bore a very strong resemblance to the amendment moved by the N.A.L.E.⁵⁷⁾ The N.E.C. was probably influenced as well by the criticism passed on the original programme by Ralph Morley and Michael Stewart. M. Stewart made a very strong case against the original policy and to the arguments presented in the 1953 Conference, added that if Labour wanted to implement the comprehensive school principle and to sell it to the local education authorities it had to throw away caution and to present a strong policy.⁵⁸⁾

The amendment of "Challenge to Britain" succeeded in creating again an image of party solidarity around the comprehensive principle. The gap between the policies devised in order to implement the comprehensive principle and the principle in the fundamental dimension, was

⁵⁶⁾ *ibid.*, p. 217.

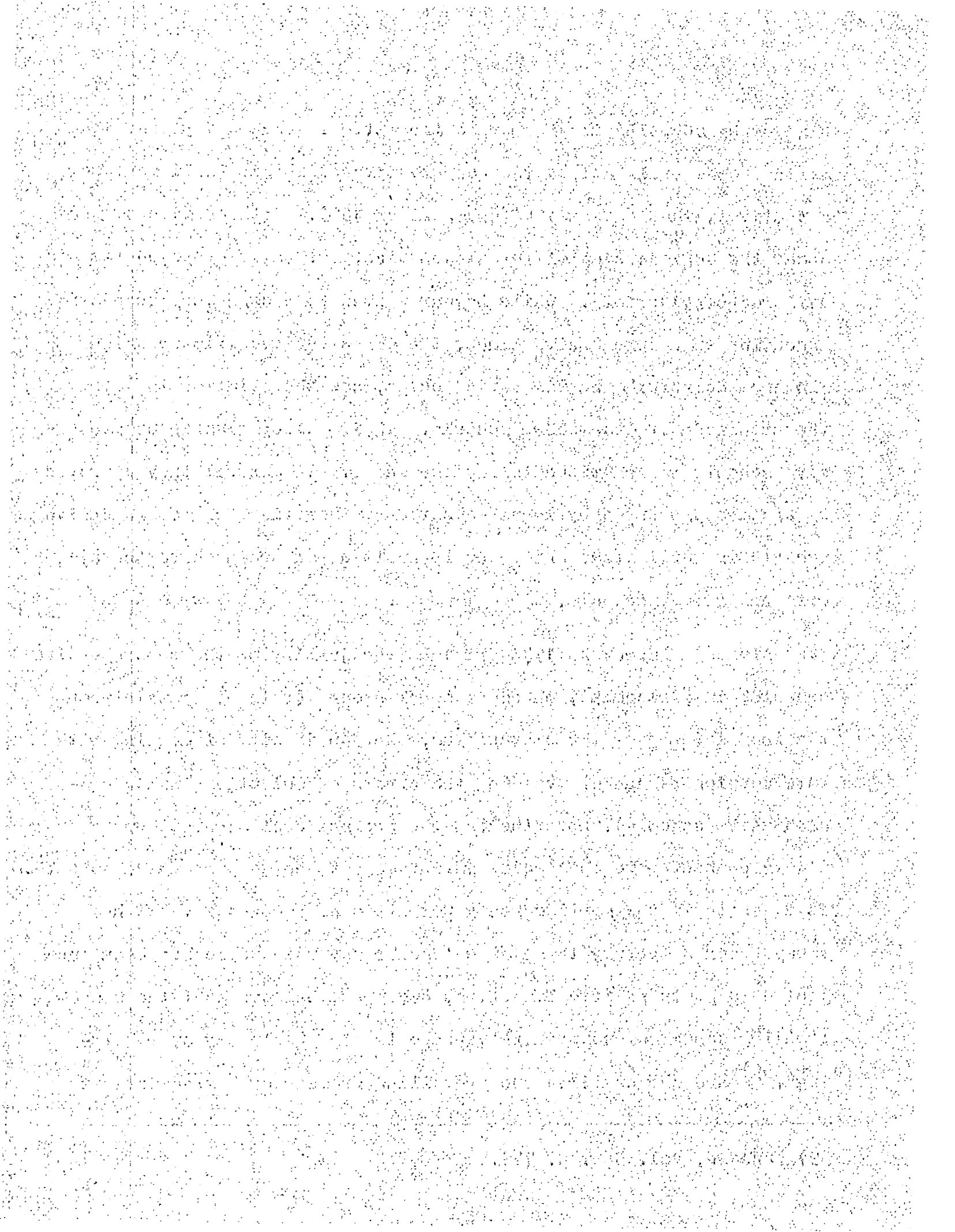
⁵⁷⁾ For comparison see 1953 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 167.

⁵⁸⁾ New Statesman, 25 July 1953.

bridged by adapting the former to the latter. Once unity prevailed again Labour could attack the Conservative policy in Parliament more effectively than during 1952 and part of 1953. Both parties agreed about the deficiencies of the eleven plus, but their proposed remedies differed considerably. While Labour wanted to reorganise secondary education on comprehensive lines, the Conservative Ministers Miss Florence Horsbrugh and Sir David Eccles, saw the solution in raising the standards of the modern schools. Their policy towards comprehensive schools was cautious to say the least. In general they approved of schemes presented by local education authorities for comprehensive schools in rural areas and in newly built urban areas where there were no grammar schools.

Although Labour in 1954 and 1955 was justifying the comprehensive schools, in Parliament, on educational ground (this being mainly on the inefficiency of the eleven plus, the possibility of dealing with late developers and of avoiding the errors of selection inside comprehensive schools), nevertheless the professional arguments were always connected to the social advantages of the comprehensive schools. In a debate in the Parliamentary Committee A. Bacon said, "It has always been a mystery to me as a teacher why this topic has been subjected to party political warfare, because I believe that the educational grounds for comprehensive schools are absolutely overwhelming",⁵⁹⁾ and she outlined the prevailing professional arguments at

59) Hansard, vol. 540, p. 773.



that period. Yet, although she claimed that her case rested on educational grounds it did not rest ultimately on these grounds. Disguised, as it was, the moral goal of equality was there: "What do we believe?", asked A. Bacon at the same speech. "On this side of the Committee we believe that separation at eleven is wrong. We believe that all children at eleven ought to proceed to one secondary school..."⁶⁰⁾ Sir Eccles replied by saying: "The Hon. Lady said with much emphasis that it was not politics at all, but it is difficult for us to believe that." He proceeded to quote from the meeting of the London Labour Party on 26th February: "Comprehensive schools will help to create a more Socialist outlook."⁶¹⁾

Throughout this period Labour pressed for the establishment of a departmental committee which would deal with the question of eleven plus, but the Minister refused constantly, arguing that the best way was to learn from the various experiments of local education authorities.

The interesting thing about the 1954 and 1955 Conferences is the lack of any debate about secondary education. The party was united after the second publication of "Challenge to Britain" both on the comprehensive school principle and on the ways and means to implement it. The gap between the fundamental ideology and policies was

60) *ibid.*

61) *ibid.*, p. 791.

reduced to questions of compulsion and the policy toward the private sector. The focus of attention was shifted, accordingly, to the tactical problem: how best to sell the idea of comprehensive secondary education to the local education authorities in view of the small number of comprehensive school plans produced by the local authorities. The basic issue was: if Labour were to return to power whether it should force local education authorities to go comprehensive, and how quickly this should be done. Some, like Margaret Cole and Lady Simon were against coercion and advocated a huge propaganda campaign. The N.A.L.T., the Policy and Publicity Sub-Committee had a different view - coercion would be essential. The N.A.L.T. saw in legislation the only way to make local education authorities reorganise secondary education by abolishing selection at eleven.

The whole matter was political and the interesting fact is that the N.A.L.T. stressed that the coercion was to be applied on a social, and not on any educational matter. To enforce educational dogma is wrong, but to enforce social requirements is right. And as fundamentally, despite the increasing reliance on professional arguments, comprehensive schools were adopted by the party basically for their social consequences, a policy of coercion is in place.⁶²⁾ Coercion was justified, in this case, because it enforced social matters and helped to achieve harmony between the comprehensive principle in the fundamental

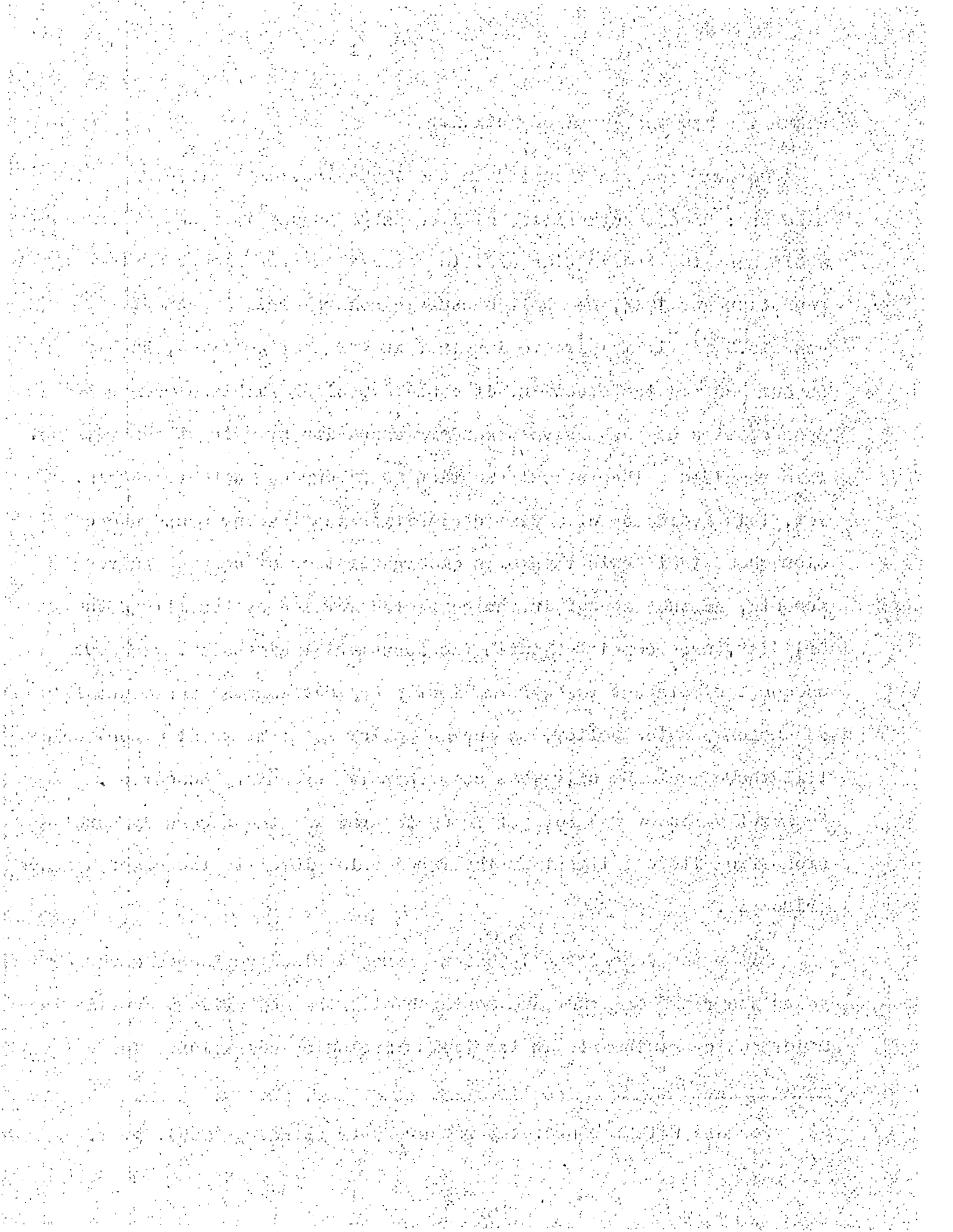
62) Labour Party, Research Memoranda, R. 375/June 1954.

dimension and the level of action.

However the line adopted in the 1955 Election Manifesto was the mild one: "Local authorities will be asked to submit schemes for abolishing the examination and, to realise the fulfilment of the Education Act 1944, we shall encourage comprehensive secondary schools."⁶³) It is hard to imagine, in terms of politics, how if Labour had won the election, it could establish within a reasonable span of time comprehensive secondary education by using these methods. This remained a theoretical question as Labour was defeated again. Yet, this avoidance of a firm declaration that Labour would use coercion shows that while the forms of organisation of comprehensive schools, as they appear in the corrected version of "Challenge to Britain", were consistent with the fundamental dimension, the way chosen to implement these forms left a gap between the fundamental dimension and the policy, as such a policy meant at least a long delay till there would be universal comprehensive secondary education. Apparently Labour was not yet ready to draw all the necessary conclusions from its commitment in the fundamental level to the comprehensive principle.

After the defeat the 1955 Conference decided to launch a three years programme of study and research with the objective of publishing major policy statements in ten fields including education. The

63) "Forward with Labour", the Labour Party (London, 1955), p. 3.



reason for this wholesale "re-thinking" was explained in the 1956 Conference by the chairman Edwin Gooch: "We have a double task; firstly to think out clearly and present to the electorate the policies we shall adopt when we return to power, and secondly to convince the electorate that these policies are sound. In other words, we need a programme which, as convinced Socialists, we believe will take us significantly nearer our ultimate goal. But it must also be a programme that will show every thinking voter that Labour has a practical solution to the immediate problems that will confront any Government. We cannot doubt that only a Socialist approach can provide an answer to these problems. But in order to translate our Socialist faith into concrete policies of action, rigorous discipline of thought and an awareness of changing realities are needed."⁶⁴⁾ This is perhaps the clearest statement possible about the relationship between the fundamental dimension and the policies. Labour should provide policies which will be both practical and in harmony with the fundamental dimension. The policies, because they have to be practical as well, cannot implement the fundamental P(m)s here and now, they can only bring society nearer to the ultimate goal. Thus it can be expected that considerations of expediency, technical possibilities and the like, though connected to the P(m), will have centrality in the

64) 1956 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 69.

programme. The policies have to be practical even if this means achieving only little as far as the moral principles are concerned.

The fundamental principles were stated again: "Our Ideal is a community in which class struggle and bitterness, selfishness and greed, will be replaced by a spirit of brotherhood and kindness and an atmosphere of social equality."⁶⁵⁾ Clearly the emphasis is on the ethical aspects of Socialism. "Towards Equality" which was introduced to the 1956 Conference by Harold Wilson, was already a result of the "re-thinking". The general aspects of this policy statement were discussed in the 1956 Conference. Though it was decided to discuss education in the next Conference (in the end the discussion took place only in 1958), H. Wilson remarked not only on the connection between equality of educational opportunity and equality in industry and professions, but made the point that this is not merely a question of educational policy but a question of administration as well.⁶⁶⁾ In our context this means that if you want to have equality in education it is not enough to decide upon the forms of comprehensive schools, the usage of adequate means for implementation is needed. This is precisely what the party failed to do in 1955.

"Towards Equality" did not go into any detail about secondary education policies. It is essentially a document which summarises

65) *ibid.*, p. 69.

66) *ibid.*, p. 118.

Labour's opposition to the existing tri-partite system, and to private schools of all sorts. The main arguments were of the purely fundamental ideological type. Interestingly there was an attempt in the document to justify the actions of the two Labour Ministers of Education. It was explained that the original intention was to provide secondary education of different types but of the same standard to suit, according to the professional arguments at that period, the different needs of children. What happened in practice was that the modern school supplied a much more limited education than the grammar school. Probably the party felt it had to explain the gap between its past actions and its present position and thus provided this justification, which indeed gives a true description of the ideological change that occurred as a result of seeing in reality that the tri-partite system did not result in equality of educational opportunity.

The subsection on "Equality and Education" opened with the well known statement: "A major cause of inequality in British society is our educational system."⁶⁷⁾ Thereafter the educational system was divided into two: the state schools and the private sector. Inequality in the state system exists in spite of the fact that "...parents' income no longer decides the kind of education that their children receive."⁶⁸⁾ The reasons for the inequality are: a) the much lower

67) "Towards Equality" (Labour's Policy for Social Justice), the Labour Party (London, 1956), p. 5.

68) *ibid.*,.

standard of the modern schools as no parity of conditions and certainly no parity of esteem between the two main types of secondary schools has been achieved. b) the close relationship between class and the type of school attended helps to perpetuate the class structure. c) the connection between future employment or entry to university with the type of secondary school attended, creates further inequality. d) despite the fact that money does not count in the state system, family background influenced success in the eleven plus and thus determines to a large extent the type of school attended. The division between the state system and the fee-paying independent or public schools creates further inequalities. Better education can be bought by money and consequently better prospects of future employment. The children attending these schools develop a separate class outlook and behaviour. The modern and the public schools are essentially one class schools. The conclusion was: "The broad effect is to heighten social barriers, to stimulate class consciousness and to foster social snobbery. The part played by our school system in maintaining class differences is thus of major importance."⁶⁹⁾ Therefore a radical change is needed as the principles of the fundamental ideology are "that our society will be happier and healthier without classes than it is with them. We reject the Tory view that a class system is the natural order of society or that the present distribution of

69) *ibid.*, p. 6.

wealth, power and status ought not to be, or cannot be, changed. We claim that, far from being necessary conditions of high productivity, many of our present inequalities have become serious obstacles in its way. We believe, moreover, that these inequalities are the product of identifiable social and economic forces which can be changed. In fact, most of them can be traced to the working of two great institutions: first the capitalist economic system.... Second, the education system which, with its three distinct types of secondary schools, largely determines the social status and the opportunities of their pupils.⁷⁰⁾

Changing education became therefore a major object in order to achieve the final goal of classless society. All the arguments justifying the need of changing secondary education gave complete centrality to P(m)s and the professional arguments were related to them.

While generally criticising the modern schools, "Towards Equality" admitted that some modern schools succeeded. This was indeed the case. In 1951 the School Certificate was replaced by a new examination, the General Certificate of Education. In 1953 as a result of pressure from the grammar schools, especially of course the highly competitive grammar schools, 15 was made the minimum age for admitting pupils to this examination. It was possible for the pupils to sit

70) *ibid.*, pp. 20, 21.

the examination in individual subjects, but the standard of a pass was raised to the level that had formerly counted as credit.⁷¹⁾ Yet a number of secondary modern schools encouraged their pupils to stay till sixteen and attempt the examination. From about 1953 the first G.C.E. successes by secondary modern school pupils began to be recorded. This fact was an additional argument against the validity of the eleven plus. Yet this achievement should not be overrated as only one in eight in the relevant age group in modern schools sat an external examination even as late as 1960.⁷²⁾ The establishment of the Certificate of Secondary Education came only in 1965 after the Delee Committee recommendations.

Although B. Simon claims that comprehensive schools took root from 1953 the expansion was slow. By 1954 there were 16, in Jan. 1956 Eccles reported 26 in existence and 16 in construction and in July 1957 Boyle reported 42 in existence, 8 under construction and 13 approved,⁷³⁾ the leading council being the L.C.C. Yet, quite a number of Labour controlled counties and county boroughs did little or nothing to apply the principle of the party to which they were committed. From 1953 the main reason was the attitude of the

71) D. Rubinstein and B. Simon, op.cit., p. 55.

72) ibid., pp. 54-58.

73) Hansard, vol. 546, p. 52; vol. 573, Written Answers p. 129.

Conservative Ministers of Education, especially Miss Horsbrugh and her successor Sir David Eccles. Nevertheless, the Ministers did not interfere, and had no authority to interfere, in a reorganisation of existing schools i.e., when no closing of an existing school, opening of a new one and the enlargement of an existing school to such a degree that it amounted in practice to a new one, was involved.⁷⁴⁾

Thus, the Labour local authorities which did nothing to reorganise on the basis of existing schools, posed a problem to the Labour party on the national level. Labour had to find a way of translating the commitment of the local Labour parties to the principle of the comprehensive school into action, and already in the 1952 Conference this problem was emphasized. This was connected, of course, to the problem, which was discussed before the 1955 election, of how to ensure that reluctant local authorities, should Labour return to government, reorganise their secondary education on comprehensive lines. In order to find out the attitude of the general public towards the comprehensive schools, the study group on education carried out a poll through a research firm. The survey showed that the majority of the public knew very little about what a comprehensive reorganisation meant. It also showed that parental interest was focused on concrete practical improvements such as reducing the size of classes, improving the

74) R. Tedley, op.cit., pp. 42-44.

staff and raising the standards. From these the study group concluded that Labour, if it wanted public support for the comprehensive schools, had to present the case in conventional educational terms. That is, Labour had to press the point that comprehensive schools are the solution to these concrete problems. It also suggested that the attack should be chiefly against segregation, and not merely against selection. The line of justifying the comprehensive school for egalitarian reasons, used predominantly till 1957, would not succeed in mobilizing public support.⁷⁵⁾ In a Research Memorandum in June 1957 the study group dealt with the problems of coercion. Its conclusions were general in character. The party, if it came to power, would have to decide, in view of the opposition of local education authorities including Labour controlled ones, whether and how to exercise coercion. It was up to the party to weigh the pros and cons. The primary advantage was to press forward without delay the necessary reorganization and the main disadvantage was the great value attached to the local authorities' freedom of action, and the traditional concept of co-operation between the local and the central levels.⁷⁶⁾

At the same time the party was divided about the question of size. Many saw in the London experiments with comprehensive schools

75) Labour Party, Research Memoranda R. 159/May 1957.

76) Labour Party, Research Memoranda R. 166/June 1957.

catering for 11 to 18 the only solution in accordance to the fundamental dimension and clung to this method as was already obvious in the 1953 Conference. On the other hand some, including Alice Bacon and the study group and notable experts on comprehensive education such as Robin Pedley, weighted again the advantages and disadvantages of the two-tier method and decided in its favour. As the number of pupils staying beyond the statutory leaving age increased enormously part of the arguments against the two-tier system, expressed in 1953, lost their meaning. Although the transfer at 15 to a senior school can be unsettling, there were now more chances that a much greater number of working class children will go over to the senior school - that working class children would continue despite the fact that the continuation of studies meant transfer to a different school. An additional result of the increasing number of children, staying after 15, was that grammar schools could in most cases be used as senior schools. Yet the most important argument for the two-tier solution was that it will abolish the eleven plus and the feeling that if the reorganisation had to be postponed till there will be enough new buildings, it might be more difficult to introduce the change.

It is necessary to stress, however, that the two-tier system was regarded by most of its advocates only as an interim solution. The successful Leicestershire experience in 1957 had a big impact, mainly because it demonstrated that an early end to eleven plus selection

was possible everywhere.⁷⁷⁾ The party was not united on this matter. As has been said before, some were converted to the two-tier system, some still clung to the one school solution, and others advocated other ways. But all, except a minority which wanted other experiments and not only comprehensive secondary schools, tried to find ways which, if not introducing the comprehensive schools throughout the country without delay, would bring the nation closer to it. W.S.L. Dalgleish, speaking about the line which the Committee on Educational Policy should adopt, criticised the tri-partite system as promoting inequality and stated that Socialists must fight inequality in education. On the two-tier system he said: "Let us argue for the Leicestershire example and be ready to drop the comprehensive school ...if we must, but do not let the Labour Party put its energies to fostering new inequalities in education."⁷⁸⁾ By dropping the comprehensive schools he meant dropping the London model of comprehensive school. But it is worthwhile noting that for many the two-tier system was a substitute for the comprehensive school and not merely a different way of organising a comprehensive school.

In the House Labour continued in 1956 and 1957 to mount its main attack on the eleven plus.⁷⁹⁾ From the middle of 1957 the shift from

77) R. Pedley, op.cit., p. 55.

78) W.S.L. Dalgleish, "Labour and Education", Unpublished, the Labour Party 1958, p. 3.

79) Hansard, vol. 549. p. 2283; vol. 554. pp. 535, 538-539; vol. 563. p. 376.

attacking selection to attacking segregation of any kind was notable. Labour realised that it was not enough to attack the eleven plus examinations, as other types of selection could be introduced and so the party set out to attack selection at eleven, and segregation at large. Alice Bacon adopted this line and at the time advocated again the two-tier system as a real possibility for finishing selection and segregation at eleven.⁸⁰⁾ An emphasis on segregation and on the educational arguments can be found in "Dead End, the Tory Government Record". While explaining the attack on the tri-partite system it was stated: "Labour attacks it on social grounds for segregating children at such an early age. But even more important, we attack it on educational grounds, for the present system wastes much of Britain's talent."⁸¹⁾ It was a natural step from the argument about the wastage of ability to the argument that Britain cannot afford to waste ability if it wants to progress technologically and scientifically. The new economy demands a higher standard of education for all. This, as we have seen was one of the late arguments which developed in phase two. Indeed in 1958 Mr. Michael Stewart M.P. said in the House that for the sake of the country's economy and social problems "We have to encourage not only the more gifted, but

80) Hansard, vol. 568. pp. 693-695.

81) "Dead End", the Labour Party (London, 1958), p. 29.

the less gifted.... We shall need them all, and we can get that general harnessing of ability only if, so far as is humanly possible, we see that no unjustifiable factors hamper people's chances of developing their talents."⁸²⁾

Meanwhile in July 1957 the study group set up by the M.E.C. in 1955, reached its conclusions. The emphasis was on the political issue: how to sell the comprehensive school in view of the situation in local education authorities we have discussed before. An additional difficulty in convincing the electorate about the comprehensive idea, concluded the group, could arise if the party choose to declare openly that the comprehensive system means the end of the grammar schools. But even should the party continue its previous tactics of not acknowledging this fact, the party still had to persuade the public on the basis of the educational merits of the comprehensive schools. Following the party's decisions of 1952, the group concluded that each local authority would be required to submit to the Minister reorganisation plans on comprehensive lines within a certain time, but the way in which the comprehensive principle was to be carried out was to be left for the local education authorities to decide, according to local needs and circumstances. The Minister could approve or disapprove of the plans submitted.⁸³⁾ No change in

⁸²⁾ Hansard, vol. 584, p. 1447.

⁸³⁾ Labour Party, Research Memoranda R. 182/July 1957.

the Minister's powers was suggested, unless the group meant that the Minister could approve or disapprove also of plans in which no abolition of existing schools, or opening of a new one, figured. In a later Memorandum, the same group reached the conclusion that although legislation, by compelling LEAs to act would cause bitter controversy, notwithstanding, if the party wished to see comprehensive schools established on a firm basis within ten years of taking office, legislation was unavoidable.⁸⁴⁾ This supports my claim that the party's attitude to the question of legislation can be seen as an indicator of the strength of the party's desire to carry out its commitment to the comprehensive principle in the fundamental dimension.

"Learning to Live" which was brought before the 1958 Conference included the study group's suggestions. In contrast to "Towards Equality", "Learning to Live" dealt basically with operational questions. In the same way that the paragraph on education in "Challenge to Britain" was the party's policy in 1953, so "Learning to Live" was Labour's policy concerning education in 1958. The first notable thing in this document is the emphasis on the following practical questions: reduction of class size; sweeping away slum schools; better education for handicapped children and ending the all-age school system. (The existence of a substantial number of all-age schools

84) Labour Party, Research Memoranda R. 301/Jan. 1958.

shows how enormous was the gap between the head and tail of the marching column.) These are the first four priorities to be achieved by a Labour government in five years. The ending of the eleven plus and the reorganisation of secondary education on comprehensive lines are at the end of the priorities list. It seems logical to deduce that this order of priorities was greatly influenced by the survey undertaken in 1957 according to which the study-group concluded that a popular education policy should tackle first of all concrete issues. The influence of the study-group's conclusions was also felt in the presentation of the attack on the eleven plus and the reorganisation of secondary education on the comprehensive principle. The purely fundamental ideological argument was omitted and James Griffiths, who introduced the policy document, went to the trouble of explaining that the proposals to end the eleven plus and establish comprehensive secondary education "...are based not on any preconceived prejudice or doctrine. Our proposals are based upon a survey of the existing system of secondary education, our realisation that it contains certain fundamental defects, that those defects must be removed, and that when they are removed the reorganisation of secondary education becomes as inevitable as it is desirable."⁸⁵⁾ The main defect is segregation: "There is no educational justification for it."⁸⁶⁾ Thus

85) 1958 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 87.

86) *ibid.*, p. 88.

segregation as such, and not only the eleven plus practice, was attacked. Ending segregation means an end to the tri-partite system and thus reorganisation becomes unavoidable. Certainly a good tactical way of justifying the reorganisation. Local authorities therefore will first be informed that Labour has decided to abolish the eleven plus. They will be invited to submit their development plans and to base them on three basic principles in the following order: "...first, our determination to reduce the size of classes in secondary schools - all of them to 30 within the first five years; second, our resolve to raise as quickly as possible the school leaving age to 16...; third, to prepare plans for the reorganisation of their secondary education on the comprehensive principle."⁸⁷⁾ Again emphasis on the practical problems. Second, this reorganisation shall take ten years. Third "...we recognize too that there are a variety of ways in which the principle can be implemented."⁸⁸⁾ The examples of how to reorganise secondary education in "Learning to Live" contain, in an important place, the two-tier system which was so strongly attacked in the 1953 Conference for egalitarian reasons. Yet from 1953 many factors combined to change the H.E.C.'s mind. Some of the considerations were mentioned before and to those were added the tactical problem of selling the idea of the comprehensive school. This

⁸⁷⁾ *ibid.*, p. 88.

⁸⁸⁾ *ibid.*

factor combined with all the practical considerations plus the realisation that if Labour wanted comprehensive secondary education it had to retreat from the 1953 position, all contributed to the re-introduction of the two-tier system. In other words, the P(t)s and the wish to abolish selection and segregation at eleven plus caused a formulation of an operative programme which, strictly speaking, was not in complete accord with the principle of comprehensive schools as formulated before in the fundamental dimension. In order to avoid a gap between the principle and the practice a change was consequently introduced in the fundamental dimension. The comprehensive principle was reinterpreted to mean every system of secondary education which is open to all children without segregation at eleven plus and which succeeds in providing a real choice for its pupils.⁸⁹⁾ As Griffiths said in Conference: "What we are insisting upon is that there shall be reorganisation on the comprehensive principle, that secondary schools shall provide for all children a wide variety of courses. How it is done in detail in each area must be determined between the Minister and the education authorities in the light of their local circumstances and the present local arrangements."⁹⁰⁾

All-age secondary schools, two-tier system with a break at 14

89) "Learning to Live", the Labour Party (London, 1958), p. 26.

90) 1958 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 88.

when children who undertake to stay till 16 are transferred to a senior school while the rest stay on at the junior school; six form college; two stages, one from 11 to 13, and the second from 13 to 18 - all these forms of organisation were declared by the N.E.C. in "Learning to Live" as in harmony with the comprehensive principle. Indeed while these variations would hardly agree with the comprehensive principle as stated in previous years, they were in perfect harmony with the new definition of the comprehensive principle in the fundamental dimension. Interestingly, there was not even one voice of criticism of this new definition. The debate on "Learning to Live", as far as the comprehensive school was concerned, dealt only with practical questions. The arguments of the purely fundamental ideological type were heard during the heated discussion on the public schools which dominated the debate. The fact that "Learning to Live" did not mention legislation to force local education authorities to reorganise secondary education was probably a result of two considerations: a) that the new flexible approach to the comprehensive principle will by itself encourage local authorities to produce plans. b) the wish to avoid conflict with the local authorities. It seems to me that the first reason was the basic one. However, this soft approach toward the local education authorities was criticised in conference and Mrs. Renee Short said to the N.E.C.: "You must lay down a timetable in which the LEAs of this country have to prepare their plans for the organisation of secondary education on

comprehensive lines. It is not enough to say as soon as possible. As the policy statement stands at this moment it is wide open for sabotage and delay."⁹¹⁾ Indeed in years to come, when Labour came back to power, it learned from experience the truth of this prediction. Meanwhile, though legislation was not mentioned in the policy statement it was clear that Labour was determined to introduce the change. In "Labour's Education Policy" under the headline of "How does Labour intend to establish a comprehensive system?", the answer was: "Local authorities will be required to prepare plans for applying, with all reasonable speed, the comprehensive principle to secondary education and provide in each secondary school a wide range of courses. We shall get rid of segregation at eleven as a matter of national policy in the same way as under the Education Act of 1944 local authorities were required to get rid of their all-age schools and provide separate accommodation for primary and secondary education."⁹²⁾ This was a firmer line than that in the previous policy statement. Yet, of course, not strong enough, as the example of the all-age schools shows. In spite of the 1944 Act these schools still existed in 1958 and their abolition formed the fourth priority in "Learning to Live".

A final point about "Learning to Live" is the tactics adopted by

91) *ibid.*, p. 100.

92) "Labour's Education Policy", the Labour Party (London, 1958), pp. 18, 19.

Labour in presenting the future of the grammar schools. Labour was aware that a direct statement that grammar schools would cease to exist when the reorganisation is accomplished, was bound to raise criticism and provoke emotions. In order to avoid this Labour adopted the tactics of speaking not about grammar schools but about grammar school education. Thus they could answer in a firm negative any accusation that they intended to get rid of the grammar schools, by saying that their aim was precisely the opposite: to give grammar school education to every child. This of course was clever only up to a point, as it was foolish to assume that the defenders of grammar schools would be convinced or trapped. Everybody knew that with the abolition of selection, grammar schools as such would cease to exist. Nevertheless the tactic was a good one as far as the wide public was concerned.

The party was of course aware, though this was not acknowledged openly, that it had introduced a change in the fundamental dimension by redefining the comprehensive principle. And I would not hesitate to say that even in 1958 the intention was to return in the future to the old definition. My conclusion is based on two statements: a) the chairman's words in the opening speech: "...nobody will make the mistake of assuming that it is our last word on the subject..."⁹³⁾

93) 1958 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 77.

b) Miss A. Bacon's words while summarising the debate on behalf of the H.E.C.: "Unfortunately, in some respects, we were not called upon to produce a document which was our ideal of what an education system in this country should be. We have had to produce a practical workable policy capable of being carried out within the space of a few years. We have had to build on a structure that is already there - a structure that in many spheres is very imperfect. We cannot just scrap everything that is there and start afresh. I sometimes wish we could, particularly in education."⁹⁴) Alice Bacon was justifying the deviation from the ideal on the basis of the P(t). Her way of doing it shows the nature of the arguments used in the operative dimension of ideology. The P(t)s have the centrality and according to the P(t)s was the programme formulated, and they are the basis of the justification of the deviation. What she did not say, but what actually happened, was the re-adaptation of the comprehensive principle in the fundamental dimension, in such a way that the new definition could fit the forms of reorganisation which were decided upon according to the P(t)s.

During 1958 Labour attacked, in the House, the Conservative policy in the same order of priorities which we find in "Learning to Live".⁹⁵) The section on secondary education in the 1959 Election

94) *ibid.*, p. 109.

95) *Hansard*, vol. 594, pp. 159-160.

Manifesto "Britain Belongs to You", was a shortened version of "Learning to Live". The same scale of priorities, an attack on segregation, the emphasis on the right of local education authorities to decide "...how best to apply the comprehensive principle" and lastly the claim that the reorganisation will not abolish grammar school education but on the contrary it will be "...open to all who can benefit by it."⁹⁶⁾ As befits a Manifesto all the educational policies were related to the moral principles of Socialism. Comprehensive secondary education means abolishing the barriers to equality of opportunity and is based on the belief that every one has equal value as a human being. "This is the belief which inspired the pioneers of Socialism, and still inspires the Labour Party, in the struggle for social justice and human rights."⁹⁷⁾

In 1959 the Conservative Minister of Education Mr. Geoffrey Lloyd introduced in the House the White Paper "Secondary Education for All". The policy advocated by the Conservatives was based on the continuation of the tri-partite system, on changing the eleven plus while maintaining some form of selection, and on raising the standard of the secondary modern schools and so reducing the fears both of parents and children of any form of selection examination. It defended the

96) "Britain Belongs to You", the Labour Party (London, 1959), p. 2.

97) *ibid.*, p. 4.

continuation of the grammar school and stated that it was too early to assess the educational merits of the comprehensive schools. Labour attacked the White Paper by two kinds of arguments: purely fundamental arguments and moderately fundamental ideological arguments. To the first category belonged the criticism of the concept of equality of opportunity as interpreted by the Conservative party. "Equality of opportunity does not mean only equality of opportunity for the clever ones, of whatever social class, to get to the top of the tree. It means equality of opportunity for every child to develop the gifts which he has in him, be those natural gifts great or small."⁹⁸⁾ The Conservative educational policy is based, claimed Labour, on an opposite conception of the desired character of society held by Labour. In Mr. Stewart's words: "The schools have to play this part in creating a community in which all will recognize the value of one another, both as individuals and as fellow citizens. It is on the vision of a community like that that we must keep our eyes and set our hearts. A system which encourages children at the age of eleven to make this sharp discrimination by the test not of common humanity, or of character, but of presumed judgment of a vague quality which no one has precisely defined, is not the way to create the kind of community on which we ought to set our vision."⁹⁹⁾ A typical purely

98) Hansard, vol. 598, p. 431.

99) *ibid.*, pp. 444-445.

fundamental ideological argument with centrality to the P(m)s. But Mr. Stewart, in the same speech, used the second type of argument as well. He criticised "Secondary Education for All" for inadequate financial provision, for the lack of increase in the supply of teachers and for doing nothing about class size and about buildings. He attacked on professional grounds the segregation following the eleven plus and defended comprehensive education: a) it was too early to decide about individual difference; b) the stimulatory effect for average children provided by being educated together with more gifted children can be provided only inside a comprehensive school; c) the London experiments with comprehensive schools show that they do not level down; d) tri-partite means restricted curricula for the mass of children while in a comprehensive school this does not happen. All these professional arguments of phase two were stressed by Mr. Stewart. Yet his argument was not purely professional as he showed how these professional arguments are related to the P(m)s, and thus the argument belongs to the moderately fundamental ideological argument type. To the accusation of the Minister that Labour wanted to abolish the grammar schools, the already familiar argument was stated by C. Ede: "I support the comprehensive school system because I believe that it will increase the number of our children who will receive a grammar school education..."¹⁰⁰⁾

¹⁰⁰⁾ *ibid.*, p. 446.

Labour lost the election again, for the third time consecutively, and as a result the 1959 Conference was dedicated to self-analysis. Gaitskell tried to explain the reason for Labour's defeat. Briefly, he spoke about the changes in capitalism: the technological advance, the absence of serious unemployment and the welfare state. These social and economic changes reacted against Labour because "...we did not take them sufficiently into account."¹⁰¹⁾ Second, Labour had to learn how to sell Socialism. Third, nationalisation lost votes. Gaitskell claimed that nationalisation was not an end in itself but a means to achieve an end. The Socialist goals are: social justice, classless society, fundamental equality of all races and of all people, fellowship and co-operation, the public interest which must come before private interest.¹⁰²⁾ All these goals must be achieved through the parliamentary system. Nationalisation, education etc. are the ways and means which should be brought up to date.

It is not my concern here to speak about nationalisation, but as far as education is concerned, as we have already seen, Labour had already changed in 1958 the comprehensive principle as a specification of the ways and means, according to the practical problems of the time including the electoral factor. This is the reason why the years

101) 1959 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 109.

102) *ibid.*, p. 111.

1960-1963, while the party was engaged in trying to find a way to present to the electorate its programme, brought no "new-thinking" in the matter of comprehensive schools. There was no need for adaptation in this matter, according to tactical or any other considerations, as the adaptation had already been done. Nothing new was said in the House in 1960. Both parties were convinced that the eleven plus was full of defects and the Conservative's policy was to let local education authorities experiment with various other ways of selection. Labour, while welcoming the Conservative wish to get rid of the present form of the eleven plus, continued to attack all kinds of selection at eleven and based its attack on the professional arguments against segregation at eleven.¹⁰³⁾ The professional arguments were related to the P(n). For example, it was stated in the House that segregation at eleven "...is a bar to genuine equal opportunities in education, and we should sweep it away and provide genuine opportunities for education,..."¹⁰⁴⁾

"Talking Points" on comprehensive education summarised under three headings the party's case against the tri-partite system; a) professional arguments against innate intelligence; b) professional arguments against the fact that there are three different types of

103) Hansard, vol. 613. p. 1315.

104) Hansard, vol. 612. p. 68.

children who require three different types of education; c) the closed view of society it involves.¹⁰⁵⁾ Professional literature was mentioned and especially that of Socialists such as Halsey. But the professional arguments, again, were not presented by themselves but, as point c shows, they were connected to the moral principles thus making the arguments moderately fundamental ideological. In the major document "Signposts For the Sixties" the party's case was presented in purely fundamental ideological arguments in which the moral principles were wedded to the professional arguments of phase two. Complete centrality was given to the moral principles and the fundamental ideology of Labour was compared with the fundamental ideology of the Conservative party. While the Tories regard class division as natural and put an emphasis on the élite, "We challenge this theory as immoral, untrue and a danger to democracy. Our Socialist attitude to education is based on the conviction that there are great potentialities of hidden talent in the British people, which can only be revealed by ensuring that every child is given more than one opportunity in the course of its life to show an aptitude for higher education. To achieve genuine equality of educational opportunity we require.... to reorganise the State secondary schools on comprehensive lines, in order to end the segregation by the eleven plus examination which is now almost universally condemned on educational as well as

105) "Talking Points" no. 23 "Comprehensive Education", the Labour Party (London, 1961), p. 1.

on social grounds."¹⁰⁶⁾ No detailed blueprint concerning the future of public schools was laid down. This was justified on the grounds that it was impossible to see the future education requirements which will arise and what the resources available will be. But as a matter of principle the end of the private sector was firmly determined, in order to do away with educational privilege and the further social inequalities it causes.

"Signposts for the Sixties" was brought before the 1961 Conference and here again the same arguments, combining the P(m) with the professional considerations including the much stressed argument about the needs of the new economy, were heard. M.J.S. Cheetham said: "It is sound economic sense for the nation to capitalize on the brains of its children."¹⁰⁷⁾ Mr. F. Peart quoted from Lord Hailsham, the Minister of Science, "We are still handicapped by the defects of our scientific and technical education of the 'thirties' which has left us with an inadequate cadre of trained manpower, and an educational machine which does not yet match up to the demands of the present day."¹⁰⁸⁾ Mr. Peart continued to develop this argument and connected it to the moral principles: "Our challenge is a desire to create a

106) "Signposts For the Sixties", the Labour Party (London, 1961), p. 29.

107) 1961 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 125.

108) *ibid.*, p. 129.

really democratic society, as Socialists, with a belief that every child should really go to the same school..."¹⁰⁹⁾ And Dr. Horace King praised the party for placing education so high in the agenda because "We live in an age of applied science and expanding democracy."¹¹⁰⁾ This argument, about technological progress connected to the Socialist P(m)s, was very frequently heard from 1960. It did appear before, but seldom.¹¹¹⁾

In the House Labour continued in 1961, 1962 and 1963 to ask for an end to the eleven plus and segregation. As a matter of fact during this period very little time was devoted to debates about education on the national level, as from 1958 the positions of the two parties on the national level had been formulated. The Conservative Minister had now to face not so much criticism from Labour in Parliament, as a growing number of programmes from Labour controlled local authorities for the establishment of secondary comprehensive systems. E. Boyle's policy was much more flexible than that of his predecessors and as a result the number of comprehensive schools grew steadily. In January 1962 the Ministry of Education gave the number of

109) *ibid.*, p. 129.

110) *ibid.*, p. 130.

111) On the usage of this argument see a detailed account in M.H. Parkinson, The Labour Party and the Organisation of Secondary Education 1918-1965, M.A. thesis, May 1968, pp. 232-236.

comprehensive schools as 152. This number did not include bilateral and multilateral schools. This meant that if the last two types of schools were included, one in ten secondary school pupils was educated in these schools.¹¹²⁾ Yet the fact that grammar schools continued to attract the best pupils took the cream from the comprehensive schools whenever there was competition.¹¹³⁾

The Party Conference of 1962 confirmed that the real battle was now being fought between the local education authorities and the Minister. The Conference merely confirmed Labour's policy and dealt with the question of shifting the burden of expenditure from local education authorities should Labour return to power. The 1963 Conference, as befits a Conference before elections, sketched again the party's arguments for abolishing the eleven plus and the tripartite system and repeated its commitment to establish secondary education according to the comprehensive principle as defined in "Signposts for the Sixties". The arguments were of the kind described before. The question of legislation was raised again and legislation was advocated in the composite resolution moved by Mrs. Joyce Cope. On the other hand Mrs. E. White while summarising for the N.E.C., thought that legislation was not absolutely necessary as

112) Education in 1962, H.M.S.O. (London, 1962), p. 120.

113) D. Rubinstein and B. Simon, op.cit., p. 86.

"...I think we could do a very great deal with the power of the purse."¹¹⁴⁾ Nevertheless, for the first time a resolution advocating to set up a universal system of comprehensive secondary education and to abolish the eleven plus by means of "...converting existing permissive legislation into compulsory legislation binding up the local authorities",¹¹⁵⁾ was carried. This shows that Labour's position regarding comprehensive schools has become consolidated. Labour was finally convinced that it was worth while to risk controversy by using legislation in order to establish the desired secondary education. This decision was, of course, taken for the time being only in Conference and it would not necessarily bind the L.P.F. if Labour came to power. But this decision in itself shows how far advanced was the party's commitment to the comprehensive school principle and its implementation. As 1963 and 1964 were the years before the elections a lot of party material about secondary education was published.¹¹⁶⁾ There was nothing new in all the publications. They simply repeated Labour's position and in all cases professional arguments of phase two were used and connected to the fundamental principles. Works were

114) 1963 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 162.

115) *ibid.*, p. 153.

116) for example: Labour Party, Talking Points 15 "The case against the eleven plus" (London, 1963); "Action Education", the Labour Party (London, 1964); "Ammunition, Education", Speaker's Note no. 4, the Labour Party (London, 1964); "Labour and the Grammar School", N.E.C. (London, 1964); "Education Waste of Talent" Talking Points no. 2, the Labour Party (London, 1964).

quoted and in general the case was well outlined and showed no signs of inner doubts. In the 1964 election Manifesto "Let Us Go With Labour for the New Britain" attention is directed first to: "The imperative need for a revolution in our education system which will ensure the education of all our citizens in the responsibilities of this scientific age".¹¹⁷⁾ The section on education summarised the programme outlined in "Signposts for the Sixties". In spite of the resolution carried in the 1963 Conference, legislation was not mentioned so as not to bind the future Labour government in case future circumstances should show that it was better to use other means.

On the local level the N.F.E.R. research conducted in 1964 showed that from 1961 there was new readiness to accept the comprehensive reorganisation. In 1964 71 per cent of all authorities either had, or intended to establish, comprehensive schools. A quarter of all local education authorities made major changes in their selection procedures between 1960-1964. It is no coincidence that the new readiness started in 1960. It was caused by four factors: a) the predominance in these years of the environmental school of sociologists, whose findings made a great impression on local education authorities; b) the findings and recommendations of the Newsom Report;¹¹⁸⁾ c) the successful experiments with various forms of

117) "Let Us Go With Labour for the New Britain", the Labour Party (London, 1964), p. 3.

118) See my Chapter Three, Sub Chapter B.

comprehensive schools; d) the well argued case by Labour which showed integrity and which appealed to the local education authorities precisely because of the emphasis on the professional findings of phase two, including the argument of the needs of the new economy.

As I have tried to show Labour never presented purely professional arguments as it always connected such findings to the party's moral principles. It either presented a purely fundamental ideological argument (centrality to the $P(m)$) or a moderately fundamental ideological argument (centrality to the $P(t)$ which were related to the $P(m)$). Yet during the years Labour learned to present these arguments in such a way as to convince the public and the local education authorities that the professional reasons were overwhelming. With all the party literature I have analysed in mind, however, I incline to think, that in spite of this image the main drive in Labour did remain purely a commitment to the fundamental ideology, and that the professional arguments were welcomed as additional factors to strengthen the case and make it appear professional. As Mrs. E. White said in the 1963 Conference, while speaking about the comprehensive principle: "And the interesting thing is that we have been proven right. What we, in our Socialist minds, felt to be right has been proved to be right."¹¹⁹⁾

In a way to summarise this Chapter, I would like to outline the

¹¹⁹⁾ 1963 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 161.

change in Labour's ideology in the years 1951-1964. In 1951 when Labour went into opposition there was a clear gap between the policies pursued by the Labour Ministers of Education and the way the policies were justified on the one hand, and the commitment of the party to the comprehensive principle as a specification of the ways and means of achieving equality in the fundamental dimension. In its first year in opposition the gap was diminished considerably as the party's declared education policy, as formulated in "A Policy for Secondary Education", was in harmony with the comprehensive principle. Only a small gap remained because the party clearly did not intend to use compulsion in order to implement the comprehensive policy. This deviation was justified mainly for two reasons: a) the importance of leaving to local education authorities the right accorded to them in the 1944 Education Act and the fear of causing bitter controversy should this right be violated; b) the belief that drastic measures would not be necessary and that a wide campaign of explanation would convert the local education authorities to the comprehensive principle.

In 1952 it became clear that the policies pursued on the local level by Constituency Labour Parties contradicted their commitment to the comprehensive principle in the fundamental dimension. This wide gap was attributed to professional doubts and to administrative difficulties. The Constituency Labour Parties themselves justified their lack of action in implementing the commitment, by referring to the above mentioned P(t) and by reference to the moral principles.

That is to say, all kinds of pre-educational and administrative considerations, which prevented them from acting, were presented by them as unavoidable hindrances. Therefore they claimed that the moral principle of equality could best be achieved by continuing on tri-partite lines and ensuring selection according to ability plus easy transfer from one school to another for late developers. Thus they justified their actions by using the moderately fundamental ideological argument i.e., operative ideological arguments. The various P(t)s, without doubt enjoyed centrality but an attempt was always made to justify the policy on moral grounds as well, with the claim that the best that could be achieved, in view of the other considerations, was equality of educational opportunity in the weak sense. The gap was widened with the publication of the first edition of "Challenge to Britain" in 1953. A two-tier system with a break at 15 was suggested by the N.E.C. as the way to translate the comprehensive principle from the fundamental dimension into actual policy, in view of technical difficulties such as shortage in buildings. The 1953 Conference vigorously attacked the N.E.C. proposal on the grounds that it deviated strongly from the comprehensive principle as formulated in the fundamental dimension. The second edition of "Challenge to Britain" contained a changed section on secondary education. The two-tier system was mentioned only as a solution when there was no alternative at all. Thus the gap between the policies suggested and the fundamental dimension was again narrowed and the situation resembled the position in

1951. The party's repeated decision not to use compulsory legislation accounts for the small gap that remained. This gap remained almost unchanged through the years till 1963, although with the years stronger terms came to be used: the local education authorities will be asked (1955), invited (1958), required (1958) to submit plans.

As a result of its successive defeats, the technical problem of erecting new buildings, successful experiments with the two-tier system and the realisation that time was against reorganisation, Labour changed its policies in 1958 and approved of the two-tier system which it had so bitterly attacked in 1953. This change was justified on technical grounds. At the same time the necessity of accepting the two-tier system because of technical considerations was shown to be the lesser of two evils, as far as the realisation of the comprehensive principle was concerned. There were two possibilities: Labour could either stick to the old policies which mostly required new buildings and so remain faithful to the comprehensive principle as formulated in the fundamental dimension. This would lose time because a huge building programme could be necessary. Or Labour could deviate from the principle in order to produce policies which would at least end selection and segregation at eleven and so bring the nation a step nearer to the realisation of the principle of equality. Moreover the change in the number of pupils staying after the statutory leaving age made the two-tier system less harmful for the working class children than had been anticipated. Yet Labour did not want the gap that

was created between the fundamental dimension and the policies by the acceptance of the two-tier system, to remain. However this time the process of reaching harmony between the policies and the fundamental dimension took a different direction. Because of all the considerations mentioned above, and on which I have elaborated previously, Labour did not want to reject again the suggestion of the two-tier system. And so the comprehensive principle in the fundamental dimension was changed without this change being admitted openly. It was modified in such a way as to make the two-tier system a legitimate method of actualizing the comprehensive principle.

This remained the situation till Labour returned to office. The gap that remained was a result of the party's rejection of legislation and its non-committal policy towards the private sector. These two issues were therefore the cause of the remaining disharmony between the level of action and Labour's fundamental ideology. Yet the gap was narrowed further with the party's decision to abolish the private sector in principle, and by the 1963 resolution passed by the Conference to use coercive legislation. Yet the gap was not closed completely as the 1964 Manifesto did not mention legislation.

Thus, during the period Labour was in opposition, the policies were changed twice according to the fundamental dimension and once the comprehensive principle in the fundamental dimension was changed in order that it should fit the change in the policies. The gap which

existed in 1951 was considerably diminished but complete harmony between the level of action and the fundamental dimension was never achieved.

CHAPTER SIX: CLOSING THE CIRCLE, 1964-1970

A. The Adoption of the Comprehensive Principle as National Policy

When Labour won the 1964 election the redefined comprehensive principle was part of the fundamental dimension and the policies formulated to implement the comprehensive principle corresponded to the fundamental dimension except in one point - the usage of compulsory legislation which did not appear in the election Manifesto in spite of the 1963 Conference decision. As has been seen, during its period in opposition, the party managed finally to achieve a working harmony between the policies and the principle in the fundamental dimension. The comprehensive principle was changed in order to correspond to practical procedures for organising secondary education on the basis of abolition of selection at eleven, and providing a variety of courses in each secondary school.

While the period in opposition was characterized by attempts to achieve harmony between the fundamental and operative dimensions the previous period of Labour's government has been distinguished by the opposite tendency: the continuous gap between the fundamental dimension and the policies pursued by the Ministers. The period discussed in this chapter again deals with Labour in office when policies are not simply formulated, as they are in opposition, but are (or may be) actually implemented; and when the balance of power between the leader and the P.L.P. on the one hand and the Conference on the other - (the N.E.C. being usually close to the P.L.P.) - is again in favour of

the leader and the P.L.P. Conference can criticise, attack, move resolutions condemning actual policies and demand different policies, but the government can ignore these up to a certain point. Theoretically the Secretary of State might have acted on lines different from those formulated while Labour was in opposition both on the fundamental and on the policy level. However, such a situation did not develop. There were still to be attacks by Conference on the Secretary's policy but these mostly related to questions which were still unresolved when Labour came to office: the questions of compulsion and timing. As far as the comprehensive principle was concerned and the forms of organisation which had been agreed by the party, the Secretary started immediately to translate them into action. In sharp contrast with the years 1960-1963 in which the comprehensive issue aroused no bitter exchanges between the two parties, the period 1964-1970 was marked by a continuous debate between the two parties on the national level. Labour was ready to introduce the comprehensive policy and was guided mainly by the following factors: a) the comprehensive principle as formulated in the fundamental dimension; b) the forms of comprehensive organisation as decided on the policy level; c) the P(t) which existed in reality such as buildings, teachers and money factors; d) the tactical problems of presenting the policy to the public in order to gain maximum support.

The electoral aspect vis-a-vis the fundamental principle, was of major importance for Labour in all its policies. Thus in the 1964

Conference the chairman Mr. Anthony Greenwood said: "We must see that the public are told what we are trying to do and why we are doing it and how it fits into the Socialist framework of society we are seeking to create."¹⁾ In this Conference education was not discussed at all and the Queen's speech did not mention by name the comprehensive schools. It merely stated generally "My Ministers will enlarge educational opportunities..."²⁾ This general phrase covered Labour's intentions of getting rid of selection and segregation. But clearly in 1964 Labour did not yet announce any national policy regarding comprehensive secondary education. In the House Labour continued to pursue the tactical line that its policy for secondary education did not mean the end of grammar school education. "We are not getting rid of grammar school education. We are going to broaden its scope to allow people access to it."³⁾ Perhaps this was also H. Wilson's intention when he stated before the election that the grammar schools would be abolished over his dead body.⁴⁾ At the same time Labour acknowledged that its policy did mean introduction of changes in the existing form of at least some of the grammar schools.⁵⁾ The purpose

1) 1964 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 95.

2) Hansard, vol. 701, p. 20.

3) *ibid.*, p. 109.

4) The Times Educational Supplement, 31 May 1963.

5) See Hansard, vol. 701, p. 110. and Crosland in The Times, 22 May 1965.

of presenting the policy towards the grammar schools in this way is obvious and was already dealt with in the previous chapter. For electoral reasons and for the benefit of all those Labour members who saw in the grammar schools an important asset, such a presentation was desirable. However it certainly did not fool the Conservatives, who claimed that "It certainly means abolition of grammar schools in their present form...",⁶⁾ and the question of the grammar schools' future formed an integral part of the Tories' attack on Labour's policy. But the main controversial issue, within Labour and between the parties, was the question of compulsion. In the coming years the Labour government found itself between two contradictory forces which tried to push it in two different directions. On the one hand the Labour party demanded quick action and use of compulsion, while on the other hand the Conservative Party fought against the usage of any form of compulsion.

Even at the beginning of the period, when the two Secretaries of State M. Stewart and R. Crosland chose not to use compulsion as they preferred to hope that the local education authorities would co-operate, compulsion was never ruled out as a possible measure at a later stage, should the situation demand it. At the beginning of 1965, Mr. M. Stewart, in reply to Mr. Hogg and Mr. Lloyd, said: "I intend

6) Hansard, vol. 701, p. 111.

to issue a circular to local education authorities calling on them to submit plans to me for the reorganisation of their secondary schools on comprehensive lines. I shall consider what further action might be required on my part to further the Government's policy after I have seen the response made by local education authorities to my circular.... My belief is that we shall have a highly co-operative response from local authorities and I am proceeding at present in this hope....⁷⁾ He added that despite his present line of approach compulsion could not be ruled out.

Stewart's announcement about the circular marked the beginning of a new phase, i.e., of a declared national policy on comprehensive secondary education. Until then, as the Queen's speech showed, Labour had not issued a policy document which made the comprehensive principle a national policy.

Preceding the promised circular, "Fair Deal for Kids, Why Labour Believes in Comprehensive Schools" was issued together with other less important publications. In "Fair Deal for Kids" the case for comprehensive secondary education was stated again and interestingly enough the emphasis was again more on the social and moral implications than on educational arguments, which though presented in full were accorded only secondary importance. The document summarised Labour's position

7) Hansard, vol. 705, p. 391.

in the fundamental dimension as in April 1965. From the social point of view the case for the comprehensive schools rested on the following arguments: a) Labour does not believe that education should divide people into first, second and third class citizens. It should unite them.⁸⁾ b) the tri-partite system is unjust. c) educating the more talented separately implies "a revolting view of society."⁹⁾

The educational arguments supporting these moral arguments were:

a) the impossibility of predicting the child's ability and future on the basis of an examination taken at eleven. b) the tri-partite system ignores the individual needs of the children involved. c) size does not exclude individual treatment in the comprehensive schools. d) experiments have shown that comprehensive schools do not level down but that the standard goes up in comprehensive schools for everyone, i.e., for the dull and the bright. e) the variety of courses in comprehensive schools cater for all needs. f) the comprehensive system does not abolish grammar school education, it opens it to all.

Neither does this system abolish parental choice as required in the 1944 Education Act as there are various forms of comprehensive education, and moreover the parents of most children had little parental choice under the tri-partite system. g) the comprehensive school avoids wastage of talent and thus can satisfy the needs of the new

8) "Fair Deal for Kids", Talking Points no. 5, the Labour Party (London, 1965), p. 3.

9) *ibid.*, p. 8.

economy. Almost no professional argument of phase two is missing yet, as has been said before, complete centrality was given in the document to the P(m)s. The document ends in a typical purely fundamental ideological argument: "Labour wants education to be a force which brings people together, not an influence which forces children to think in terms of competition from their earliest days at school. Selection has separated children of different social backgrounds into schools which intensify and exaggerate these differences. Every child in a comprehensive school is treated as important and as potentially valuable to society as his neighbour. Comprehensive education encourages each child to make the most of his or her abilities and interest There is no need for less able children to feel inferior, nor for the more able to feel superior. They can all meet on equal terms for games, for art, for music... and they all gain from this contact."¹⁰) It is worth while pointing out that at that stage, as the last sentence shows, the comprehensive schools were described as streamed or set in one way or another. The question of streaming or setting inside the comprehensive school became a crucial one toward the end of the 1960s.

At this point, after the case for the comprehensive schools was stated again, mainly on social grounds, the Sub-Committee for Policy and Finance dealt with the various forms of organisation and repeated

¹⁰) Ibid., p. 11.

again all the possibilities outlined before.¹¹⁾ It is interesting to note that the Sub-Committee referred to the disputed two-tier system as a temporary solution to local problems. This shows once more the intention of Labour to return to the earlier definition of the comprehensive principle in the fundamental dimension (as it was before it was redefined in order to enable the two-tier system to fit into the definition.)

Before issuing the circular Labour took an interesting political step. It tried to create the impression that the national policy, which would be outlined in the circular, was a result of developments all over the country and in public opinion. In other words, the national policy was needed to put together in order and in one policy declaration, all that the local education authorities had already brought into being. The national policy was not (it was implied) meant to create something new but to give guidance to existing developments. Thus the number of local education authorities which had a comprehensive system either implemented or approved for the whole or part of their area, was stressed.¹²⁾ And this fact was presented as a justification of the hope that there would be no need of compulsion.

When Crosland succeeded Stewart, the Conservative party had the

11) The Sub-Committee on Policy and Finance: Comprehensive Schools, 12 Jan. 1965, the Labour Party (unpublished).

12) For ex. see "Education: A Story of Achievement", Talking Points no. 13, the Labour Party (London, 1969), p. 8.

impression that he had a more conciliatory tone on secondary education in regard to compulsion and the future of the grammar schools. This was indeed true, but Crosland was quick to deny that his attitude was softer. Although he described the question of compulsion as an academic one, he stressed that it was so for the moment. Describing the strength of the movement towards going comprehensive he remarked "We have to remember that, despite the discouragement of the previous Government, the movement towards comprehensive reorganisation is already very strong. I am perfectly confident that local authorities will respond voluntarily and co-operatively to our request to submit plans."¹³⁾ If anybody exercised a policy of "active discouragement", Crosland said, it was certainly some Tory Ministers who rejected local education authorities' comprehensive plans. The present shouts of the Tories about infringing local authorities' rights is an irony, as they themselves exercised such policy.

The famous Circular 10/65 published on the 12th of July, followed the endorsement of the Government's policy in the House in a motion passed on 21st Jan. 1965: "That 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 separation of children into different types of secondary schools, notes with approval the efforts of local authorities to reorganise secondary education on

13) Hansard, vol. 708, p. 1449.

comprehensive lines which will preserve all that is valuable in grammar school education for those children who now receive it and make it available to more children; recognizes that the method and timing of such reorganisation should vary to meet local needs; and believes that the time is now ripe for a declaration of national policy."¹⁴⁾

The circular stated that the government's objective was to end selection and separatism in secondary education. The purpose of the circular is "...to provide some central guidance on the methods by which this can be achieved."¹⁵⁾ That is to say, events had led to the need of central guidance. The circular deals with the various forms of organising comprehensive schools and leaves the choice between the forms to the local education authorities. However, although the circular deals with practical questions it is possible to deduce from it the trend, which I have mentioned before, to return to the old definition of the comprehensive principle in the fundamental dimension. Six main forms of comprehensive organisation were presented, but a distinction was made between those forms which are "fully comprehensive" and those which are not and therefore "...should be regarded only as an interim stage in the development toward a fully comprehensive secondary organisation."¹⁶⁾ The fully comprehensive

14) Circular 10/65, Ministry of Education, H.M.S.O. (London, 1965), p. 1.

15) *ibid.*

16) *ibid.*, p. 2.

forms are those which do not involve any discrimination between children, i.e., in which all children either remain at the same school from 11 to 18, or where all are transferred at 13 or 14 to a senior school, or where a sixth form is separate. Schemes which involve the separation of children (among them the two-tier system in which the transfer is optional and the child can either go to the senior school or remain till the statutory leaving age at the junior school) were acceptable as interim solutions only because they were the lesser of two evils. That is to say, it is accepted that certain F(t)s, such as limitations imposed by existing buildings, make the establishment of "fully comprehensive" schools impossible for the time being. Thus in order, at least, to abolish selection at eleven and to start the reorganisation, the incompletely comprehensive forms are acceptable as interim solutions. The comprehensive principle is thus defined again as involving no separation of children and the forms of organisation that deviate from it are not in full accordance with the comprehensive principle but are a step toward it. This is a different picture from the one in "Learning to Live" in which all the forms, including the two-tier system, were declared to be in harmony with the comprehensive principle which was redefined on that occasion in order to embrace all these forms. Obviously, without any fuss or declaration the party returned to the old definition of the comprehensive principle. On the policy level interim solutions were allowed for the reasons stated before and qualifications were specified in the circular to ensure

that the interim solutions will function, as far as possible, according to the comprehensive principle.¹⁷⁾ The circular, for a change, was concerned also with the instrumental aspect of the comprehensive school - an aspect usually overridden by P(m)s. It pointed out the problem of neighbourhood schools which can result in some comprehensive schools having children from a better background than other schools. This could be harmful both socially and educationally. The following was inserted to avoid this "The Secretary of State therefore urges authorities to ensure, when determining catchment areas, that schools are as socially and intellectually comprehensive as is practicable."¹⁸⁾ The comprehensive principle demands cross section of social background and intelligence. This should guide the local education authorities who must accordingly do what the technical possibilities permit to achieve this goal. The circular stated that the voluntary schools should enter into the scheme of reorganisation through negotiations between the authorities and the governors of the school. As for Direct Grant grammar schools the Secretary "...hopes that authorities will study ways in which the schools might be associated with the plans, and the governing bodies will be ready to consider changes...which will enable them to

17) See the qualifications concerning the two-tier system, in which all children are transferred at 11 to a Junior Comprehensive School and at 13 or 14 some move to a Senior School while others remain in the Junior School, *ibid.*, p. 4.

18) *ibid.*, p. 8.

participate fully in the local scheme."¹⁹⁾ Finally, the plans had to be submitted within a year. The circular ends with the realistic assessment that a full reorganisation will require time, and stress is again laid on the confidence that, because the comprehensive school is widely accepted, this statement of national policy will simply secure further impetus.

On the whole, Circular 10/65 is in harmony with the comprehensive principle in the fundamental dimension as far as the forms of organisation are concerned, and deviated from it because it does not ensure a reasonably quick reorganisation. No kind of compulsion is suggested. Although the official explanation for not using more vigorous means was the hope of voluntary co-operation, it seems to me that the reasons were more complex. In my opinion Labour did not believe whole-heartedly in co-operation but preferred a soft policy both for electoral reasons and in order to be able to introduce the revolution in a more or less evolutionary way. The whole presentation of the national policy as a culmination of existing trends, and the attitude toward the grammar school question, was intended to soften the real revolutionary character of the reorganisation in the same manner as Plato tried to soften the revolutionary nature of his ideal state by referring to a hypothetical similar situation in the past.

From the time the circular was issued, all Labour publications,

¹⁹⁾ *ibid.*, p. 9.

debates and written answers in the House, gave from time to time the current number of local education authorities who produced whole or partial plans approved by the Secretary. The ILA produced its plan in 1966 as already in 1962 a full review of the London School Plan had been worked out. In October 1965 two thirds of the secondary school children in the country were living in the area of authorities who have already decided to go comprehensive in all or part of their territory.²⁰⁾

B. From National Policy to the 1970 Education Bill

From now onwards the demands of the Labour party from the Secretary were basically three: to use legislation in order to hasten the process of the reorganisation; to end streaming inside the comprehensive schools and to integrate the public school structure with the state education system. Those three issues were seen as crucial if the comprehensive principle, as formulated in the fundamental dimension, was to be fully implemented. Accordingly, the arguments were of the purely fundamental ideological type. Centrality was given to the P(m) of equality and professional considerations were presented to support the case.

In the 1965 Conference a composite resolution demanding action on all three issues was moved. It was claimed that only by ending streaming inside the comprehensive schools the educational system can

²⁰⁾ 1965 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 68.

become "genuinely comprehensive" and that the integration of all other schools with the state system was also essential to achieve that goal. If negotiations do not result in quick action there is no escape from legislation. All these are necessary "...to bring equality into education..."²¹⁾ to end "...privilege of any kind in education" and to realize the "...dynamic philosophy for a dynamic society..."²²⁾ Professional arguments, educational, sociological and economic, supporting these suggestions were introduced as well. A streamed comprehensive can have a depressing effect on a child who is put in a low stream. Time is short and talent cannot be wasted any longer. Speed is essential as children suffer all the time. Works of research were referred to in order to show the relationship between class and success in the eleven plus, the mistakes resulting from it and consequently the great wastage of ability. It was concluded that in any kind of streaming not ability is measured but class background.²³⁾ On the other hand in unstreamed groups "...children do progress according to their ability because they are given the right kind of education."²⁴⁾ As a matter of fact it was premature to draw the last professional conclusions in 1965 yet they were used

21) *ibid.*, p. 210.

22) *ibid.*, p. 211.

23) *ibid.*, pp. 211-212.

24) *ibid.*, p. 212.

in Conference as they supported the claim for equality.

Meanwhile it was becoming clear that without some kind of pressure the reorganisation would take years. An attempt to mobilize more support for the comprehensive schools by explaining the whole object again was undertaken by the Socialist Educational Association in "Guide to Comprehensive Education". It was mainly addressed to the rank and file in Labour, which indicated that the comprehensive issue was not yet completely understood in Labour itself. Indeed the publication started by saying: "Even though Socialist ideas are national policy, they still need to be argued and put over to the electorate."²⁵⁾ It was hoped that the booklet would explain the issue and would enable the rank and file to spread the comprehensive idea everywhere. The booklet itself contains nothing new. It explains again the case against the tri-partite and for comprehensive secondary education and supplies answers to the criticisms expressed against the comprehensive schools. It relies heavily on all the professional arguments of phase two which support the case, and strives to show that the attitude of the Conservative party is the doctrinaire one, but nevertheless the booklet itself connects the professional arguments to moral principles of the fundamental ideology of Labour.

However, explanation was not enough to hasten action, and as a result Labour's policy hardened. The first indication was given in

25) "Guide to Comprehensive Education", the Socialist Educational Association (Leeds Labour Publishing Society, 1966), p. 1.

the 1966 Election Manifesto "Time for Decision": "...we shall press ahead with our plans to abolish the eleven plus - that barrier to educational opportunity - and reorganise secondary education on comprehensive lines. We have appointed the Public Schools Commission, to recommend the best way of integrating the Public Schools into the state sector."²⁶⁾ Similarly in the Queen's speech opening the 1966/67 Parliamentary session it was stated: "My Government will promote further progress in the development of comprehensive secondary education."²⁷⁾

On the policy level this meant the issuing of Circulars 10/66 and 13/66. Although Labour still tried to avoid the ultimate measure of legislation it used the "purse" to create pressure on local education authorities. Circular 10/66 said: "...it would clearly be inconsistent with the Government's long term objective if further school buildings programmes were to include new projects exclusively fitted for a separatist system of secondary education. Accordingly the Secretary of State will not approve any new secondary projects (i.e., any projects not already included in an approved programme) which would be incompatible with the introduction of a non-selective system of secondary education. In cases where the Department does not yet have the necessary information about reorganisation schemes,

²⁶⁾ "Time for Decision", the Labour Party (London, 1966), p. 16.

²⁷⁾ Hansard, vol. 727, p. 48.

authorities are asked to describe for each secondary proposal how it will, or could, fit into a comprehensive pattern."²⁸⁾ The measures taken in Circular 10/66 were thus justified by referring to the long term objective of attaining a fully comprehensive secondary education. Similarly Circular 13/66 demanded from local education authorities "...to show for each secondary proposal that it would be compatible with an intention of introducing a non-selective system of education..."²⁹⁾

However, sectors inside Labour were pressing for more action as they were dissatisfied with the speed of the reorganisation and with the progress of the negotiations with the voluntary and direct grant schools. Crosland tried to explain away a need for legislation by stating towards the end of 1966, that "So far only three authorities have declined to submit plans and a tiny handful of other authorities are submitting plans potentially based on the retention of selection."³⁰⁾ Later, to show that the trend of public opinion was steadily inclining towards the comprehensive schools Crosland adduced the Gallup Poll figures from April and figures from two other polls undertaken in March 1966 and December 1965. The figures showed that from 1965 the number of people who thought the comprehensive schools a good idea

28) Circular 10/66, Ministry of Education and Science, H.M.S.O. (London, 1966), p. 2.

29) Circular 13/66, Ministry of Education and Science, H.M.S.O. (London, 1966), p. 2.

30) Hansard, vol. 732. p. 853.

increased (50%), the number of those disliking the comprehensive schools remained steady (18%), the number of those who did not know declined (18%), and the number of people who had not heard about the comprehensive school declined as well (6%).³¹⁾ Consequently at the end of 1966 Crosland continued to say that he did not foresee the necessity of legislation.³²⁾

In spite of all the figures Labour continued to press the Secretary to hasten up the reorganisation. A composite resolution was moved in the 1966 Conference to this effect. It asked for more money, legislation, a national publicity campaign and the integration of the public and direct grant schools into the state system. All this, it was argued, is necessary in order to have a fully comprehensive system in a definite time,³³⁾ as time could not be wasted. Speaker after speaker argued for legislation "...to compel unwilling councils". The case for the unstreamed comprehensive was argued as well, on the same lines as in the 1965 Conference.

Jennie Lee replied on behalf of the N.E.C. She acknowledged the need for more money, but thought legislation was unnecessary. Taking Crosland's side she said: "We should ask you to look at the facts about this and pause. Sometimes we do not realise when we

31) Hansard, vol. 733. Written Answer, p. 143.

32) Hansard, vol. 735. Written Answers, p. 139.

33) 1966 Labour Annual Conference Report, pp. 118-119.

are being successful. We ought really to appreciate our successes... and it is a most remarkable fact that, of 162 education authorities, only three have refused to co-operate with the Minister in sending in plans of any kind."³⁴⁾ But, Labour, she stressed, was not relying only on the good will of the local education authorities. Circular 10/66 provided "...certain sanctions that we can apply.... We have also made it quite clear that... 'The Minister would certainly not rule out the prospect of legislation, should it prove necessary'."³⁵⁾ As for the public schools, one had first to see the report of the Public School Commission. The motion was therefore remitted to the N.E.C. and Crosland continued to issue the number of approved plans during 1967.

The Secretary of State continued to avoid direct compulsion and the Parliamentary secretary Mr. Gordon refused to agree that it was necessary to take action against local education authorities who allowed parents a choice of grammar school education in other areas. When Mrs. Renee Short proceeded to say that "We expect him to defend the established comprehensive schools", he replied: "I regard this as a very retrograde step, but it is not so unreasonable that I would be justified in intervening under the appropriate section of the Act."³⁶⁾

34) *ibid.*, p. 129.

35) *ibid.*

36) *Hansard*, vol. 755, p. 1655.

Against this continued disinclination of the Secretary to use compulsion, Labour's pressure regarding legislation grew, especially in view of events on the municipal level, when local elections passed control to Conservatives. While in the 1966 Conference a resolution calling for legislation was remitted to the N.E.C., in the 1967 Conference a resolution of the Socialist Educational Association, calling for legislation, was passed with the approval of the N.E.C. As Miss A. Bacon for the N.E.C. said: "The National Executive ask you to pass the resolution without any qualifications whatsoever.... Education, Mr. Chairman, is a partnership and always has been between Government and local authorities. Local authorities have to work within a framework of national laws with various local variations. But, you know, there are some things that are laid down nationally.... I want to say quite categorically on behalf of the Government that, as most local authorities are changing to a system of non-selective secondary education, it would be absolutely unthinkable that in some areas there should be permanent differences, with some children living in an area where they had selection at 11, or any other age, and others living in areas where there were comprehensive schools. The Government could not tolerate such a situation and, if local authorities refuse to comply with requests to change to a non-selective system, or delay unreasonably then I give you my pledge that the Government will not hesitate to legislate. (Applause)"³⁷⁾ Thus the ground was prepared

37) 1967 Labour Annual Conference Report, pp. 136, 137.

already in the 1967 Conference for compulsory legislation. Another fact that showed the high priority of the comprehensive reorganisation was that the reorganisation was only slightly affected by the devaluation.

Edward Short succeeded R. Crosland as Secretary of State and Miss A. Bacon was appointed a Minister of State. In the House accusations that the Conservatives "...are prepared to smash up comprehensive schools... on purely spiteful and doctrinaire political lines",³⁸⁾ were heard from Labour M.P.s who demanded legislation. Already the chairman's address in the 1968 Conference spoke of doubts, not about Socialist principles, but about the way the Labour government was tackling its job.³⁹⁾ That is to say, the Labour government was criticised for creating a gap between the fundamental dimension and the policies. In the educational sphere a new Education Act was demanded in order to avoid "...a hotch-potch system of education with the quality varying from authority to authority... Till the tri-partite system is finally dead there can be no equality of opportunity and the system will not die under present legislation. Only new legislation will ensure the equality of opportunity that we have paid so much lip service to over the years..."⁴⁰⁾

38) Hansard, vol. 767. p. 793.

39) 1968 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 116.

40) *ibid.*, p. 231.

The comprehensive principle, as formulated in the fundamental dimension, was praised by George Brown. He described it as "...this marvellous concept we have as a Party and as a Government of giving all children, regardless of background, equal opportunity in terms of education."⁴¹⁾ The party did not doubt this, it doubted whether the actions the government was taking to implement this "wonderful concept" were sufficient and concluded that in view of the attitude of certain Conservative local authorities, legislation was the only answer. Education, it was claimed, is a national issue and therefore the government has the right to legislate.

Dominant in the arguments were the moral principle of equality and the future of the economy. Miss A. Bacon in the 1968 Conference approved again of legislation but pointed out that it was not enough to have a great number of approved plans as "...it is not only the plans, it is the implementation of those plans. The plans are just a starting point, we have to get ahead with the plans that have been accepted."⁴²⁾ In short, more money to help local authorities with their comprehensive building plans was needed. She rejected, in the name of the N.E.C. and the Labour party at large the Newsom Committee's Report, which advocated a slow integration of the public schools by

41) *ibid.*

42) 1968 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 239.

increasing slowly the number of free places. This was a "half solution" and was therefore no solution at all.

To sum up, Miss Bacon's speech was aimed to achieve a policy programme in accord with the fundamental principles: more money, legislation to go ahead efficiently with the implementation of the comprehensive principle, and no slow integration of the public schools with the state system as having a small number of children educated in superior types of secondary schools goes against the P(m) of equality.⁴³⁾ The resolutions demanding more money, legislation and rejection of the Newsom Report, were carried. Labour thus made it clear that a new Education Act with a new definition of secondary education was needed.⁴⁴⁾ Meanwhile the School Building Programme continued to follow Circular 10/66,⁴⁵⁾ and in the beginning of 1969 Mr. Short indicated in the House that he was going to introduce a Bill. In the 1969 Conference a composite resolution calling for the government to "...enact immediate legislation to implement the principle of comprehensive education",⁴⁶⁾ was passed. But Miss Bacon explained that a major Education Bill would have to be postponed until

43) See also "The Public Schools", Information Paper no. 24, Labour Party Research Department (London, 1968), p. 7.

44) See also Information Paper no. 35, Labour Party Research Department (London, 1969).

45) See Circular 5/67, Dept. of Education and Science, H.M.S.O. (London, 1968).

46) 1968 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 336.

after the reform of local government. Yet "...we cannot postpone legislation about comprehensive education (Applause). And so, in the next session of Parliament, we shall introduce a short Bill dealing with this one specific subject (Applause)."⁴⁷⁾

The fact that in spite of the story of progress which Miss Bacon proceeded to describe, Labour decided to introduce immediately a Bill relating to comprehensive education, shows, inter alia, the party's wish to close the remaining gap between the fundamental dimension and the policies concerning the comprehensive principle. That the commitment to the P(m) played an important part in the decision to introduce the Bill, is obvious. The publication of the Black Papers with their emotionally charged ideological arguments supplemented hap-hazardly by professional arguments, evoked a similarly emotional, extreme reaction in Labour. Labour tried, as did the Conservatives in the two Black Papers, to show that not only social considerations motivated them but that their policy was the one which was professionally sound. Yet it was very difficult to hide that Labour was fighting in the main for equality versus privilege and inequality. While for years the debate had been generally level headed, from now on the arguments of both parties, because they were fighting for their basic moral principles, became heated with emotions. Some of the arguments were very obviously mixed with emotional overtones and were designed to

47) 1969 Labour Annual Conference Report, p. 342.

appeal mainly to the passions, while others tried to present professional arguments in order to fortify their case and make it more "objective".

Alice Bacon admitted the effect of the Black Paper on the nature of the debate: "Now we who have fought for so many years to see comprehensive schools established are told that we must approach these criticisms in a spirit of sweet reasonableness, that we must not issue premature and hot-headed condemnations of those who say they are seeking the best interests of all our children. Well, Madam Chairman, I am afraid I cannot act dispassionately when I see such dangerous nonsense as this published, for we all know the real motives from which it springs. It is not concern with human equality and human progress, and with giving all our children the fairest possible chance of the best education. What really lies behind the vicious attacks on the 1944 Education Act and our whole policy on comprehensive schools is a passionate and undying belief in human inequality and privilege (Applause). I say to those who write and support their Black Papers: all of us have an equally passionate and undying belief in human equality and social justice as the basis of our children's education (Applause). And we shall not only keep on fighting you relentlessly but in the end it is we who will win. (Applause)."⁴⁸⁾ Indeed, an excellent example of an emotional speech and the frequency of applause

48) *ibid.*, p. 343. The emphasis is mine.

shows only too well how easy it is to evoke emotions.

The Queen's speech opening the 1969/1970 Parliamentary session, confirmed that "A Bill will be introduced requiring local education authorities to propose plans for reorganising secondary education on comprehensive lines."⁴⁹⁾ In Parliament a hot debate on the proposed Bill ensued, provoking all the familiar issues that we found in Labour's various arguments for the comprehensive schools. The Conservatives played mainly on the rights of local authorities, and E. Heath accused Labour that "It is apparently all right to settle things locally provided that does not conflict with the dogma of the Socialist Government. If it does then there is to be blackmail by the Secretary of State through finance and, when that is unsuccessful, legislation from the Westminster Parliament to impose it upon them."⁵⁰⁾ The Conservative party proceeded to attack the proposed legislation by claiming that this legislation will do nothing to raise educational standards or to solve concrete educational problems such as shortage of teachers. It will produce botched-up schemes and "...will merely dictate the dogmas of the Government to unwilling parents and unwilling authorities. That is why we shall oppose it."⁵¹⁾

H. Wilson replied that the Bill is part of the "...legislation

49) Hansard, vol. 790, p. 6.

50) *ibid.*, p. 26.

51) *ibid.*, p. 27.

programme in the field of social concern and social justice."⁵²⁾ He continued by reminding Heath that Conservative Ministers did not respect, in their policies, the rights of local education authorities and prevented many from implementing a comprehensive policy. In any case, he said, the compulsion would affect only a minority of local education authorities as most do co-operate. Wilson, of course, attacked the Conservatives that it was they who "...even before the Bill has been published...want to fight this proposal on partisan and doctrinaire lines, regardless of the right of parents and children who want comprehensive education and equality of opportunity."⁵³⁾

It cannot escape notice that both parties, while attacking each other for acting according to "doctrinaire lines", were defending at the same time their position on the basis of their P(m)s and on educational arguments related to those principles, and fell back for example, on the same right - the right of parents to choose - while accusing each other of abusing this right. The Conservatives demanded for the parents the right to choose between comprehensive schools and grammar schools while Labour replied that under the tri-partite system the right of parental choice was an empty phrase for something like 80% of parents whose children were sent to

⁵²⁾ *ibid.*

⁵³⁾ *ibid.*, p. 35. The emphasis is mine.

secondary modern schools. While in the comprehensive school the child may select from the variety of courses, those he needs.⁵⁴⁾ Labour had won the election on the basis of its Manifesto in which the intention to abolish the eleven plus and to reorganise secondary education on comprehensive lines was stated, and so, Labour claimed, it was the government's duty to fulfill this promise.⁵⁵⁾ Labour did not hesitate to say that its main concern was to provide equality of educational opportunity and through it a more equal, human, compassionate and brotherly society. Indeed Wilson saw in the realization of these P(m)s the legitimization of the legislation: "...this House, and the Government responsible to the House, have the right and the duty to provide equality of educational opportunity."⁵⁶⁾ And Mr. Short "complimented" Mr. Heath, by describing him as the "...defender of privilege and the eleven plus."⁵⁷⁾ Obviously Labour wanted to show that the Conservatives, despite all their talk about the defects of the eleven plus, actually wanted to retain it. Indeed it was very difficult for the Conservative party to explain how it proposed to retain the tri-partite system and abolish selection at the same time. It might work in practice, but in a theoretical debate it was difficult

54) *ibid.*, pp. 554-555; see also "Demolishing the Myth", T.E.S., 15 May 1970.

55) *Hansard*, vol. 790, p. 564.

56) *ibid.*, p. 36.

57) *ibid.*, p. 554.

to explain how the creaming off by the grammar school did not affect the comprehensive schools.

Labour proceeded, in the House, to show that professional findings and educational considerations supported overwhelmingly the case against the eleven plus and the tri-partite system and for the comprehensive schools. Social and educational considerations were presented together, sometimes moral principles were presented alone, but never did a Labour speaker argue only on professional grounds without invoking the P(m)s.

Before the second reading of the Bill, in February 1970, Mr. Short explained in the longest speech about comprehensive schools ever heard in the House, why the Bill was necessary and what it was seeking to achieve. He started with the Motion passed in the House on the 21st of January 1965 which justified a declaration of national policy and continued by describing the developments in local education authorities regarding the comprehensive reorganisation. Thereafter he presented a summary of the professional arguments of phase two and three against selection and segregation, choosing carefully those arguments which supported his case, giving figures and quoting names.⁵⁸⁾ However, he did not present a purely professional argument, as after finishing with the professional resumé he said: "This is,

58) See Hansard, vol. 795, pp. 1463-1467.

essentially the educational case for the comprehensive school. Its aim is to give equality of educational opportunity irrespective of a child's social background and to cut out the penalising of children because of their social environment. I hope that there would be great agreement in the House that no child anywhere in Britain should be penalized because of social factors. But this, of course, is exactly what selection on a so called ability basis at the age of eleven for different types of school does.⁵⁹⁾ He continued with the use of the familiar Labour argument, that the Bill was not a compulsion from above so much as a response to the desires of parents and educators, which in some cases could not be fulfilled without using coercion.

Needless to say that the debate that followed was bitter and ruthless, the Tories accusing Labour for relying only on those professional arguments which supported the case and of ignoring the fact that a lot is still unknown about intelligence and its relation to heredity and background.⁶⁰⁾ In short, they claimed that the Bill, contrary to the 1944 Education Act, was socially and not educationally centered. Labour did not hesitate to attack Mrs. Thatcher on the same lines and it was stated that: "What she demands is a freedom for a minority which is denied to the majority. That is privilege, and it

59) *ibid.*, p. 1466.

60) *ibid.*, p. 1473.

is privilege that the other side of the House is defending today."⁶¹⁾ The whole debate, while using educational arguments, turned out to be basically about the different moral principles of the two parties. Mr. Price, after repeating his accusation of Tory hypocrisy and for their hidden wish to retain selection, concluded that the debate "...will show the electorate, particularly those who say that there is no difference between the parties, that there is a difference, that the Conservatives are entrenched in the defence of a small privileged minority and that the Labour party stands for schools which cater for the whole range of society."⁶²⁾ Angus Maude's reply was that "The only doctrinaire, dogmatic people in this House are the Secretary of State and the Hon. Member for Perry Bar and his associates..."⁶³⁾ The only level headed views were presented by E. Boyle, but his voice was a lonely one in a debate which was rightly described as "Big Guns Open up in Battle over Selection".⁶⁴⁾

The Bill was passed to the Standing Committee. Its proceedings were interrupted by the success of the opposition in defeating the central clause (Clause I) because of the absence of three Labour M.P.s. Clause I stated: "With a view to the ending of selection of

61) *ibid.*, p. 1490; see also p. 1494.

62) *ibid.*, p. 1508.

63) *ibid.*, p. 1520.

64) T.L.S., 20 Feb. 1970.

pupils for admission to secondary schools by reference to ability or aptitude, every local authority, in fulfilling those duties, shall (subject to the following provisions of this section) have regard to the need for securing that secondary education is provided only in schools where the arrangements for the admission of pupils are not based (wholly or partly) on such selection."⁶⁵⁾ This was the central clause of the Bill and there was no point in going on with the Bill after this clause had been defeated. Mr. Short, was however firm in his intention to impose comprehensive education. He took the Bill back to the House and after a long discussion about procedure, it was decided "That the Education Bill, as far as amended, be recommitted to the former committee."⁶⁶⁾ The standing Committee was instructed that "...notwithstanding that they have disagreed to Clause I of the Education Bill, they have power to insert in the Bill provision with a like effect."⁶⁷⁾

The Tories proceeded again to attack the clause but Mr. Short would have none of this. The eleven plus, he said, was the greatest bar to equality of education, which was one of the great remaining social injustices in Britain. The position of the two parties was described in the following way: "There are now few issues on which

65) Education Bill (no. 91), H.M.S.O. (London, 1970), p. 1.

66) Hansard, vol. 800, p. 456.

67) *ibid.*, p. 465.

the two sides of the Commons are so deeply divided."⁶⁸⁾ This fact confirms my analysis, that the two parties were defending, through education, their fundamental ideology. It was not really a debate on educational grounds as one would not expect such a heated discussion merely on professional matters. The result of the debate about principles was that the consensus, for which both Crosland and Boyle had tried to work, disappeared and instead a polarization was created. Finally on 30th May, the government succeeded in restoring the operative first clause to the Education Bill. The new clause, like the original, compelled local education authorities to recognize the need for introducing comprehensive education in order to end selection for secondary education. The Bill never became an Act as Labour decided upon a spring election and was defeated.

As for the content of the Bill, circles supporting comprehensive schools criticised it on two main counts. The first criticism claimed that the Bill should have been less rigid, so that it could survive a change of government and especially changes in local authorities. Mr. Short's attitude to the direct-grant school, following the Donnison Report, was not conducive to good will, and it was claimed that its result would be that many direct-grant schools would go independent and raise their fees. The T.E.S. claimed that Short looked for a short cut and confined the argument to an

68) T.E.S., 24 April 1970.

oversimplified debate on high principles, and that to force the issue in this way is to evoke counter reaction, which indeed is what happened.⁶⁹⁾ A short cut can only make things worse if there is a change in government as it would inevitably result in the denunciation of the Act if a Conservative government followed. The major criticism was, however, directed against the weakness of the Bill. According to the Bill the Secretary of State requires local education authorities to submit plans showing the measures which the authority intends to take in order to end selection. With the plan a timetable for its implementation has to be submitted. If the Secretary of State does not accept the plan the Bill gives him power to require a local authority to prepare a new plan and to submit it within a given time. A final clause provides for the government to ask for the revision of any reorganisation scheme which has already been approved.

The main worry of many educationalists, before the Bill was disclosed, was whether it was going to be anything more than a propaganda exercise, i.e., whether it would have the teeth they would have liked. Indeed the weakness of the Bill, claimed the N.U.T. after the Bill was read, lay in the fact that it was founded on administrative action only. The Department of Education could thus only "request" authorities. Much more explicit powers had to be given to the Secretary of State in order to ensure that every local council marched

69) T.E.S., 3 April 1970.

as quickly as possible to abolish the eleven plus. The N.U.T. therefore supported amendments designed to put more teeth in the Bill. They wanted the Bill specifically to allow local education authorities to redraw school boundaries in order to encourage a socially representative mixture of children. This was regarded as essential as according to the Bill "Banding", which was adopted by the ILA, was outlawed as it meant selection of some kind. Secondly, the Bill according to the N.U.T., should have prohibited selection at 15 or 16 plus, while the Bill left a loophole allowing education authorities to select children for further sixth form schooling on the basis of ability.⁷⁰⁾ The N.U.T. suggestions aimed to avoid the emergence of ghetto schools.

The Comprehensive Schools Committee, criticised the Bill on two points: a) the selection at 16; b) the lack of definite dates. It concluded by arguing that a further legislation is needed.

Asking the question: "who should rule the schools?", The Guardian for one, saw the only solution to achieve change in education, by changing the machinery of government: to have the State run all the schools itself, or to give to the Secretary of State, in a major Education Bill, limited defined powers to direct local authorities' educational policies.⁷¹⁾ While R. Klein, in The Observer,

70) The Guardian, 18 March 1970.

71) The Guardian, 9 Feb. 1970.

thought that coercion may prove counter-productive as to force councils to adopt policies in which they do not believe is calculated to ensure that these policies will be pursued in a half-hearted and niggardly way.⁷²⁾ These two different views have one thing in common: the short Bill is not going to solve the problem of ensuring a comprehensive universal secondary education. This conclusion actually unites all those who, while standing for a comprehensive reorganisation, criticised the Bill for not being suited to achieve this purpose.

Why then did Mr. Short fight for the Bill with such a determination especially when in 1970 the facts were that out of the 163 local education authorities in England and Wales, 110 have had reorganisation schemes approved for the whole or greater part of their areas; 12 had schemes under consideration at the Department; 9 have had their schemes rejected and not resubmitted; 5 have not replied to the circular and 8 have declined to submit schemes? (In numbers there were 1,200 comprehensive schools in 1970 compared to 262 in 1965.) The figures certainly show progress and the general opinion in February 1970 was that the country, despite the small number of reluctant local education authorities, accepted and favoured the comprehensive principle. Why then introduce a Bill which does not have adequate power and in which it is actually stated that it will

72) The Observer, 8 Feb. 1970.

be at least a decade or twenty years before a universal comprehensive system can be established, because of the shortage of finance for new buildings and the conditions of the present school buildings? Why did Mr. Short not wait for the local reorganisation to proceed while he concentrated on helping to carry out approved schemes and on what was going on inside established comprehensive schools? All the problems could then be tackled in a big Education Bill which could be effective in a way that a small Bill could not. Surely the answer is not that Labour wanted, towards the end of its term of government, to ensure comprehensive reorganisation in case the Conservatives took over, as there was nothing to prevent the Conservatives, in such an event, of denouncing the Bill? Neither could the Bill, as has been seen, help very much if Labour remained in power. It seems to me that the Bill was motivated not so much by practical considerations as by principles. It was basically a declaration of faith in the comprehensive principle more than anything else. The Bill was introduced mostly because of pressure inside the party, pressure which, as I have tried to show, was building up from 1964 and which was mainly based on the party's commitment to the fundamental of equality. The Bill was an expression and culmination of the whole trend inside Labour from 1964.

When Labour took office it did not immediately make comprehensive secondary education into a national policy, in spite of the fact that when it was in opposition Labour achieved almost a complete harmony

between the comprehensive principle and the policies formulated to implement it, by readapting the definition of the comprehensive principle in the fundamental dimension. The remaining gap between the fundamental dimension and the policies consisted of the attitude towards public schools, direct-grant schools and other independent schools; of lack of compulsion to quicken the implementation in an effective way and of vagueness about the time factor. In 1965 M. Stewart announced that Labour intended to make the comprehensive principle into a national policy and this was done by Crosland in Circular 10/65. The circular returned to the orthodox definition of the comprehensive principle in the fundamental dimension without any admission that there was a change. Presumably the party did not want to announce that there was a return to the old definition as it did not want to acknowledge that this definition had ever been replaced. At any rate the return to the old definition of the comprehensive principle resulted in the labelling of those schemes which were not completely in accord with the orthodox definition, as interim solutions only. These interim solutions were acceptable only because they helped to solve the problem of selection and were unavoidable in certain localities because of technical considerations. The gap which remained in 1965, between the fundamental dimension and the level of action consisted of lack of effective compulsion, streaming inside the comprehensive schools and the problem of the public schools and other independent schools. The 1965 Conference urged action on

these three issues but the N.E.C. was against it. However a step forward was taken in 1966 with the introduction of Circular 10/66 which used the purse as a means of imposing comprehensive schools on unwilling local education authorities. The Secretary was unwilling to use legislation and retained this attitude in 1966 and 1967. The party, however, pressed harder and harder, and in the 1967 Conference the N.E.C. joined the Conference in the demand for legislation, and a new Education Act was demanded in 1968. Yet because of the local reform programme the major act had to be postponed. Despite this the Secretary decided to introduce a short Bill on secondary reorganisation. The introduction of the Bill can be seen as a gesture to close further the gap between the fundamental and the policy levels, yet because of the nature of the Bill a gap still remained. This gap was twofold: on the one hand the question of independent schools, as separate from the direct grant schools, and on the other came the problem of creating a social cross-section of school population and the elimination of selection inside the comprehensive schools themselves.

If Labour succeeded in closing the gap as far as their intentions of enforcing reorganisation are concerned, it failed in what is perhaps a more substantial aspect of the comprehensive principle: the securing of comprehensiveness in the comprehensive schools themselves. In other words it succeeded largely in abolishing the eleven plus in its existing form but failed to close the door for the re-introduction

of selection within the comprehensive schools themselves. Labour's policy was directed for years at securing the external form of comprehensive secondary education and awareness of the problems inside the comprehensive schools was a much later development. This accounts for the fact that so little emphasis, till the mid 1960s, was laid on the question of streaming in the comprehensive schools. Why this awareness developed so late is a separate question which can perhaps be attributed to the way the human mind works: only after securing the first step and after experience with the comprehensive schools did the problems concerning the inner selection in these schools become an object of observation and consequently of study and criticism. The comprehensive schools had first of all to exist for some time before the true nature of what was going inside them could be observed. Once it was observed criticism began as inner selection was as opposed to the moral principle of equality as the eleven plus. Yet it would take again years till effective action about this could be undertaken. This is perhaps the unfortunate fact about the nature of decision making and planning. Moreover, the fact that the streaming question was easy to foresee, shows once more that the instrumental aspect of the comprehensive school came always only after the event, as on the whole it was overridden by the more obvious aspects connected with the fundamental of equality.

PART THREE

THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

CHAPTER SEVEN: IN AND OUT OF POWER 1943-1951

A. The Conservative Party and its Fundamental Ideology

The Conservative party has such deep historical roots, that it would be very naive to expect complete continuity as far as the party's ideology, structure and social basis are concerned. However, some kind of continuity, especially in the party's fundamental ideology, does exist because of the party's ability for adapting itself to new situations without discarding old principles completely.

As far as the social basis of the party is concerned, there have been the country party, the industrial and commercial party and the party of the suburbs. Disraeli's Toryism was already infiltrated by the influence of the industrial and commercial sectors, and the party of industry can best be symbolised by Chamberlain and Bonar Law. Simultaneously the party was becoming also the party of the suburbs and the two major figures who symbolise this party are Baldwin and Douglas Home. The complexity of the Conservative party not merely in relation to its social basis, but in regard to its ideology is evident. The party's fundamental ideology required to allow for the adjustment of all the various principles of its various "parties".

To say, as Lord Butler claimed in the 1950s, that the Conservative party is a modernized version of Disraeli's Conservatism, is an oversimplification, but at the same time it contains a grain of

truth, as the party leadership is known for its ability to justify new programmes by using old principles: even if in the process the old principles are isolated from their historical context and given a different significance. Thus, certain statements taken especially from Burke and Disraeli serve to express the party's contemporary principles and also to justify the policies of the party throughout the period from 1940 till 1970.

It is outside the scope of this thesis to deal with the historical development of the Conservative party. What is of interest and importance are certain principles derived from the past: from the Old Tories, the Old Whigs, from Disraelian Conservatism and from Liberalism. These principles, adopted and readapted time and again, remained the core of the party's fundamental ideology around which there is a strong consensus in the contemporary Conservative party, in spite of all the feuds inside the party. It seems to me that the main fundamentals are the following:

- 1) The conception of society as an organic whole to which the principles of order and hierarchy are vital: diversity contained in unity.
- 2) The conviction that the Conservative party is the party entitled to rule.
- 3) The paternal element as regards the central government on the one hand, and the belief in grass-root democracy on the other hand.
- 4) A distrust of all-inclusive ideology i.e., "dogmatic anti-dogmatism" and the emphasis on an empirical pragmatical approach.

5) The value of tradition.

6) The importance of quality and excellence.

The conception of the whole universe as "a great chain of being" arranged in an hierarchical order and the view of society as consisting of orders one above the other, characterized the literature and philosophy of the sixteenth century and was a basic principle in the Old Tory philosophy. The Old Whigs' conception of hierarchy, notably in Burke, was undoubtedly influenced by "the great chain of being". Yet Burke, and the Old Whigs in general, substituted for the cosmological concept of hierarchy a more rational justification of hierarchy: the divine order had a sociological sanction in that it was that form of society which would work best.¹⁾ Aristocracy was the natural governing class not because it had "blue blood" but because its education and upbringing made it the most suitable to govern. Therefore the governing body had to have an independent authority. Throughout the years the party regarded itself as the party destined to rule because it has the qualities necessary for governing. The power structure of the party, at least in theory, provides the leader with unlimited power and the cabinet in general is supposed to enjoy great independence. Great stress is put on the quality of the leadership and on its importance for the benefit

1) S. Beer, op.cit., pp. 10-11.

of the whole nation, and from this follows the great concern about educating an élite.

The concept of hierarchy as a desirable structure is connected to another concept - unity. Hierarchy does not mean disunity. While the existence of different classes is natural because of the innate differences between men, all the orders/classes are united in one society and, as in a living organism each class has its function to perform and each is essential to the proper functioning of the whole. The duty of the governing class, influenced by the patriarchal image, is to care for the good of the people. As B. Beer says: "In Disraeli's version of Tory Democracy a conception of authority was joined with a distinctive conception of purpose.... The nation would have, as the young Disraeli said in words echoing the rhetoric of the sixteenth century, 'that free order and that natural gradation of ranks which are but a type and image of the economy of the universe'. But each class, rank, and interest would enjoy security of status.... Inequality and security are combined in this distinctively Tory conception of purpose."²⁾ A century passed, but from Disraeli's emphasis on security and on the need to "...elevate the condition of the people",³⁾ Lord Butler drew the justification for the adoption of the welfare

2) *ibid.*, pp. 269-269.

3) From "The Crystal Palace Speech" in 1872, quoted from R.T. McKenzie and A. Silver, "Conservatism, Industrialism and the Working-Class Tory in England" in R. Rose, (ed.), *op.cit.*, p. 24.

state. The paternal element made it easier for the modern Conservative party to justify the growing functions of the government which were a direct result of the party's acceptance of the welfare state. Needless to say Disraeli himself was not the father of the welfare state and the whole idea was alien to the Conservative party till the 1940s. Bonar Law's address in 1922 is a good example of the rejection of the welfare elements by the Conservative party at that time,⁴⁾ and another example is the way in which the party reacted to the Beveridge plan.

Another fundamental principle is the deep rooted suspicion of ideology as an all-embracing programme for action. The leadership should not be confined by any specific programme which could restrict its power of manoeuvre. Having what the Conservatives call "philosophy" is one thing, formulating an ideology in the ideational sense⁵⁾ i.e., with a description of the ideal society, is something different. All the history of the Conservative party is marked by this "ideology of having no ideology". As D.H. Block said in 1965, while defining the Conservative party: "A party that makes a shibboleth.... has the continual embarrassment of having to try and implement something that is irrelevant to the times.... The Conservatives approach is empirical and practical". It does not bind its supporters to dogmatic rules

4) Bonar Law's address, The Times, 27 Oct. 1922.

5) For the term "Ideational ideology" see S.P. Huntington, "Conservatism as an Ideology", A.P.S.R., June 1957, p. 456.

fixed for all times.⁶⁾ So much do the Conservatives emphasize their dislike of dogmatism that this approach can be described as "dogmatic anti-dogmatism".

Finally one must note the great value attached to tradition: to accumulated experience and to old institutions. Interestingly the Conservative party is regarded as the most successful right-wing party as far as adaptability is concerned and yet it contains this strong element of respect for tradition. However, except for few cases where "old" has become synonymous with successful, (whether it had been successful or not,) the Conservative party acted as the Marquis of Salisbury said in 1953. "Above all we made it our aim not to sweep away all our forefathers bequeathed to us, but to build on the strong foundations of the past, always adopting the ancient fabric to our social system to suit modern needs."⁷⁾ From this attitude arises the notion of the preferability of evolutionary change to revolutionary change.

In the literature on the Conservative party there is an agreement that the party does have an ideology and an agreement about the nature of the fundamental P(s) of the Conservative official fundamental ideology. By the "official fundamental ideology" of the Conservative party I mean that ideology which is the result of the

6) Quoted from R. Hellenius, op.cit., pp. 61,60.

7) The Marquis of Salisbury in The New Conservatism, C.P.C. (London, 1955), p. 15.

adjustment of all the various ideologies inside the party. This fundamental ideology is an adjustment both of past principles and of present ideological differences inside the party.

S. Beer sees the major fundamental P(m)s of the party, which distinguish it from the Labour party, as the belief in inequality and in freedom.⁸⁾ Inequality is derived from the principle of hierarchy discussed before, while the P(m) of freedom, which finds its expression in grass-root democracy as well, was adopted by modern Conservatism from Liberalism. J.A. Christoph says: "For Conservatives, the belief in the naturalness and usefulness of inequality, the inevitability of hierarchy... may have been muted by the necessities of Britain's contemporary situation, but it has not been abandoned in favour of a wholly different value system."⁹⁾ R. Helenius emphasizes the value attached to pragmatic politics combined with the Conservatives' claim that they have no ideology, the respect for tradition, the P(m) of divergence, the view of society as an organism and the belief in order.¹⁰⁾

But it is perhaps best to let contemporary Conservatives speak for themselves about their fundamental ideology, which of course they will never call ideology but will use such terms as "philosophy" or

8) S. Beer, op.cit., pp. 387-388.

9) J.A. Christoph, "Consensus and Cleavage in British Political Ideology" in Political Parties: Contemporary Trends and Ideas, R.C. Macridis, (ed.), London, 1967), p. 93.

10) R. Helenius, op.cit., pp. 34, 57-62, 105-107.

"elements" or "principles". The Conservative party has no constitution and its Manifestos usually do not enlarge on fundamental P(m)s precisely because of the "dogmatic anti-dogmatism" of the party. Therefore the best sources are addresses and statements of party officials.

In 1946 C.J.M. Alport defined Conservatism as consisting of two elements: The first is the historical or conservative element; the second is the radical or reforming element. The "Political principles" which follow from these two elements are: the importance of slow progress, national unity, the free development of human personality and the great stress on quality and variety.¹¹⁾ In the same manner Lord Butler said that "...the classical role of Conservatism has always been to find the right mean between its dynamic and its stabilising aspects."¹²⁾ In his speech to the 1947 Conference the Right Hon. Sir Anthony Eden defined the Conservative faith as based on the following fundamental principles: "At its core Conservatism stands for liberty of the individual, his right to liberty, to justice, to respect for his own distinctive personality", and not "on a rigid doctrine".¹³⁾ The empirical approach was emphasised also by Anthony Eden in 1946. He warned against the development of "doctrinaire"

11) "C.J.M. Alport talks to you about Conservative Principles", C.P.C. (London, 1946), pp. 4-14.

12) R.A. Butler, "A Disraelian Approach to Modern Politics" in Tradition and Change, C.P.C. (London, 1954), p. 11.

13) Sir A. Eden in The New Conservatism, p. 11.

anti-Socialism" and said that the Conservative approach is and should remain empirical; based on realism and practical requirements and tackling each problem as it arises.¹⁴⁾ David Clarke stressed in 1947 the respect for history and tradition: "A mark of the Conservative attitude is a deep sense of those traditions which have persisted in this country from generation to generation. We Conservatives see in the present character of the people and in our national institutions not the work of few men...but the accumulated wisdom of generations built upon the ascertained and much tried common sense which is the peculiarity of the English people.... The first care of the Conservative is, therefore, to approach change historically, to ascertain the purpose and principle of the institution and to safeguard its continuity whatever change of form may be necessary."¹⁵⁾ The stress on tradition is found also in Lord Butler's speech to the 1946 Conference: "Our particular contribution to the social philosophy of our time must be that we are guardians of tradition, that we bring all that is most inspiring in our past to serve the ever altering needs of the present..."¹⁶⁾ The view of society as a partnership is also stressed: "Society is a partnership, and so underlying all our differences there

14) *ibid.*, p. 18.

15) D. Clarke in The New Conservatism, p. 20.

16) R.A. Butler in The New Conservatism, p. 31; on the importance of tradition see also G.K. Clark, "The Historical Basis of Conservatism", The Good Society, C.P.C. (London, 1953), pp. 23-28.

should be a fundamental unity - the very antithesis of the 'class war' - bringing together what Disraeli called the Two Nations into one single social entity."¹⁷⁾ The organic image is very strongly emphasized by Nigel Birch who in 1951 said that according to Conservatism society is "...a living body, organism and not a mere convenience, contract or device..."¹⁸⁾ Quality is of the utmost importance and thus the Socialists¹⁹⁾ are attacked for aiming to level down, whilst the Conservative party wants to level up.²⁰⁾ The aim of the government is to enable individuals to develop to the full their different personalities.²¹⁾

The Conservative fundamental ideology contains thus the belief in the innate inequality of men and in the naturalness and usefulness of this inequality. It was not the influence of the professional arguments of phase one which made the party adopt the tri-partite system, though these arguments were very welcome, as they supported the party's F(m)s. It is my contention that, exactly as in Labour's case, the educational policy of the Conservative party was influenced by the party's fundamentals: the naturalness and usefulness of

17) R.A. Butler, "A Disraelian Approach to Modern Policy" in Tradition and Change, p. 11.

18) N. Birch, The Conservative Party, C.P.C. (London, 1951), p. 31.

19) Throughout the years the Conservatives referred to the Labour party almost always by the name "Socialists".

20) H. Macmillan, The Conservative Approach, vol. 1, no. 1, Nov. 1948.

21) It is interesting to note that these are the "ideas" of J.S. Mill and T.H. Green, the moderate left of a hundred years ago.

inequality, emphasis on the able, parental choice, guarding tradition and old institutions, evolutionary rather than revolutionary change and the rejection of the Socialist P(m) of equality. As Angus Maude put it in 1954: "...the difference here is a philosophical difference....If you believe, as nearly all left-wing intellectuals believe, in the doctrine of the perfectability of man, then education acquires an importance which to a Conservative it can never, I think, attain.... If you reject that idea, as many Conservatives must, then you find yourself with a somewhat difficult position to defend politically against the left-wing intellectuals, and with some very difficult problems of choice and priorities."²²⁾

As remarked earlier, the contemporary Conservative fundamental ideology is an adjustment of various ideologies within the party. Whether you call them "tendencies"²³⁾ or ideologies, the fact remains that in the parliamentary and in the extra-parliamentary party there are groups with different ideologies. The cabinet is sometimes divided on ideological issues, in Parliament the leadership is sometimes opposed by the backbenchers on ideological grounds while the backbenchers themselves are divided ideologically.²⁴⁾ Outside Parliament the spectrum consists mainly of the Bow Group, Pest and

22) A. Maude, "An Educated Electorate" in Tradition and Change, p. 79.

23) For the distinction between "Tendencies and Factions" see R. Rose, "Parties, Factions and Tendencies" in R. Rose, (ed.), *op.cit.*, pp. 318-320.

24) For the divisions in the backbenchers see S.B. Finer et.al., Backbench Opinion in the House of Commons 1955-1959 (Oxford, 1961), Chs. 2-3.

the Monday Club. The Conservative party may not be as sharply divided as the Labour party but it certainly is not free from ideological dissension. The difference is rather in the way the forces are organised. Indeed it would be naive to expect ideological unity in the Conservative party. The party has its reformists, its defenders of the status quo and its reactionaries.

The Bow Group is the extra-parliamentary spokesman for the reformists and Pest is another, while the Monday Club represents the views of the defenders of the status quo and the reactionaries. The last two groups are not as well organised as the reformists, especially in recent years. The publications of the Monday Club are few and very poor indeed in comparison to those of the Bow Group. The Bow Group itself takes pains to repudiate its image as a group with an ideology different from the official ideology: "The Bow Group was founded as essentially a research society, and it has remained that. It expresses no corporate opinion, holds no polls among its members on political issues.... the Bow Group has tried to demonstrate the value of political research that is free from the demands of doctrine..."²⁵⁾ Nevertheless, as the following Chapters will show, the Bow Group has a specific ideological view and its publications all demonstrate a reformist trend. The reluctance of the Bow Group to acknowledge the fact that it does represent a certain type of Conservative ideology,

²⁵⁾ Michael Wolff in the introduction to The Conservative Opportunity, 15 Bow Group Essays on Tomorrow's Toryism, C.P.C. (London, 1965), p. 9.

is perhaps due to the general reluctance of all Conservatives to acknowledge openly the existence of inner cleavages.

A few words about the power structure of the party are necessary. The literature on this subject sets out two main opposing views. The first view held by R.T. McKenzie, S. Beer and R.H.S. Crossman, is that the Central Office is the personal machine of the Conservative leader and the ultimate power of the leader is stressed.²⁶⁾ The other view, held by M. Pinto-Duschinsky, claims that the Central Office is not the personal machine of the leader; that the Research Department and the Conservative Political Centre (C.P.C.) have sometimes developed policies not completely in tune with those of the leadership. The power of the leader is seen as conditioned both by the ultimate possibility of dismissal, and by his constant subjection to the Parliamentary Party and to the Constituency Associations. In other words, the party leader has to anticipate discontent, to use informal manoeuvres and to compromise on policies in order to minimise the effect of dissension.²⁷⁾ A. Sampson takes a middle of the road view. He claims that the power lies somewhere in the triangle between the Prime Minister, the Central Office and the 1922 Committee of the parliamentary backbenchers.²⁸⁾

26) The ultimate power of the leader is stressed also by R. Rose, "Parties, Factions and Tendencies" in R. Rose, (ed.), op.cit., p. 322.

27) M. Pinto-Duschinsky, "Central Office and 'Power' in the Conservative Party", paper delivered to the Political Studies Association's Conference, Birmingham 1971, p. 1 ff.

28) A. Sampson, op.cit., p. 68.

The fact that these differences in opinion exist indicates one thing: the power structure of the Conservative party is not formalized and it is therefore difficult to pin-point. It might very well be that no general formula of any kind can be reached except the assertion about the informality of the 'power structure'. There are, however, certain points which concern me most, upon which there is some kind of agreement between the authors mentioned. The resolutions of the Annual Conference, though only conveyed to the leader and not formally binding, whether the party is in power or in opposition, have to be taken into consideration in order to avoid great dissent. The same applies to the views of the backbenchers who sometimes express different views from official party policy. The Annual Conference sometimes becomes a forum for debate, but since 1945 it has been mainly a stage for the Ministers to express their opinions and to receive ovations. In this respect lies its main difference from the Labour Annual Conference. In the Central Office the department which has the greatest influence, especially when the party is in opposition, is the Research Department, which had its greatest influence in the years 1945-1951. A final point could be made concerning the official material published by the party. The material issued under the name of the Conservative Central Office almost always is in harmony with the official ideology and policy, while that published by the Research Department and especially by the Conservative Political Centre (C.P.C.) sometimes expresses differing views.

B. The Conservative Interpretation of the 1944 Education Act
(1943-1951)

Although the 1944 Education Act was passed by the coalition government, the major work behind it was that of the Conservative party, notably of R.A. Butler, President of the Board of Education. The Hadow Report 1926, the Spens Report 1938 and the Norwood Report 1943 preceded the White Paper on Educational Reconstruction 1943. The Spens Report was based on the psychological arguments of phase one and stated that: "Intellectual development during childhood appears to progress as if it were governed by a single central factor, usually known as general intelligence, which may be broadly described as innate- all-round intellectual ability.... Our psychological witnesses assured us that it can be measured approximately by means of intelligence tests... but this is true only of general intelligence and does not hold good in respect of specific aptitudes or interests."²⁹⁾ Accordingly the Report recommended three types of schools (grammar, technical and secondary modern) in order that justice should be done to the varying capacities of the children. Multi-lateral schools were not recommended as a general policy, even as the goal of a long range policy.³⁰⁾ But "The establishment of parity between all types of secondary schools is a fundamental requirement."³¹⁾

29) The Spens Report in Educational Documents, J.S. MacLure, (ed.), op.cit., p. 195.

30) *ibid.*, pp. 197-198.

31) *ibid.*, p. 198.

The Norwood Report, as distinguished from the Spens Report, went much further and claimed that there actually existed three broad types of children suited to the three types of secondary schools as far as both intelligence and aptitudes are concerned.³²⁾

While the Spens Report was reflecting the professional arguments accurately, the Norwood Report vulgarised the psychological arguments. The impression is created that the report tried to prove that the three types of secondary schools actually existing (even though under different names) were exactly what were professionally required.

The war atmosphere brought about a demand for reform in education, and leading figures, from all the churches, published a letter to this effect in The Times on the 21st of December 1940. In 1941 the Green Book was issued by the Board of Education. It served, in Lord Butler's words "...to put some of the aspirations of the time" into a scheme.³³⁾ The Green Book stimulated thinking about educational reform. On the 12th of September 1941 Butler, according to his memoirs, sent a letter to Churchill indicating the necessity for educational reform. Churchill objected but Butler disregarded what Churchill had said and went straight ahead assuming, as he says: "...that if I spared him the religious controversies and party political struggles of 1902

32) The Norwood Report, in J.S. MacLure, (ed.), op.cit., pp. 201-204.

33) The Times, 19 May 1971. When this Chapter was written Lord Butler's memoirs did not yet appear.

and sidetracked the public schools issue, I could win him over."³⁴⁾

Other members of the party regarded with great caution the demand, stemming from the educational inadequacies revealed by the war situation and inspired by the war atmosphere, for an educational reform. The Conservative Sub-Committee on Education, established by the Central Committee on Post War Reconstruction, published in 1942 its views on secondary education. It stressed that as the war atmosphere brought about the general demand to raise the average level, the Conservative party was afraid, for tactical reasons, to emphasize a function of secondary education of as great importance; viz.,: "...to detect and bring to fruition exceptional qualities..."³⁵⁾ The Sub-Committee stated that this function was "...contrary to the blessed slogan 'equality of opportunity'", but claimed that not only must the provision for the ordinary child never be allowed to interfere with the special provisions for the bright, but that this was generally accepted by the electorate. The people know that they need first class leadership. What this document shows is that the Conservatives were afraid that the general demand for equality of opportunity would blur what for them was of utmost importance: the upbringing of an élite. Indeed, even the party's 1943 Conference itself was swayed by the

34) *ibid.*

35) "Looking Ahead - Educational Aims", the Central Committee on Post-War Reconstruction (London, 1942), p. 35.

war atmosphere.³⁶⁾

The White Paper did not stress openly the issue of the able children. Both in the White Paper and in the House Butler emphasized the equal standing of secondary schools. But he did say, and it was stated in the White Paper, that the general form of secondary education would be the tri-partite system. "Such, then will be the three main types...grammar, modern and technical schools."³⁷⁾ What Lord Butler called "The philosophy of the scheme",³⁸⁾ and what I prefer to call the fundamental P(m) behind the scheme as outlined in the White Paper, was the wish to retain diversity and thus to maintain freedom of choice. As the White Paper stated: "It is just as important to achieve diversity as it is to ensure equality of educational opportunity."³⁹⁾ In his speech in Parliament, Butler did not use the phrase "equality of educational opportunity", but the much more accurate one, as far as the scheme outlined in the White Paper is concerned, i.e., "secondary opportunities of varying types..."⁴⁰⁾ It is interesting to note that though Butler praised the Spens Report, and not the Norwood Report, nevertheless he accepted the conclusions of the

36) The National Unionist Association of Conservative and Liberal Unionist Organisations' Council, July 1917-March 1943, Unpublished, Central Office, p. 388.

37) White Paper on Educational Reconstruction 1943, in J.S. Maclure, (ed.), op.cit., p. 209.

38) Hansard, vol. 391. p. 539.

39) White Paper on Educational Reconstruction, in J.S. Maclure, (ed.), op.cit., p. 206.

40) Hansard, vol. 391. p. 539.

second, and it was these conclusions that he outlined in the House in order to justify the three types of secondary schools: "...secondary opportunities of varying types should be offered to all pupils according to their aptitude..."⁴¹⁾ However, Butler's reformist views were expressed both in his demand for equal standing for the secondary schools and in the demand to abolish the "special place examination": "In the future, children at the age of about 11 should be classified, not on the results of a competitive test, but on an assessment of their individual aptitudes largely by such means as school records, supplemented, if necessary, by intelligence tests, due regard being had to their parents' wishes, and the careers they have in mind."⁴²⁾ As shall be seen, this paragraph and the following one were ignored by future Conservative governments. On the future of the tri-partite system the White Paper said: "It would be wrong to suppose that they will necessarily remain separate and apart. Different types may be combined in one building or on one site..."⁴³⁾ That is to say that Butler envisaged the possibility of the multilateral school becoming more than just an experiment. It is easy to understand why, as Butler disclosed years later, the whole reorganisation enjoyed more Labour support than Conservative support. Indeed,

41) *ibid.* The usage of the term "aptitude" testifies to the influence of the Norwood Report.

42) White Paper on Educational Reconstruction, in JMS. Maclure, (ed.), *op.cit.*, p. 208.

43) *ibid.*, p. 209.

in the House, very probably because of Conservative pressure, Butler was much more cautious in his approach towards the multilateral schools "...and I would say to those idealists who want to see more than one form of secondary education in the same school - sometimes called multilateral schools - that I hope more than one type of secondary education may from time to time be amalgamated under one roof and that we may judge from experiments what is the best arrangement."⁴⁴⁾ Thus a-priori Butler said that the multilateral type would be allowed only occasionally. Such an approach was in complete harmony with the Conservative conception of the tri-partite system as the general rule, all other forms being just experimental. Even the tri-partite system was regarded by many Conservatives as too reformist and as deviating from the fundamental P(m)s of the party. That this indeed was the opinion among many Conservatives can be seen from Butler's following words: "I have heard on some sides that with the equalizing and widening of opportunity a dull uniformity will creep over the whole of our school system. This is far from the intention of the government."⁴⁵⁾

Butler had to persuade his fellow members that the proposed Act was in harmony with their P(m)s. Only after they were satisfied as to the connection between the tri-partite system and the P(m)s of

44) Hansard, vol. 391. p. 1829. The emphasis is mine.

45) *ibid.*, p. 1831.

diversity and quality and with the rejection of the P(m) of equality, the Conservatives were willing to accept the proposals. This is clearly reflected in Mr. Denman's speech in the House following Butler's speech: "I thank the President for his word diversity.... He wishes us to retain diversity and to avoid dull uniformity. That is profoundly important.... Beware of the pursuit of equality. Catch phrases like 'equality of opportunity' are very attractive... but they have their limitation. I have always urged and shall continue to urge that education should be related not to the pockets of the parents but to the capacity of the children. Equality of opportunity, however, does not and cannot exist and undue pursuit of it may result in excessive standardisation and sameness. Children in two houses side by side may not have equal opportunity.... Opportunity depends even upon psychological factors within the children and within their parents.... The more democratic a society, the more must the aim of diversity be pursued rather than the aim of uniformity and sameness. We should make up our minds that the governing word of educational advance is 'quality' rather than 'equality'."46)

Here equality of educational opportunity was interpreted not as an opportunity for each child to have that kind of secondary education which suits his ability and aptitude, but as the same type of secondary education for all. This is interesting, as the Labour party itself,

46) *ibid.*, p. 1867.

as has been seen before, took quite a long time till it adopted this interpretation in the fundamental dimension and even longer before it made it its policy. Certainly the 1945-1951 Labour government's policy, which was claimed by the Ministers to be the actualization of equality of opportunity, interpreted equality of educational opportunity as different types of secondary education according to ability and aptitude with an emphasis on parity of conditions and esteem. One would have expected the Conservatives to define equality of opportunity in the same manner, if only for tactical reasons, especially in view of the fact that the popular professional arguments of phase one gave professional legitimization to this interpretation. Indeed, the White Paper described secondary education organised on the tri-partite basis as "...of diversified types but of equal standing..."⁴⁷⁾ The existence of these two interpretations of "equality of educational opportunity" inside the Conservative party, shows not only the inner confusion in the party as to what equality of educational opportunity means, but that for some Conservatives it was unthinkable to support a system which provided equality of opportunity of any kind, and thus they had to show that the tri-partite system did not provide it. Certainly the party as a whole opposed an organisation of secondary education on the basis of the strong sense of equality of opportunity, i.e., the same type of secondary education for all, as

47) White Paper on Educational Reconstruction, in J.C.S. Maclure, (ed.), op.cit., p. 207.

this was very much against the party's fundamental ideology. The confusion in Mr. Denman's speech was a result of his interpretation of equality of educational opportunity not only as providing the same secondary education but also as providing the same result in each case, i.e., equality of opportunity means equality of success. This is of course illogical, as equality of opportunity even in the strong sense does not mean equal success. One is tempted to think that Denman's confusion resulted from his desire to show that there can never be equality of educational opportunity. Indeed, if equality of educational opportunity had meant equality of success it could never have been achieved.

Confused as it was, there was a true assertion in Mr. Denman's speech, i.e., that the three types of school were not equal, and this was afterwards insinuated in "The Nation's Schools". To admit this could be damaging electorally and consequently this fact was afterwards almost never admitted openly by the Conservatives for many years. Such a blunt statement as Mr. Denman's can not be found again. The party was to claim for years that the tri-partite system was the actualization of equality of educational opportunity, and the professional arguments of phase one, in their crude form, were adduced to justify this professionally. The tri-partite system provides equality of educational opportunity as it gives to each child that type of secondary education for which he is suited and from which he can benefit. But in 1943 the party was not as yet clear about the line

it had to adopt to justify its defence of the tri-partite system, and therefore a statement such as Mr. Denman's was possible.

A year later, when the Education Bill was presented in Parliament, Mr. Butler said, in explaining Clause 8, which deals with secondary education: "Clause 8 (I) makes clear that the secondary stage will be designed, not only to provide an academic training for a select few, but to give equivalent opportunities to all children over eleven, of making the most of their natural aptitudes."⁴⁸⁾ The words "equivalent opportunities" were later replaced by "equal opportunity", and this was to be the official line of justifying the tri-partite system for the benefit of those who demanded equality of opportunity. As Churchill said in a broadcast as early as the 22nd of May 1943: "Human beings are endowed with infinitely varying qualities and dispositions.... we cannot make them all the same.... It is in our power, however, to secure equal opportunities for all."⁴⁹⁾

It is important to note that the Clause dealing with secondary education in the Act itself was different from the equivalent passage in the White Paper. While the White Paper, as has been seen, stated that secondary education would be organised as a rule on tri-partite lines, there was no such indication in the Act. Clause 8 (I) (b)

⁴⁸⁾ Hansard, vol. 396. p. 209.

⁴⁹⁾ Notes on Current Politics (N.C.P.) 1945, Research Dep. (London, 1946), p. 1.

said only: "...and the schools available for an area shall not be deemed to be sufficient unless they are sufficient in number, character, and equipment to afford for all pupils opportunities for education offering such variety of instruction and training as may be desirable in view of their different ages, abilities and aptitudes...".⁵⁰⁾ Legally it was therefore possible to interpret this clause on tri-partite, on multilateral and on comprehensive lines. Miss A. Bacon claimed in 1959, that this change was a result of strong Labour pressure. That this was very probable and that the change did not reflect any re-thinking on the part of the Conservatives, was clear when the pamphlet "The Nation's Schools" appeared. As I have dealt already with this pamphlet,⁵¹⁾ it is sufficient to note here that the pamphlet followed the White Paper and not the Act. It stated that the organisation of secondary education was to be on the tri-partite lines and the vulgar typology of the Norwood Report was used.⁵²⁾ The attitude towards the multilateral schools was one of the utmost suspicion.⁵³⁾ The inferiority of the secondary modern was not stated bluntly, but it was there for anyone to see. The three types of schools were presented as leading to different vocations

50) Education Act 1944, H.M.S.O. (London, 1944), p. 5.

51) See my Chapter Four, Sub-Chapter C.

52) "The Nation's Schools", pp. 12, 13.

53) *ibid.*, pp. 23-24.

and thus not only as socially distinct but as perpetuating social distinctions.⁵⁴⁾ It was obviously a document in line with the Conservative fundamental ideology: inequality, diversity, elitism, tradition, and evolutionary change were to be preserved through the suggested organisation of secondary education. The value of tradition was very much emphasized: "We are not, of course, planning a new educational edifice on a cleared site; the educational system exists. But the task before us is....one of extension and modernizing to secure a new structure that, while incorporating all that is sound and serviceable in the old, will be fully adapted and fully equipped to meet the new needs..."⁵⁵⁾ The grammar schools were defended on the basis of "past experience". The arguments against the multilateral schools, though fortified by professional arguments such as the size of these schools, were mainly purely fundamental ideological ones. Past experience suggested that the opposite type of school is the best i.e., the grammar school. But how many children will go to the grammar school? And why not regard the secondary modern school as an unproved experiment like the multilateral school? Simply because having multilateral schools could endanger the existence of "pure" grammar schools and thus endanger all that this type of school stands for.

The party lost the 1945 election and went into opposition. The

54) *ibid.*, pp. 15-16, 21.

55) *ibid.*, p. 4.

most notable thing about the period 1945-1951 is the small reference to secondary education in the Conservative party. Neither in the Annual Conferences or in the House nor in the party official publications did the Conservatives concentrate on secondary education. Their attacks on Labour policy were infrequent and almost negligible in comparison to the attacks of the Labour party itself on the policy of its Ministers. The reason was, of course, very simple: both Labour Ministers pursued policies in line with those of the Conservatives. As a gap was created between Labour's fundamental ideology and the policies of its Ministers, so a correlation between the operative levels of the two parties developed. As long as the Labour policy was based on the tri-partite interpretation of the 1944 Education Act, there was almost nothing in the policies to arouse Conservative attack. The Conservative party concentrated its opposition, on the national level, on developments in Labour's fundamental ideology. On the local level the party attacked the programmes suggested by certain LEAs, notably that of the L.C.C.

Neither Conservative policy nor its fundamental ideology in regard to secondary education underwent any change although the years 1945-1951 were a period of "re-thinking" for the party. This is understandable in view of the fact that precisely in the sphere of education the Conservative party had already adapted its ideology and policy to the demands of the day by introducing free secondary education for all. That Butler's 1944 Education Act was an adaptation to

the demands of the welfare state is confirmed by the fact that it was not an easy task for him to persuade all his colleagues to agree to what was regarded as a reformist policy in one of the issues in the social services field. To go further than the 1944 Act was inconceivable as the P(m)s of inequality, diversity, quality and regard for tradition and evolutionary change remained firmly part of the party's fundamental ideology. The period served, therefore, merely to consolidate the Conservative position and to polish the arguments in justification of the tri-partite system while attacking the multilateral and later the comprehensive schools. The arguments used in the attack on the developments in Labour's fundamental ideology were derived from the Conservative fundamental ideology as stated by Churchill in his speech to the 1946 Conference. "It is easy to win applause by talking in an airy way about great new departures from policy if all detailed proposals are avoided. We ought not to seek after some rigid symmetrical form of doctrine such as delights the minds of Socialists.... Our own feelings and the British temperament are quite different. So are our aims. We seek a free and varied society where there is room for many kinds of men and women.... We are fundamentally opposed to all systems of rigid uniformity in our national life..."⁵⁶⁾ The chairman of the 1950 Conference accused Labour's fundamental ideology of desiring to level down and of

56) 1946 Conference Minutes, Unpublished, Central Office (number of page not given).

putting the unity of the party before the unity of the Nation.⁵⁷⁾

The main concern of the Conservatives at that period was the brilliant child, a question, on which, H. Linstead claimed "Conservatives and Socialists are poles apart."⁵⁸⁾ Though, as has been shown in the Chapters on Labour, this generalisation was not correct, since many in Labour were concerned for the able child, nevertheless the emphasis in Labour's fundamental ideology, as it developed in the late 1940s, was not on the able child but on creating real equality of opportunity for average children. For Labour this meant a fight for equality, while for the Conservatives the emphasis on the able child was a specification of the P(m)s of quality and elitism. In terms of secondary educational policy this meant preserving "pure" grammar schools: "It is of vital importance to the nation that the standard of the grammar schools, and particularly of their sixth forms, should be kept at the highest level."⁵⁹⁾ For the Conservatives to endanger the education of the able children was obnoxious: "An average standard of education which is maintained by lowering the highest standard of quality is worse than inadequate."⁶⁰⁾ From

57) 1950 Conservative Annual Conference Report, p. 24.

58) Hugh Linstead, "What do you Think about Education", C.P.C. (London, 1949), p. 5; Linstead Sir Hugh was an M.P. for Putney Division of Wandsworth 1942-1969. Chairman of Macarthy's Pharmaceuticals Ltd. (Who is Who, 1971).

59) "The Right Road for Britain", Central Office (London, 1949), p. 44.

60) Ian Macleod and Angus Maude, (eds.), "One Nation", C.P.C. (London, 1950), p. 39.

this devotion to quality and therefore to the grammar school followed the attacks on the multilateral school and later, on the comprehensive school. Also the adoption of a policy of improving the standard of the secondary modern schools arose primarily from the wish to protect the grammar schools,⁶¹⁾ rather than from a sincere desire to better the lot of the mass of children who were educated in modern schools. Having particularly in mind the developments in L.C.C. it was stated: "The most disturbing feature of Socialist administration is the tendency to bring all schools down to the same level. The right course would be to raise the prestige of secondary modern schools and so avoid the entering to the grammar schools of children unsuitable for academic education."⁶²⁾ This was probably also the real reason behind the demand in "The Nation's Schools" for a reduction in the number of grammar school places. That the majority of children who would thus lose the opportunity of entering the grammar schools would be from working-class homes, was known to all, but was not mentioned openly by the Conservatives because of its possible damaging effects electorally. It was, however, for this reason that the Labour party bitterly attacked the first Labour Minister of Education for continuing to circulate the pamphlet. While inside Labour there

61) The "grammar schools selected" were mainly in middle class, middle size industrial towns.

62) Topics for Today No. 25: "The Working of the Education Act of 1944", C.P.C. (London, 1951), p. 4.

were various opinions at that period concerning secondary education, almost all could see what would be the result of a reduction in the number of grammar school places.

Time and time again during 1945-1951 the Conservatives emphasised the need to develop the curriculum of the modern schools and though this was justified also by the vulgar professional arguments of phase one, it was never a purely professional proposal solely taking into account the needs of the children concerned. The Conservative party learned, however, to speak about the equality of educational opportunity embodied in the tri-partite system. Equality of educational opportunity was now interpreted in one way only: "Nothing is more important for securing equality of opportunity than to ensure that the education received by each boy and girl gives them fullest scope for their abilities."⁶³⁾ The irony is that while in 1944 when the tri-partite system could have been claimed to actualize equality of opportunity as the psychological arguments of phase one were not yet challenged, not all Conservatives described the tri-partite system as giving equality of educational opportunity. At the end of the 1940s and also all during the fifties when it was already becoming clear, both from experience and from the emerging sociological findings that the tri-partite system was not giving equality of opportunity, the Conservatives spoke about the system as one which did provide

63) "The Right Road for Britain", p. 43.

such equality. Tactically this was a good line to adopt, especially at the end of the 1940s and the beginning of the 1950s as the public at large was not yet sufficiently aware of the new professional findings. But here and there a statement showed that the Conservatives knew that the tri-partite system was not providing equality of opportunity and that their concern with the modern school was largely a result of their concern to preserve the standard and the existence of the grammar schools: "Our policy is to develop a curriculum in the modern school which will be suitable to the ability and aptitude of the pupils attending this type of school and thus give them a better education than they are receiving at present. Socialists would appear to prefer to reduce the very high standards of our grammar schools and, in that way, satisfy their lust for equality. We cannot afford the waste of the best brains that this policy would entail."⁶⁴)

The impression the Conservatives wanted to create was that Labour's policy was un-professional and derived from their fundamental P(n) of equality, while the Conservatives were demanding the right thing educationally. While they were right in their point concerning Labour, they were misleading on the second point. Their response towards the changes in Labour's fundamental ideology was not based on educational considerations versus Socialist ideology, it was Conservative ideology versus Socialist ideology. Indeed, in a document

64) The Campaign Guide, General Elections 1950, Central Office (London, 1949), p. 428.

which acknowledged the fact that the tri-partite system did not achieve parity of esteem because "Unfortunately, public esteem is not easily secured by legislation", it was stated that the tri-partite system was in line with "...threads which have run through Tory policy since Disraeli...".⁶⁵⁾ In other words, even though there was no equality of opportunity in the tri-partite system, it was the right system because it was in accord with the party's P(m)s. It secured the old institution of the grammar schools and the education of the able children who came mostly from middle class background, and kept diversity and freedom of choice for those parents who had the money to buy education in case their child could not get a place in a grammar school. The Conservatives in fact did not want equality of educational opportunity, and were opposed to the multilateral and to the comprehensive schools precisely because these forms were envisaged by Labour, rightly or wrongly, as possible ways of achieving equality of educational opportunity.

The main stated objection of the Conservatives to the multilateral and the comprehensive schools was their size. But this professional argument was always accompanied by an emphasis on the importance of preserving the grammar schools.⁶⁶⁾ Indeed the "circumstances" in which Conservatives permitted experiments with multilateral schools,

65) "One Nation", pp. 40, 41.

66) See "The Right Road for Britain", p. 44.

and later with comprehensive schools, were obviously rural areas and new housing estates where a destruction of an existing grammar school was not involved. The actual ignorance of the party, at that time, about the comprehensive school was manifested in the way the school was defined: a comprehensive school is a school "...in which all are taught the same subjects. Subsequently they are divided into grammar, technical and modern sides."⁶⁷⁾ This was not a definition of a comprehensive school but of some kind of mixture between comprehensive and multilateral schools.

The "proper order of priorities" envisaged by the Conservative party was: "...preserve the traditions and corporate life of the grammar schools; help parents to send their children to secondary schools of their own choice, and see that the rewards of the teaching profession are such as will attract men and women of high quality."⁶⁸⁾ Speaking about parental choice in the tri-partite system was only tactics, since, for the great majority of parents, whose children were sent to secondary modern schools, no choice existed. Later, Labour was to play the chord of the lack of actual parental choice in the tri-partite system. Yet, for the Conservatives the choice existing in the tri-partite system was sufficient, as it allowed to those middle class parents, whose children were classified for secondary

67) The Campaign Guide, General Elections 1950, Central Office, p. 427.

68) All the Answers, Central Office (London, 1951), p. 120.

modern schools, to buy a better education.

In the House, where, for the most part Labour's policy and not Labour's fundamental ideology was debated, the Conservatives frequently stated their approval of the policies pursued by the Labour Ministers. In July 1946 Butler praised Wilkinson by saying: "I am glad that she prefers the educational ladder to the flat iron."⁶⁹⁾ And when Wilkinson, as a result of strong Labour pressure, did not reprint "The Nation's Schools", she practically apologized to Butler, in a written answer, for this.⁷⁰⁾ Tomlinson was asked, both by members of his party and by Conservatives about the number of multilateral and comprehensive schools approved. His answers usually, as in the case of South-West Middlesex, satisfied the Conservatives more than they satisfied his fellow members, since he pursued the policy of allowing few experiments, and only then when they did not invoke the abolition of an existing grammar school.

Mr. Linstead voiced the opinion of most Conservatives when he said: "I cannot sympathise with the statement...that the purpose of the comprehensive school should be to eliminate class distinction. That, in the minds of Hon. Members opposite, may be a desirable object, but I think it is educationally a false object. I do not think the Minister should direct major educational policy toward the

69) Hansard, vol. 424. p. 1814.

70) *ibid.*, Written Answers, p. 330.

goal of eliminating class distinction."⁷¹⁾ Indeed this view was shared by the Labour Minister and though he could not state it openly his policy testifies to it. Linstead was attacking not the actual policy of the Minister, but the demands of Labour members to adapt the policy to Labour's fundamental ideology. On the policy level the Conservatives objected, in the house, mainly to the programme and progress in the L.C.C., which was the major programme for reorganising secondary education on comprehensive lines. And Linstead was actually accused by a Labour M.P. of fighting against comprehensive schools only because an increase in their number would mean a reduction in the number of grammar schools.

When the Conservative party returned to power its position regarding secondary education was much more consolidated than in 1945 and the arguments used to justify the tri-partite policy, as noted before, had been polished. The party learned to justify the tri-partite system, which was in harmony with its fundamental ideology, in such a way as to create the impression that this form of organisation was the best one educationally, and that it did provide equality of educational opportunity.

71) Hansard, vol. 466, p. 2062.

CHAPTER EIGHT: THIRTEEN YEARS OF GOVERNMENT 1951-1964

A. Defence of the Tri-Partite System and the Rejection of the Comprehensive Principle (1951-1957)

From the time the Conservatives returned to power, secondary education had again become a much discussed issue in the party. This had nothing to do with developments inside the party itself, but with the adoption of the comprehensive principle by Labour and with the emergence of the sociological theories of phase two. The ball was thrown by Labour, by the official Reports about secondary education and by the sociologists and consequently the Conservatives had to return it.

The thread that runs through the debates, in Conference, in the House and in the party's official publications during the years when Florence Horsbrugh was Education Minister, was the continuous defence of the tri-partite system and the rejection of the comprehensive school vis-a-vis the Labour position consolidated around the comprehensive principle. The Conservative party not only did not move from its previous position, but if anything its line in support of the tri-partite system hardened in view of the attack on the system, and the party launched an attack on the comprehensive school. The policy pursued by the Minister was in complete harmony with the fundamental dimension of the party's ideology and all the resolutions passed in Conference confirm this fact. During these years there

were as yet no voices of dissent inside the party, which was rallied around the preservation of the tri-partite system and around the rejection of the comprehensive school. The Minister was committed to the comprehensive schemes already approved by the previous Labour Minister and much as she would have liked she could not reverse the decisions. Thus the L.C.C. could continue with its establishment of comprehensive schools. But even in this case, where the Minister had no legal authority to interfere, she took the irregular step of helping a campaign against the comprehensive schools in London. As for new schemes for comprehensive schools, her attitude was and remained that of extreme caution and suspicion. The inevitable result was that only a very small number of comprehensive schools was established.

As experience and sociological findings showed that the eleven plus examination could not perform its assumed function, and as the evidence was such that it could not be ignored, the Conservative party had to find a way by which it could justify the continuation of the tri-partite system and the rejection of comprehensive schools, and yet at the same time acknowledge the deficiencies of the eleven plus. That the new professional arguments were not going, at this stage, to change either the party's policy or its interpretation of the P(m)s which were actualised through the tri-partite system, was obvious. The position of the party was stated clearly by the Minister who, while replying to Miss Alice Bacon in the House, said: "I quite agree that it is very difficult to know exactly the abilities and aptitudes of

any child, at a particular age, but I would rather see mistakes made in this scheme than increase the number of comprehensive schools until an experiment has been tried in these schools."¹⁾ The importance attached by the party to this statement is shown by the fact that of all the Minister's statements this was the one quoted in the Notes on Current Politics.²⁾ The Minister's policy did not even give the comprehensive school a real chance to show its merits. Her policy, in view of the criticism on the eleven plus, was to leave LEAs to work out the most suitable methods for selection. That she did not envisage an end to the eleven plus, at least not in the near future, was reflected in her permission to practice a limited amount of coaching for intelligence tests in primary schools.³⁾ This certainly was against the best educational interests of the children as it distorted the education given in primary schools.

In the 1952 Conference Mr. Thomas Boyce of the Conservative and Unionist teachers' association (established in 1947), moved the following resolution: "That this Conference believes in the educational value of separate Grammar, Technical and Modern schools and deplores any attempt to replace this tri-partite system by Comprehensive schools."⁴⁾ In his speech Mr. Boyce stressed that this was a vote

1) Hansard, vol. 497. p. 631.

2) N.C.P. 1952 no. 6, Research Dep. (London, 1953), p. 26.

3) Hansard, vol. 498. p. 696.

4) 1952 Conservative Annual Conference Report, p. 93. The emphasis is mine.

to reaffirm the party's belief in the tri-partite system and the complete rejection of the comprehensive school: "...to have nothing to do with the Socialist abortion which is called the comprehensive school."⁵⁾ While the Minister acknowledged in the House the defects of the eleven plus, Mr. Boyce was more cautious in accepting the evidence against the eleven plus and he claimed that the tri-partite system "...is based upon the perfectly sound educational idea that you determine as far as, and as accurately as you possibly can, the particular interests and abilities of the individual child, and having done that, you send him or her to the particular school whose curriculum and staff, equipment and whole purpose and objective, are designed to meet these particular interests and abilities."⁶⁾ That this was professionally inaccurate is obvious. First, even the psychological arguments of phase one never claimed that at the age of eleven plus, if ever, a child's interests can be defined. Second, the evidence against the eleven plus was already, by 1952, stronger than suggested by this speech. That real facts had little to do with the rejection of the comprehensive schools was evident from the inaccurate and emotional way in which the speaker described the comprehensive schools: "...you herd them all into one institution in a confused and muddled mass and let them sort themselves out during the course of the next

5) *ibid.*

6) *ibid.* The emphasis is mine.

two or three years into the particular line of work which they are going to follow..."⁷⁾ Certainly the L.C.C. comprehensive schools were not organised in this way. Moreover, the real reasons for the attack on the comprehensive schools were disclosed at the end of his speech: a) if you have the comprehensive system the old grammar school must go; there is no room for it.⁸⁾ b) "...the most important and vital reason why I object to the comprehensive school is that it is an absolute denial of freedom and liberty to the bright child, to the child who is going to make a future leader. It is a denial of what is a fundamental object of Conservatism, namely, the giving of complete opportunity to the individual and the preservation of sanctity of personality."⁹⁾

Thus it is the fundamental ideology of the Conservatives which justifies the rejection of the comprehensive school and not professional arguments. Though for an instant the speaker tried to create the impression that he was also concerned with the fate of the average child who, according to him, will be smothered in the comprehensive school, it became immediately evident that it was the able child whom he had mainly in mind: "It is this denial of democracy and of opportunity to the bright child which is the chief objection on educational

7) *ibid.*, p. 93.

8) *ibid.*

9) *ibid.*, pp. 93-94. The emphasis is mine.

grounds to the comprehensive school..."¹⁰⁾ This could have been an educational argument provided that it was proved and that one could maintain opportunity for the brilliant child and at the same time give the best education to the average child. As this was not the case, the real question was a question of priorities: whom do you sacrifice, if a sacrifice is needed, the brilliant children or the average majority? The Conservative answer, following the fundamental ideology of the party, was clear: the brilliant child comes first as he is the potential leader. It was a clear case of Conservative P(m)s against Socialist P(m)s: "...I invite you to stand by our old institutions, the grammar and public schools, to respect our own traditions and have nothing whatever to do with this abortion of abortions, the Socialist controlled and inspired comprehensive school."¹¹⁾ Not only is it a purely fundamental ideological argument, but it is emotional as well. This shows how strongly the P(m) of equality was rejected by the Conservatives. The speaker did not even allow for experiments with comprehensive schools. The second speaker, V.E. Perry, made it clear that if there were a necessity of choice between caring for the average majority or for the able minority the Conservative position would be to take care of the bright: "...can we, as a nation, afford to advance the average and mediocre to the possible

10) *ibid.*, p. 94.

11) *ibid.*

neglect of the talented few?"¹²⁾ The bright child would get real opportunity only if grammar schools existed, and the average would get their equal opportunity in the secondary modern schools as "The tri-partite system does not impede the educational progress of the average."¹³⁾ This claim would have been true if the secondary modern schools had parity of conditions and of esteem, and if the eleven plus and the theory on which it was based had been correct. However, these conditions were not fulfilled. The modern schools were generally neglected and the methods of selection were very questionable. Notwithstanding these facts, the speaker saw the tri-partite system as giving equal opportunity, while in truth only those who went to the grammar schools had a real opportunity.

At first it seems that the views expressed by the two speakers in the 1952 Conference were more extreme than the Minister's policy: they demanded no experiments whatsoever with comprehensive schools, while she allowed for some experiments. But a second look shows that the Minister was actually of the same opinion. In her speech she emphasised that the experiments were and would continue to be limited. Indeed, limited experiments carried out in certain specific areas could not harm existing grammar schools. That the Minister intended to limit the experiments as much as possible was very clear:

¹²⁾ *ibid.*

¹³⁾ *ibid.*

"Experiments...must be limited, because they are dangerous for the welfare of the children of this country."¹⁴⁾ Indeed, experiments can be dangerous, but why take this attitude only towards the multilateral and comprehensive schools and not towards the modern schools as well? After all the secondary modern school, as envisaged in theory, was as much an experiment as the comprehensive school. (The truth was, however, that the existing modern schools were simply the old elementary schools, slowly patched.) The fact that the Minister's policy toward the comprehensive schools was not based on educational considerations explains why she described only this type of school as experimental. She emphasized over and over again that her considerations were purely educational and this continuous emphasis in itself casts suspicion on the truth of her claim. While giving the number of existing and approved comprehensive schools she took pains to show that the majority - 11 - were approved by her predecessor, while she has approved only 3 in areas where there will be "...comprehensive schools as well as other forms of secondary education."¹⁵⁾ She emphasized as well that her hands were tied in respect to the schemes approved before her time: "I am...tied by that approval under Section

14) *ibid.*, p. 95.

15) *ibid.*, p. 96.

13."¹⁶⁾ The only professional argument brought against the comprehensive school was its size¹⁷⁾ and the effects of this size on the community spirit of the school. This argument was almost always brought to strengthen the ideological arguments i.e., the justification of the tri-partite system and the rejection of the comprehensive school according to the P(m)s of tradition, diversity, quality and inequality. In the House, Miss Bacon asked whether the Minister's views, outlined before, reflected the policy of the Conservative government and the answer was positive. On this Mr. J. Johnson, Labour M.P., remarked that it definitely "...makes the comprehensive school a party politics issue."¹⁸⁾ Indeed, it was a matter on which, at that period, the two parties were poles apart. While in the period of Labour government, when the policy of the two Labour Ministers was close to the Conservative policy, there emerged a correlation between the operative dimensions of the two parties and a gap was created between the fundamental and operative dimensions in Labour. Now, after Labour had adapted its policy to its fundamental ideology (at least in many respects) and a harmony also existed between the policies and the fundamental ideology of the Conservative party, a great gap developed not only between the fundamental dimensions of

16) *ibid.*

17) See for example H.C.P. 1952 no. 8, Research Dep. (London, 1953), p. 26; "Britain Strong and Free", Central Office (London, 1951), p. 28.

18) Hansard, vol. 505. p. 2084.

the two parties, but also between the operative dimensions of the two parties. In each party there was harmony between policies and fundamental ideology, and a gap existed between the two parties both as regards policies and as regards the fundamental ideologies.

The Minister's proposed solutions to the deficiencies of the eleven plus were to improve selection methods and to make transfer easier for late developers. However, her Department did nothing to find better methods and the policy was to leave the matter entirely in the hands of the LEAs.¹⁹⁾ Little or nothing was done either to create vacant places in existing grammar schools or to increase the number of grammar schools in order to enable late developers to find a place. In the House the Minister repeated what she said in the 1952 Conference. She would allow only a limited number of experiments and she would not approve proposals that the secondary provision of an area should take the form of comprehensive schools and nothing else.²⁰⁾ During the debate on the Education Bill (Miscellaneous Provisions,) in February 1953, Labour tried to introduce a clause obliging the Minister to see that there were an adequate number of comprehensive schools in the various areas. The attempt failed.

On the policy level the Minister concentrated her efforts on practical problems: buildings, equipment and teachers. The situation

19) Hansard, vol. 509, p. 241.

20) Hansard, vol. 510, p. 45.

in these respects was grave because of the increasing number of children entering secondary schools and because of the economic crisis. Money for buildings had to be cut.²¹⁾ And till May 1953 not even one purpose-built comprehensive school was established.²²⁾ The emphasis on practical problems characterizes Conservative policy and if the tri-partite system had not been challenged both by Labour's ideology and by the professional arguments of phase two, it is very probable that there would have been no debate on principles in the Conservative party, but only restricted discussion on practical ad-hoc issues. It was mainly the Labour party which dictated the nature of the debate, and the Conservative party was forced very often to fight on their opponents' ground. The debate in the 1953 Conservative Conference was undoubtedly dictated by Labour's "Challenge to Britain". The motion moved in this Conference by Angus Maude said: "That this Conference welcomes the progress made by the Minister of Education in carrying out the reforms of the Butler Act and expresses its conviction that Socialist proposals for destroying the Grammar Schools and undermining the position of the Independent Schools would result in a reduction of educational opportunities for all children."²³⁾ Following the

21) See Circular 242 Ministry of Education, H.M.S.O. (London, 1951) and Circular 245 Ministry of Education, H.M.S.O. (London, 1952).

22) Hansard, vol. 515, Written Answers, p. 186.

23) 1953 Conservative Annual Conference Report, p. 37. Angus Maude M.P. for Stratford-on-Avon Division of Warwickshire since May 1963. Wrote with E. Powell Biography of a Nation, 1955. Was Director of the C.F.C. from 1951 to 1955. He is now Chairman of the Conservative party study group examining economic and social conditions in the future.

motion came immediately the familiar argument about the brilliant child: "It is important to raise the average quality, but it will be fatal if the average quality were to be raised at the expense of the best standards, and to the detriment of the prospects of the brightest children, because the brightest children are all-important to us: on them depends the future of our industry and our administration..."²⁴⁾ The rest of the speech concentrated on attacking "Challenge to Britain" in its first version. The proposals outlined there were described as revolutionary, doctrinaire and highly controversial. A. Maude had to admit that at least one of Labour's considerations in adopting the comprehensive principle was the problem of selection. Yet he claimed, as a true Conservative, that though the problems associated with the eleven plus were real they should be solved on the basis of the existing system and certainly not in any way which could endanger the grammar schools: Improve what you have got "...without destroying something which has taken centuries to create."²⁵⁾ There was no need to destroy the secondary modern schools either, as they were "...a great experiment."²⁶⁾ By referring to the secondary modern as "an experiment" Maude actually destroyed one of the "professional" arguments of the Conservatives, i.e., that only the

24) *ibid.*

25) *ibid.*, p. 38.

26) *ibid.*, p. 37.

comprehensive school was an experiment and that for this reason the number of such schools should be limited. To hear from Maude such praise of the secondary modern is very interesting as shortly afterwards he himself pointed out that the attempt to create parity of esteem for the modern school had failed and that a radical improvement of the secondary modern was necessary.²⁷⁾ The defence of the secondary modern school, in view of its deficiencies, can be seen as an expression of the desire to keep the grammar schools intact.

Equality of opportunity continued to be interpreted in Conference as different types of education for the different types of children in spite of the new professional findings of phase two. The real issue was, as always, the preservation of the grammar schools, and Labour was accused, in a very emotional language, of hating the grammar schools and the able children: "These are the people whose eyes, when they rest on a grammar school, seem to cloud over with envy, hatred, malice.... Some of these people even welcomed the half-baked scheme which was put forward in 'Challenge to Britain'..."²⁸⁾ What is certain is that the speaker hated comprehensive schools and saw in them a threat to Conservative P(m)s. The speaker was also absolutely ignorant of Labour's proposals and standpoint. The "half-baked" schemes referred to were actually less egalitarian than the 11 to 18

27) A. Maude, "An Educated Electorate" in Tradition and Change, pp. 83-84.

28) 1953 Conservative Annual Conference Report, p. 39.

comprehensive school. The irony is that later it was a Conservative local authority which first adopted this "half-baked" scheme, i.e., the two-tier system in Leicestershire, and the Conservatives in years to come pointed with pride to the Leicestershire experiment. The proposals of the second version of "Challenge to Britain" were attacked in many party publications and always on the ground that Labour's policy meant the end of grammar schools. The policy of defending the grammar schools by every means was stated over and over again.²⁹⁾

The Minister's speech in the 1953 Conference was very much a repetition of that of 1952. Again the ideological character of her arguments against the comprehensive school was revealed, this time through a contradiction in her speech. On the one hand she denounced the comprehensive schools on educational grounds and on the other hand she claimed that it was still too early to decide on the merit of these schools. Her policies showed the non-professional nature of her policy towards the comprehensive schools. When in 1953 she accepted Coventry's plan for comprehensive schools the Minister emphasized that the buildings should be erected in such a way that a split up into separate schools would be possible.³⁰⁾ Even this conditional acceptance of the experiments in Coventry was possible only because the plan did not involve the absorption of any grammar school. In the

29) See "All the Answers", Research Dep. (London, 1955), pp. 120, 121.

30) Hansard, vol. 525, p. 1408.

notorious Kidbrooke school case she objected to the plans, which were already well under way, because a local girls' grammar school was to be absorbed in the new Kidbrooke comprehensive school. Her decision to interfere was legalised by the petition of the parents of the grammar school children. Without this petition she would have had no legal grounds, as the plan had been approved by Tomlinson. As a result of her action she was sharply attacked in the House,³¹⁾ by a L.C.C. delegation and by the Association of Education Committees representing all the local education authorities in the country.

Kidbrooke was opened as a comprehensive school without the incorporation of Eltham Hill Girls' High School. In the same year the Minister refused to allow the L.C.C. to expand the Bec Grammar School as a comprehensive school. These actions are worth while remembering as they meant interference with the autonomy of LEAs. In the name of the same freedom, which they had themselves violated, the Conservatives attacked Labour's intention of forcing through comprehensive education from 1964. As a matter of fact even by 1955 the Conservatives accused the schemes in "Challenge to Britain" of violating the freedom of LEAs.³²⁾ The Kidbrooke and Bec incidents were justified by one-sided presentation. Only the petitions of parents, whose children were in the grammar schools, were mentioned. Nothing was said of the petitions

31) Hansard, vol. 520. pp. 777-779.

32) The Campaign Guide, 1955, Central Office (London, 1955), pp. 263-265.

of the L.C.C. and the Association of Education Committees.³³⁾

In the 1954 Conference a motion moved by Cmdr. P.W.T. Kime, suggested the use of the purse where there were no other means of controlling already approved comprehensive school schemes. He had the L.C.C. especially in mind.³⁴⁾ It was in this Conference that the first dissenting voices were heard. Some Conservatives came to the conclusion that the progress of Britain depended not only on the élite but on more skilled technicians and better educated manual workers.³⁵⁾ More money and effort should therefore be spent on the modern schools. This, however, was an opinion of a tiny minority as the majority still thought in terms of concentration on the able. But it was the slow realisation that the country indeed needed better educated man power, and above all the old concern to preserve the grammar schools that were behind the growing demand in the party to look again at the modern schools and to try and make a success of them.³⁶⁾ It was also becoming more and more impossible to talk about equality of educational opportunity in view of the conditions existing in many secondary modern schools and because in many places the technical school did not develop at all. Findings about parental

33) *ibid.*, p. 266.

34) 1954 Conservative Annual Conference Report, p. 71.

35) *ibid.*, p. 72.

36) See A. Maude, "An Educated Electorate", pp. 82-84; N.C.P. 1954 no. 14, Research Dep. (London, 1955), p. 28.

aspiration were also pressing the Conservative party to do something as regards the secondary modern. The findings showed that all parents (in the survey), who were concerned about their children's education, wanted their children to go to grammar schools.³⁷⁾ As the number of grammar school places was limited inevitably a lot of children sitting for the entry examination failed. And T.H. Marshall commented that there was a great deal of frustrated educational ambition.³⁸⁾ On the other hand parents whose children went to grammar schools often objected to the introduction of comprehensive education, but they were in a minority. At the same time vis-a-vis the new sociological findings of phase two, books were published in defence of the grammar school. All these books were mainly ideological as the basic assumption, in all of them, was the importance of a specially educated élite for the country.³⁹⁾ The Joint Four issued a statement in 1955 in support of the grammar and modern schools. It was obvious that they were determined to oppose any reorganisation which might destroy the grammar school. The Minister, Sir David Eccles, who succeeded Miss F. Horsbrugh was quick in reassuring the Joint Four: "One must choose," he said, "between justice and equality, for it is impossible to apply both principles at once. Those who support comprehensive schools

37) Education, 27 August 1954.

38) T.E.S., 20 August 1954.

39) For example see Harry Ree, The Essential Grammar School (London, 1956); G.H. Dantock, Freedom and Authority in Education (London, 1954).

prefer equality. Her Majesty's present government prefers justice. My Colleagues and I will never agree to the assassination of the grammar schools."⁴⁰⁾ In practice, this meant that experiments with comprehensive schools would be confined almost entirely to rural areas and new housing estates where grammar schools did not exist.

At the same time Sir David had to pay a lot of attention to the secondary modern school, if he wanted to fight the "frustrated educational ambition" and to prevent it from turning people toward the comprehensive school. The fact that it was now possible for pupils of the best secondary modern schools to sit for the O level of the G.C.E. helped a little, but to an insufficient degree, as relatively few secondary modern pupils were sitting for the examination. The effect of the "frustrated educational ambition" was reflected also in the decision of Eccles to increase the number of grammar school places to a working maximum of 25 per-cent.⁴¹⁾ This was done reluctantly as the consequence of raising the number of grammar school places, if only by such a small percentage, meant that in some areas children who were less successful in the eleven plus would enter the grammar school. The Conservative party was always reluctant to increase the number of grammar school places and even suggested, as has been seen before, in 1944 in "The Nation's Schools" that the number of places

40) Quoted from D. Rubinstein and B. Simon, op.cit., pp. 70-71.

41) Hansard, vol. 540. pp. 784, 788-789.

be reduced in order to keep the élitist character of the grammar school. But dissatisfaction with the secondary modern schools and with the small number of grammar school places was increasing in the public and in the Conservative party itself. In the 1955 Conference, though the motion called only "...for immediate steps toward implementing the Government's declared policy of expansion in technical education... as an urgent national necessity",⁴²⁾ Mr. Leonard Smith, while opposing the motion, said: "I cannot understand why on earth Sir David does not expand the grammar school system. Why he does not take steps to encourage local authorities to provide more grammar schools?"⁴³⁾ Every child, he said, wants to go to grammar school and while "...every child is not suited to a grammar school education.... The Minister has stated that he wants every child who will benefit to have a grammar school education, but, you know, the child's ability does not count, it is the number of places available."⁴⁴⁾ He continued his criticism of the policy pursued by pointing out that Butler's intention in the 1944 Act was that all secondary schools were to have equal status: "Now we all know, there is a tremendous gulf between the grammar school and the other forms of secondary education."⁴⁵⁾ His

42) 1955 Conservative Annual Conference Report, p. 78.

43) *ibid.*, p. 79.

44) *ibid.*, pp. 79-80.

45) *ibid.*, p. 80.

conclusion was that the first step should be to increase the grammar school places, as the grammar schools' educational value, as distinguished from that of the secondary modern and of the comprehensive schools, was well proved.

In the House Sir David based his decision to provide 25 per-cent places as a working maximum on the fact that the more pupils entering the grammar schools means that more leave at an early age,⁴⁶⁾ but in Conference he gave different reasons: a) the greater the number of places the greater will be the resentment of those left out. b) In order to make the modern school an attractive alternative "...we must keep in the secondary modern school a great majority of those boys and girls who are in the middle block of intelligence and who will have courses going across the top of the secondary modern school in subjects that will give them a real interest in prolonging their studies afterwards."⁴⁷⁾ His conclusion was: "I am sure that our right Conservative policy is to stick to the grammar schools we have, bring up the provision to 20 per-cent or thereabouts, where it is below, and to do all we can to make secondary modern schools a real interesting alternative."⁴⁸⁾

Indeed, this was the right Conservative policy. The intention

46) Hansard, vol. 549. p. 2283.

47) 1955 Conservative Annual Conference Report, p. 81.

48) *ibid.* The emphasis is mine.

was clearly twofold: to avoid frustration which could be damaging in the elections, as it could turn parents towards the comprehensive school solution, and at the same time to secure the traditional character of the grammar school as a school education for the élite. That, in spite of the talk about parallel courses Sir David had no intention of making the modern school into something similar to the grammar school as far as further educational opportunities were concerned, was reflected in his response to Labour's demand for the introduction of other external examinations, besides the G.C.E., in the modern school.⁴⁹⁾ His view about this issue was stated in Circular 289 and in the House he said that he was not as yet satisfied that the interests of the children at secondary modern schools demanded that they should sit for another external examination.⁵⁰⁾ If, as he previously claimed, Conservative policy decided in favour of justice and not equality, and if, as he admitted, the eleven plus was inadequate and children progress at different rates,⁵¹⁾ surely it was contrary to justice that children allocated to modern schools should be unable to sit for another external examination. Once more, the policy was actually intended to keep the differences between the schools, to keep

49) The G.C.E. O level was above Old School Cert. Pass. The S.C.E. was lobbied into existence by teachers to get back Old School Cert. i.e., a bit below the G.C.E. O level.

50) Hansard, vol. 549. p. 2289.

51) *ibid.*, p. 2284; Hansard, vol. 540. pp. 790-791.

the grammar schools as the schools for the future élite (catering mainly for a certain class), and at the same time to do something for the average majority in order to appease the parents and to supply the so called demands of the new economy.

Translated into action the Minister's encouraging suggestions about the improvement of the modern schools amounted, at that stage, almost to nothing. Even transfer was not being made on a greater scale, as Sir David said: "...what I should like to see is a little more transfer of children who have been misfitted at one time or another."⁵²⁾ Transfer was indeed a problem, as the grammar schools and the localities objected to "transfer down" and so there were almost no places available in grammar schools for late developers. All the talk about the average child, and it was mainly talk and not action, was intended to diminish growing support for the comprehensive school which Conservatives continued to see as a threat to their P(m)s. Labour was accused of adopting the comprehensive principle for social reasons, and Sir David quoted from the T.E.S. a statement made by a member of the London Labour Party on 26th February 1954: "Comprehensive schools will help to create a more Socialistic outlook."⁵³⁾ That Labour wanted the comprehensive schools mainly for social reasons was true but the Conservative policy was far

52) Hansard, vol. 549. p. 2284. The emphasis is mine.

53) Hansard, vol. 540. p. 791.

from being based on professional arguments. The old professional arguments against comprehensive schools and for the tri-partite system were constantly repeated, sometimes with complete disregard of new professional arguments. Yet the professional arguments formed always only a small part of the argument as a whole. The main arguments were purely fundamental ideological arguments. That the party's educational policy was based on the party's fundamental P(m)s was actually stated by Sir David himself in his speech to the 1955 Conference: Conservatives believe in independence, in liberty and on that they base their conception of the social services including education.⁵⁴⁾ While Labour see in the social services a levelling instrument the Conservatives reject this conception. Levelling in education is contrary to the Conservative fundamental ideology: "In education, a blind faith in the unproven virtue of the comprehensive school, to which all must go, could mean denial of opportunity to the most able children."⁵⁵⁾

However you look at it, you always reach the same conclusion: for Labour comprehensive schools were a specification for the implementation of the P(m) of equality, while for the Conservatives, who reject the P(m) of equality, the comprehensive schools were a threat.

In spite of all the talk about the need to try and achieve a

54) 1955 Conservative Annual Conference Report, p. 81.

55) R.A. Butler in The New Conservatism, p. 127.

"parity of esteem" between the three types of schools, the Conservative party continued to regard the three schools as leading to different vocations, the modern school leading obviously to the more inferior vocations.⁵⁶⁾ The concessions made to parental aspirations and to the professional arguments of phase two were summarised in the 1955 Manifesto: "Parents should have the chance before the eleven plus examination to discuss with teachers and the local education authority which school is likely to suit their child best. There must be proper provision for the later transfer of children from one type of school to another."⁵⁷⁾ The provision for transfer and for parental choice were to remain a desiderata mainly.

In the 1956 Conference the issue of the comprehensive school did not figure directly as the motion asked for "...tax relief on school fees to those parents, who, by sending their children to independent schools, are relieving overcrowding."⁵⁸⁾ Yet, in his speech Sir David Eccles, while claiming that liberty to pay for their children's education is a fundamental matter as it concerns the parents' freedom of action, said concerning Labour's educational policy: "I find that the Socialists do not think of these things; their aim is equality, drab uniform equality; ours is variety and excellence."⁵⁹⁾ He admitted,

56) See for example the 1955 Manifesto "United For Peace and Progress", pp. 24-25.

57) *ibid.*, p. 25.

58) 1956 Conservative Annual Conference Report, p. 97.

59) *ibid.*, p. 101. The emphasis is mine.

therefore, that the differences in the educational policies of the two parties lay in their different fundamental ideologies, as the educational policy, in each case, was a specification of the parties' P(m)s. He added that he believed that the majority of people in Britain, whether they belonged to the Conservative party or not, do not like equality.

The 1957 Conference marks the beginning of a change inside the Conservative party itself. Before 1957 criticism inside the party was confined to the issue of grammar school places and the conditions in the secondary modern schools. If, before 1957 there were Conservatives who did not object to comprehensive schools, their voice was not heard. However, in the 1957 Conference two speakers voiced a change of mind inside the party though it concerned a minority only. The motion moved was astonishingly similar to the one moved in 1952: "That this Conference, believing in the true value of separate grammar, technical and secondary modern schools, deploras any political attempt to displace this tri-partite system by the extensive construction of comprehensive schools."⁶⁰⁾ What made such a resolution necessary was the increasing number of comprehensive schools opened by 1957 notably in the L.C.C., their success, and the fact that many Labour controlled local education authorities were preparing plans for going comprehensive and were waiting only for the opportunity to do so. In view of

60) 1957 Conservative Annual Conference Report, p. 111.

these developments the Conservative party felt that a restatement of its faith in the true value of the tri-partite system was needed. Notwithstanding the new professional findings it was claimed that the tri-partite system "...is a perfectly sound and logical educational idea..."⁶¹⁾ The same horrible description of the comprehensive school, as a place in which children are herded together in a confused mass, was repeated,⁶²⁾ despite the fact that in 1955 the Conservative party itself said about the comprehensive schools: "The comprehensive schools already in existence retain some measure of internal classification and segregation..."⁶³⁾ This was meant to show that the comprehensive schools did not actualize equality. Thus the Conservative party used on each occasion the description of the comprehensive schools which suited its purpose for the moment and disregarded the true nature of these schools. (As a matter of fact the criticism about the remnant of inequality within the comprehensive school was valid, but this is not the point which interests me here).

During the debate in the 1957 Conference it was made clear very quickly that, (exactly as in 1952), the heart of the matter was the anxiety over the grammar schools and what they stood for. The usage of the expression "the vicious cult of equality" showed again how

61) *ibid.*

62) *ibid.*

63) *The Campaign Guide 1955, Central Office (London, 1955), p. 266.*

strongly the Conservatives reject the P(m) of equality. It was still claimed by the party, in spite of all the contradictory evidence, that the tri-partite system was providing equality of educational opportunity.

However, the main opposer of the motion, Mr. Martin Henry, said what was never before said in a Conservative Conference: "I do not believe, and I speak from experience, that you can grade children in that manner...nor is it right or proper that this should be done....I believe that you cannot set bounds to the educational progress of any child at the tender age of eleven years. Apart from these considerations, and I think they are vital ones, it is wholly hypocritical cant to talk about giving equal opportunity for our children when in point of fact the places which are obtainable, for instance, at the grammar school are dictated wholly and purely by the number of places available and not the ability of the children to occupy these places.... It seems to me that if you wish to give children a fair chance it is not a bad idea at all to have them in one building and one school, and I personally am not afraid of the comprehensive school."⁶⁴ What a revolutionary thing to say in a Conservative Conference! Geoffrey Lloyd, in his speech, did not answer this criticism. He chose, instead, to attack Labour's reasons for adopting the comprehensive principle and for hating the grammar schools: Labour is set against

64) 1957 Conservative Annual Conference, p. 113.

the grammar schools because working class children attending these schools become Tories. That the grammar school indeed tends to alienate working class children from their previous background was later shown by research to be true,⁶⁵⁾ and that the Labour party was frightened of these consequences is not surprising. But exactly as the majority of Labour members were frightened of the grammar schools the majority of the Conservatives were frightened of the comprehensive schools which they believed would turn the children into future Socialists.

Support of the comprehensive school by a minority of Conservatives was a new phenomenon in the party but one should not exaggerate its significance. At that stage, in 1957, this view had almost no impact on the party at large. The party continued to defend the tri-partite system in the same way it had defended it for years and to attack the comprehensive school because of its relation to the rejected P(m) of equality.

B. The Character and Limits of the Reforms of Secondary Education
(1958-1961)

The Conservative party did not substantially change its policy towards the comprehensive schools in the years 1958-1961. Yet several factors combined to demand a new tactical approach and some considerable changes in its policy towards the secondary modern schools. It

65) See Jackson and Marsden, op.cit.

was obvious in 1958 that doubts in the party itself about the educational policy were increasing - on the national level and especially in the localities. In addition the "frustrated educational ambition", mentioned before, increased. The evidence against the eleven plus was becoming stronger and stronger and doubts were cast on the possibility of finding better selection methods. The social atmosphere demanded some kind of a solution which would take the sting out of the dreaded eleven plus. The whole concept of the strict categorization of children according to their abilities and aptitudes into three basic types was shaken as well. The modern school, in general, did not succeed in rousing parental respect and for many parents, primarily from middle to lower middle class, the grammar school continued to be the secondary school. Labour's "Learning to Live" did not make matters easier as it provided a scheme for comprehensive education with variety of alternatives all based on the abolition of the eleven plus and the three separate types of secondary schools. In contrast, the Conservative party appeared to lack any constructive solution to the problems concerning the eleven plus and the categorization of children at that age into different types of schools. Parents were becoming more and more aware of the fact that entry to the secondary modern school closed the doors to further education, and in view of the doubts cast on the eleven plus were becoming aware of the injustice of the existing system. The parental pressure was felt mainly by the local education authorities and consequently some of them decided

to act, and to take the initiative into their hands in the lack of any national guidance.

The example was set by the Leicestershire Conservative controlled County Council. The experiment was a result of public disapprobation of the bi-partite system and under the influence of the professional arguments of phase two. The Director of Education for Leicestershire wrote that in view of this development, which is "...as irresistible as the tide",⁶⁶⁾ local authorities would be relentlessly driven to adopt the large scale comprehensive school, unless some satisfactory alternative were devised. As Leicestershire was Conservative controlled it did not want to abolish the existing grammar schools or to establish the 11 to 18 comprehensive school. The solution was a two-tier system in which the modern school was transformed into a comprehensive high school taking all children from 11 to 14, and the grammar school became upper school, taking all children from 14 whose parents, after consultation, decided that they wanted their children to stay at school at least till the age of 16. The rest of the children remained till the statutory leaving age at the comprehensive high school. This form of organisation could be accepted by the Conservatives as it abolished the eleven plus without abolishing the grammar schools. At the same time it provided parents with real

66) S.C. Mason, The Leicestershire Experiment, Councils and Education Press (London, 1957), p. 9.

choice. In 1960 the scheme which had developed successfully was extended to three other areas in the county, and other local authorities were considering introducing it.

The Conservative party, on the national level, did not, in the beginning, welcome this experiment whole-heartedly and Sir Edward Boyle stressed that it had to be regarded merely as an experiment. But the fact that a Conservative controlled local authority had started to abolish the eleven plus could not be ignored on the national level. In addition, the criticism heard in the 1955 and the 1957 Conferences gained momentum within the party. In the 1958 Conference Mr. Arbuthnot opposed the motion on the basis that Conservatives had to put much more emphasis on the education of ordinary children. The argument was now voiced that the place of Britain in world competition depended not only on the education of the few but on a broadly based education, as technicians were as important for Britain's success as scientists and leaders. Lady Lewisham expressed this view strongly: The secondary modern schools have been the "...Cinderellas of education", their equipment, buildings and staff were inadequate. It was absolutely necessary to raise the standard of the secondary modern schools. The party, claimed Lady Lewisham, was wrong to be "...obsessed by the brainy child." Clever children would get to the top but the majority of children develop slowly. "Let us never forget that it is these average Englishmen and women upon which we

depend in peace and in war."⁶⁷⁾ Mr. M. Henry followed the argument of Mr. Leonard Smith in 1955. He pointed out that the criticism of the eleven plus has been gaining in strength. While the Conservatives, he said, do not see the comprehensive school as the solution "...what is certain is that the basic principle embodied in the comprehensive school will continue to serve as a killing weapon in the Socialist armoury in exploiting public concern and dissatisfaction at the alarming discrepancy in the provision of grammar school places throughout the country. It is not sufficient, to my mind, to describe the Socialist challenge in this matter by simply holding it up...as doctrinaire. Surely it is hypocritical to talk about equal educational opportunities for all, when the number of children receiving grammar school education is dependent not wholly on ability but upon the number of places available. The basis must be on ability and not availability."⁶⁸⁾ Even M.W. Partridge, while supporting the motion and still adhering to the old solution of improvement of selection methods, finished by saying: "But what we must ensure is that all roads lead to the top."⁶⁹⁾

The Minister's policies were, therefore, criticised on two

67) 1958 Conservative Annual Conference Report, p. 70; Lady Lewisham, Countess of Dartmouth, Member for Richmond upon Thames C.L.C. from 1967; Member for Lewisham West L.C.C. 1958-1965. (Who is Who, 1971).

68) 1958 Conservative Annual Conference Report, pp. 69-70.

69) *ibid.*, p. 69.

points: a) his unwillingness to increase the number of grammar school places above the working maximum, of "20 per-cent or thereabouts"⁷⁰⁾ b) the lack of provision for secondary modern schools, which entails for their children almost total exclusion from further education. On the fundamental level the Conservative ideology was challenged further for wrongly putting the emphasis on leadership, at a time when the progress of Britain depended rather more on the education of the average majority. This challenge to the fundamental ideology, based on practical considerations, was at this stage voiced only by a minority. But the criticism of the party's policy and the criticism of the fundamental ideology could not be ignored in the social climate of the late 1950s.

The criticism of the party's policy enjoyed the greater support within the party. If the Conservative party did not want to lose its grip on the situation, if it did not want to enable Labour's comprehensive school alternative to win massive public support which would force LEAs into the adoption of that principle, the party had to change both its tactics and its policy. A negative approach, i.e., the continuous attack on Labour's suggestions as doctrinaire and unprofessional, had become insufficient and ineffectual. A new programme and a massive propaganda campaign were required. The need for new tactics together with the demands of the changing economy for

70) As has been seen before, the Minister's original 25 per-cent had turned to 20 or thereabout.

educated manpower led to the party's attempt to tackle the problem of secondary education afresh on the policy level. While the Minister agreed that changes in policy must be made, concerning especially the modern schools, the changes remained purely on the operative level. The fundamental ideology was not changed: the party still stood for diversity, quality and inequality. The grammar schools had to be protected because of all that they stood for, and the comprehensive school had to be attacked also because of what it stood for: "They [the Labour party] seek to impose from the top a system which I can call nothing else but the nationalisation of our schools, with one pattern, one Party and one State.... Let us remember that they want the comprehensive school for one reason: the policy of equality and egalitarianism, the Socialist approach to politics."⁷¹⁾ Even those Conservatives who attacked the government's policy did not, except for Lady Lewisham, attack the party's fundamental principles. As Mr. H. Henry said: "The essence of our Conservative faith and philosophy is not equal shares for all, but certainly it is equal opportunity for all..."⁷²⁾ The question was, of course, how to provide equality of opportunity in the tri-partite system?

Nobody in the 1958 Conference attacked the party's policy towards the comprehensive schools. They could attack the policy in

71) 1958 Conservative Annual Conference Report, pp. 67-68.

72) *ibid.*, p. 69.

regard to the discrepancies in grammar school places and in regard to the provision for secondary modern schools, as these attacks did not touch any of the fundamental P(m)s. To attack the party's policy toward the comprehensive schools however would have meant attacking the fundamental P(m)s and would have amounted to a demand for change not only at policy level but in the party's fundamental ideology. Even Lady Lewisham's attack on the fundamental ideology was not very serious, as more emphasis could be placed on average children without sacrificing the P(m) of excellence. As a matter of fact there were still those in the party who could not even acknowledge that the time had passed for the rigorous division of children into three groups.

The Minister's position was a compromise between the reactionaries and the reformists and it was confined to changes in policy and these concerned chiefly the modern schools and the new tactics. His problem was to devise a policy to answer the demand for better technicians, to take the sting out of the eleven plus and so minimise the possible attraction of the comprehensive schools, and at the same time to be in harmony with the Conservative fundamental ideology. Geoffrey Lloyd's solution was outlined in his speech to the 1958 Conference and in the "White Paper: Secondary Education for All - A New Drive". He acknowledged that it was necessary to produce technicians and highly educated craftsmen, and admitted that the secondary modern school did not achieve the standard desired. Only relatively few secondary modern schools succeeded in establishing a fifth form

and in providing the necessary courses to enable the children to sit for the O level G.C.E. The Minister claimed that if there were good modern schools the eleven plus would cease to be a crucial issue. The Leicestershire experiment was praised and even some comprehensive schools were described as very fine. Yet the basic approach towards the comprehensive school did not change. It was one thing to praise schemes which did not involve the abolition of grammar schools and another thing to approve of comprehensive schools in places where they could endanger existing grammar schools. The comprehensive school remained "an experiment". The Conservative policy was described as a policy based on educational considerations while Labour was accused again of adopting the comprehensive principle for dogmatic and political reasons: "The truth is that the Labour Party has not adopted the comprehensive scheme for educational reasons; they have adopted it for political reasons."⁷³⁾ This contrast between the so called Conservative educational approach and Labour's ideological one, was immediately repudiated, and the ideological character of the Conservative policy was revealed, when the Minister emphasized again that comprehensive schools meant the end of grammar schools and what they stood for.

The White Paper 1958 was the culmination of the developments described previously. It stated the Conservative policy clearly and

73) *ibid.*, p. 74.

showed that while on the operative level the Minister was ready for reforms, those reforms were to be strictly within the limits set by the party's fundamental ideology. It stated that because the standards of the modern schools varied "...a number of these children are not getting as good opportunities as they deserve."⁷⁴⁾ Because many secondary modern schools are ill-equipped "...many parents still believe that, if their children go to a secondary modern school, they will not have a fair start in life.... and the anxiety of parents over 'eleven plus' will be finally allayed only when every secondary school, no matter what its description, is able to provide a full secondary education for each of its pupils in accordance with his ability and aptitude. Furthermore, this is a matter of prime importance, not only to individual parents but also to the nation as a whole.... We need not only first-class scientists and technologists but also an ample supply of technicians and craftsmen."⁷⁵⁾ That is to say: a reform was in fact necessary to appease the parents and to satisfy the "demands of the new economy". The last claim was much talked about in that period both by Labour and the Conservatives though without evidence. The reforms suggested were based however on the assumption that no matter how secondary education was organised, there must remain a substantial element of selection in the broad sense of the word "...if we are to do justice to the different needs of individual

⁷⁴⁾ Secondary Education for All - A New Drive, Comnd paper 604, H.M.S.O., p. 4.

⁷⁵⁾ *ibid.*, p. 5.

children. For children do differ considerably in their mental power, in their special gifts, in vigour, in industry and in the ability to concentrate.... But this does not mean that a child's performance at the age of eleven should determine the remainder of his school career once for all."⁷⁶⁾

What, then, had to be done? Comprehensive secondary education was rejected for three main reasons: a) the desirability of diversity b) the history of grammar schools made them indispensable c) the traditional character of educational progress in England and Wales was mainly evolutionary and to a large extent a combination of a series of local histories d) the size of the comprehensive school. The professional argument formed only a small part of the overall argument against the comprehensive schools. As selection in the broad sense could be and was practised also in comprehensive schools, the only professional argument against this type of school was its size. The alternative was to improve the standard of the modern schools, and the real step forward was the suggestion for an overlapping of courses in the grammar and secondary modern schools: "The essential conditions of success are that all secondary schools should be enabled to be good in their own ways, and that there must be full recognition of the fact that, where separate grammar and modern schools exist, there will be an overlap in the capacities of the

⁷⁶⁾ *ibid.*

pupils and that therefore the courses offered must overlap also."⁷⁷⁾

This would take care of the transfer problem which was finally admitted to be serious.

One might ask why have overlapping courses in two different types of school and not in one school? The answer given was that though courses would overlap, the way in which they would be given in the secondary modern schools would suit the learning capacity of the children in these schools better.⁷⁸⁾ Professionally there was very little evidence to substantiate this claim, yet the establishment of some academic courses, parallel to those in grammar schools, was the limit to which the Conservatives could go if they wanted to stick to their fundamental ideology. Thus they might pacify some parents and meet the economic demands, and at the same time safeguard the grammar schools to which, after all, the best children would continue to go. The reform helped to preserve diversity and class distinctions by maintaining in the secondary modern school vocational courses beside the academic ones. There was no intention of making the secondary modern school equal to the grammar school, and this was clearly expressed in the Minister's speech: "There will no longer be any sharp distinctions between the courses and opportunities at the bottom of the grammar and technical schools and the top of the

⁷⁷⁾ *ibid.*, p. 6.

⁷⁸⁾ *The Campaign Guide 1959*, Central Office (London, 1959), p. 299.

modern school."⁷⁹⁾

The strong emphasis on the necessity of broad selection was a direct result of the Labour shift from attacking the eleven plus to attacking selection and segregation at large. This view was described by the Conservatives as "egalitarianism run mad".⁸⁰⁾ The emphasis on reform in secondary modern schools had full party support and was the main educational theme in "Onward in Freedom" 1958 and "The Future of the Welfare State" 1958. Even the most reformist group in the Conservative party - the Bow Group - objected at that time to comprehensive schools chiefly on the ground that existing grammar schools should not be abolished: "Therefore, attempts to introduce comprehensive schools must be condemned where this involves the destruction of good grammar schools."⁸¹⁾ The recommendations of the Bow Group were to provide more grammar school places where needed. On the reform concerning the modern school their views were in complete harmony with official policy.⁸²⁾ What came to be known as The square deal for the average child meant "...that every child should be able to travel along the educational road as far as his ability and perseverance can

79) *ibid.*, p. 299. The emphasis is mine.

80) "The Future of the Welfare State", C.P.C. (London, 1958), p. 82.

81) "Willingly to School", a Bow Group pamphlet, C.P.C. (London, 1959), pp. 32-33.

82) *ibid.*, p. 44.

carry him, irrespective of the type of school to which he goes", and so each child will have "...opportunity and encouragement for further education."⁸³⁾

The reform was limited to the framework of the tri-partite system to which the Conservatives clung in order to safeguard excellence, diversity and tradition and to fight against equality in the strong sense. The whole "New Drive" can be seen as a final attempt to restore people's faith in the tri-partite system and to distract them from the comprehensive principle. So strong was the party's desire to preserve the tri-partite system, that while admitting the inadequacy of the eleven plus and conceding that this examination was not outlined in the 1944 Act, they claimed that "It is the general tri-partite system, not the actual method of selection for it, which is outlined in the Act."⁸⁴⁾ The simple fact is that this statement is false, as the Act, as we have seen already, did not outline the tri-partite system. It was the White Paper of 1943 and the pamphlet "The Nation's Schools" that gave the tri-partite interpretation.

Another matter, tactical in nature, had also to be attended to by the Conservative party. As Labour used the tactic of describing universal comprehensive education as grammar education for all, the Conservatives had to expose this promise. While those involved in

83) The Campaign Guide 1959, pp. 299-300.

84) *ibid.*, p. 300.

education knew that Labour's policy must mean the abolition of the grammar school in its present form, the public at large was taken in by Labour's line. Geoffrey Lloyd had thus to say: "To promise all children a grammar school education is just bamboozling the parents, particularly when what the Socialists really intend is to abolish the grammar schools. The parents know, if Mr. Gaitskell does not, that the grammar schools provide a particular type of academic courses suitable for the cleverest children."⁸⁵⁾

As for the comprehensive schools, the Conservatives changed their tone but not their policy. The change of tone was manifested in the way the Minister and the party official publications spoke about the number of comprehensive schools approved by Conservative Ministers. While before, Ministers used an apologetic tone in giving the number of comprehensive schools approved, in 1959 it was stated almost with pride that the Conservatives had approved 59 comprehensive schools. Obviously the intention was to create an impression that the Conservative party was really treating comprehensive schools on professional grounds. However, in reality this was not the case. The Conservatives had a well-defined policy: approving experiments with comprehensive schools only in sparsely populated county districts, and in areas of extensive new housing with no well-established

⁸⁵⁾ *ibid.*, p. 301.

secondary schools.⁸⁶⁾ This was and continued to be, in general terms, the Conservative policy regarding comprehensive schools, a policy in complete harmony with their P(m)s. The extension of a grammar school to become a comprehensive school was regarded, just as in P. Horsbrugh's time, as passing the death sentence on the grammar school. It was clear that the White Paper's intention was to safeguard the continued independence of the grammar schools. It is therefore natural that the White Paper received the most enthusiastic welcome from the Joint Four, who for years had been fighting for the preservation of the grammar schools.

That the Conservative policy in regard to the comprehensive schools was unaltered is also evident from the series of conflicts between local authorities desiring to establish comprehensive schools, and the Ministry who wished to confine the experiments to the above mentioned areas. Sir David clashed with Manchester and Swansea in 1955. In Manchester the Minister rejected a plan to transform an existing school at Wythenshawe, and likewise Swansea's proposal for merging four secondary schools eventually into a multilateral school. His reason was that he could not allow the extermination of the existing grammar schools. He proposed that two new comprehensive schools should be established in new housing areas.⁸⁷⁾ In the Swansea

86) *ibid.*, p. 303.

87) *T.E.S.*, 6 Jan. 1956.

case the Minister's action was more radical than in Manchester, as Swansea's post-war development plan was approved in principle by Tomlinson in 1949. Other post-war plans, for example in Oldham and Bradford, could not be implemented within the conditions set by the Conservative government. The plans were therefore "frozen". A similar thing happened with the plans of the county borough of Newport in Monmouthshire in 1958. And in 1959 Geoffrey Lloyd rejected a proposal by Darlington to establish a comprehensive school.

In the House the Ministers continued to reject Labour's proposal that a Departmental Committee be established whose task would be to look into the achievements of the comprehensive school.⁸⁸⁾ In the 1960 Conference Mr. Dudley Smith summarised the Conservative policy: "The ultimate aim of the Socialist Party in education may be summed up by saying that they are in favour of a doctrinaire policy of comprehensive schools and they would like to introduce comprehensive schools to the exclusion of the grammar and technical schools. We say that there is a definite place for comprehensive schools, in certain well-defined areas. But we say they should never be used as a system to destroy the grammar schools, and we will see that the grammar school system is preserved."⁸⁹⁾ The solution given was the

88) Hansard, vol. 581. Written Answers, pp. 195-196; vol. 585. p. 586.

89) 1960 Conservative Annual Conference Report, p. 28. Dudley Smith M.P. for Warwick and Leamington since 1968; for Brentford and Chiswick 1959-1966; Opposition Whip 1965-1966; Governor Mill Hill and North London Collegiate School. From 1970 Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Dep. of Employment. (Who is Who, 1971).

one suggested in the White Paper 1958.

Yet, a minority in the party was not satisfied with the talk about the improvement in the modern schools emphasized in party publications,⁹⁰⁾ and considered inadequate the legal opportunity given to modern school children to sit for the G.C.E.⁹¹⁾ At the 1960 Conference, two years after the publication of the White Paper, Miss F.G. Roberts said: "We heard yesterday and to-day about how the G.C.E. should be taken in the secondary modern school. How many modern schools have the accommodation to have a G.C.E. form? The one of which I am a governor certainly has not."⁹²⁾ Her suggestion was to send children at the age of 13, 14, or 15 to grammar schools. This suggestion showed despair, on the part of Miss Roberts, of any future improvement in the modern schools.

That the reforms outlined in the White Paper 1958 did not succeed in pacifying parents and muting "frustrated educational ambition" was most manifest in Sir David's speech to the 1960 Conference - a speech full of anxiety about the mounting sense of deprivation: "Now, we ought always to insist in our party and insist strenuously that children of less than average academic ability are just as worth while

90) See for example N.C.P. 1961 no. 14, Research Dep. (London, 1962), p. 20.

91) See Schools Regulations 1959 no. 364, H.M.S.O. (London, 1959), p. 3, Par. 15(b).

92) 1960 Conservative Annual Conference Report, p. 33.

as those above the average."⁹³⁾ Otherwise there was a danger of jealousy in society "...and this must not happen. But I have to tell you that it will happen unless parents, teachers and employers look for, respect and encourage all good qualities in children besides the capacity to pass examinations."⁹⁴⁾ This reminds one of Ellen Wilkinson's foreword to "The New Secondary Education". In each case what happened in reality, i.e., the lack of success in achieving parity of esteem for the secondary modern schools, slowly and reluctantly dawned upon the Ministers. And in each case the Minister sought refuge in an utopian dream about the possibility of changing the values of the society. The tragic feature is that a situation which occurred in 1947 should be repeated as late as 1960. Like ostriches the Conservatives buried their heads in the sand. When in the 1961 Conference a member criticised the party for lack of sufficient interest in education and stated that the secondary modern child was grossly under-educated because "...the stereotype curricula of our schools, inherited from time past, protected by tradition and sanctified by usage are ludicrously inadequate as a means to prepare young people for present day needs",⁹⁵⁾ the Conference shouted "No".

To some extent the change of Ministers in 1962 marked the end of

93) *ibid.*, p. 35.

94) *ibid.*, .

95) *ibid.*, p. 103.

the period which started as early as 1944. From 1944 till 1961 the Conservative party clung to the tri-partite system. It saw it as the norm compared to which other forms were experimental only. Reforms necessary, because of the social atmosphere, economic demands, professional arguments and Labour's comprehensive scheme, were limited to the framework of the tri-partite system. The party admitted faults in the eleven plus and the tri-partite system only up to a point, and constantly sought remedies which would retain the basic structure of the existing system. All the "cures" proposed for the evils of the eleven plus were purposely limited by the party's ultimate object: to preserve the grammar schools. Policy was overwhelmingly dictated by adherence to the party's fundamental P(m)s and by the rejection of the P(m) of equality. Voices demanding changes in the fundamental ideology were so rare that they had no influence whatsoever. With certain modifications concerning the secondary modern schools, the Conservative educational policy did not change from 1944 and harmony between the fundamental dimension of the party's ideology and its policies was maintained. Except for a slight change in the interpretation of the P(m) of equality of educational opportunity, which was dictated by experience, there was no change of interpretation as far as the other P(m)s were concerned.

That the reforms outlined in 1958 were inadequate was becoming clear by the end of the 1950s. Some real change in the party's educational policy was needed. The change in policy could consequently

bring about a corresponding change in the fundamental dimension. Some fundamentals could be differently interpreted and an emphasis could be put on those fundamentals which did correspond to the new policies. However, the change could remain on the level of policy only, in which case a gap between the fundamental ideology and the policy could develop.

C. The Gap Between the Fundamental Dimension of the Party's Ideology and its Policies (1962-1964)

In the last three years of the Conservative government the debate between the two parties and within the Conservative party itself about secondary education was on a low level of intensity. As the initiative in the debate was usually taken by the Labour party, and as Labour's position was consolidated in "Learning to Live", there were no new issues raised by Labour to which the Conservative party had to reply. The professional views were also clearly spelled out in the early 1960s. The Conservative party itself stated its view, on the fundamental and on the operative levels, in the White Paper 1958. The section on secondary education in the Conservative's 1964 Manifesto was, therefore, a repetition of the White Paper. But if in the fundamental dimension of the party's ideology there appeared to be no change as regards secondary education, on the policy level changes were under way. Though the changes occurred in Sir Edward Boyle's period as Minister, they cannot be described as his doing but rather as a result of accumulating factors. Sir E. Boyle's role was rather

that of following public opinion and the local education authorities, than of leading them. Yet, by not resisting the changes he certainly contributed to the new developments. He himself was very careful to confine the changes to the policy level. As a result, when the party went into opposition, a gap existed between its policies and the specification of secondary education as a means of preserving the fundamental P(m)s of the party. The Bow Group felt that a gap was being created and accordingly attempted to readapt the fundamental dimension to the policies. Yet the fact that the Manifesto was a repetition of the White Paper 1958 shows that the attempt was not successful.

The change in the Conservative policy was mainly in regard to the eleven plus and the principle of tri-partitism, and as a result toward the comprehensive schools as well. While the party had acknowledged for years already the deficiencies in the eleven plus, a clear statement approving the abolition of the eleven plus was not issued. It was stated that the improvement of the secondary modern schools would take the sting out of the eleven plus and the matter was left entirely in the hands of the local education authorities. In 1963 Sir E. Boyle declared for the first time, in a reply to a written question, that: "No formal advice has been given. But I have made known my view that the strictly educational case for moving away from formal methods is now well established."⁹⁶⁾ And in the 1963

96) Hansard, vol. 684. Written Answers, p. 133.

Conference in his comment that "...we want every child to have the same opportunities for acquiring intelligence",⁹⁷⁾ there is the clear implication that the theory of phase one concerning innate intelligence was no longer valid, as the great influence of the environmental factors had also to be taken into account. The decision of the L.C.C. to do away with the eleven plus gave Boyle the opportunity to express his view: "I have myself been coming to the conclusion that the strictly educationalist case for moving away from formal methods of selection was now well established, and that the time was perhaps approaching to make an end of the absolutely strict neutrality which the Ministry has maintained in public towards local selection methods. And I am therefore glad to have this opportunity of saying that in my view the general public welcome accorded to the L.C.C.'s proposals is fully justified, and I have no doubt that the status of the old written examination as a mean of eleven plus selection has received a mortal blow."⁹⁸⁾ This is a good example for my assertion that Boyle was following public opinion rather than leading it, although, as I stated before, by giving his approval post facto he contributed to the further movement away from the traditional eleven plus. Indeed, according to the N.F.E.R. survey for 1964, a quarter of the local

97) "This is Conservative Policy for Education", Central Office (London, 1963), p. 7. The emphasis is mine.

98) "Educational Opportunity", Central Office (London, 1963), p. 3.

education authorities made major changes in their selection procedures between 1960 and 1964.

Sir Edward Boyle was, however, very careful to keep his statement as an approval only, and not to turn it into a national policy statement: "However, it is one thing for me to abandon strict neutrality. It would be quite another for me to suggest, which I do not intend to do, that discretion in this matter will now be suddenly removed from local education authorities."⁹⁹)

As Boyle acknowledged the invalidity of the psychological arguments of phase one i.e., the theory of innate intelligence and of the method of measuring this ability, the next logical step would have been to acknowledge that the existing tri-partite system was outdated. But here Sir Edward Boyle faced a dilemma: to acknowledge the invalidity of the tri-partite system meant, among other things, opening the door to the abolition of grammar schools in their present form. And this could be interpreted as defying the P(m)s of tradition and excellence. Sir E. Boyle was not prepared to do this, at least not explicitly, but his view on this question underwent a change, if not an obvious one, from 1962 to 1963. In 1962 he said: "I have always thought that there was a strong case for a comprehensive school...in two types of areas; first, a new housing area in which there were no

⁹⁹) *ibid.*, p. 3.

existing secondary schools to which public opinion had become attached, and secondly a relatively scattered district where it may well be preferable on educational grounds.... There can be no doubt that a number of comprehensive schools in large boroughs have been markedly successful.... But it does not follow that a comprehensive school would be the best solution in all areas, even if local education authorities were starting, as it were, with a clean sheet, and, of course, they are not.... While I shall always be ready to talk over any proposals for secondary reorganisation with representatives of an authority I must place the same reserve - to put it no higher - as my predecessors have done, over any proposals which entail closing an existing school in order that a new comprehensive school may enjoy a monopoly of the abler children within its area."¹⁰⁰⁾ Though Boyle did not say that he was speaking about the grammar schools and used the expression "existing schools", the reference to "the able children" makes it absolutely clear that he had the grammar schools in mind. This is very similar to the well known statements of previous Conservative Ministers. But in 1963 he spoke to the Conference of Association of Education Committees, and repeated his view in the House, that: "Neither I nor my colleagues in the Government are wedded to any particular pattern of secondary school organisation; none of us believes that children can be sharply differentiated into various

¹⁰⁰⁾ The Guardian, 6 Sep. 1962.

types of levels of ability; and I certainly would not wish to advance the view that the tri-partite system...should be regarded as the right and usual way of organising secondary education, compared with which everything else must be stigmatised as experimental. Indeed, a system of completely separate schools is unlikely to be the best answer either in a new housing area where one can plan from the beginning or in a very scattered county district. All I have said on the other side is that, like my predecessors, I must continue to exercise the right to resist any proposal which seems likely to level down academic standards without any compensating degree of advantage in other ways."¹⁰¹⁾ The change from 1962 is obvious and lies in the last sentence. According to the 1963 statement, if a comprehensive school could prove, for instance, that it had social advantages or that it encouraged pupils to stay in school longer, even if the plan involved the absorption of a grammar school, it could be approved. According to the 1962 statement it would have been rejected merely on the grounds that it involved the abolition of an existing school. But in many ways the 1963 statement resembled that of 1962. It was in a way a compromise - Sir E. Boyle did not say openly that his view had changed on the fundamental question of the grammar schools and thus he could satisfy the fervent defenders of the grammar schools in the party, and on the other hand his statement enabled him to pursue a

¹⁰¹⁾ Hansard, vol. 680. Written Answers, pp. 161-162.

more liberal policy towards the comprehensive schools. He most probably opted for this compromise in order to avoid an obvious gap between the statement and the party's official fundamental ideology which continued to see secondary education as a specification of the P(n)s of tradition, excellence, diversity and inequality. Thus we find in the official publications of the party of that period Boyle's reformist view about the eleven plus, the tri-partite system and the comprehensive schools side by side with passages from the 1958 White Paper.¹⁰²⁾ The intended ambiguity of Sir E. Boyle's statement made this unholy mixture possible, but it made all the official statements ambiguous and unconvincing. This was the price the party paid for its reluctance to introduce openly a change in its fundamental ideology.

That Sir E. Boyle's policy towards the comprehensive schools had indeed changed was apparent from the actual policy he pursued. For example in October 1963 Bradford City Council decided to end selection at eleven plus and to start with a two-tier system with a transition by stages to a fully comprehensive system. Sir E. Boyle approved and even waived a statutory requirement in order to facilitate the transition. In the North, Leeds and Hull were also working out schemes. Staffordshire was developing more comprehensive schools and Derbyshire worked out a scheme covering the county as a whole. Sir E. Boyle

102) See "Educational Opportunity", pp. 3,5; The Campaign Guide 1964, Central Office (London, 1964), pp. 217-219.

accepted all these schemes, but concurrently the most he permitted himself to state publicly in this connection was: "I think we may be in a much better position to reach something like definite conclusions about the optimum future pattern of secondary school organisation in two or three years time than we can hope to do at this moment. Meanwhile, where there are separate schools, we need always to remember that wherever the line is drawn, children just on either side of it will be indistinguishable from each other both in ability and potentiality. And it follows that they are likely to need the same kind of education.... It is important for secondary schools of all kinds to recognise the varying abilities of their pupils - for the modern schools to stretch the abilities of their brighter children, and for grammar schools not to concentrate only on their high fliers."¹⁰³⁾

The end recalls the White Paper 1958, but change is indicated by Boyle's statement that in two or three years time it may be possible to reach conclusions. Although he did not say it openly, this meant that the conclusion might well be in favour of the comprehensive schools. In this statement, he definitely did not limit the comprehensive schools only to new housing estates and certain rural areas. And while speaking of the necessary arrangements in grammar and modern schools he used the word "meanwhile".

What Boyle could not, or did not want to say, but what his actions

¹⁰³⁾ Hansard, vol. 680. Written Answers, p. 162.

in fact signified was spelled out by the Bow Group in their pamphlet "Strategy for Schools". This pamphlet was very different from their "Willingly to School" published in 1959. They demanded large-scale research about the comprehensive schools. They admitted that, contrary to what they had claimed in the past, bright children may not suffer in the comprehensive school because of internal streaming and the house-system, both of which counterbalance the negative effects of size.¹⁰⁴⁾ It is nonsense, they said, to claim that the abolition of the eleven plus would end segregation, because the existing structure of secondary education - the tri-partite system - demands segregation.¹⁰⁵⁾ Their suggestion was that all secondary school children should follow a common course of studies from the age of 11 to 15. After these four years, the schools should provide more specialized courses for those intending to go on to higher education, and vocationally biased and general courses for those intending to leave within one or two years. It is impossible, they concluded, to pursue this in the tri-partite system. They did not go so far as to claim universal comprehensive education, but mainly because of administrative difficulties. Their suggestions regarding the structure of secondary education were therefore: "...that LEAs would be wise to plan comprehensive schools when establishing schools in new towns.

104) "Strategy for Schools": a Bow Group Pamphlet, G.P.C. (London, 1964), pp. 35-36.

105) *ibid.*, p. 64.

In other areas, where many school buildings at present exist, all local authorities should scrutinise the existing arrangements to consider ways of broadening the curricula offered in their secondary schools. This might be done by providing larger units, which have considerable advantages, either by enlarging the grammar schools or by a system of zoning schools in an area."¹⁰⁶⁾ The Certificate of Secondary Education should be accepted as the examination for all secondary school children and O level abolished.

While developments in local authorities and the policy of the Minister were close to the Bow Group's views, the official party publications were not in alignment for the simple reason that the party at large was not ready or willing to abandon its concept of secondary education which was in such perfect harmony with its fundamental ideology. The result, as I have remarked before, was the creation of a gap between the policies and the fundamental ideology. The pressure of the reformists in the party to adapt the fundamental dimension to the policies was for the moment ignored. Instead the ambiguous statements of Sir E. Boyle were quoted, as they permitted an interpretation which was not contradictory to the P(m)s, even if Boyle's interpretation of his statements as seen through his actions did contradict the P(m)s. Thus the party went into opposition with a great deal of confusion as regards secondary education. It lacked an official constructive

¹⁰⁶⁾ *ibid.*, p. 110.

alternative to that suggested by Labour. They put forward only the vague promise, repeated over and over again during the years, to provide opportunities for all children to go forward to the limits of their capacity in all secondary schools, no matter what the designation of the school might be. The party was, as yet, not prepared to stretch the fundamental P(m)s in such a way as to permit the incorporation of the comprehensive principle. In the years to come the Conservatives learned to interpret and present their fundamental ideology in such a way that acceptance of the comprehensive principle became possible. The Conservative fundamental ideology, because it lacks an "ideal type" well spelled out, is open to different interpretations - the P(m)s can be "filled" with new meaning. However there is a limit to which the P(m)s can be stretched i.e., a limit to the possibility of specifying and explaining the principles in different ways. This limit was to determine the extent of the Conservative party's acceptance of the comprehensive principle.

CHAPTER NINE: THE RETURN TO OPPOSITION 1964-1970
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A. From the Attack on the Principle to the Critique of
Implementation (1964-1968)

The official policy of the party at the end of 1964 was a far cry from that of 1957. From faith in the tri-partite system the party had moved to such expressions of viewpoint as: "Conservatives do not regard any pattern or organisation as the 'norm' compared to which all others must be classified as experiments." The party now claimed that its policy had for long been to move away from the rigid eleven plus and the inflexible tri-partite system. The comprehensive schools were no longer described as mere experiments but neither was the comprehensive principle accepted by the party in its official publications as a favoured solution except in certain areas (new housing estates and some rural areas). The suggestion made in the 1958 White Paper, of parallel courses, was still regarded as the remedy to the evils of the eleven plus. As the Minister followed a much more open-minded policy towards comprehensive schools, though without open admission of the fact, the party's position was on the whole confused. The only thing which the party did realise when it went into opposition was that it was no longer possible to defend the rigid tri-partite system and to reject the comprehensive principle or even to confine it, as they did in their official publications till they left office, to certain areas. Confronted by a changed situation, which Boyle had helped to bring

about by his policies, the party had to accept it and to find ways by which to adapt itself to the change without sacrificing its fundamental P(m)s. Yet, while it was clear to them that the wind of change could no longer be ignored, the party did not as yet know how to deal with it. What Sir E. Boyle had realised in his years as Minister, was now being digested by the party. The interesting thing is the length of time it took the Conservatives to reach this stage. The party had practically to be pushed into the corner by local development, by professional arguments, by public opinion and by the Labour party, before it finally faced the fact that a new official policy on the national level regarding secondary education was needed. This fact is interesting because it is usually claimed that the Conservative party is one of the quickest right-wing parties in the Western Democracies to adapt to new situations. The case of secondary education does not confirm this. Analysis of the party's policy in the years 1945-1964 suggests that the lack of a quick response was basically because it was not simply a change in educational policy that the party had to face, but a change in the interpretation of its P(m)s. The question of grammar schools and comprehensive schools was not simply an educational issue, but an ideological one. The grammar schools stood for what Conservatives believed in, and the comprehensive schools represented what they rejected. Only if one looks at the issue in this way does the reluctance of the party to bend to the wind of change make sense. Administrative and financial considerations

contributed, of course, to the party's adherence to the tri-partite system which was the cheapest method, and the easiest to administer. Yet, by themselves the administrative and financial considerations can not explain the party's reluctance over such a long period to face change beyond certain limits.

From 1965 it is important to distinguish between two aspects of the Conservative educational policy: between the attack on Labour on the one hand, and the constructive suggestions put forward by the Conservatives on the other.

In 1965 it was clear that the Conservative party had decided to cease its attack on the comprehensive principle and to attack, instead, Labour's policy of implementing it. Circular 10/65 provided a good target for the attack. The beginning of the process of attacking Labour's policy of implementation instead of the comprehensive principle per se was reflected in the motion moved in the 1965 Conference. The party "...whilst acknowledging that comprehensive schools have an important part to play in the educational system, condemns the ill-considered Labour schemes adopted by Labour Education Committees and approved by the Labour Government which destroy good grammar and secondary schools without reason."¹⁾ The mover, Mr. W. Olegg, made his point in saying: "...the main object of this Motion is to

1) 1965 Conservative Annual Conference Report, p. 51.

criticise the inept manner in which the Socialists are trying to impose a comprehensive system of education on this country.... But the Motion does not condemn comprehensive schools. They have an important part to play in the system, and we cannot say that the 1944 Act is sacrosanct; some system is needed."²⁾ Hereafter followed a detailed attack on Labour's policy: Labour first decided on the general principle, then instructed local education authorities to propose schemes by the following year, and only afterwards a research project, about the best methods of comprehensive education, was financed. This would take years to report. Moreover, no money is provided for the re-organisation, and this makes it impossible to establish purpose-built comprehensive schools. The results must be botched-up schemes, such as a combination of two schools a mile apart, and destruction without cause of good secondary modern and grammar schools.

This sounds like an unbiassed attack based on professional considerations, but it was soon revealed that the main reason for the attack was anxiety about the grammar schools: "The grammar schools are being destroyed, not because they have failed but because they have succeeded. They are being destroyed because this Socialist policy is

2) *ibid.* W. Clegg M.P. North Fylde since 1966; 1955-1961 - Lancashire County Council. Opposition Whip; 1967-1969. (Who is Who, 1971).

a policy of envy."³⁾ The seconder accused Labour of destroying grammar schools and in spite of the party's statement that the tri-partite system should not be regarded any longer as the norm, referred to the comprehensive schools as "experiments".⁴⁾ This shows that although the motion said one thing, it was difficult for some Conservatives to abandon the old arguments against the comprehensive schools. Most speakers in the debate were concerned about the lack of any constructive Conservative educational policy. Indeed, the educational policy laid down in "Putting Britain Right Ahead" was very ambiguous. The first point consisted of the well known Conservative statement that "...all young people should have the opportunity to receive the kind of education that enables each of them to travel along the education road as far as their ability and perseverance can carry them."⁵⁾ The second point emphasized again the need for diversity, and the preservation of the standards of the grammar schools. There was nothing in this statement to guide Conservative controlled local education authorities. The ambiguity, which was reflected also in the mover's ideas about future Conservative educational policy, was most probably a result of real uncertainty how to solve the problems and an offspring of the party's desire to pacify, meanwhile, both those who wanted

3) 1965 Conservative Annual Conference Report, p. 52.

4) *ibid.*

5) "Putting Britain Right Ahead", Central Office (London, 1965), p. 16.

change and those who continued to reject the comprehensive principle. While the majority of the speakers in the Conference agreed that some kind of selection at a later age must remain and that a universal system of comprehensive secondary education was out of the question, they disagreed on other issues. Some spoke of a system in which grammar schools and comprehensive schools should work side by side. Others spoke about the overlapping courses in grammar, modern and comprehensive schools. Only one speaker, Mr. Patrick Lawrence, in opposing the motion, advocated a universal comprehensive secondary education. He emphasised that the problem was to reduce the size of classes and to have good teachers. Then "...it will be possible to abolish the eleven plus or any other examination because all children will have an opportunity of going to a comprehensive school in its best sense."⁶⁾

Sir E. Boyle, in his speech, concluded that the party was indeed in a dilemma as far as secondary reorganisation was concerned. This, he said, was the reason for no clear-cut Conservative policy. The following paragraph from Sir E. Boyle's speech illustrates clearly the difficult position of the party. "We as a Party, I hope, have the honesty to admit that this is not an easy matter, and that is why we do not take a more dogmatic line. On the one hand, I think very many people, including a number of Conservatives,... believe sincerely that

6) 1965 Conservative Annual Conference Report, p. 55.

the age of 11 is too early to decide which children should go to one kind of school and which children to another. However, we as a Party do also very reasonably fear that our academic standards... would be bound to suffer if all our grammar schools were rapidly to lose their identity as separate institutions. I see Mr. Enoch Powell.... He made a magnificent speech on this subject recently in which he pointed out the importance of fostering traditions of excellence. Traditions are much more closely bound up with institutions than many people realise. We as a Party, I hope and believe, understand institutions in a way that many of our opponents do not.... Faced with those conflicting considerations, what should our attitude be? I would express it something like this: We recognize, as the Motion does, that there are parts of the country that seem particularly suited to a pattern of organisation that does away with the need for selection at 11. I am thinking here especially, although not exclusively, of areas of new or expanding housing.... But we do not believe that the time has come for the rapid and universal imposition of the comprehensive principle."⁷⁾

Boyle's speech outlined clearly the correlation between the P(m) of tradition and the institution of the grammar school. At the same time he did not confine comprehensive schools to specific areas only and objected mainly to the rapid abolition of all grammar schools. His

7) *ibid.*, pp. 56-57.

view was inclined to the reformist side of the Conservative party. Yet it was also a view based on ideological considerations together with the educational ones i.e., it was not a purely fundamental ideological argument but a moderately fundamental ideological one. In other words this was a typical argument of the operative ideology as the centrality was given to educational considerations, and those were linked to P(m)s. The same kind of policy was stated also in the House on the 21st of January 1965 by Quintin Hogg, and quoted in the N.C.P.⁸⁾ The party's policy was a policy of compromise between the rigid tri-partite system and that of universal comprehensive education. They wanted comprehensive schools but wished to retain at the same time the good grammar schools and the good secondary modern schools with parallel academic courses. Such a policy of compromise could remain in accord with the party's P(m)s of tradition, excellence and diversity.⁹⁾ What was sacrificed was the defence of all grammar schools because they stand for tradition and excellence. It was also much easier to defend the good grammar schools than to defend all grammar schools simply because they were grammar schools. At a first glance, Boyle's speech in the 1965 Conference looks more reformist than the party's official policy as found in the N.C.P. of the same year, as in his speech he did not refer to the "parallel

8) N.C.P. 1965 no. 3, Research Dep. (London, 1966), p. 60.

9) *ibid.*, p. 61.

courses" as a third possibility. But though he did not speak about this third possibility his defence of grammar schools and modern schools in big cities implied this "third possibility" as well.

It is obvious that in 1965 though the wording of the motion in Conference was contrived to give the impression that the party at large accepted the comprehensive principle, many in the party did not yet commit themselves to this acceptance as too many reservations about the comprehensive principle as such, and not merely about Labour's policy of implementing the principle, were still heard. The attack on Labour's policy was still to a large extent an attack on the comprehensive principle itself. The party was actually attempting to appear as if it accepted the principle while at the same time it tried to find ways to limit the establishment of the comprehensive schools. A similar situation prevailed in 1966 and precisely because many in the party did not accept even the comprehensive principle, Pest, the reformist group, attempted to push the party once and for all from its old position. For this purpose Pest published their pamphlet on secondary education. A comparison between Pest's publication and the party's official publications of the same year shows only too well how far from a real reformist policy the party was.

"Action Not Words" emphasised again the possibility of the parallel courses: "Encourage LEAs to provide as full a range of courses as possible in all three secondary schools.... Strongly

oppose hasty and makeshift plans, especially in the big cities, for turning good grammar and secondary modern schools into comprehensive schools.... Give parents as much choice as possible by having diversity in the pattern of education."¹⁰⁾ Why "especially in big cities"? For the simple reason that the majority of grammar schools were there. The N.C.P. 1966 also put an emphasis on "variety versus uniformity" and on the grammar schools' special function of educating the able: "...we do not believe that the academic standards set by grammar schools can be preserved if all these schools are to lose their separate identity."¹¹⁾ Doubts were also expressed as to whether all children would fare better in comprehensive schools than in secondary modern schools. The Campaign Guide 1966 repeated the aims stated in "Putting Britain Right Ahead". Again the theme was variety versus uniformity and the "third possibility" was advocated. The comprehensive schools were again to be confined to certain areas and the vague statement of the 1964 Manifesto was repeated again.¹²⁾ And Miss Winifred Wilson (Deputy head in a Hampshire Primary school) expressed in an article "Education 1966 and After", the old Conservative claim that the bright children, the potential leaders, should be educated separately: "I believe that bright children need extra special care. These are our leaders of the future, in fact these people are our

10) "Action Not Words", Central Office (London, 1966), p. 11.

11) N.C.P. 1966 no. 3, Research Dep. (London, 1967), p. 59.

12) The Campaign Guide 1966, Central Office (London, 1966), pp. 172-180.

future."¹³⁾ She did not believe that all children should be educated in the same type of school. Her solution was the one outlined in the White Paper 1958 i.e., "the third solution". She was expressing the views of the more extremist of the Conservative party.

Pest's views were in contrast to the extreme view and to the official policy as well, and reflected the reformist views inside the party. Though in many ways the policies suggested by Pest resembled Labour's suggestions, they were nevertheless Conservative policies, i.e., based on newly defined but still Conservative P(m)s. The same policies can be justified in different ways, i.e., according to different P(m)s. Pest criticised the Conservative party sharply: "It seems to have nothing to offer in return other than ambiguous reservations or embarrassed silence; and it merely displays the barrenness of its ideas by suggesting that all this may simply be a local government responsibility. The Tory party is in a dilemma. It has witnessed organic changes in the structure of our educational system, yet it has failed to recognize the wind of change and turn its sails to take account of them."¹⁴⁾ But, said Pest, "We believe that Tories can and must succeed in adapting themselves to these developments."¹⁵⁾ Pest

13) W. Wilson, "Education 1966 and After", in Focus on Education, winter 1966, p. 27.

14) "Educating the Individual Child", Pest Education Series no. 1, C.P.C. (London, 1966), p. 4.

15) *ibid.*

saw the reason for the reluctance of the party to adapt itself as lying in the contradiction between the changes demanded and the party's fundamental ideology. This is my own view, though stated less explicitly than I have done: "It would be irresponsible and futile for the Tory party to ignore what work has been done both at home and abroad even if many of its conclusions run counter, as many of them do, to traditional Tory Party Policy."¹⁶⁾ What Pest called "Tory Party Policy" I have defined as the party's fundamental ideology. Yet, as in the comprehensive schools case, P(m)s influenced the policy throughout, it is also possible to speak about the traditional party policy as running counter to the required changes. Pest's conclusions were: a) to end selection at eleven plus b) to adopt a system of education which would keep the doors open for as long as it is educationally possible. Alternative forms of secondary education were discussed: the 11 to 16 comprehensive school, the transfer at 13, the Leicestershire style, the New Leicestershire style (in which all go at 14 to a senior secondary school) and the sixth form college. The last two possibilities were regarded as the best but Pest wanted more experiments with yet untried forms. That these suggestions were in line with the Conservative fundamental ideology was made clear by Pest itself. They saw the basic "roots and tenets of Tory philosophy" as caution, evolutionary change, diversity and

16) *ibid.*, p. 5.

the primacy of the individual over the state.¹⁷⁾ The abolition of the eleven plus and of the tri-partite system and the establishment of various types of non-selective secondary schools were justified mainly on the basis of the P(m) of the ultimate importance of the individual who in this case was the child. This is a good example of a similar policy justified in two different ways: While Labour justified the end of selection and segregation on the basis of the P(m) of equality, the Conservative group Pest justifies it on the basis of the P(m) of the primacy of the individual. Pest put special emphasis on this P(m) to counter-balance those Conservative P(m)s which were not in complete harmony with the policy suggested. Thus not a word was said about the social consequences which Labour hoped the comprehensive schools would achieve.

The difference between Pest's suggestions and the party's official policy as shown earlier is obvious. In the House the Conservative party was trying to stop Labour from using compulsion and was attacking Circular 10/65. No coherent alternative was advanced by the party.

The motion moved in the 1966 Conference by Dr. Kathleen Ollerenshaw was again an attack on Labour's policy: "That this Conference deplores the inadequacy of the Labour Government's

17) *ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

provision for essential expansion in education at every level, and considers, in particular, that its fiscal policies, together with pressures on local authorities to introduce all-comprehensive secondary education, are seriously impeding preparations for raising the school leaving age in 1970-1971 and curtailing development in the colleges of further education."¹⁸⁾

Though direct grant grammar schools were not mentioned in the motion they figured in the speech of the mover, Dr. Kathleen Ollerenshaw, and in the debate. The party was realising that it had to declare its unequivocal support for the direct grant grammar schools as through them tradition and élitism could be preserved since these schools were not dependent for their money on the local authorities and had large catchment areas. Except for this issue there was no clear party policy concerning secondary education and the party was aware that the image it was creating for itself was harmful. Mr. John Selwyn Gummer stated that the party had to explain that it was supporting grammar schools not in order to defend privilege but in order to defend equality of opportunity. However, his argument that the party was fighting for equality of opportunity through the defence

18) 1966 Conservative Annual Conference Report, p. 37. Dr. K. Ollerenshaw, M.A., B.Phil., F.I.M.A., a mathematician, is a member of Manchester City Council, chairman of the Education Committee of the Association of Municipal Corporations. In 1960-1963 served on the Central Advisory Council for Education (England), which under the chairmanship of Sir John Newsom produced the Newsom Report.

of the grammar schools was very unconvincing. It was obvious that what the party was fighting for was quality rather than equality of opportunity. The attempt to justify the defence of the secondary modern schools in big towns on the ground that children who came from "...special home back-ground, need security at school and do not need, nor can they comprehend, the size of a large comprehensive school",¹⁹⁾ was also unconvincing. This line of argumentation could perhaps delude the public and so the party was wise to use these arguments on purely tactical grounds. But the real reason for the defence of secondary modern schools in big towns was different: retaining modern schools in big towns meant retaining the grammar schools in such towns and this meant retaining the majority of grammar schools and what they stood for. The emphasis on direct-grant grammar schools was based on the same reason i.e., on the wish to retain tradition and excellence. Indeed Mrs. Janet Todd said about the defence of the direct-grant grammar schools: "What could be more in accordance with Conservative principles?"²⁰⁾ Therefore, the suggestion was not merely to preserve the existing ones but to add to their number. The party was considering turning maintained grammar schools into direct-grant schools to preserve them and so to supply the demand of parents who would not want their children to attend comprehensive schools and who

19) *ibid.*, p. 40.

20) *ibid.*, p. 41.

would have enough money to pay for their children's education. The parents would mostly belong, of course, to a certain class.

Sir E. Boyle's speech was in general more reformist than the views expressed in Conference. He emphasized his concern for excellence but stressed that the majority opinion in Britain was moving away from selection at eleven. Selection at eleven should be finished but Conservatives must insist on certain qualifications: a) badly improvised schemes for comprehensive reorganisation must be opposed b) the long traditions of intellectual discipline associated with grammar schools must be preserved c) there should be no dilution of sixth form standards. That is to say, Sir E. Boyle advocated change but within the Conservative P(m)s as far as this was possible: "...the postponement of selection must not mean the enthronement of mediocrity.... do not let us forget the very real importance...of the gifted child. Can any of us feel sure that the high flyers - the top 3 or 4 per-cent - in our society can be adequately catered for in a completely non selective system? Their [the Labour party] concern is to level down, whereas ours is to extend opportunity to all those who are prepared to show enterprise and effort."²¹⁾ As in all other spheres of life effort and enterprise are emphasized by the Conservatives vis-a-vis Labour's emphasis on equality in the strong sense. As Churchill said in 1945: the Socialists see society

21) *ibid.*, p. 43.

as a queue while the Conservatives see it as a ladder each climbing as far as his ability, enterprise and effort allow.²²⁾ Interestingly Sir E. Boyle justified the continuation of the private sector in education on the basis of the P(m) of the primacy of the individual and the family over the state,²³⁾ the same P(m) according to which Pest justified their suggestions for reform in secondary education. This shows how the same P(m) could be stretched to justify both the existence of a private sector in education and the reorganisation of secondary education on the basis of abolishing selection and segregation at eleven plus. In the Campaign Guide 1966, in order to fortify the right to parental choice, the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights was referred to.²⁴⁾ This raises the question why this right was ignored by the Conservative party for so many years, as the tri-partite system certainly did not provide it in reality for the majority of parents. The answer is simple: parental choice meant for the Conservative party mainly the possibility of buying education. The fact that the majority of parents can not afford this choice for their children was either ignored or justified in the following way: if parents do not make the effort to have the money this simply means that they are not sufficiently concerned with their children's

22) W. Churchill in The New Conservatism, p. 24.

23) 1966 Conservative Annual Conference Report, p. 44.

24) The Campaign Guide, 1966, p. 184.

education. This argument of "money as a good guide to the allocation of resources" was hitherto mainly used by Conservatives in health and housing, yet it figured in education as well.

The point, which to my mind marks the real change in the Conservative policy towards secondary education, on the national level, was Edward Heath's speech to the National Advisory Committee on Education on the 17th of June 1967. He tried to do what was long overdue: to reconcile the fundamental dimension of the party's ideology with a new educational policy. That is to say, to present a Conservative policy which faces the revolution in secondary education and at the same time reconciles the change with the party's F(m)s. Heath made a clear distinction between the revolutions around secondary education to which the Conservative party had to adapt itself and between the revolutions which the party had to fight. But all the revolutions had to be encountered in one way or another. A policy of ignoring them was no longer wise, or possible. The party had to adapt itself to what Heath called the material, the professional and the social revolutions and fight the political and the ideological revolutions. Of the political and ideological revolutions concerning education he said: "The Political revolution with its trend towards equal opportunity and what I consider to be an undesirable trend towards egalitarianism.... And there is the revolution in ideology threatening the erosion of accepted standards and values."²⁵⁾ The distinction he

25) E. Heath speaking to the National Advisory Committee on Education 17th June 1967, News Service Central Office (unpublished), pp. 2-3.

makes between "Political" and "Ideological" revolutions is unclear. Certainly a trend towards egalitarianism means also a change of values, i.e., it is also an ideological revolution, while the policies advocated in order to realise the change of values can be also defined as political revolution. However, the fact remains, that according to Heath, the Conservative party had to adapt its ideology and policy to the professional and social changes and had to fight on the fundamental dimension and on the policy level the change in values leading to equality. He advocated precisely such a policy: adaptation to change and at the same time a defence, through the policies, of those Conservative P(m)s which were challenged by the so called political and ideological revolutions. It is clear that the party's fundamental ideology could not remain completely unchanged if the party wanted to adapt itself to the social and professional revolutions. Some change in the meaning of certain P(m)s was needed as well. Yet Heath did not acknowledge the fact that coping with those revolutions would necessarily entail some changes in the fundamental ideology. However, by examining his suggestions it will become clear where and how the fundamental P(m)s were to be affected.

Heath accepted the trend of educational opinion against selection and segregation at eleven plus: "By selection I mean the process of classifying children according to their I.Q. and separating them

into different types of school at too early an age."²⁶⁾ Heath went even further and remarked of Conservative policy of the past: "It has never been a Conservative principle that in order to achieve this (to do justice to children's differing needs and abilities), children have to be segregated in different institutions."²⁷⁾ It is enough to look, for example, at the motions moved in the 1952 and the 1957 Conferences to see how untrue this is. The party did claim, as has been shown, for a very long time that the segregation into different schools was necessary and even claimed for years that the tri-partite system was dictated by the 1944 Education Act. The Bow Group described the party's position very accurately: "The Tory party's policy on comprehensive education has undergone a definite change in the past decade. The approach of the 1958 White Paper on secondary education, which was the vigorous development of the secondary modern schools towards 'parity of esteem' with grammar schools, has now become Mr. Heath's recent '...it has never been a Conservative principle that in order to achieve (selection or grouping by ability) children have to be segregated in different institutions'."²⁸⁾

In 1967 Heath could not even afford to admit the fact that the party had regarded the tri-partite system as the norm for many years. This could not be admitted because during all those years, in spite

26) *ibid.*, p. 6.

27) *ibid.*

28) "Conservatives and Comprehensives", A Bow-Group Memorandum by Simon Jenkins, C.P.C. (London, 1967), p. 8.

of the claim that they were acting according to educational considerations, the Conservatives' real object was to preserve their fundamental P(m)s. That is to say, as has been indicated throughout this thesis, the party's main considerations were not educational but rather ideological.

What Heath said in 1967 meant that although some kind of selection at a later stage was necessary, it could be done within the same school, i.e., in a comprehensive school. This was precisely his conclusion: "If, however, the transfer from primary to secondary education is now to be made without selection, this is bound to entail some reorganisation of the structure of secondary education, at least in the earlier stages."²⁹⁾ This was actually the limit to which the party could go if it wanted to preserve the grammar schools as institutions educating the more able. If the change concentrated on the early stages then the grammar schools would have to undergo certain changes but they could be preserved because: a) they had proved their ability to adapt themselves to change, b) changes would not affect the role of the grammar school as the institution for educating the able children as the sixth form would be preserved. Accordingly those schemes of reorganisation which made it possible to preserve the identity of the grammar school were recommended by Heath: sixth form colleges and the schemes where grammar schools become senior high

29) E. Heath's Speech, p. 6.

schools as in the two-tier or multi-tier schemes. In these schemes the eleven plus is abolished but the grammar school (though under a different name) remains the place where the ablest and the more willing to learn are educated. Sixth forms are not affected and adequate provision for the bright children exists. The 11 to 18 comprehensive school was advocated by Heath only for areas in which no grammar schools exist.³⁰⁾ Heath's suggestions were not clear-cut and he preferred to shift responsibility: "...in the last resort it is the local authorities who must be free to judge in the context of local needs and conditions and in the light of local views."³¹⁾ Evolutionary change and parental choice were emphasized as well. Parental choice was the basis of the demand for preservation of the direct-grant school as "Conservatives do not believe that education should be a state monopoly."³²⁾

Heath finished the speech as a typical Conservative: "But we must be sure that in concentrating on those who have not had a chance in the past we do not neglect those who could and should be excelling. To the challenge of the revolution in education to which I referred.... I add the other.... It is the challenge of widening opportunity without sacrificing the abilities of the best."³³⁾ Indeed to this

30) *ibid.*, p. 9.

31) *ibid.*, p. 10.

32) *ibid.*, p. 12.

33) *ibid.*, p. 19.

challenge was orientated the policy suggested by Heath. It was not simply an educational challenge but an ideological one as well, i.e., how to adapt the Conservative P(m)s and consequently the policies in such a way as to preserve the essence of the Conservative fundamental ideology. Heath's suggestions were tuned to this two-fold task in an excellent way: abolish segregation at eleven without abolishing the grammar schools and the direct-grant schools. The professional arguments and public opinion determined the decision to abolish eleven plus and early segregation. But within this framework the suggestions were dictated by the party's fundamental ideology. Therefore, in spite of educational disadvantages, all forms of two-tier systems were advocated by Heath. Even the Bow Group regarded these solutions as educationally bad: "Many of these schemes involve two or three-years post-primary schools which have been almost universally regarded as unsatisfactory, particularly by teachers who work in them."³⁴⁾ Heath adhered therefore as much as possible to the party's P(m)s. Yet in spite of this a change was introduced, if unopenly, in the fundamental dimension. Because of the professional arguments of phase one the Conservative belief in the innate inequality of human beings had to be modified and the traditional form of the grammar schools was sacrificed as well. To disguise this change the P(m)s of excellence, parental choice, diversity and the rights of local authorities were emphasized.

34) "Conservatives and Comprehensives", p. 13.

Though the policy advocated by the Bow Group in the memorandum "Conservatives and Comprehensives" was for the most part based on professional considerations, it too was influenced by Conservative P(m)s if to a smaller extent. The memorandum is a good example of how the same policy can be justified by two different ideologies. The memorandum described Sir E. Boyle's and E. Heath's contributions to the comprehensive debate as those of the "traditional Conservative". It was claimed that it has been a very good position to hold when in opposition - but as in the majority of local education authorities Conservatives were in power "They have the opportunity now to make a distinctive mark on it by developing it their way."³⁵⁾ The Bow Group stated frankly that "The old ideal of parity of esteem between grammar and secondary moderns was inevitably a farce. Contrary to much belief the system was a denial of parental choice..."³⁶⁾ Therefore the tri-partite system was actually in disharmony with the P(m) of parental choice. While the point of comprehensive education was that the choice need not be made as early as eleven: "Any believer in equality of opportunity should oppose the categorization of children into successes and failures until they are more ready to choose for themselves."³⁷⁾ Again, this means that the tri-partite system was in disharmony with the P(m) of equality of opportunity. Comprehensive

35) *ibid.*, p. 9.

36) *ibid.*

37) *ibid.*, p. 10.

schools provide equality of educational opportunity and this is one of the Conservative P(m)s. What the Conservative fundamental ideology rejects is the strong sense of equality. While Labour saw in the comprehensive school the mean to achieve equality in the strong sense, it was precisely because the Bow Group did not believe that comprehensive schools would achieve that goal, that it could support the schools: "Comprehensive schools neither are, nor are likely to be, harmonious social mixers...".³⁸⁾ The Socialists believe that universal comprehensive education will soon bring "...great egalitarian millennium". But, "Anyone who knows anything about schools and school-children knows this is rubbish."³⁹⁾ Comprehensive schools "...will make little or no difference to the social structure of a community or even the attitudes of its members.... Yet this is not what comprehensive education should be about, and those who talk about 'social engineering' will only bring the important and genuine educational content of the comprehensive principle into disrepute."⁴⁰⁾

So it was that the Bow Group could justify comprehensive schools on the basis of Conservative P(m)s: comprehensive schools would not actualize the rejected P(m) of equality, they will, however, provide equality of educational opportunity and choice. Compulsion was, of course, declared as harmful and against the Conservative beliefs.

38) *ibid.*,.

39) *ibid.*, p. 4.

40) *ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

Once all these issues were made clear P(t)s such as educational, administrative and financial considerations determined almost wholly the forms advocated by the group. Only as regards the sixth form college the Conservative bias was revealed: "The sixth form college represents to them [to the grammar schools] a challenge that is worthy of their standards of excellence.... There can be little doubt that the sixth-form college scheme (either 15 or 16 to 18) is the best compromise between the requirement of postponing selection and the need to preserve academic excellence...."⁴¹⁾ And thus the Bow Group finally recommended, of all the schemes suggested in Circular 10/65, the sixth-form college; though for areas in which grammar schools did not exist the 11 to 18 comprehensive schools were recommended.

The impact of Heath's speech and of the reformists' views inside the party was clearly evident in the 1967 Conference in which, for the first time, the mover of the motion unequivocally supported comprehensive schools. Precisely because of this fact it was the first time in 17 years in which the debate resulted in a ballot and the motion was carried by 1,302 to 816. The party was clearly divided but the reformists, for the moment, had the upper hand. Mr. D.J.F. Hunt said: "But let us make clear throughout the debate that we oppose the Socialists not on the comprehensive principle but, rather, on their methods.... I notice that some of the Motions...call for a Party

⁴¹⁾ Ibid., pp. 14-15.

pledge to retain all good grammar schools. With respect, I do not think that the Party should make this pledge. I do not think that it can be done at the same time as accepting the comprehensive principle.... We must agree that the future of secondary education does lie with the comprehensive principle, and that such an object must be stated so that we can give local authorities an object which they can work towards."⁴²⁾

The qualifications, all of which were based on the party's P(m)s, were: a) in big cities there would still be a place for grammar schools b) the schemes adopted should be able to achieve grammar school standards c) the change should be evolutionary d) local authorities should not be under compulsion e) more direct-grant grammar schools are needed in order to preserve choice and excellence. A.C. Chataway was organising secondary education in Greater London Area, for the last six months preceding the Conference, on the basis of the coexistence of comprehensive and good grammar schools.

However, the motion which was in harmony with the new interpretation of certain Conservative P(m)s and with the traditional interpretation of the rest, was hotly opposed by the more reactionary elements in the party. Dr. D. Hall said: "I wish we could forget some of this bunkum we hear about equality of opportunity in education.... I wish more Conservatives would go further than just criticise the present

42) 1967 Conservative Annual Conference Report, pp. 55-56.

Government's policy on the ground that they are imposing the comprehensive system.... Finally, we must oppose attempts to use education as a mean of achieving the political end of equality."⁴³⁾ Mrs. Christine Howard followed the same line in yet more extreme terms: The Motion was a non-motion, it advocated "...pale pink policies". Conservatives should declare openly that they dislike comprehensive schools, that they believe in selection, that they believe that adults are different, in short that the Conservatives reject the comprehensive principle as such.

Mr. Gilbert Longden used the old terminology of different aptitudes and abilities while justifying selection (though not at eleven). He summed up by pointing to the different P(m)s of the two parties which, according to him, should result in different and not in similar policies: "The Philosophy of Socialism can be summed up in this nutshell: because everyone cannot go to the Ritz, no one shall go to the Ritz; and, if no one goes to the Ritz, the Ritz goes. Thus the first casualty of egalitarianism is excellence; and Socialism is the mid-wife of the second-rate. Our philosophy is the exact opposite. It teaches us not to destroy until we can replace with something better. It teaches us not to envy, but carefully to nurture excellence. Let us say so loudly and clearly from every rooftop in the land."⁴⁴⁾ Mr. K.G. Warren from Enfield, the home of the notorious

43) *ibid.*, pp. 57-58.

44) *ibid.*, p. 59.

Enfield case, while suggesting the pursuit of the policies of the 1958 White Paper spoke in the same manner as Mr. Longdon, "...is it sense for our Party to neglect by default one of the basic principles of Conservative philosophy - retain what is good; improve and develop that which is unsatisfactory. I would remind you that more or less those words were said by Disraeli 135 years ago. They are as true today as they ever were."⁴⁵⁾

The last two speakers' arguments are good examples of purely fundamental ideological arguments. The reactionaries were not even ready to allow for a different interpretation of certain P(m)s. They wanted the policies to be based strictly on the traditional interpretation of the party's fundamental ideology. Yet, if the party wanted the policies to cope with the demands of the day a change at least in the interpretation of some P(m)s was needed.

Sir E. Boyle, in his speech, repeated E. Heath's challenge. The Conservatives' objective in secondary education "...is to widen opportunity without sacrificing standards of excellence..."⁴⁶⁾ His view was very similar to that of the mover of the motion and relied heavily on Heath's speech. Only one point in his speech is important. Boyle, aware of the hostility of many members to the similarity between the policies of the two parties pointed out the differences between the

45) *ibid.*, p. 60.

46) *ibid.*, p. 62.

policies; the Conservatives respect local democracy, they have regard for the consequences for other parts of the educational system and they stand against using education as a mean of imposing social uniformity. Two of the distinct features of the Conservative policy mentioned by Boyle are the P(m)s of local democracy and the rejection of the P(m) of equality in the strong sense; the third difference stems from the P(m)s of diversity and freedom of choice. That is to say: the difference between the policies advocated by the parties is a result of their different P(m)s.

In the second half of 1967 the party followed in the House the line advocated by Heath and Boyle. Boyle repeated in the House the views he expressed in Conference and the theme was always "to widen opportunities without sacrificing excellence."⁴⁷⁾ To this end the party voiced in the House its concern about neighbourhood schools, about areas where there was no alternative except a comprehensive school without a developed sixth form and the importance of direct-grant schools. There was no attack on the comprehensive principle. The study made by the Research Department on Secondary Education in the same year relied heavily on the arguments of the environmentalists and Heath's speech was quoted as the party's new policy.⁴⁸⁾

In 1968 Angus Maude wrote "Quality and Equality" in which he

⁴⁷⁾ Hansard, vol. 753. p. 495.

⁴⁸⁾ "Education For All", Old Queen Street Papers: N.C.P. no. 1, Research Dep. (London, August 1967).

tried to show that the equality demanded by the Socialists was impossible to achieve unless one changed the whole structure of society, which he regarded as a negative aim. Moreover, Maude claimed that the interpretation given by Labour to social justice was false as one cannot say that since A cannot buy X, B should be stopped from buying it if he can. Of interest from my point of view is the fact that although the pamphlet was about education the greatest part was dedicated to an analysis of the P(m)s of equality, social justice and quality. The educational policy was viewed as based directly on the different P(m)s of the two parties. Maude's suggestions about secondary education were therefore based on the Conservative interpretation of equality of opportunity and social justice, and on the Conservative belief in excellence and tradition. The main point Maude stressed was the need for selection at some stage and this demand followed directly from the Conservative P(m) concerning the inequality of men. The defence of independent schools was also based on the party's fundamental ideology: social justice means, according to the Conservatives that B should have the possibility of buying education if he is able and willing to do so, disregarding the fact that A may not be able to do so. To the assertion that the independent schools are socially divisive, Maude replied "Of course society has always been divided, and it would be a poor kind of society that had no divisions in it at all."⁴⁹⁾ That is to say, as the traditional Conservative fundamental

49) A. Maude "Quality and Equality", C.P.C. (London, 1968), p. 14.

ideology claims, inequality and social divisions are not merely facts but desirable phenomena.

As for the electoral considerations, which occupied the party all the time, Maude claimed that a policy based on selection at some stage would win rather than lose votes. Even Boyle, in his speech to the 1967 Conference, did not ignore the electoral aspect. He claimed that if the local education authorities concentrated on education this would be rewarding politically and not only educationally.⁵⁰⁾

During 1968 almost nothing was said on secondary education in the House. The party continued to attack compulsion and what came to be called "the nationalisation of education". The sections on education in "Make Life Better" repeated the essence of Heath's speech.⁵¹⁾ However, at the end of 1968 the divisiveness inside the party, manifested already in the 1967 Conference, became more obvious and the dissenting voices became stronger. The motion in the 1968 Conference, which demanded choice inside the state sector as well, was regarded by the majority as too reformist. Though the mover based his arguments on the Conservative P(m)s of quality and choice against the Socialist policy which was described as based on "uniformity and Socialist equality", his view was regarded as too reformist, as he warned against defending all existing grammar schools. Consequently an Addendum composed by A. Maude was moved as well. It was "...designed to call

50) 1967 Conservative Annual Conference Report, p. 63.

51) "Make Life Better", Central Office (London, 1968), p. 18.

attention to the plight of the grammar schools which are about to be abolished, in many cases by Conservative councils."⁵²⁾ Mr. Maude claimed that the Conservative councils were completely confused by the not clear-cut Conservative national policy. It was necessary to take immediate action in order to save the grammar schools. A statement in defence of the grammar schools on the national level was needed. The Addendum read: "The Conference condemns the Government's attempt to force on local education authorities, regardless of the wishes of parents and elected representatives, schemes of secondary school re-organisation calculated to destroy established grammar schools and to lower academic standards; and calls on the Conservative Party to give clear and unequivocal support to Conservative Local Authorities which seek in pursuance of their election pledges to resist Government blackmail and preserve their grammar schools from senseless destruction."⁵³⁾

This was more extreme than the official policy of the Conservative party which did not demand the preservation of all established grammar schools. Indeed, Sir E. Boyle in his speech after repeating that the Conservative party stands for local democracy and will not tolerate botched up comprehensive schemes, said: "I really would question very much indeed going so far as Angus Maude and suggesting that Conservative controlled local authorities if they decide to reorganise can

52) 1968 Conservative Annual Conference Report, p. 42.

53) *ibid.*, p. 44.

only do useless botched up jobs everywhere.... The point I wish to make to you is this: I believe there is a very wide measure of opinion in this country, including a great deal of Conservative opinion, which is not happy - has not been happy for a long time over selection into separate schools at the age of eleven, and which believes that a gradual, rational sensible approach to change is right.... I believe this is a field where we must go forward, backed all the time by practical experience. I am sorry if this view is not sufficiently right wing for some or left wing for others."⁵⁴⁾ The last sentence is very illuminating as it shows clearly that the different opinions in the party concerning secondary education were not based on professional arguments but stemmed from different ideological views or, more correctly, from different interpretations of the party's fundamental ideology. The party was divided on ideological grounds and this was reflected in the divisiveness concerning secondary education. The whole issue was based on fundamental ideological arguments to such an extent that Boyle did not say "I am sorry if this does not seem to some of you as the right policy from the educational point of view", but instead referred to the ideological views of the members.

The Addendum was carried, in spite of Boyle's speech, by an overwhelming majority. The purely fundamental ideological case was won and the moderately fundamental ideological view of Boyle was defeated. Boyle's reaction was simple: "I will join you willingly...

54) *ibid.*, p. 45.

in the fight against Socialist dogmatism... but do not ask me to oppose it with an equal and opposite Conservative dogmatism..."⁵⁵⁾

The question was, who was going to dictate the future educational policy of the Conservative party on the national level: Boyle with his reformist views which enjoyed considerable party support, or the extremists who were also backed by a large number of Conservatives.

B. Turning the Clock Back (1968-1970)

E. Short's statement of his party's intention of introducing a Bill to make comprehensive education compulsory hardened the Conservative position. If the 10/65 and 10/66 Circulars were regarded by the Conservative party as a threat to local democracy and to the concept of partnership in education between the local and national levels, the prospect of a Bill was even worse. The party spoke almost with one voice in condemning Labour's intention. One of the important Conservative P(m)s, adopted from Liberalism, was and is grass-root democracy. Though the Conservative Ministers of Education did not hesitate in their time to interfere with the comprehensive plans of LEAs they never went so far as to introduce a Bill forbidding LEAs to make such proposals. Of course the position of the Conservative Ministers was easier as they were empowered by the 1944 Act to reject plans which involved closing an existing school, opening a new one, or the enlargement of an existing school to such a degree that it amounted

55) N.C.P. 1968 no. 17, Research Dep. (London, 1969), p. 39.

in practice to a new one. The Labour government, on the other hand, could not make use of these powers in its fight for universal comprehensive education as LEAs which did not want to go comprehensive could simply avoid producing plans involving new buildings or changes in old ones. They could simply use the old buildings, though because of the growing number of children attending secondary schools and in view of Circular 10/66, this was becoming difficult.

Following Short's announcement Heath said: "It is apparently all right to settle things locally provided that does not conflict with the dogmas of the Socialist government. If it does then there is to be blackmail by the Secretary of State through finance and, when that is unsuccessful, legislation from the Westminster Parliament to impose it upon them.... This measure.... will merely dictate the dogmas of the Government to unwilling parents and unwilling authorities. That is why we shall oppose it."⁵⁶⁾ It was one thing for the Conservative party to accept the comprehensive principle provided LEAs (and especially, of course, Conservative controlled ones), could reorganise secondary education in a way that would be in harmony with a somewhat redefined Conservative fundamental ideology. That is to say when local authorities could choose either those forms of comprehensive education which did not abolish the distinct character of the grammar school, or they could decide to have comprehensive and grammar schools side by side or even comprehensive, grammar and secondary modern

56) Hansard, vol. 790. pp. 26-27.

schools side by side. It was a different matter altogether to accept a compuleory universal comprehensive secondary education which would limit the freedom of LEAs to reorganise secondary education on the lines mentioned above.

Heath stressed that his party was opposing the compulsion and not the principle. But what happened eventually was that the threat of compulsion strengthened the right wing in the party. In other words the threat of compulsion resulted in the fact that the Conservative party started to turn the clock back. Through the medium of its fight for the right of reluctant LEAs to settle their own arrangements, the party fought also for non-comprehensive secondary education. This, of course, could not be easily reconciled with the position with which the party had tried to identify itself in the previous two years, i.e., acceptance of the comprehensive principle. As a result of this the policy was changed and re-emerged as the same one advocated earlier by A. Maude and Dr. Ollerenshaw, who would solve the eleven plus problem in having all kinds of secondary schools and selection starting at least approximately at 13.

As I doubt whether at any given time the party, except for a few like Sir E. Boyle, the Bow Group and Pest, really accepted the comprehensive principle, and as there always were members who voiced the objection to that principle, the threat of the Bill provided an excellent opportunity to start talking again with greater emphasis about retaining all grammar schools in their existing form. The party's

claim that it opposed the Bill "...because it is a violation of the concept of partnership between Government and local authorities in education",⁵⁷⁾ was one reason (which was also based on the party's P(m)s). At the same time it was also a good cover for a fight for a secondary education in harmony with the traditional interpretation of the party's fundamental ideology. Another factor which contributed to the strengthened re-emergence of the more extreme arguments was the fact that from 1968 the party came to control a majority of local authorities by winning them from Labour. Thus a fight for the rights of local authorities was also a fight for the right of the majority of Conservative controlled local authorities to reorganise secondary education in their own way. The official publications issued in 1969 advocated selection at least from thirteen. The following is a typical statement: "Nor should there be undue hurry to change established systems when they are manifestly good.... Those local authorities which are slowest to make haste now may in the long run, or even within the next few years, find that they have a much better system than any of those based on one or other of the six suggestions set out in the Labour Government's Circular 10/65."⁵⁸⁾ The party, on the national level, had now to persuade Conservative controlled local authorities to halt their plans for reorganisation on comprehensive lines, as

57) *ibid.*, p. 594.

58) Kathleen Ollerenshaw, "Re-Thinking on Education", C.P.C. (London, 1969), p. 9.

most of the Conservative controlled local authorities had started or already produced plans based on Circular 10/65, bearing in mind the forms advocated by Heath in his speech.

The change in tone was subtle but it was there. It can be found also in the 1969 Report on Secondary Education by a Sub-Committee set up by the National Advisory Committee on Education in 1968.⁵⁹⁾ The main purpose of the Sub-Committee's report was to give guidance to the Conservative controlled LEAs. Although the suggestions were far removed from the recommendations of the Conservative and Unionist Teachers' Association's in 1952 or in 1957, they followed a more extremist line than that of Sir E. Boyle. Although the alternatives outlined in Circular 10/65 were discussed, the basis of the whole report was the Conservative fear of comprehensive secondary education: "Conservatives fear that the gifted child will suffer in comprehensive schools.... They fear that comprehensive education may lead to poorer academic attainment in examination results, and a general lowering of academic standards. They also fear that as a result of the extension of the comprehensive system, schools will be more and more absorbed into the community pattern in which social problems take precedence over educational problems - in short, that it may result in a

59) From 3 Nov. 1966 the Conservative and Unionist Teachers' Association has changed its name to The Conservative National Advisory Committee on Education.

Socialist egalitarian society."⁶⁰⁾ This is, to my mind, the best example of the real Conservative position in 1969. In the passage quoted above the truth emerges - the Conservative party disliked the comprehensive principle itself and not merely Labour's policies of implementing the principle. It disliked it because it threatened the P(m) of quality and for attempting to achieve the P(m) of equality in its strong sense. The professional argument about lowering the standards was closely connected with the predominant concern with the future of the bright children. All in all the case against the comprehensive schools was set out in the report on purely fundamental ideological arguments. Abolish the eleven plus but do it in the Conservative way, i.e., with diversity in secondary education which will guarantee the preservation of elitist secondary schools.

Another factor which contributed to the Conservative fear of the comprehensive principle as such, was the growing demand in Labour to have unstreamed comprehensive schools. The more Labour demanded this the more cautious became the Conservatives towards the comprehensive principle, as they never gave support to an unstreamed secondary education. In August 1969 E. Heath confirmed in a letter to Mrs. Myra Fitzsimmons that the party would turn the clock back: "...I can assure you that if the Government introduces legislation to make comprehensive schools universally compulsory we will not only oppose that

60) Report on Secondary Education, the National Advisory Committee 1969, Inner Publication, vol. II, p. 16.

legislation but will also repeal it when we return to office. The situation will then once more be as it was when we were last in office,"⁶¹⁾ That is to say that the policy the party intended to follow when it came to power would not be identical with the party's policy while it was in opposition, but would be the continuation of the official policy of the party when it was in power.

The 1969 Conference was the last one in which Boyle spoke as a member of the Shadow cabinet. It seems to me that it will be correct to say that the changes in the party's policy from 1968 were the cause of Sir E. Boyle's resignation. It was apparent in 1969 that his view was opposed by a strong minority in the party both on the national and on the local level. The motion of the 1969 Conference was a condemnation of the proposed Bill. The mover, Mr. Michael Turner-Bridger, made it clear that the Conservative policy in 1969 was to return to the policy pursued in the early 1960s, when though Sir Edward Boyle acted in a very open minded manner the official publications relied heavily on the 1958 White Paper. There was much talk about preserving all grammar schools and the representative of Birmingham boasted that in Birmingham all grammar schools were retained while only eight comprehensive schools were established: "We kept them [the grammar schools] because we believe in selection and we kept them

61) Quoted from the Report of Secondary Education 1969, vol. II, last page.

because we felt that the grammar schools offered an opportunity for academic training to these boys and girls who could make the most of their talents as a consequence.... I hope that the local authority representatives will make a really determined effort about this. There is a place, in my view, for comprehensive schools in some areas."⁶²⁾ Councillor Dr. K. Ollerenshaw referred to Birmingham, which retained all its grammar schools, as the "mighty Birmingham."⁶³⁾ And Councillor John D. Penny went so far as to say: "I think the majority will agree that, although there might be something in the comprehensive system, it is at best unproven and at worst damaging and ruining to all the people and the children and citizens of tomorrow.... I want the party to come unequivocally behind the grammar schools."⁶⁴⁾

The views heard in the 1969 Conference show that the clock was turned back: no more praise of the comprehensive principle, no more talk about retaining only the good grammar schools, and again the negative approach towards the comprehensive school which at best was regarded as suitable to the famous "certain areas". That the arguments justifying the change were purely fundamental ideological ones was

62) 1969 Conservative Annual Conference Report, pp. 38-39.

63) *Ibid.*, p. 39.

64) *Ibid.*, pp. 40-41.

stressed by the speaker himself who outlined the traditional Conservative interpretation of equality of opportunity from which the defence of the tri-partite system and the condemnation of the comprehensive principle stemmed: "...equality of opportunity means opportunity for people to be unequal, equality for the brighter child to have the opportunity to develop to the best his ability, the very thing which is denied to our children in our present comprehensive organisation."⁶⁵⁾

Only one speaker, Miss Susan Pritchard said that the introduction of comprehensive education should be compulsory. She based her argument on the P(m) of parental choice in the same way the Dow Group did in 1968, i.e., the tri-partite system did not provide real parental choice while the comprehensive system does. If grammar and comprehensive schools function side by side the comprehensive school will become the secondary modern school to which only those unable to obtain a place in a grammar school will go. The best teachers will go to grammar schools and so the choice will again be unreal.⁶⁶⁾

Sir Edward approved of the motion which condemned the proposed legislation because of his view that education should be run as a partnership between the central and local authorities. At the same

65) *ibid.*, p. 41.

66) *ibid.*, p. 39.

time he spoke sharply against the extremists in both parties. Of the Conservative extremists he said: "...those extremists ... who believe that any change in education tends to be for the worse.... I say we have had enough of the extremists and it is time for the voice of moderation to have its say."⁶⁷⁾ But the extremists in the party were able to carry the rest with them. The party stood behind the Black Papers no. 1 and no. 2,⁶⁸⁾ while Boyle could not but criticise the "rhetorical" passages in the Black Papers: "We can fight for quality in education without talking in a sort of shrill and peevish tone which suggests 'Stop the modern world, I want to get off'."⁶⁹⁾ His view was clear: the Labour party was wrong in wanting to abolish all grammar schools and the Conservative party was wrong in committing itself to ossifying what is left. Sir E. Boyle's reformist views were consolidated and crystalised from 1964 and he has been voicing them with great conviction for a number of years. As long as the party shared his views, or seemed to share them, he could be the Conservative spokesman on education. When the party decided to put the clock back, the party and Boyle had to part company. The strength of the opposition to his views can be gauged from his later decision to leave politics altogether.

67) *ibid.*, p. 42.

68) For a discussion about the Black Papers see Chapter Two.

69) 1969 Conservative Annual Conference Report, p. 43.

Mrs. Thatcher, who succeeded Sir E. Boyle, was to present views acceptable to the extremists' if not identical with them. It was this fact, that Mrs. Thatcher led the debate on secondary education on behalf of the Conservative party, which contributed to the purely fundamental ideological character of the debate in the House in 1970. The policies of the two parties were being polarized. The debate was no longer, as in the first years when the Conservatives were in opposition, about methods but on the comprehensive principle itself, though Mrs. Thatcher tried hard to conceal this fact.

In October 1969 she said in the House: "Our main concern is to see that there is provision for the varying abilities and requirements of the children and that the doors of opportunity are held open to all children to go on, if they are capable, to O levels and A levels and, beyond that, to university.... Children will develop their abilities at different ages and the task is to spot the ability when it develops and to make the facilities available."⁷⁰⁾ Except for the talk about the A level, this statement followed the party's official policy in 1958-1964. It could be interpreted in a variety of ways including the "third possibility" advocated in the 1958 White Paper. That even the old tri-partite system was included as a solution in some places was confirmed in the N.C.P., which after quoting Mrs. Thatcher said:

⁷⁰⁾ Hansard, vol. 790, pp. 599-600.

"Conservatives do not accept, however, that every scheme that does away with the need for 11 plus selection will result, as the Labour party claims, in better opportunity for all."⁷¹⁾

During the debate on the Bill Mrs. Thatcher adopted clever tactics. She was trying to show that universal comprehensive secondary education will not achieve the equality of opportunity which Labour claimed it will achieve, and that the Bill would not even abolish selection. This was a clever line to adopt as the popularity of the comprehensive school was chiefly based on the belief, among the public, that comprehensive education would provide real equality of opportunity and would abolish selection. She first tried therefore to show that this would not happen. If she could succeed in showing that Labour's claims were not realistic then it would be much easier to present the Conservative policy: if comprehensive schools do not abolish selection then the fact that the Conservative policy actually involves selection would be much less damaging, as far as the public opinion was concerned. The door would then have been opened to defend the Conservative policy vis-a-vis Labour's policy on technical grounds, such as financial and administrative factors. Educational arguments, sociological and psychological, could not help very much as each party could use those arguments which best suited its case, and which were

⁷¹⁾ H.C.D. 1969 no. 27, Research Dep. (London, 1970), p. 406.

in harmony with its fundamental ideology. Mrs. Thatcher therefore attacked the Bill by saying that it provided for selection: selection according to ability for the sixth colleges and selection according to aptitude for music and dancing.⁷²⁾ Moreover, equality of opportunity will not be achieved because in different areas there will develop different comprehensive schools - in poor areas bad ones and in wealthy areas good ones. Where a comprehensive school resulted from merging a secondary modern school and a grammar school it would have a strong sixth form, while the merger of two modern schools would produce a small and poor sixth form. If it could be ensured that the comprehensive schools had a full range of ability then the situation would be different. But, she said, this will be impossible, as the Bill does not allow selection at eleven and so it will be impossible to guarantee that each comprehensive school will have a full range of ability.⁷³⁾

On the Conservative policy itself, she lacked clarity. At first she claimed that as the aim is to enable each child to develop to his maximum ability and as children develop at different ages, it is possible to provide equal opportunity by making transfer easy.⁷⁴⁾ This

72) Hansard, vol. 795, p. 1477.

73) *ibid.*, pp. 1478-1483.

74) *ibid.*, p. 1476.

meant that she was defending the existence of secondary modern schools as well as grammar schools and advocating comprehensive schools for the "special areas". But later Mrs. Thatcher spoke about the coexistence of grammar and comprehensive schools, and did not mention the secondary modern schools at all.⁷⁵⁾ She claimed that coexistence could work and that the comprehensive schools would not be crowded off provided they had the full range of ability which produces a strong sixth form. In such a case some of the children who could get a grammar school place would choose to go to a comprehensive school.

This sounds plausible, but does it bear the weight of examination? Was not Mrs. Thatcher making the same mistake of Wilkinson, Tomlinson, Horsbrugh, Sir D. Poole and G. Lloyd? The difference was that they spoke about a "parity of esteem" between the grammar and modern schools while she spoke about a "parity of esteem" between grammar and comprehensive schools. True, there is a substantial difference: the comprehensive school provides a sixth form. But even so it was unrealistic to imagine that if a choice existed, children (or their parents) would opt for a comprehensive school if they were offered a grammar school place. This could happen only in the minority of cases. A revolution in the scale of values was needed in order to achieve such a situation, and primarily the employers' favourably

75) *Ibid.*, p. 1483.

biased attitude toward the grammar school should have been changed. All things considered I find it hard to believe that Mrs. Thatcher was really convinced that parity of esteem between the grammar and all the comprehensive schools would develop.

On the whole, the picture which emerged about Conservative policy was very ambiguous. It was only clear that the party wanted to retain selection, sometimes at eleven, to preserve all grammar schools, and to have fewer comprehensive schools. Although Mrs. Thatcher did attempt to present an un-biased view towards the comprehensive schools, prejudice was there nevertheless. She and the Conservative party had to improve the opportunity of the average child, for economic and electoral reasons if for no other reasons, but the solutions suggested certainly did not provide a major role for the comprehensive schools. Exactly as on the Labour side, the arguments of the Conservative party were purely fundamental ideological arguments, and the various P(t)s were brought in to strengthen the P(m)s. The accusation of the Conservatives that for Labour comprehensive schools meant equality was true, and Labour's accusation that the Conservative policy towards secondary education was a direct derivation from the party's P(m)s, was correct as well. The debate was, as I have already stated when discussing the Labour party, not about education, but about Socialist P(m)s versus Conservative P(m)s. Sir E. Boyle's contribution, which consisted mainly of educational arguments, the P(m)s being related to the professional arguments, only made more

obvious the purely fundamental ideological character of the arguments of the other speakers.

The section on secondary education in "A Better Tomorrow" shows clearly the change in the party's policy, i.e., what I have called "turning the clock back". There was no longer talk about complete abolition of the eleven plus and while Heath and the Bow Group recommended in 1967 the abolition of the O-level the official policy in 1970 ignored this completely: "They [the MBAs] will take into account the general acceptance that in most cases the age of eleven is too early to make final decisions.... All children must have the opportunity of getting to O level and beyond if they are capable of doing so."⁷⁶ This general statement was all the guidance given to local education authorities. This was done deliberately as general statements can be subjected to various interpretations. Thus, it could not be said that the policy was defending privilege as this was not spelled out. At the same time this statement enabled such an organisation of secondary education that all grammar school could survive. One sentence in N.C.P. 1970 disclosed the party's intention to continue with the tri-partite system, if not in as rigid a way as in the 1950s: "...it is important to make adequate provisions for late developers."⁷⁷ Though it was not said that the provisions referred to meant easy

76) "A Better Tomorrow", Central Office (London, 1970), p. 20. The emphasis is mine.

77) N.C.P. 1970 no. 2, Research Dep. (London, 1971), p. 34.

transfer this was obvious as inside the comprehensive schools, whatever their disadvantages are, provisions for late developers do exist. The sentence about the "adequate provisions" was repeated in the Campaign Guide 1970. The party was obviously intending to go back, as Heath said in 1969, to the policy pursued in its last years in government. The acknowledgment of the comprehensive principle was buried. The future Secretary of State for Education and Science could pursue a policy of maintaining all grammar schools and in some places even the eleven plus. The attitude toward the comprehensive schools depended much on who will be the future Secretary of State as the party's official policy left it to him/her to decide in each individual case, the basis being the preservation of grammar schools and selection at least from the age of 13.

The party's position in 1970 was not identical to its position in 1951. Too much has happened socially, professionally and in the economic sphere to enable a complete return to the past policy of the rigid tri-partite system. Yet the changes demanded by all the factors mentioned above did not result in a completely new approach to secondary education. The changes were incorporated so as to enable the establishment of a complete harmony between the policy and the party's P(m)s of diversity, inequality, quality and the respect for tradition. The only change in the fundamental ideology was the interpretation of equality of educational opportunity, as it could no longer be claimed that the rigid tri-partite system provided this. To minimise the

change in interpretation so as to avoid a clash between the P(m) of equality of opportunity and the P(m) of the innate inequality of men, the emphasis was simply shifted from the assertion that the differences between children can be discerned at the age of eleven to the emphasis that the differences can be discovered at about the age of 13. The basic assumption, that children are different, was not abandoned and thus the policy was in complete harmony with the Conservative P(m) of the inequality of men. The party's policy turned out to be what Sir R. Boyle was afraid of i.e., based on dogmatic anti-Socialism, or in other words it was a policy in complete harmony with the traditional Conservative interpretation of the party's fundamental ideology.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of every case study, as I see it, is twofold: a) presentation of a detailed analysis of a certain problem b) an attempt to see what the case study can contribute to the understanding of politics in general. A case study by its nature has certain limitations. It has to be well defined in order to make possible detailed analysis of the problem studied. Because it deals with a specific well-defined issue other issues, which in reality are connected with the problem analysed in the case study, can at best be hinted at. For example, as I have concentrated on the question of the relations between ideology and policy in the debate about the comprehensive schools on the national level, I was forced to set aside a detailed analysis of what happened in the localities. Other aspects such as the role of pressure groups have had to be left out. In a larger context I had to isolate national policy concerning the comprehensive schools from other national policies which were pursued at the same period. The result is an artificial isolation of the problem; in reality such dissociation does not exist. The nature of politics is complexity, every issue being interwoven with other issues, whereas the nature of a case study is to concentrate on a certain, isolated, aspect only. The scope and limits imposed by the method do not necessarily falsify reality, provided the case study is well defined and its limits are acknowledged and taken into account throughout.

That is why I emphasized at the outset that this study is concerned only with the relations between ideology and policy on the national level in the debate about the comprehensive schools, and that it is not concerned with the question whether the parties were in fact the major factor influencing the direction of the debate and policy, or if not, what the important factors were. Awareness of the limits of the case study should, of course, underline also the implications drawn from it. As will be seen, precisely because the case study deals with comprehensive schools, certain implications which seem to repudiate generally accepted assumptions actually only modify them.

There is no need to summarise in detail the direction of the ideological change in each party as this has been done at length, in each of each chapter. What needs to be put together is how the relationship between fundamental ideology and policies in one party, connects with the relationship between fundamental ideology and policies in the other party. Seliger provides an ideal-type of the connection in, what he calls, "politics of consensus" (in which category British politics belong).

PA PB

F → ← F

↑ ↓

OI → ← OI

PA PB

F → ← F

↓ ↓

OI ↔ OI

Explanation of symbols: PA = Party A; PB = Party B

F = Fundamental ideology; OI = Operative ideology

↑ ↔ = Correspondence

→ ← ↓ = Conflict

One has to bear in mind that the models are the ideal type poles of a continuum, that there is never full congruence within the ideologies of the parties, nor solely incongruence between the ideologies of different parties. Neither is there ever full congruence between the operative ideologies or complete asymmetry between the fundamental and operative dimensions in either party. (This is true too in the results of the case study which will follow shortly). The model attempts to show that in politics of diminishing alternatives, i.e., when the similarity between the policies of the parties becomes greater, a gap is created between the fundamental and operative dimensions of each of the parties which evokes ideological change.²⁾

The following comparisons between the two parties can be made:³⁾

1) 1944-1951: Conflict between the fundamental ideologies of the two parties. Correspondence between the policies of the two parties. Conflict between the arguments used by each party to justify its policies (the operative ideologies). (In Labour, conflict between fundamental ideology and policies; also conflict between the fundamental and operative ideologies. In the Conservative party, correspondence between fundamental ideology, policies and operative ideology.)

2) 1951-1958: Conflict between the fundamental ideologies of the two

2) *ibid.*, ch. VI, p. 31.

3) The verbal explanation is followed by illustrations.

parties. Conflict between the policies of the two parties. Conflict between the two operative ideologies. (In Labour, as a result of the adaptation of the policies and their justification in the light of the fundamental ideology, correspondence between fundamental ideology, policies and operative ideology. No change in the Conservative party.)

3) 1958-1962: All relations as in period two. (Yet, the correspondence between Labour's fundamental ideology, policies and operative ideology, was a result of a change of policies in 1958 with a corresponding change in the fundamental ideology.)

4) 1962-1964: Conflict between the fundamental ideologies of the two parties. Slight correspondence between the policies of the two parties. Conflict between the two operative ideologies. (In Labour, correspondence between fundamental ideology, policies and operative ideology. In the Conservative party, as a result of change in policy, conflict between fundamental ideology and policies. Only a slight conflict between fundamental ideology and operative ideology.)

5) 1964-1968: Conflict between the fundamental ideologies of the two parties. Greater correspondence or convergence between the policies of the two parties. Conflict between the two operative ideologies. (In Labour, correspondence between fundamental ideology, policies and operative ideology; in 1965 Labour returned to the orthodox definition of the comprehensive school principle both in the fundamental

dimension and in the policies. In the Conservative party, as a result of the adaptation of certain principles in the fundamental ideology to the policies, correspondence between fundamental ideology, policies and operative ideology.)

6) 1968-1970: Conflict between the fundamental ideologies of the two parties. Conflict between the policies of the two parties. Conflict 6) 1968-1970: Conflict between the fundamental ideologies of the two parties. Conflict between the policies of the two parties. Conflict between the two operative ideologies. (No change in Labour. Same relations in the Conservative party as in period five because fundareversed.)

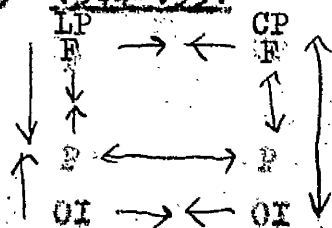
This can be illustrated in the following way:

Explanation of symbols:

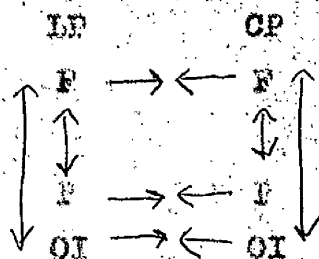
LP = Labour Party
 CP = Conservative Party
 F = Fundamental Ideology
 P = Policies
 OI = Operative Ideology, i.e., arguments used to justify the policies

↕ ↔ = correspondence or convergence
 <---> = slight correspondence or convergence
 *-->← = conflict
 --->←--- = slight conflict

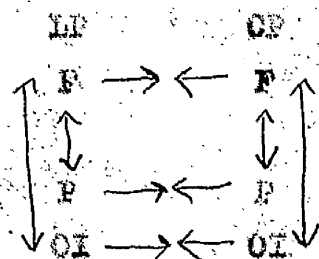
1) 1944-1951



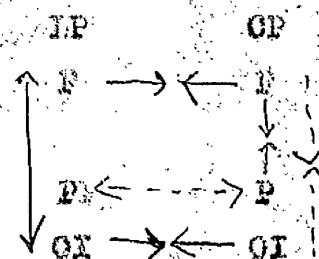
2) 1951-1955



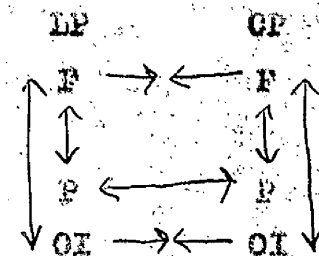
3) 1958-1962



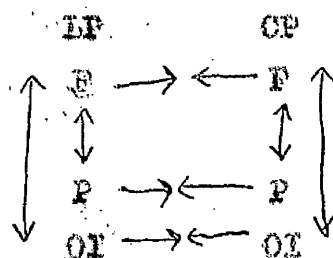
4) 1962-1964



5) 1964-1968



6) 1968-1970



I have deliberately changed Seliger's P and OI to P, P and OI as in the instances when the parties were in some agreement about the policies (consensus on the policy level) the justification of the policy by each of the parties was different. That is to say that although the parties agreed on policy, they justified the same policy in two different ways because the justifications were connected to two different fundamental ideologies; while Seliger's Model would suggest that the convergence occurred not only in the policies but at the same time also in the arguments used to justify the policies, i.e., in the operative ideologies. In 1945-1951 Labour's policy was very much on the same lines as the Conservatives' proposed policy. Yet while the Labour Ministers justified the tri-partite system because they believed that, provided parity of esteem existed, this system does provide equality of educational opportunity and because they saw in the grammar schools the entry to further opportunities for working class children, the Conservative party justified the tri-partite system because it preserved class distinctions, elitist tradition and diversity. During 1964-1968 although the Conservative party claimed that it accepted the comprehensive principle and shaped its policies

accordingly, nevertheless the policies were justified in a way different from that within the Labour party. While Labour saw in the comprehensive schools a means of achieving a more equal society, those Conservatives who did not believe that the comprehensive schools would achieve this goal justified them on the basis of the primacy of the individual over the state, which meant that equality of educational opportunity must be provided for all children (see the Bow Group and Post); other Conservatives who continued to believe that the comprehensive schools would reduce or efface inequalities, accepted them only provided that they did not exclude the existence of elitist institutions. The change in the fundamental ideology of the Conservative party in these years was not such as to enable us to speak of a convergence between the fundamental ideologies of the two parties. Far from it; and as the arguments used to justify the policies were related to the fundamental ideology of the party it is obvious that they should differ from the arguments used by Labour, as these were also in harmony with Labour's fundamental ideology. That is why a situation can arise, such as when in each party there is a harmony between its fundamental ideology and its policies (1964-1968), or when in one of the parties the policies deviate from the fundamental ideology (Labour in 1945-1950), in which the policies advocated by the two parties are similar yet the arguments used to justify the policies remain different. Similarly there can exist a situation in which, though in neither party is there a gap between the policies and their justification on the one hand and

the fundamental ideology on the other, and while the policies of the two parties are similar, yet the fundamental ideologies remain distinct (1964-1968).

Consensus in the fundamental dimension never existed. The closest the fundamental ideologies of the parties reached was in 1942-1944 and in 1964-1968 when there was some resemblance as to the interpretation of equality of educational opportunity in the two fundamental ideologies, though in 1942-1944 the resemblance was much stronger than in 1964-1968. Neither was there a consensus as regards the operative ideology i.e., the arguments used to justify the actual policies. Some degree of consensus or convergence existed only in the policies themselves; chiefly in the period 1945-1951, and to a smaller extent in 1962-1968. The periods of the greatest degree of consensus occurred while Labour was in government and the Conservatives in opposition: 1945-1951 and 1964-1968. Yet the constellation was different in each of these periods. In 1945-1951 the convergence between the policies resulted from the different interpretation of the fundamental of equality held by the Labour Ministers, according to which the tri-partite system was the actualization of the fundamental of equality. Administrative and financial considerations, though never mentioned as the reasons for pursuing the tri-partite policy, contributed also to the Minister's policy. As the Conservative party also conceived of secondary education as based on the tri-partite principle some consensus in policies existed, while in the Labour

party a gap slowly developed between the policies and their justification on the one hand and the fundamental ideology on the other. In 1964-1968 the consensus was a result of the Conservatives' awareness that for electoral, professional and economic reasons they must change their policies. The consensus in both periods was largely the result of various pragmatic and professional considerations. As has been mentioned before, in 1945-1951 the Labour Ministers were influenced by administrative and financial factors and in 1964-1968 the Conservative party was greatly influenced by public opinion, professional findings, developments in local education authorities and the demands of the new economy.

It is therefore safe to generalise that the politics of consensus were a result of technical prescriptions of various kinds. Yet in general the importance of the demands arising from reality should not be exaggerated vis-a-vis the fundamental ideologies. Both Labour and the Conservatives pursued at times policies in contradiction to the demands of reality. Labour pursued the policy of comprehensive schools in the early 1950s when the idea was not at all popular and the Conservative party continued to defend the tri-partite system when public opinion was already set against it. The Conservative party also acted for years against new professional findings.

The case study has therefore introduced several modifications or clarifications in regard to the framework. First, while it bears out

that there is a bifurcation of each party's ideology into fundamental and operative ideologies which can be in harmony or disharmony with each other, it seeks to distinguish between the policies themselves and the operative ideology which is used to justify them. That is because, as has been shown, similar policies have been justified in different ways because the different fundamentals of the parties influenced their operative ideology. As there was never a consensus or convergence from 1944 to 1970, in so far as the fundamental ideologies were concerned, there could be no similarity between the operative ideologies. Second, intermediate stages are needed between contradiction or asymmetry and convergence in order to describe what really happens in reality. Third, it was shown that convergence between the policies can exist when there is a gap between the fundamental ideology and the policies of one party only. In two cases of convergence between the policies a gap between the fundamental dimension and the policies existed only in one party. In 1945-1951 the gap was in Labour, while in 1962-1964 the gap was in the Conservatives. To have consensus on the policy level it is enough for one party to move towards the policies advocated by the other party, thus creating within itself a gap between its fundamental ideology and policies. It was not necessary for both parties to create such a gap in order that a consensus in policies should exist. However, it seems to me that the modifications outlined here elaborate rather than contradict the framework.

I started with several assumptions incorporated in or based on the framework, the major one being that politics can not be divorced from ideology. In other words, every policy is justified either by a purely fundamental ideological argument or by a moderately fundamental ideological argument. This holds both for policies which are in harmony with the fundamental ideology and for policies which deviate from the fundamental ideology. Each party develops both kinds of arguments and the second type is generally used to justify a deviation from the party's fundamental ideology: a deviation which is caused by demands arising from reality. It was also assumed that when a gap is created between fundamental ideology and policies, the party tries to restore the harmony between its fundamental ideology and its policies and the arguments used to justify them, either by readapting the policies to the fundamental ideology or by changing the fundamental ideology according to the policies. It was assumed that when an ideological change occurs the direction of change is from the level of action to the fundamental ideology. A change in the policies, demanded by reality, and justified by operative ideology, creates a gap which raises tension which in its turn evokes a change in the fundamental ideology. It was further assumed that policies enjoying consensus are no different from other policies in respect to their relation to ideology. That is to say that even policies which are accepted by the two parties are related separately to the fundamental ideologies of each party.

The case study might either confirm or dispute these general assumptions. It would, for example, dispute the assumption about the inevitable connection between ideology and politics if it showed that at certain stages a party did justify its policy by using purely professional arguments of any kind. However, the case study showed that during the whole period the policy planned or executed by both parties, whether in government or in opposition, was always justified either by purely fundamental ideological arguments or by moderately fundamental ideological arguments. Professional arguments of various kinds - psychological, sociological, educational, administrative, financial - were always brought in either merely to fortify the argument while the centrality was given to P(m)s, or when centrality was given to the professional arguments they were connected always, or at least an attempt was made to connect them, to the P(m)s. In this respect there was no difference between the Labour and the Conservative parties, both having used the two types of arguments. Usually the moderately fundamental ideological argument was used as an operative ideology, to justify policies which deviated from the parties' official fundamental ideology. Yet sometimes moderately fundamental ideological arguments were used to justify policies which were in harmony with the fundamental ideology. Occasionally purely fundamental ideological arguments also were used to justify deviations.

It was seen, also, that whenever a change in the fundamental ideology occurred it was either as a result of the need to adapt the fundamental ideology to the policies or as a result of the reappraisal of policies, which previously had been considered in harmony with the existing interpretation of the fundamental ideology. Under observation these policies were judged not to actualise the fundamentals. Consequently the current interpretation of the fundamental ideology was changed, because the previous interpretation had been proved, through the policies which derived from it, to be false. Examples of the first kind of change are the changes in Labour's fundamental ideology in 1958 and in that of the Conservative party in 1964-1968. In Labour the change in the fundamental dimension in 1958 regarding the definition of the comprehensive principle resulted from the party's wish to avoid a gap between policies and fundamental dimension. As policies were not in complete harmony with the existing definition of the comprehensive principle, and because the party could not at the time pursue policies which would be in complete harmony with this definition in the fundamental dimension, the definition of the comprehensive principle in the fundamental dimension was changed by reason of the policies. In the Conservative party a change in the interpretation of certain fundamentals was required in 1964-1968 if the party was to avoid a widening gap between its policies and its traditional interpretation of its fundamentals. Thus the fundamental dimension was changed in the light of the policies. An example of the second type of change

is the change in Labour's fundamental ideology during 1945-1951. The change in the fundamental dimension in respect of the interpretation of the fundamental of equality in the sphere of secondary education, was mainly the result of observation of the tri-partite system. Facts and alternatives were observed and judged in the light of the final goal of Labour's fundamental ideology and accordingly one system of secondary education was rejected and another - the comprehensive school - was established in Labour's fundamental ideology as the specification of the ways and means of achieving equality. Accordingly the definition of equality of educational opportunity, in the fundamental ideology, was changed.

The common fact in both kinds of change in the fundamental ideology is that the change was always the result of the observation of what was happening on the level of action. Either what was observed repudiated the accepted interpretation of the fundamental ideology and consequently change was introduced, or the change in policies was unavoidable and in order to avoid a gap the parties reluctantly adapted their fundamental ideologies to the policies. The parties indeed manifested a dislike of that kind of change in the fundamental dimension which required a sacrifice of the strict interpretation of the fundamentals. Thus Labour took the first opportunity to return to the old definition of the comprehensive principle in the fundamental dimension (in 1965), and the Conservative party restored their traditional meaning to almost all the fundamentals in 1968-1970.

A gap developed between fundamental dimension on the one hand and policies and their justification on the other, either as a result of a change in the fundamental dimension without a corresponding change in the policies (Labour 1945-1951), or when the policies were changed in accordance with the demands of reality without a corresponding change in the fundamental ideology (Conservative party 1962-1964). A gap therefore usually occurs when the party is in government and not when it is in opposition. In government the demands of reality have much greater influence on the shaping of the policies, while the period in opposition is usually used to restore harmony. Both parties manifested dislike for the existence of a gap, and consequently a process of adaptation occurred: either the policies were changed in the light of the change in the fundamental dimension (Labour 1951-1958), or the fundamental dimension was changed so as to be in harmony with the policies (Labour 1958-1964, Conservatives 1964-1968).

Does this justify the generalisation that in other spheres of policy also the Labour and the Conservative parties will defend their policies by using ideological arguments of the two types? One would expect to find the bifurcation of ideology into fundamental and operative ideology, the creation of gaps, and a process of ideological change. Probably use of the moderately fundamental ideological argument will be usually confined to the justification of policies which deviate from the fundamental ideology, though on occasion purely fundamental ideological arguments also will be used to justify

deviations. Consensus will usually be found in policies only, at least as long as the parties remain distinct. The similarity between policies will be a result of pragmatic considerations of various kinds, and usually the gap between the policies and the fundamental ideologies will occur while the party is in power and the adaptation (in one of the directions) will take place while the party is in opposition. The parties dislike a long period of inner conflict and also dislike a change in their fundamental ideologies which entails some sacrifice at the expense of strict interpretation of their fundamentals.

What may not be deduced from the case study is that in other spheres, for example in foreign policy, the purely fundamental ideological arguments will have such a predominance as they assume in the case of the comprehensive educational policy. The predominance of purely fundamental ideological arguments in the case study was a result of the close relation between some of the fundamentals of each party and the issue of the comprehensive schools. That is to say, that most of the arguments were purely fundamental ideological ones because for Labour comprehensive schools were a specification of the ways and means of achieving the final object of equality, while the Conservative fundamental ideology rejects with equal vigour, the fundamental of equality in the strong sense. The fight of the Conservatives against compulsion was a battle for the fundamentals of grass-roots

democracy and parental choice. For the Conservatives the grammar school bore the same relation to their fundamental ideology as the comprehensive school did to Labour's fundamental ideology: the grammar schools were seen as the specification of the ways and means of preserving the fundamentals of quality, tradition and inequality. Because of this relationship of the comprehensive school and the grammar school with the fundamental ideologies of the parties it was obvious to many writers who did not deal directly with the question of ideology and policy that the debate on the comprehensive schools was of an ideological nature.

Other general implications require modification in the light of this strong relationship between the comprehensive schools and the parties' fundamental ideologies. The case study showed that the Conservative party did not manifest the ability, attributed to it in the literature, of adapting itself quickly to new situations. On the contrary: the case study showed a reluctance on the part of the Conservatives to adapt themselves to change. However it seems to me that this fact does not dispute the general assumption of Conservative adaptability, as the strong relation between the comprehensive schools and the party's fundamental ideology must be taken in account. A modification or elaboration of the general assertion is therefore needed: the speed of adaptation of the Conservative party to changing circumstances depends on whether or not other considerations, such as electoral or economic considerations, are overridden by or override the desire of

the party to stick to its fundamental ideology. In the issue of the comprehensive schools such a change meant the sacrifice of fundamentals. An accumulation of other factors was therefore essential in order to bring about an adaptation. As long as the other factors, (public opinion, professional arguments etc.,) did not carry enough weight the party was reluctant to adapt itself. Moreover even when the many reasons for adaptation could be expected to force the party's hand these were weighed in the balance with the many fundamentals which were at stake (the situation in 1968-1970) and the party chose to defend its fundamentals. In short, while the party manifested reluctance to change because of the specific nature of the issue, in other issues which are not so closely connected with the party's fundamental ideology or which are more closely related to other strong considerations, the party can be expected to adapt itself to change much more quickly.

Another general assumption about the Conservative party has been challenged to some extent by the findings of the case study: the pragmatic, ad-hoc nature of Conservative policy which is usually reflected in its conduct of debate. However, in the case of the comprehensive schools, though the party paid much attention to questions of buildings, staff and equipment, nevertheless the debate was by no means confined to these issues, as we have seen. The party's deviation from ad-hoc debate on practical questions was caused chiefly by the fact that in the whole issue of the comprehensive schools the

Conservative party was never the initiating but always the reacting party. Labour's policy challenged Conservative fundamentals and this brought about the discussion of high principles. Thus it was again the nature of the specific issue which led to a debate of principles. One would therefore expect the Conservative party to engage in debate on this level whenever the issue is closely connected with its fundamental ideology.

Another assumption - that the Conservative party is much less concerned with education than the Labour party - has been challenged in this case-study. It is usually assumed that, as the Labour party believes in the perfectability of man and in the possibility of achieving a better society by "bringing out" (e-duco) the best in men through education, it is much more interested in education than the Conservative party, which does not believe in this perfectability. Generally speaking, from 1951 to 1970 education formed an important part in the Conservative party's debates and official publications. This was not however a result of a sudden change in the value attached to education by the party. It was not until the grammar schools were challenged by Labour's proposed comprehensive policy that the Conservative party started to take a lively interest in education. That is to say the important place given by the party to secondary education was not the result of a sudden interest in the education of the majority, but rather the result of its interest in the education of an élite, and in the other values that the grammar schools symbolised.

This explains the Ministers' interference during 1951-1962 with the autonomy of the local education authorities. Though such an intervention is against the party's fundamental ideology, this fundamental was overridden by the fundamentals which the grammar schools were assumed to preserve, and which required protection.

What the case study clearly shows is that lack of an ideal type of society, as in the fundamental ideology of the Conservative party, does not weaken adherence to the party's fundamentals. The Conservative party does have an ideology and this ideology does influence its policies.

As for the Labour party, the case study showed the great importance attached by the party to the fundamental of equality up to 1970. If the party gave way in the economic sphere, it compensated by shifting the emphasis to social engineering, and the comprehensive school became one of the specifications of the ways and means of achieving the desired equality. In a way it is precisely because the party abandoned universal nationalisation that it fought so strongly for the comprehensive schools. The reluctance of the party to acknowledge the change which in 1958 weakened the meaning of the fundamental of equality, also testifies to this. It was also seen that the policies outlined by Labour during its long period in opposition were the basis of the party's actual policies when it returned to government. This does not mean that in all cases the same process will follow. In general, the policies that Labour formulated while in opposition were in

greater harmony with its fundamental ideology than the policies pursued afterwards. This is due both to the fact that while in opposition the Annual Conference exercised greater influence and to the fact that while in opposition the party is not called upon to actualize its promises immediately. The fact that in the issue of the comprehensive schools the policies outlined in opposition were carried out when the party resumed power, was a result of the party's need to adhere, while in government, to some policy which was in close relation to the fundamental of equality. Precisely because, in other spheres, the policies were modified according to the demands of reality, the party chose the issue of the comprehensive schools as the one issue which might counter-balance the modification that took place in other spheres. Secondary education was chosen, because of the party's genuine belief that education and economy are the two main issues which eventually decide the character of society; and because it was easier to embark on a reorganisation of secondary education while supplying only part of the money needed, than to pursue some other policies in harmony with the fundamental of equality. This, however, does not mean that Labour had no intention of increasing, in the future, the money needed for a reorganisation on comprehensive lines. Unquestionably Labour would have allocated more money for that purpose than the Conservative government does. In the period 1964-1970 Labour, though allocating less money than necessary, did so because it regarded this as a lesser evil than the continuation of the tri-partite system.

All in all, the Labour party, because it did not abandon its old fundamental ideology in favour of a new one, and because as a left wing party it has no raison d'être unless it acts to promote equality, chose comprehensive schools as the one issue through which it manifested its desire of achieving the final goal of the classless society. The comprehensive schools did not, and could not, achieve this goal. That this fact, obvious in the light of the American experiment and the British experiments, was indeed ignored, reinforces my assertion that once Labour had picked the comprehensive issue as the one through which it wanted to show its fight for equality the real facts and the instrumental questions played no part. That is to say, once the comprehensive school had become the symbol of the party's fight for equality, the question whether or not it could fulfil the function ascribed to it became marginal and was even deliberately evaded. The fight for the comprehensive school started as a genuine fight for equality. But once the identity between equality and the comprehensive school was established in the party's fundamental ideology, the real facts had almost no effect. One almost gets the impression that the party defied all facts which contradicted the possible contribution of the comprehensive schools to equality, because it could not afford to acknowledge this, at least till it could find another issue on which to hang its fight for the fundamental of equality. Labour succeeded so well in spreading the belief that the comprehensive schools will diminish inequality, that it swept along not only its own members but the Conservatives as

well. Only relatively few Conservatives voiced the opinion that comprehensive schools would not diminish inequality.

Finally, the main practical lesson to be learned from this case study is that where there is an issue which is closely connected to the fundamental ideologies of the parties, an attempt must be made to give more power of decision to those who are professionally equipped, and thus able to see beyond the ideological implications. There is no doubt in my mind that policies based on purely professional arguments are a utopian dream or perhaps more correctly, an anti-utopian dream. As long as parties exist and function in the framework of social democracy, no issue can or should be neutralised completely from the fundamental ideologies of the parties. At the same time what can be avoided is precisely what happened in the case of the comprehensive schools. The moral seems clear: instrumental questions should never be permitted to become of negligible or even of secondary importance.

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