

A CONCEPTUAL AND HISTORICAL EXPLORATION OF IDEOLOGICAL
INFLUENCES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF STATE EDUCATION WITHIN ENGLAND
AND WALES

A Ph.D Dissertation Submitted To The University Of London

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is concerned with the relationship between a state and its public education system. It is based upon the premise that the system in England and Wales is inherently rooted in its nineteenth century past and that recent educational policies have only served to strengthen this fact rather than reforming the system to give it more relevance for a society about to enter the twenty-first century. This orientation serves to perpetrate epistemological, sociological, economic and vocational perspectives which are more appropriate for the nineteenth century than for our own times. The dissertation makes the point that educational policymaking at the end of the twentieth century in England is based on outmoded thinking, outdated concepts of statehood, society, the relationship between citizen and state, knowledge and, therefore, education itself.

The thesis concerns itself with a comparative overview of the development of 'statehood' and a consideration of the notion of 'ideology'. It examines the ideological sources and development of education in three historical settings. This is followed by a detailed examination of the sources of the national system of education in England. The current educational climate is considered in the light of developments since the enactment of

the legislation of 1944. This is centred upon a close study of the parliamentary debates which preceded the Acts of 1944 and 1988 which clearly demonstrated that the educational agenda, in political terms, is still dominated by nineteenth century thinking, not the least important aspect of which is religion.

The conclusion argues that, with the advent of postmodernism, a new relationship is needed between education and the state. Indeed, the whole structure and methodology of education will need to be re-worked to take advantage not only of the new means of understanding available, but also of the new understanding of knowledge itself.

Introduction

At the outset of this study I was concerned with the implications of the reforms which had recently been introduced through the 1988 Education Act. My focus was a narrow one.

Close scrutiny of the debates in both Houses of Parliament inevitably widened that focus as I perceived that the roots of this legislation did not only lie in the open ideology of a Party driven, at the time, by the excesses of the 'new right', but, more than that, in a complex web of less overt influences.

The search for a definition of these influences became the driving force behind this thesis. In many ways, the radicalism of the Conservative agenda through the Thatcher era crystallised and clarified many issues for me, for it threw into sharp relief the reality of the dogged persistence of the ossification of popular perceptions of education in a late nineteenth-century guise. Issues which I had presumed to be peripheral and belonging to the extreme I found to be important and prominent factors in policymaking.

Most interesting of all was the fact that I concluded that the enormous wave of educational emancipation which had thought to have washed over this country, especially in mid-century, had not entirely damaged the sea-wall of privilege and hierarchical differentiation as might be assumed.

The religious dimension, I discovered, is still highly dominant. This thesis implies that this is not because of religion itself but, more subtly, more concerned with the Church as an instrument of state. That the state education system is concerned with the coercion and control of the

citizenry is well-documented and difficult to deny and, in all probability, this is a logical and inevitable necessity to maintain an ordered society. Upholding the prominence of religion in the education system, through its legal status and the compulsory inclusion of religious education within the National Curriculum, may have less to do with Christian evangelism than a concern to deny the reality of an uncertain statehood.

This ever-broadening focus of my research led me to consider the very rationale of the schooling system *per se*. Inevitably I found myself poised on the near outset of a new millenium speculating on future developments. The retrenchment towards the educational structures of a previous era are totally incongruous in relation to the needs, both of the individual and the state, of the twenty-first century. What is clear to me now is that the mechanisms which have drawn the system back towards the class-bound model, circa 1904, are wide and more deeply embedded in the very concept of statehood itself. Whether this model will withstand the certain scientific and technological transformations about to be witnessed in the new century remains to be seen.

Richard Hoyle
London
October 1995

1. EDUCATION AND 'THE STATE'

a) The Concept of Statehood

It would be a wrong assumption to believe that the involvement of the state in education is a recent phenomenon. In terms of centralised policy-making, funding, assessment and testing of academic standards, the involvement of government in this country and the rest of Europe is a recent development. However, the connection between education, diverse and differing systems of schooling, and *the state* is intricately and intimately bound together and extends back in time to the civilisations of the ancient world.

Educational activity cannot take place oblivious to the value-systems operative in the prevailing contemporary culture and so it is, *ipso facto*, a moral concern and, implicitly, a political one. It is in this sense that the education of future citizens (and other categories of populations) has been of natural and legitimate concern of governments, whatever their philosophical and political character.

The relationship between state and education has been one of reciprocal influence. The education of the individual has helped fashion that individual's outlook upon the state and its prevailing values, and these values have informed the content of the educational programme itself. Thus, education is

involved with the inculcation of 'citizenship', which renders it a political, as well as a moral, activity.

In order to further understand this relationship it will be necessary to examine the concept of 'statehood', in both general terms as well as with specific reference to the British state.

Dyson (1980) has referred to the concept of the state as being "a category of mind" (p 3). Certainly, the notion of statehood is a complex, almost ethereal one, elusive to define because of differing historical and cultural perspectives.

In this country the idea of statehood is not as strongly established as it is in much of the rest of Europe. This is because the state as an institution has played a less conspicuous role in Britain than, say, in France where the violence of revolution and the uncertainties of periodic constitutional upheaval have created a close fusion between the concept of 'state' and 'community' (ibid. p 129); and also because:

"In the absence of the idea of the state as a cultural symbol the emphasis falls on the Crown as the focus of shared rituals and ceremony, pomp and theatricality."

(ibid. p 248)

The United Kingdom is far from 'united' as resurgent nationalism in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland attests, not to mention the fervent regionalism of Cornwall and, to some extent, some areas of the north of England. A national identity may be portrayed as 'English' or 'Scottish' but perhaps not as commonly or easily as 'British'. In cultural terms the notion of 'British' is rather ethereal and nondescript.

Dyson (op.cit.) suggests that the notion that sovereignty exists in the Crown-in-Parliament has shifted the focus in Britain away from the state towards society itself, with its overtones of privilege and exclusiveness (ibid. p 250). It could be added that the frequent demands for Scottish and Welsh assemblies of some kind, not to mention the Irish situation, weakens the very concept of 'Britishness'. It must not be overlooked that the 'national' curriculum introduced in 1988 was modified for Wales and Northern Ireland and had no relevance for Scotland. There is, therefore, official recognition that considerations of the relationship between state and education in Britain is a plural concept.

In this country there is a lack of clarity between concepts such as 'state', 'nation' and 'society' which fails to differentiate their distinct meanings and implications (Benn and Peters 1959, p 251).

It is important to bear in mind this (hypothetical) British view of 'the state'. The distinction between 'state' and 'society' and, indeed, 'state' and 'sovereignty' is crucial to any understanding of the marked politicisation of educational policy-making since the mid-1980s. The state is not a tangible object but rather "a system of rules, procedures, and roles operated by individuals" (ibid. p 253). However, the conflict between liberal individualist theories of the state and advocates of a social interventionist state has had a distinct effect upon education as the social state created in the consensual climate of post-war reconstruction has been dismantled and a new order, based on individualism, promoted instead. The re-positioning of the Labour Party under Smith and Blair in the 1990s, and the emergence of 'New Labour', characterises the extent of this shift in the body-politic to the centre-right.

The mixed metaphor of Thatcherism, with its duplicitous and contradictory offering of the strong state and the empowered individual, reflects a long tradition in this country of a reticence to allow the state to impinge upon individual liberty - the concept of a 'free country' is deep-rooted in Britain. It could be argued though that it also reflects an acquiescence towards the authority of the state simply because the state is seen to be democratic, through parliamentary representation,

even though it is infiltrated by class division which tempers attempts to achieve a chimerical community of equal citizenry.

Social order is created through the idea of statehood. By legitimating and institutionalising power, order can be maintained without the use of force or violence. In a liberal democracy statehood imposes consensus through democracy (although a Marxist stance would claim that such democracies are illusions, merely maintaining class divisions and privileges) and the apparatus of state, including educational institutions operated by the state, exist to help preserve this consensus through the transmission of cultural values. It could be argued that the radical changes within schools (as well as further and higher education) imposed since the mid-1980s are associated with changes in the perception of the very concept of the state itself. There are those who would say that the devolution of power to schools through local management schemes is a reflection of the gradual dismantling of the welfare state and the rise of self-help individualism. There are those, though, who would interpret such reforms, as will be seen, in a completely different way (see Chapter 4).

It could be perceived, for example, that schools were failing in their role as transmitters of cultural values by endorsing, or at least failing to stem, tides of social upheaval rippling

through the 1960s and 1970s and, again, in the mid-1980s. Certainly, the leftist-activists of the National Union of Teachers did little to dispel this notion.

The concept of statehood is a comparatively recent phenomenon. It has emerged since the general demise of absolutism and the rise of liberalism which began in western Europe in the seventeenth century. It is important to recognise that although there has been, to a large degree, a linear development of theories of the state, which will be briefly outlined below, there is no agreed ideal. Even with the apparent collapse of European socialism and the overthrow of communism in the west there still exists a virile debate between left and right, and the legacy of feudalism, nationalism and imperialism, together with the experience of socialism within a communist framework, have ensured a continuing plurality of ideas and manifestos relating to state development. Inevitably, this struggle has left its mark upon education as systems of learning have attempted to relate to the battle of ideas and the, often turbulent, ascendancy and demise of political tides.

In addition to its relative novelty, the concept of statehood

is also difficult to analyse because of its multi-dimensional nature. Statehood is more than mere territory and national identity, it is also representative of:

"a body of attitudes, practices and codes of behaviour, in short civility, which we associate correctly with civilisation."

(Vincent 1987, p2)

A 'state' is, at least, an organised public power and it can be argued on that basis that 'states' have existed in western Europe since the evolution of the city-states of ancient Greece. The democratic basis of many of these city-states, albeit of a crude and incomplete nature, provided a guarantee of a free citizenry. It will be seen that the philosophic debate about the role of education within the state was enjoined by the leading Greek philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle and that the influence of their ideas has been significant and enduring, not the least, on education itself.

Roman city-states were based on aristocratic power rather than democracy but the Romans developed a systemised code of law which, as Stuart Hall maintains, helped:

"to establish the distinction between 'state' and 'society', or between the public (pertaining to the state and public affairs) and the private (pertaining to relations of private association, 'civil society',

and the domestic life of the patriarchal family)."

(in McLennon, Held & Hall, 1984, p 3)

The classical states of Greece and Rome contributed conceptual and structural ideas about the organisation of peoples under the authority of a public power which still have a fundamental influence today. One such principal development of classical times was the emergence of a perception of the importance of morality in the sense that:

"(The) critical rejection or acceptance of custom or law is what is distinctive of morality..."

(Benn & Peters 1959, p 26)

The teaching of morals was the focus of the curriculum of classical Athens and of prime concern to Aristotle, as will be seen. The assumption that education, by its moral content, will, in itself, create a loyal citizenry is a universal and enduring theme. It will be seen how this point has exercised the mind, and the passions, of politicians in England since the middle of the last century to the present day (Chapters 2 and 5, in particular).

The development of trade and military conquest brought an interchange of ideas between differing societies which, in turn, challenged people to question and reflect upon their own

system of values. Inevitably:

"Men began to proclaim that, whatever their civic allegiances, there was a bond between them as reasonable beings."

(ibid.)

This concept led to the development of a code of law characterised by moral rule which "should be regarded as universally applicable and rationally acceptable to the individual" (op.cit. p 27).

The eventual triumph of Christianity in the Roman Empire corrupted this rationalist approach. Theology imposed a new order which was based upon God's rules, as interpreted and propagated by the Christian papacy. If education is concerned with the pursuit of truth and the revelation and understanding of reality, then the Church, as the sole fount of education until the modern age, perverted the direction and definition of educational development from Roman times. Its position as an arm of government, through its established status in England, has further complicated the relationship between education and the state since that time and through to today. It will be seen that the established Church in England has contributed significantly to educational policymaking throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Chapters 2 and 5).

Feudalism, which emerged in the ninth century, was a decentralised model, where power resided in the hands of the local aristocracy whose authority derived from their ownership of land and people. In England the monarchy was stronger and more unified than in many other European countries and a chain of obligation and obeisance existed from the king, through the aristocratic strata, to the serf. Towns and cities fell outside the mechanism of feudalism because of their independent 'charters'. Their social and political structures were dominated by trade and financial systems. In addition, or, rather, parallel to this feudal network and municipal organisation, was the Church. Through a common acceptance of 'the divine right of kings' the Church exerted a continuing influence on secular power structures which was often the cause of tension and brooding rivalry between church and state. After the Reformation in England church and state were fused together in the monarchy which, from the mid-sixteenth century, exerted absolute power within a clearly defined absolutist state structure.

The evolution of the absolutist state, which found its strongest European exemplification in England and France in the seventeenth century, arose from the absolutist theocracy of the papacy. The Pope was God's chosen representative on Earth and thus was omnipotent and omniscient. This inevitably led to

tensions between the authority of Catholic Christendom in Rome and its many emerging nation-states ruled by kings who declared themselves to have 'divine right'.

The era of absolutism was founded on the premise that the state could guarantee order, legality and justice through the sovereignty of the king; the theory of property which held that all belonged to the king (including people); the fact that the king had a 'divine right' to govern in absolute terms; and through the acknowledgement that the king 'personified' the state ("L'Etat, c'est moi." Louis XIV, 1655).

Vincent (1987) suggests that:

"...it is important to realise that the impersonal State of the twentieth century originated in the personal State of the sixteenth century."

(p 51)

Although absolutism was succeeded by new developments which sought to re-affirm democracy and curtail the unlimited power of the monarch and, thereby, the state itself, it is clear that many of the central precepts of absolutism:

"...became deeply embedded in legal theory and practice and still underpin some of our vocabulary on the state."

(ibid. p 76)

This is a very cogent point in contemporary analysis of developments in the relationship between education and state in Britain from the mid-1980s onwards. Measures which have been deeply unpopular and discredited within the education profession have been enacted by a Government secure in its authority and legitimacy, and in the near certainty that they will be implemented by professionals who accept the authority of the state to enact the measures but who, in many cases, oppose the measures themselves. The absolutist state has not entirely ceased to exist.

Despite the establishment and development of some key concepts, the modern notion of statehood, in general terms, did not begin to crystallise until the power of absolute monarchy was challenged. In England this occurred in the seventeenth century, and in France in the eighteenth century.

It was Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) who first influenced European thought with his desire "to make a more curious search into the rights of states and duties of subjects". Hobbes was, according to Held (1983):

"a point of transition between a commitment to the absolutist state and the struggle of liberalism against tyranny."

(p 3)

Hobbes was concerned with the maintenance of order. He explored the question of the necessity of the state and its form. In his writings Hobbes concluded that there had, for the maintenance of order, to be a sovereign state whose rule and will was absolute but whose authority was conferred by the people.

Hobbes did not live to see the 'Glorious Revolution' of 1688, although he witnessed the developments which led to the Civil War and the establishment of a Parliamentary Commonwealth. The deposing of James II led England towards a more liberal and constitutional evolution mainly as a result of the demands of the aspiring classes connected with the period of agrarian and early industrial capitalism (Hall 1984, p 10).

Constitutionalism arose from the effects of the declining significance of monarchy. The term implies some diversification of authority and thus a limit to it. The state is seen as "the guardian of constitutional order" (Vincent 1987, p 79). Constitutionalism is a system of in-built checks and balances on power and, although it heralded the rise of liberalism in this country, it was not in practice a guarantor of democracy. However, the events which culminated in 1688, and the accession of William and Mary to the throne, secured the ultimate victory of parliamentary supremacy and the

beginning of the burgeoning of liberal democracy which has maintained its influence to our own times.

Benn and Peters (1959) make the point that the idea that valid law might be created by an act of will "and not simply discovered by an act of understanding" was a revolutionary one, and that without it "the modern theory of the state could scarcely have emerged" (p 257). The importance of this lies in the fact that through this idea the pre-eminence of political authority is established. Thus:

"The law-making state became the source of legitimacy for all other forms of social organisation; as the locus of sovereignty, it was unique."

(ibid.)

John Locke (1632-1704) claimed that 'the state' was the sum of individuals which existed before the state was established. States were established to guide society and could be revoked if they were perceived to be failing its subjects (as happened in 1688). Individuals had natural rights, granted by the laws of nature, and thus sovereign power resided naturally in the people themselves. Governments only ruled and their legitimacy was sustained by the will of the people. Held (1983) says:

"Political activity for Locke is instrumental; it secures the framework or conditions for freedom so that the private ends of individuals might be met in civil society. The creation of a political

community or government is the burden individuals have to bear to secure their ends."

(p 13)

The state has a moral basis of supremacy because it alone is concerned with the 'common good' above sectional interests. Defining the 'common good', however, is problematic to say the least. Government policies which were meant to benefit a particular section of society would be criticised, as many educational policies often are, for example, on the grounds that sectional interest was being implemented at the expense of public interest. But is it possible to realise the interests of everyone? Benn and Peters(1959) suggest not:

"Political problems very often demand a choice between conflicting interests. And though there may be good reasons for a given choice, it can rarely be one in which all interests are harmonies in a transcendent interest..."

(p 272)

They suggest, instead, that policy-making can be approached "in a spirit of impartiality" (p 273). This is a weak argument. Governments are rarely able to act in the general interest without reference to philosophic conviction, a perception of popularity with the electorate and the timing of the next general election, and the views of those who fund the Party machine. As will be seen (Chapter 4) the educational reforms in England in the 1980s derived from the ideological convictions

of the new right and it is clear that they mainly benefitted a particular section of society.

Locke's ideas formed the basis of much political constitutional development in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In Britain his ideas developed movements towards the right of individuals, popular sovereignty, majority rule, the division of powers within the state, constitutional monarchy, and a representative system of parliamentary government (op.cit. p 14).

One can see connections between Locke's advocacy of individual freedom within a strong and secure state and the basic tenets of 'Thatcherism' in the 1980s. Elements of Constitutionalism and Absolutism have become bedfellows as the British state in the closing years of the twentieth century grapples with the dilemma of declining economic prosperity and aspiring social demands. Vincent (1987) makes the point that:

"Neither the Labour Party nor Conservative theorists have really attempted to articulate a theory of the state. The old latent distrust of the state has crept into both ideological traditions. We are now left with the inevitable crudity and ignorance of those, who, within the confines of a powerful state, call for 'something' to be rolled back."

(p 118)

Locke's ideas were further developed by Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) and James Mill (1773-1836). Their espousal of 'liberal democracy' rested on a central claim that there must be limits on legally sanctioned power.

Government was to be accountable and charged with the task of securing the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people. People should be free to engage in and enjoy their own interests while the state acted as umpire ensuring that the conditions for this to take place were maintained and developed (this was certainly the central tenet of the Conservative administrations between 1951 and 1964, for example). To this end the state had, above all, to provide defences for the nation and to promote the conditions for the free market and free exchange.

This 'laissez-faire' model of government was counter-balanced by an advocacy of state intervention in areas which would undermine the happiness and well-being of the greatest number.

David Held cites law and order as a prime example:

"The enactment and enforcement of law, backed by the coercive powers of the state, and the creation of new state institutions was legitimate to the extent that it upheld the general principle of utility."

(in McLennan et al., 1984, p 44)

This is an argument familiar to anyone who is acquainted with the rhetoric of the Government throughout the 1980s and it is a factor of 'Thatcherism' which will be dealt with later (Chapter 4).

John Stuart Mill (1806-73) sought to further develop ideas of liberal democracy by addressing issues related to the autonomy of individuals. The only acceptable reason for state intervention, he suggested, was to ensure the protection of the citizenry from harm. J.S. Mill advocated the promotion of a society where the individual could be assured of free development in all aspects of endeavour. Representative government created conditions favourable to both liberty and reason, for the electorate were then free to choose their rulers based on periodic critical reflection.

The creation of representative government, which began to be implemented effectively in this country from the passing of the Reform Act in 1832, was, to some extent, an attempt to overcome the problem posed by the logical tension between a 'sovereign state' and a 'sovereign people'. The state enacts the law and has jurisdiction over its peoples, but it is the people themselves who confer this authority on the state. The development of universal suffrage and a system of parliamentary government which requires a government in power to submit

itself to the electorate within five years of assuming office goes some way towards investing people with a share of national sovereignty. This concept of balance between 'strong' state and 'free' individual is central to any understanding of modern Conservatism (see Chapter 4).

It can be seen that liberal democracy has drawn upon key concepts from many stages of the development of statehood since classical times. It contains elements of absolutism with liberalism and therein lies its fundamental tension. It is inevitable that suppressed hostilities on the part of some of its peoples will surface from time to time against the state because democracy implies that a minority of people will be dissatisfied with the decisions of the state. (One might note that the Conservative governments elected in 1979, 1983, 1987 and 1992 in each instance did not secure over 50% of the popular vote).

Since 1979 the State, through a succession of Conservative governments, has been highly interventionist in state education and it has been active not only through the structural and organisational changes it has imposed, but also for ideological reasons. The power of the State has been wielded to impose pedagogical changes which have been openly and consistently criticised by educationalists and teachers because of their

brazenly ideological overtones. Clearly, in a liberal democracy, government intervention is acceptable in order to ensure the protection of people against 'harm'. Claiming that certain classroom methodologies and epistemological selections are harmful to children is contentious at least, and certainly value-laden, and brings into question the issue of ideological influence upon educational policy-making.

Many would say that this interventionism is acceptable because state schools exist to promote the values of society which are legitimated by the authority of the state. This idea has credence, of course, in the historical intervention of the state in the development of schooling. As Dyson (1980) says:

"The close relationship of both the theory and the practice of education to the idea of the state found its expression in a moralistic pedagogy that stressed the authority of the teacher as the interpreter of the great moral ideas of his time and the community's need for rigorous 'binding', for social discipline and 'collective forces'."

(p 94)

The rise of the corporate, impersonal and seemingly uncaring state has been concurrent with the demise of the family which:

"was once a multi-functional organisation within which men and women found their work, amusements, and religion under patriarchal government; but nowadays...its functions have dwindled to little

more than the regulation of sexual relations and the procreation and care of children."

(Benn & Peters 1959, p 256)

This fragmentation of social hegemony has put in question a once natural assumption of allegiance to the state through the manifestly manageable scale of a society based upon indigenous family structures but since eroded by the effects of Fordism, multiculturalism, and pluralistic and competing value systems.

Thus, the importance of schools as instruments of state apparatus cannot be overlooked. Take, for instance, the role of the education system as a mechanism of vocational stratification and allocation. It is the state which establishes and controls the mechanisms of examinations and, thereby, access to positions of authority and influence and it is the state that has a vested interest in the promotion of social hegemony, made less certain since the erosion of common secure family structures. The school's role has been augmented by this decline in the strength of the family - its pastoral, mentoring role strengthened - and, therefore, its usefulness to the state, keen to sustain social hegemony, intensified. The relationship between the state and its education system becomes, therefore, ever more important. It could be argued that one of the reasons education has risen so rapidly to the forefront of the general political agenda in the 1980s and

1990s is simply the fact that this point has been more widely recognised.

The 'nation-state', based upon a unity of culture expressed through a common language and literature "and a feeling of loyalty for a common land" (Dyson 1980, p 129), has been bolstered by a national curriculum which insists that pupils should know about Tudors and Stuarts but "merely nods in the direction of cultural pluralism" (Kelly 1990, p 98).

Clearly, the rationalist approach towards law making and enforcement developed by the Greeks and Romans is far removed from that evidenced in educational policy making in England in the closing years of the twentieth century. Reason has been supplanted by rhetoric:

"the deliberate use of language to influence the attitudes and values of others, to persuade by devices other than rational argument, to obfuscate realities..."

(Kelly 1992, p 136)

and through the blurring of logical distinctions, the use of emotive language, the use of metaphor and argument from analogy (op.cit. pp 136 - 144), the power and authority of the state has been utilised in a manner which has less to do with democracy than sectional political ideology.

In historical terms it is clear that the replacement of simple social structures (citizen / slave) by complex social infra-structures encompassing political, demographic, multicultural, multi-faith and economic factors is going to generate a different educational demand from that, say, of a rhetorical debate at a Greek gymnasium for the sons of free Athenians, but it is from the Athenian rationalist model that the 1988 National Curriculum takes its source.

In briefly reviewing some comparative models of state involvement and interaction with education it may be possible to unearth some common factors which will help illumine the development of public education in England. But first, having explored the notion of 'statehood', it will be prudent to similarly focus upon the concept of 'ideology'.

b. Notions of Ideology

If it is difficult to define the characteristics of the British state then it is not difficult to appreciate the related fact that there are competing and conflicting ideologies at work in Britain and, indeed, throughout western Europe. One only has to see the painful and protracted arguments abounding as the European Union contrives to hammer together some semblance of unity to realise that there has been born no certain and clear legacy to follow post-imperialist nationalism. This creates a dilemma for public education because education, being a process which is concerned with the selection of values, is, as we have seen, a political activity. Michael Apple (1990) points out that:

"educators could not fully separate their educational activity from the unequally responsive institutional arrangements and the forms of consciousness that dominate advanced industrial economies like our own."

(p 1)

Hierarchical societies imply that schools will be involved in the mechanisms of social and economic mobility, vocational selection and the reproduction of the division of labour (op.cit.) Clearly then, schools are bound up in the pursuit of ideological aims which are determined by factors associated

with the cultural, economic and political values prevailing at a given time. This will be clearly seen in a later consideration of educational models in ancient Greece, Revolutionary and Napoleonic France, and Soviet Russia

The role schools fulfil in the reproduction of an unequal society through the transmission of (selected) culture is an issue which has been well researched (Pierre Bourdieu in France, and Basil Bernstein and Michael Young in England, for instance). Michael Apple in the USA has made an extensive study of the ideological functioning of schooling since the late 1970s and his consideration of the nature of ideology is particularly helpful.

It is essential, Apple maintains, to be aware of the sophistication of the whole concept of 'ideology':

"What ideology means is problematic usually. Most people seem to agree that one can talk about ideology as referring to some sort of 'system' of ideas, beliefs, fundamental commitments, or values about social reality, but here the agreement ends."

(p 20)

The problem depends of the perceived scope and function of ideology which, Apple suggests, can have several interpretations.

Ideology can be concerned with specific occupational issues, broader political programmes and social movements, or with comprehensive world views and outlooks. Such differentiations of scope, from the narrow to the universalistic, can be characterised by one of two basic functional determinants. The first is a desire to promote a form of false consciousness "which distorts one's picture of social reality and serves the interests of the dominant classes in a society" (ibid.), and the second promotes systems of interacting symbols "that provide the primary ways of making otherwise incomprehensible social situations meaningful" (ibid.).

The first model is the least attractive. It is a Machiavellian construct, a means to political ends, which many would argue is exemplified by the Thatcherite rhetoric of the 1980s (Kelly 1990, and Ball 1990, for instance). This suggestion is given further credibility if one agrees with Apple's assertion that ideology is usually taken to have the following three distinctive features:

- 'legitimation' - the justification of group action and its social acceptance;
- 'power conflict' - between people seeking or holding power;
- 'style of argument' - a special rhetoric.

(Apple 1990, p 22)

All three features are evident in the manoeuvring of Thatcherism in the 1980s, none more so than in the rhetoric employed. Through cleverly constructed and delivered rhetoric the ideology of the right assumed ascendancy over that of the left in populist terms. Thus, the reforms in education, culminating in the 1988 Act and in further consolidating actions afterwards, were given legitimacy through the power of rhetoric which minimalised effective opposition because the rhetoric masked reality, in terms of popular acceptance. As Kelly indeed says, "we must separate the reality from the rhetoric" (Kelly 1990, p 53).

The 'socialisation' tradition, which questions the selection of school knowledge and views schools as having a social mechanism function, has been usurped by the 'achievement' model, one which leaves school knowledge unexamined and supposedly neutral. The National Curriculum imposed by the 1988 Act has ratified the enduring domination of high-status knowledge and despatched areas of curriculum to the periphery, if not oblivion, which posed challenges to establishment values. The stratification of knowledge mirrors the stratification of society. As Apple says:

"One major reason that subject-centred curricula dominate most schools...is at least partly the result of the place of the school in maximising the production of high-status knowledge. This is closely interrelated with the school's role

in the selection of agents to fill economic and social positions in a relatively stratified society."

(Apple 1990, p 38)

Apple (1979) has made the point that schools are mechanisms of cultural distribution. Through the selection of curricula and by pedagogical approaches which may emphasise one part of the curriculum at the expense of others, selected values can be propagated and maintained.

Drawing attention to the Marxist view, propounded by Gramsci and others, that it is the dominant class within a society which controls the knowledge-preserving and producing institutions, thereby preserving the ideological dominance of the status quo, Apple suggests that maybe:

"the 'reality' that schools and other cultural institutions select, preserve and distribute may need to be seen as a particular 'social construction' which may not serve the interests of every individual in society."

(Apple 1979, pp26-27)

However, Apple cites this argument as being too generalised and, as Whitty (1974) suggests, it offers no explanation as to how and why reality comes to be constructed in certain ways and how it manages to resist being overthrown.

The introduction and acceptance of a national curriculum in this country in the 1980s which was openly regarded as reactionary and unsatisfactory by many educationalists is a case in point. The 1988 Act contained an assortment of measures, including the National Curriculum, which were ideologically conceived. It could be argued that opposition to much of the content of the 1987 Bill was vociferous, as will be seen (Chapter 5), but impotent because of the Government's ideological intent. Discourse was dominated by rhetoric and selective, even emotive, language used by The Right to control the debate. The whole process was one of power-coercion and, although it was a legitimate process, it brings into question issues relating to the efficacy of the democratic process within a system of representative government.

Discourse was deliberately engineered to obfuscate reality and bring about intended changes which were grounded in the ideology of Conservatism and free-market economics and promote, according to Kelly (1990), an ideology of instrumentalism, commercialism and elitism which is conceptually at odds with the process of individual development [p 46 ff]. It could be argued that the legitimisation of such an ideology, which is concerned essentially with societal development rather than that of any individual's personal capacities for their own ends, distances the schooling process even further from the

aims of education. This will, indeed, be a theme of the concluding chapter of this study.

Indeed, it could be argued that as society has become more complex and multi-layered and the roles of individuals have become more varied and disparate, it is impossible for public education to cater for this individual development and that schools can only be concerned with the development of *society*, even if that implies the abandonment of individual concern. Thus concerns for the curriculum are nothing to do with a wholesome education, the development of the whole person, but rather with the needs of the state as a whole. There is nothing new about this phenomenon, as will be evidenced from the comparative studies which follow, it is simply a fact that increasingly complex social orders obscure individual needs and growth. The question is can it be 'both' or must it be 'or' ?

Central to any discussion of the relationship between ideology and schooling is the notion of hegemony. Rachel Sharp (1980) suggests that:

"Hegemony refers to a set of assumptions, theories, practical activities, a world view through which the ruling class exerts its dominance. Its function is to reproduce on the ideological plain the conditions for class rule and the continuation of the social relations of production. Hegemonic beliefs and practices thus shape practical ideologies and penetrate the level of common sense, mixing and

mingling with ideological practices more spontaneously generated."

(p 102)

Sharp does not insinuate that this is a consciously manipulative process; rather, that hegemony has to be realised against "countervailing tendencies produced by the structural location of the working class in the labour process and elsewhere" (ibid.). This analysis echoes closely that propounded by Raymond Williams (1973) who suggested that there is a selective tradition at work which continually makes and remakes the dominant culture by incorporating any initiatives which might threaten the mainstream within its central currents. Nowhere could this phenomenon be more apparent than in the sudden shift to the right by the Labour Party, following its 1992 election defeat, and its compliance with the view that opted-out schools were here to stay.

Hegemonic practice succeeds, Sharp maintains, when it has produced "an unquestioned, taken-for-granted attitude towards how things are" (p 103), thus reproducing and preserving the status quo.

Sarup (1982) makes the point that Gramsci, the Italian Marxist, viewed hegemony not only in terms of the control exercised politically and economically by the ruling class, but also in its success

"in projecting its own particular way of seeing life and the world, so that this is accepted as 'common sense' and part of the natural order by those who are in fact subordinated to it."

(p 62)

The emergence of 'Thatcherite Populism' (see Chapter 4) and its sustenance through two deep economic recessions, suggests that this is exactly what has occurred in Britain since 1979. Sharp draws attention to this process operating within curriculum development imposed from the centre:

"This is because the increasing fragmentation of knowledge into narrowly focused specialisms leaves most people, outside the scope of their occupational role, subjected to the 'tyranny of common sense', a common sense structured throughout by hegemonic meanings."

(Sharp 1980, p 158)

The discrete subject emphasis of the National Curriculum exemplifies this point.

Schools operate within the system, not apart from it. They are an important state apparatus inevitably tied up with its values and interests; as Apple (1982) points out, schools "do not exist in a political vacuum" (p 4). Rather, they are constricted in structural terms by the power of the state:

"Hence, the role state intervention plays in legitimising and setting limits on the responses that education can make to the processes of

stratification, legitimation, and accumulation is essential."

(ibid.)

This precept is clearly exemplified in the educational policy-making of the 1980s when the dissenting, left of centre, view of the educational world was viewed as anarchical and curtailed through legislation which aimed to move control from the rim of the wheel back to the hub.

One factor which cannot be overlooked is the concept of change. The momentum of change which had been sweeping through developments in curriculum theory and practice in the post-Plowden years was arrested in the late '80s as a result of ideological hostility to the 'progressive' values being promulgated. The pendulum had swung too far and the perceived radical ideology of the left was brought under control easily by the Conservative government because, as Blenkin, Edwards and Kelly (1992) make clear:

"For some, change - and especially social change - has been viewed as a process of deterioration from some kind of golden age of perfection; change is the process by which things get worse rather than better...The response to this view of change is to attempt to arrest it, to stop things from getting worse, to keep things as they are, or, better, to take them back to where

they used to be."

(p 8)

This seemingly populist move to return education to its conservative nineteenth century roots with an emphasis once again upon academic standards and examinations, an orientation towards high status knowledge and a hierarchical array of institutions related to buying power and geographical fortuity, has succeeded because of this conceptual phenomenon.

Can education be ideology-free? Can teaching be neutral? In a liberal society ideological neutrality is carefully preserved, indeed promoted, in the name of tolerance and individual liberty. In liberal democracies such as Britain it is regarded as central to the national way of life (Nicholas, 1983, [p 218ff]).

Corbett (1965) says of a liberal society that:

"it offers an open forum in which all opinions can be aired and all positions argued for. Their merits are supposed to be an open question."

(p 152)

But Corbett, like Nicholas (op.cit.), suggests this notion is a sham on the grounds that:

"liberalism is not in fact an impartial referee in the struggle of ideas; it is a leading contender

in the struggle, claiming implicitly at least, to rule the others out."

(ibid.)

Political ideology, by definition, must be evangelical by nature.

It was the illiberal side of Thatcherism which ushered in the educational reforms which culminated in the 1988 Act. The measures were designed to de-bunk and arrest the perceived progressive ideologies which had held sway since the 1960s.

The promotion of a knowledge-led model of the curriculum could not, of course, have been neutral because knowledge is viewed in hierarchical terms. The terms 'core' and 'foundation' subjects, with religious education (and 'basically Christian' collective worship) singled out as an *hor_A d'oeuvre*, laid out clearly a curriculum plate rich in ideological taste and philosophical selectivity. Marx was out, Aristotle was back in.

The point is that it may be difficult to argue that the objective pursuit of truth and reason can take place within a school at all. There are insurmountable obstacles both theoretical and practical which make this objective virtually unattainable. These include issues of teacher neutrality, the

selection of content, the choice and availability of resources, the constraints imposed by testing and assessment, and the influences of the hidden curriculum and, above all, the power and influence of the state.

Although there have been attempts to promote the concept of the neutral chairperson, most notably Stenhouse through the Humanities Curriculum Project (1970), it is now generally agreed that the idea is not a feasible one in practical terms. It would seem logical that within a liberal democracy teachers should be engaged in the process of promoting free access to as wide a spectrum of thought and opinion as possible to allow the development of free choice and selection of viewpoints on the part of the learner. This model is at odds though with a view of the curriculum which is based on a hierarchy of traditional subject disciplines.

The imposition of a mandatory national curriculum could well be viewed, from a liberal standpoint, as a vehicle for manipulation of thought and outlook. To claim that it is a 'minimum entitlement' that does not preclude the study of areas outside its remit is a misnomer because in practice the amount of attainment targets and the pressure of testing and assessment leaves little time for any extended curriculum other than that which has been specifically prescribed. School

budget shortfalls at a time when local authorities, especially those controlled by Labour Councils under threat of having central funds withdrawn because of disapproved taxation policies, are short of money further preclude curriculum deviation. The encouragement of market competition between schools induces a hidden curriculum which encourages conformity and the pursuit of 'traditional' values. 'Parent-power' allies itself to the steady and safe conservative values implicit in a traditional subject-based curriculum.

These issues raise basic questions about the purposes of schooling:

If, in a liberal democracy, the state is regarded as a source of power and authority, periodically checked and assessed by the electorate, but nevertheless with the people subservient to the government's policies (and, therefore, its ideological framework), can 'education' prosper in its schools? Clearly, if education is viewed in terms of being valued as an intrinsic end in itself rather than a purely utilitarian process, if it is to be principally concerned with the pursuit of truth and reason, then the situation is problematic on several grounds.

The first of these is organisational. Schools exist to educate large groups of pupils who must be 'educated' at the same time

and then be submitted to the procedures of formal assessment, mainly through external examinations. There is little scope in this model for the individual pursuit of truth or for any passport to investigative discovery. Time, resources and organisational factors make education more akin to an extended training and memorising course than to a purely educational experience.

Secondly, the schooling process is essentially one of vocational grading and selection. The egalitarian ideology of the left which promoted the rise of comprehensive schools and the decline of selection at eleven plus was unsuccessful in terms of the public's perception of the purpose of schooling. The establishment of legal mechanisms to enable grant-maintained schools to 'change their character' and become selective schools again is evidence, if it were needed, of an ideological commitment by the Conservative governments of the 1980s and 90s towards encouraging a return to the rigid stratification of ability and a preservation of the supremacy of the academic over the vocational.

Thirdly, schools operating in a capitalist, corporate state, where the dominating motive is the maximisation of economic profit, are inevitably perceived as a part of that process by virtue of their assigned role as trainer and vocational

clearing house.

As Sarup (1983) says, education

"should be seen as a historical category; no 'education' exists independently of the functions which it serves or the uses to which it is put...education is a crucial ideological instrument."

(pp 145-146)

It may be necessary therefore to examine perceptions of the role of the school in historico-political terms and analyse the degree of convergence between the aims of schooling and those of education.

What is of central importance is to remember that schools were designed to inculcate behavioural consensus, that "the curriculum field has its roots in the field of social control" (Apple 1990, p 47). Also that, as far as this country is concerned:

"Although running the risk of over-generalisation the thesis seems plausible that in the course of the nineteenth century the ruling class gained effective control over a crucial instrument for establishing its dominance: the form and content of schooling."

(Sharp 1980, p 158)

In historical terms it may be more accurate to describe this process as 're-establishment', for in pre-industrial times

education had been totally in the control of the ruling classes. There was no need, or demand, for the ruled to be educated and thus the ruling class held the means of total control. Numeracy and literacy and an awareness of basic geographical and historical facts were only made necessary by the new industrialised mechanisms of production, the expanding geography of the empire, and the need to inculcate some sense of national hegemony among the crowded masses of the expanding urban centres. Knowledge brought with it new and threatening aspirations to the millions of members of the underclass, and thus the state, the ruling classes, had to assume, comparatively quickly, total control over the educational apparatus in order to preserve its own ideology.

The model of education that was brought under state control was derived from the classical model systematised by the Greeks and, in particular, Aristotle. If the state model was a poor, diluted version of that found in the hallowed halls of Eton, Harrow, Rugby and Winchester, its classicism was its hallmark nevertheless. It will be prudent to review state education's cultural origins.

If the establishment of a national system of education in England was part of a mechanism of social control and national economic need which had little to do with bestowing on the

common man the benefits of education *per se*, then perhaps it may be worthwhile studying two situations where not only a new educational system was established but also a new state. In the France of the 1790s and the Russia of the 1920s, faced with the challenge, and the opportunity, to construct a model from scratch, as it were, and freed through revolutions, in theory at least, from historical and social legacies, what emerged in qualitative terms as far as the provision of education was concerned ?

c). Public Education : Comparative Perspectives

i. The Athenian Ideal

There are issues of political philosophy which transcend the epoch of their consideration. All associations of people collected together in some form of statehood have to contend with the same problems and ethical and moral dilemmas. Educational questions and hypotheses posed by the philosophers of ancient Greece strike a familiar note to the late twentieth century ear and thus the writings of Plato, Aristotle and others have a continuing pertinence.

There was no Greek state, of course, in the time of either of these two philosophers. The numerous city states were in their final years prior to the conquests of Alexander and their fusing together to create a greater Hellenistic hegemony. Philosophers, despite their heightened sense of perception, do not usually possess the gift of prophecy and Aristotle, who merits particular study simply because he poses practical problems and pragmatic solutions, was no exception. His concern is for the realisation of the utopian city state with the existing social structure that he was acquainted with. There is no advocacy of re-modelling or revolution, he is no political activist but rather a philosopher-adviser suggesting reform and refinement. In this sense his ideas present sparks of illumination for a better understanding of the infra-structures

of models of state in any age.

It will be important to gain some basic understanding of the structure of the Athenian state which provided the context for Aristotle's ideas.

The social composition of many city states was based generally on democratic lines but government was in the hands of a minority of people who were classed as citizens. In Athens in 313BC, for instance, there were only 84,000 citizens compared to 35,000 resident aliens, who could take no part in government, and 400,000 slaves. The rulers were, therefore, outnumbered by over five to one and a strong and reliable constitution was essential to maintain order.

Grant (1982) maintains that one of the most important phenomena of the Hellenistic age was the development of a common form of education (p 134). This education was of a predominantly rhetorical kind. "The ability to be a speaker of words was the second of the arts (next to being a man of action)" (ibid.).

The formal education of a Greek citizen at the time of Aristotle extended from the age of seven to twenty and occurred in three progressive stages. The 'elementary' stage from age to seven to fourteen was not under public control but available

through private means. Its curriculum consisted of reading, writing, gymnastics and music.

From age fifteen to seventeen pupils underwent physical and musical training and studied some mathematics and science but it was the study of literature which was predominant. Grant (op.cit.) points out that writers "were studied in minute detail according to a meticulous plan" (p 135). Not only was there this prototype 'National Curriculum' but the familiar concern for social conditioning, common to all state-sponsored educational programmes, was also a major component:

"...the programmes increasingly concentrated not only on teaching but on training of character and instruction in social behaviour: that is to say, they became a sort of moral preparation for citizenship."

(op.cit. p 135)

These 'schools' of pupils congregated at the *gymnasium* where physical training was combined with learning and listening to visiting lecturers. In the Athens of Aristotle the pupils (boys, of course) wore wide hats and black cloaks and were encouraged to feel a strong sense of common identity and loyalty:

"Fostering companionship, common ideas and esprit de corps, the gymnasia had increasingly replaced the old family life as the principal training ground of the young, and became the rallying points of all who possessed, or hoped

to possess, Greek culture and education."

(op.cit. p 136)

This could surely be translated to Eton or Harrow today. The elite microcosmic society of an English public school with its fast-track admissions system to the higher echelons of ruling power and influence. The influence of this model, through the Renaissance to the present day, has painted all educational reform with a nostalgic and elitist brush and stifled, perhaps smothered would be a better word, egalitarianism and the pursuit of pure learning. Those who would fight for equality of educational opportunity for all are battling against in-built prejudices and assumptions which have weathered twenty-three centuries.

The cause of this legacy is the rigid class system which existed in Greece between the citizenry and the huge population which played no part in the governing of society, the resident aliens and the slaves. In a pattern reflected down the ages and throughout the emerging nation-states of Europe, there was an education for the rulers and an education for the ruled. Put in this context, reflecting upon the rigid social pyramids upon which societies from ancient times have been structured, the advances in educational egalitarianism in England in the twentieth century have been colossal and the setbacks and disappointments logical and to be expected.



For Aristotle, the transmission of cultural values was an essential pre-requisite for social stability and the enduring quality of the constitution:

"Education must be related to the particular constitution in each case, for it is the special character appropriate to each constitution that set it up at the start and commonly maintains it, eg. the democratic character preserves a democracy, the oligarchic an oligarchy. And in all circumstances the better character is a cause of a better constitution."

(The Politics: VIII i 1337a11)

This conservative doctrine is one which sees moral education, in terms of a study, understanding and acceptance of constitutional laws, as a vital part of a formal educational programme:

"...of all the safeguards that we hear spoken of as helping to maintain constitutional stability, the most important...is education for the way of living that belongs to the constitution...It is useless to have the most beneficial laws...if (citizens) are not going to be trained and have their habits formed in the spirit of that constitution."

(1310a12)

There must be "preparatory training" and preparation for vocation, but there must also be "training for the activities of virtue" (1337a11). There must be 'education for citizenship':

"For one must be able to work and to fight, but even more to be at peace and have leisure; to do the necessary and useful things, yes, but still more those of moral worth."

(1330a30)

As Kitto (1951) explains:

"The boy was not sent to school to work for a certificate and thereby given 'educational advantages'...The Greek...sent the boys to school to be trained for manhood - in morals, manners and physique."

(p 232)

No citizen can be isolated from society. He is part of the state and therefore has no right to be educated privately in private tastes and standards. There being "one aim for the entire state" it is logical that "education must be one and the same for all" (1337a11). Order, civility and the suppression of anarchy are paramount purposes of education. One can see clearly the basis of the differentiated education of the English system - the ordered education of the 'renaissance man', the inculcation of traditional values in the public fee-paying schools from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, the persistent predominance of the classical curriculum until economic reality causes a consternating and belated acceptance of the new technological bias.

Although Aristotle lived, by the standards of today, in a stable society with a clear and virtually uncontested social

hierarchy he still acknowledges that there will be controversy over any agreed aims of education, that there will be no "generally accepted assumptions about what the child should learn, either for virtue or for the best life" (1337a33). Further than this, "there is no agreement as to what in fact does tend towards virtue" (ibid.) and thus there will be differing opinions about the content of any moral education.

The proliferation of knowledge, beliefs and value-systems in the intervening centuries has made this philosophical maze ever more complex and intricate.

Taylor (1955), in his analysis of *The Politics*, makes the point that Aristotle saw public control of education as being necessary to inculcate in future citizens a loyalty to the constitution "and the ends it is designed to subserve" (p 106). In an age which sought to define and categorise realism, which accelerated understanding in so many spheres of knowledge and pigeon-holed this accumulation of discovery with careful systematisation, Aristotle was inevitably an advocate of the authoritarian state. Its very tidiness made this an appealing inevitability for him.

Yet there was another factor in the relationship of the state to education in the Athens of Aristotle and that was the status

of epic literature.

Kitto (1951) explains that:

"The real education of the Athenian...was given in the places of assembly - in the hours of talk in market place, colonnade or gymnasium, in the political assembly, in the theatre, at the public recitals of Homer, and at the religious processions and celebrations."

(p 37)

In other words, much of the educational experience was a public and open one and not an activity sequestered in a private room behind a closed door. The public recital Kitto refers to is an important phenomenon for the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were seminal works of literature for the Greeks, an assertion of the supreme virtues of the Greek hero and thus an exemplification of moral conduct and aspiration:

"For centuries these two poems were the basis of Greek education, both of formal school education, and of the cultural life of the ordinary citizen ...a citation from Homer was the natural way of settling a question of morals or behaviour."

(op.cit. p 44)

Homer saw a pattern to life, "a framework into which particular action is seen to fit" (p 55) and "the divine background" of epic literature "means ultimately that particular actions are at the same time unique and universal" (ibid.). Homer is then,

for the Greeks, the Bible. In his two greatest works are contained the equivalent of the lessons of the parables of Jesus, the wisdom of the *Proverbs* and the exultation of the *Psalms*. More than this, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are celebrations of Greekdom, a 'national' proclamation of pride. Their educational use belies a greater function as a catalyst for 'national' hegemony, for:

"next to the Greek language itself it was their common heritage of Homer which most gave to Greeks this conviction that, in spite of the differences and hatreds which divided them, they were one people."

(op.cit. p 45)

Is this not a familiar theme ? The passions aroused in debate about Shakespeare's place in the National Curriculum, an argument to which even the heir to the throne deems it necessary to contribute (1994), is surely of the same thread.

What is the nature then of the ideal education for a Greek citizen ? It is authoritarian, its rhetorical methodology suggests intellectual freedom but its epistemological structure is conservative, static and state-serving. Future citizens were led through a rigorous and extensive programme which made them literate, numerate, expressive, physically strong but, above all, loyal and obedient. The search for an ideal state is central to Aristotle's concerns but so is his desire to see the

preservation of the traditional.

In an age of scientific research and discovery and the increasing clarification of the causes of natural phenomena, a process that Aristotle contributed to hugely, Aristotle stands out as a traditionalist, a conservative, an advocate of the *status quo*. His sense of orderliness and defining categorisation of the world into finite groups and sub-groupings has had a influence on the development of educational systems over a period of two millennia. His influence is a pervading and, apparently, enduring one. As Barnes (1982) says:

"An account of Aristotle's intellectual afterlife would be little less than a history of European thought."

(p 86)

Grant (1982) reminds us that Cicero translated the Greek programme into his *Humanitas* and this later became the basis of Renaissance education (p 137); and Barnes points out that after Aristotle had been translated into Latin in the twelfth century his philosophy held sway for the following four centuries virtually unchallenged (op. cit. p 86).

The tension between intellectual freedom and moral training, which is an enduring dilemma for the state as well as the

educationalist was not ignored by Aristotle:

"...in modern times there are opposing views about the tasks to be set, for there are no generally accepted assumptions about what the child should learn, either for virtue or for the best life; nor yet is it clear whether this education ought to be conducted with more concern for the intellect than for the character of the soul."

(1337a33)

Aristotle offers no solution then, no pointer towards a reconciliation between intellectual freedom and behavioural conditioning. The importance of moral education is left to stand on its own merits and Aristotle opts for safety by assuming a conservative stance.

Aristotle's concern for the education of a 'good citizen' has permeated all public systems of schooling. That states have had their own perceptions of the definition of a 'good citizen' is beside the point. The fact remains that schools have been, and continue to be, the first and main conduit of social control. Whether this constitutes good education is another matter.

ii. Revolutionary & Napoleonic France

Revolution implies destruction and re-birth. The severing of Louis XVI's head from his body created in France the opportunistic necessity of creating a new state in which the instruments and apparatus of state could be re-modelled and re-aligned in a new order with each other. The period from 1792 until Napoleon's assumption of total power in France was short but this interregnum between two 'monarchies' presents an interesting study of an attempt by a 'new' state to create a political and moral order based upon democratic and egalitarian principles.

Here was a state determined to be unfettered by the legacy of feudalism and monarchical despotism and yet its era of revolution and idealism was, within a decade, smothered by the ambitions and personality of a single individual. Idealism was not enough. The state, the all-powerful core of a concentric hierarchy, triumphed and the individual was kept in check.

In the interim the revolutionary idealists, committed to liberty, equality and fraternity amongst the citizenry, attempted to create a new order which need have no connection with previous or neighbouring models. Even time itself was re-named and in the Constitution of 'Year 1' (1793) the state

declared that the education of the people was its responsibility; indeed, it stipulated that education was a 'civic right'. Preceding the English legislators by eighty years, this history of the assumption of a state's initial control of an education system presents an interesting and informative study.

The 1791 Constitution, establishing France as a constitutional monarchy, had proposed state control over a free public system of education but from the very beginning of this process of educational enfranchisement the values of the state were inherently locked into the schooling system. From March 1791 schoolteachers had to take an oath of allegiance associated with the civil constitution and in September of that year the state, for the first time, committed expenditure towards education and five months later teachers were prohibited from taking fees for pupils. Thus within the space of less than a year the new order clearly defined education as an activity not only under state patronage but firmly under state control.

The 'Bouquier Law' on primary schooling enacted at the end of Year 1 established the principle of obligatory primary schooling. Any private individual was allowed to open and run a school but there would be municipal surveillance and the syllabus had to include, besides the 3Rs, "the Rights of Man,

the Constitution and heroic and virtuous actions." Nearly two hundred years later, it is tempting to say, the 'Baker Law' in England established a compulsory syllabus which had to include, besides the 3Rs, the complete history of the Kings and Queens of England and the teaching of the Ten Commandments.

The state cannot control the process of education, that is an illogical and inconsistent concept. Education is a free-spirited enterprise and the state, any state, cannot sanction free-spiritedness for fear of losing control, for fear of anarchy. The new French state soon found that its intentions with education were being abused by economic uncertainties and human frailties. One suspects the symptoms are universal and timeless and, it would seem, insurmountable.

Within a year, for example, of Bouquier's obligation for pupils to attend primary school the law was abandoned because of cost; the syllabus was further circumscribed at the end of Year 2 and, besides the above components, 'republican morality, the French language, and the geography and history of a free people' were added. Additionally all teaching was to be conducted in standard French and pupils were to visit hospitals and workshops and, when needed, were to help in the fields.

Primary schools (for pupils aged 6 - 13) therefore were an

essential part of the process of hegemonisation, social stabilisation and economic regeneration. Where were the practical manifestations of the ideals of Rousseau who had formed the philosophical bedrock of the Revolution?

Here, surely, in this new world of individual liberty was the chance for an end to what Wordsworth described as

"...the first
Poetic spirit of our human life
By uniform control of after years,
In most, abated or suppressed..."

(*The Prelude* Book V 260-263)

Instead the Revolutionary years saw an ever-increasing suppression of the individual until the emancipatory hopes of universal education were abandoned altogether. In the Constitution of Year 3 (1795) education receives no mention whatsoever.

In that year the 'Daunon Law', applied to all levels of education, re-introduced school fees thus, at a stroke, replacing educational opportunity into the domain of an elite; reduced the number of required primary schools in each area; and established a system completely at odds with egalitarianism which, like its English counterparts to be, was concerned with social, vocational and occupational selection.

At primary level, girls and boys were to be educated separately with the former only being taught the 3Rs, republican morality and 'training in useful skills'. Boys leaving the *Ecole Polytechnique* were to proceed to specialised schools controlled by the Ministry of the Interior for artillery, military engineering, mines or civil engineering. [The similarities in England in the 1990s, with many secondary schools opting for specialisation status with full government encouragement and approval and City Technology Colleges having an obvious bias towards the technical, is apparent. The introduction of unannounced inspection visits to schools by municipal powers in Year 5 (1798) suggests that OFSTED has a longer pedigree than one might have imagined.

Interest and attention on secondary education in the Revolutionary period was more detailed and rigorous. The Revolutionary State, like all states since, was particularly interested in the education and training of its citizens about to become available for adult service to the state.

A law passed early in Year 3 established *Ecoles Centrales* in every Department (one school per 300,000). Entry was restricted to boys, the *liberty* of girls being constrained by persistent social perceptions of their role within the family, and the syllabus was to include maths, physics, natural history,

scientific method, political economy and legislation, history, hygiene, arts and crafts and ancient and modern languages. Every school was to possess a library, a natural history collection and a chemistry laboratory. Scholarships were to be provided for poorer families and teachers were to be appointed on the basis of a competitive examination.

Plus la difference! The qualitative divide between primary and secondary education present[^] a striking and familiar picture. The progressivism of the curriculum on offer reflecting not the medieval classicism of the English public school but the contemporary intellectual interests of late eighteenth century Europe. Acknowledgement of resources needs and even the mention of scholarship places, giving a tenuous link to revolutionary ideals. S/

If the Revolutionary period had achieved a peace with itself and its neighbours in Europe, instead of enduring 'Reigns of Terror' and political turbulence, economic bad luck (the harvests were, on the whole, disastrous in the 1790s) and intermittent administrative confusion, then the spirit of *Emile* may yet have triumphed. Instead, the new century saw the ascendancy of Napoleon who corrupted the failing ideals of the Revolution towards his own glorification and despotism. ?

Judges (1965) remarks that:

"In all its phases, the Revolution, its resources crippled by war, inflation and the insufficiency of capital confiscations to provide welfare services as a replacement for what the religious congregations had previously offered, failed to set up schools or to train teachers"

(p 173)

Its triumph of ideas remained a paper victory. The reality was "educational destitution" (ibid.).

Napoleon saw education in absolute instrumental terms. In his views is exemplified the extreme model of education for the ends of the state even to the detriment of the individual. His views are important to note because they have had an enduring impact on the French system and his imperial power enabled his views and interpretation of education to be enacted in practical measures. The Napoleonic model is a centralised one *par excellence* and thus presents interesting parallels with the trend towards a centralised system in England since 1979. As Cobban (1965) points out with reference to the contemporary French situation:

"If, today, the Rector of a university cannot appoint his secretary, dismiss a cleaner, or modify an academic course without reference to Paris, it is in

obedience to the dead hand of Napoleon."

(p 34)

The emperor's view of society was essentially that of a state-serving, and nepotistic, hierarchy where everyone played a part in serving their country and therefore, in effect, Napoleon Bonaparte. Consequently education had no relation to personal enlightenment and discovery, it was a purely practical concern enabling the state to be efficient and well-served by its members. As Archer (1971) succinctly puts it:

"Napoleon's two overriding aims of bringing about efficiency in the State and stability in society could not be served by treating unequals equally...As the inculcation of useful skills was to be the supreme end of instruction, and as the State required only small numbers of trained individuals, any extension of training to the masses would be economically wasteful and socially dangerous."

(p 138)

Thus the spluttering reforms of the Revolutionary period were silenced and a new and more stringent elitism introduced whose sole objectives were to service the state and keep it in order. Archer describes how instruction for the masses was limited, sufficient to cater for the needs of a mainly agricultural economy, and that tight control over secondary education ensured "that the best available talent would be channelled

into useful occupations." (ibid.)

Ellis (1991) makes the important point that Napoleon's educational reforms were effective because of his functional view of education:

"As such, he closely related it to the practical needs of the state and to the professional prospects of his educators. The main aim was to train the future military and civil leaders of France. He paid little attention to the elementary schools and largely neglected the education of women."

(p 46)

What is striking about this educational outlook is its refreshing openness and honesty. Commentators may feel positive or negative about it, but at least the model is clearly defined through its transparent functionalism. There is no fudged agenda, no hidden sub-text. Napoleon himself, speaking in the Council of State in 1806, declared that his chief aim was:

"to have a means whereby a lead may be given to political and moral conceptions."

(quoted in Geyl (1965) p 133)

Young people "should be made to fit the state of the nation and of society" (ibid. p 134). The personification of the state in the guise of the emperor himself took this functionalism along an intense and warped tangent which Taine in 1890, in a picture

which conjures a resemblance to the blind obedience of Hitler Youth in the present century to their *emperor*, described as "fanatical subjection, passionate devotion, and complete surrender of self to the Emperor" (quoted in Geyl, *op.cit.*p135).

The enormous process of civil reform and re-organisation, encompassed in the 'Napoleonic Codes' which codified the whole spectrum of French law, established a uniform and centralised order firmly based on imperial decree.

Ellis (*op.cit.*) points out that Napoleon's emphasis:

"was on loyalty and public service in the furtherance of his own grandeur, most evident perhaps in the Imperial Catechism introduced into all state schools as from 1806."

(p 46)

One wonders if this is just a mark of vanity and self-aggrandizement or whether there is a close relationship with other factors promoting national hegemony or even obedience - such as saluting the 'Stars and Stripes' in the American mid-west, or holding mandatory acts of collective worship each school day which are "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character" in Southall?

Certainly, if the state wishes to encourage conformity and uniformity it must control the reins of the curriculum. The introduction of the baccalaureate examination in France in 1809 ensured strict standardisation of the curriculum and, as Ellis (op.cit.) remarks:

"Strict governmental supervision, at times almost akin to military precision, was imposed on this system from the start."

(p 47)

The fact that the baccalaureate still survives intact and is still the pivotal mechanism for university entrance in France despite a post-Napoleonic history that has seen a monarchical restoration, the near calamitous war of 1870, the Third Empire, two world war invasions and several republics, surely speaks much for the strength, attraction and endurance of a rigidly centralised system and offers comparison to the English lineage of piecemeal confusion and disparity of aims which will be chronicled in detail later.

What was Napoleon's legacy in educational matters? Institutionally, they are the lycees, the baccalaureate and the *ecoles normale* (teacher-training establishments); structurally, the strict central control of the education system has persisted with the needs of the state being served through every measure of reform. As with her neighbour across the

Channel, attempts to democratize the education system have failed because of divisions within French society between the bourgeoisie and the working class and, also similarly, because of the separation of primary and secondary schooling. These characteristics are a Napoleonic bequest: for the emperor, secondary and higher education would provide skilled servants of the state and primary schools would create loyal, docile citizens.

Throughout the nineteenth century increasing industrialisation prompted modifications by subsequent regimes but there was no attempt to embark on a root and branch reform programme until the years leading up to the second world war when a tripartite system failed to be enacted in 1937. As Archer (1971) says:

"There was little success in democratization because of the fragmented nature of the political parties, and underlying this the cleavages dividing French society."

(p 146)

The riots of 1968 made reforms inevitable and politically expedient but the state still kept its basic control of the system and its direction:

"The new formula basically consisted in conceding various types of educational democratization in order to conserve the instrumentality of education to the polity. As such it represented a revised version of the Napoleonic credo, namely, 'Let the people's

rights to instruction not infringe upon State educational needs.'"

(op.cit. p 155)

Many would argue that throughout the 1980s in England the state, through the machinery of government, strengthened its control over the education system because it was proving too great a threat against the conservative establishment by its pursuit of egalitarianism and a perceived leftist agenda.

The strategy was rooted in an inherent ideological doctrine. Lawton (1994) explains the underlying point when he says that:

"...Conservatives tend to take for granted that society is, and should be, divided hierarchically into ranks or classes, and that the Platonic view of different kinds of educational training for different levels in society is part of the natural order."

(p 12)

The original nineteenth-century aims and objectives of the system, which will be examined later in detail, have been restored through a re-assertion of central control, a factor which has brought into sharp relief the instrumental value of an education system for the state. So too in France:

"...talk of decentralisation is now standard electoral rhetoric. The blunt fact remains that no government yet has brought itself to a voluntary renunciation of the centralised Napoleonic system. Once in power each succumbs to the belief that this politically

responsive structure will promote the
speedy achievement of its political aims..."

(op.cit. p 170)

iii. Soviet Russia

The Bolshevik Revolution which overthrew the Tsarist absolute state only to replace it with another one with similar 'monarchical' authority presents a case study of a situation where the ground rules were totally re-written in a way which differed from the situation in France after the removal of the Bourbons. As Dukes (1990) says:

"The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was the first major society to announce its creation according to a coherent ideology."

(p 215)

It must not be forgotten that the revolution of 1789 was superseded in France by the declaration of a constitutional monarchy and not a republic and, although afterwards there was a painful and bloody attempt to create a new order, the experimental turmoil simply proved rich soil for the germination of a new imperial state where the ideals of the revolution were submerged.

Lenin saw the need for the old bourgeois model to be completely dismantled before a new proletarian state could be created. Furthermore his vision was that of a scenario where the state eventually withered away and left only simple organisation structures in place under the control of the masses. In Lenin's vision it was necessary:

"...to train all the citizens, so that 'the government of men' could be transformed into an 'administration of things.'"

(op.cit. p 244)

Here, then, is an interesting anticipation of a state *without* a strong centre, whose political structure is essentially local and collective and where authority and decision-making is dispersed among the people. This vision denies the existence of a state controlled education system; indeed, there can hardly be a strong relationship between education and the central state where the state is purely a geographical concept.

If the communist intention had become a reality then it would have been interesting to witness the characteristics and qualities of the education that was devised and the method of its delivery.

The fact that Lenin's vision failed to materialise and that, in complete contrast, the most powerful authoritarian and totalitarian state quickly came into being - with rigid control over all the apparatus of state - offers opportunities to seek universal points of interest which may be illuminating concerning the relationship between education and state in universal terms.

What were the factors which denied Lenin's vision to be

realised? In a proletarian state, where social hierarchy has no place, it should be possible for education to flourish, unhindered and untainted by class interests. Yet from the late 1920s onwards, under Stalin, the Soviet education system, dictated from the centre, became the servant of the oppressive state and not the emancipator of the individual. It cannot be denied that the illiterate peasantry were given the skills of reading and writing within a comparatively short space of time through the 1920s and 1930s and that the new communist state achieved remarkable technological prowess through the transformation of its agrarian economy into one of the world's foremost industrial powers by the advent of the second world war, but the education of its workers was one where truth was dented and deformed by state propaganda and ideological perspective in order to maintain the supremacy of the Party.

There was, it cannot be denied, an urgent need for education to be involved in the process of salvaging the country from the ravages of civil war and revolution. In the mid-1920s industrial output had fallen to less than 20% of its pre-first world war level and ten million people had died through starvation, epidemic and war before the end of 1921.

The very radicalism of the new ideology made it inevitable that schools should also be secularised and taken over by the

machinery of the new state, specifically *The Party*, and used to deliver a programme of education which not only addressed the monumental scale of national illiteracy and ignorance but also imbued within the serfdom a basic understanding of the teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin which supposedly underpinned the new state.

It wasn't just that the economy was to be planned, the whole machinery of state rolled over Soviet life, and schools were a part of the general plan:

"Cultural revolution was a constituent part of Communist ideology, entailing the creation of a new co-operative outlook generally. In Lenin's view, the cultural revolution was to be closely linked with that in political and economic life. To maintain the connection between factory, farm and school, for example, education would be polytechnical."

(op.cit. p 254-55)

From the beginning, schools were to be part of the adhesive of the new society, an essential cog in the new wheel and thus education was left as a favoured mistress of the state and its progenic out-turn laid at the disposal of the state. If education had any hope of gaining its integrity with the advent of the new order, it was quickly disillusioned.

A decree in the winter of 1919 had declared that there was an obligation for all citizens between the ages of 8 and 50 years of age to learn to read and write. Schools for the new Red Army were quickly established.

"With these and other special institutions for workers and peasants, some eight million adults were taught to read and write in the first ten years of Soviet power."

(op.cit. p 257)

The period of turmoil in Russia following the overthrow of the Tsar saw the emergence, after the bitter struggle of the civil war, of the Russian Communist Party, the political organisation which had, at its centre, the oligarchic *Politburo* - the inner Cabinet of the Central Committee - which, until the collapse of the system after seventy years, determined the whole structure, direction and machinery of the state. Carr (1950) makes the point that:

"The notion of a centralised and disciplined party as the instrument of revolution was cardinal to Lenin's thought...Lenin later called the system... 'democratic centralism'."

(p 47)

Education was always central in this *schema* because for the state to function properly as an ideological entity its people had to be taught to think of the world order from the same standpoint, an echo of Aristotle's argument. Thus:

"The Bolsheviks' education system at first was a curious amalgam of state control, ideological straitjacketing, and progressive reform."

(Kort 1990, p 134)

Like the Athenian emphasis on moral discourse and revolutionary France's inclusion in the curriculum of 'republican morality' there was a determination in the new Russia to use the education system to promulgate the national philosophic code. The pattern is well-established: national systems of education in all differing political frameworks are conduits for the flow of collective obedience and loyalty to the ruling political system.

There was a political and an educational impetus in Russia between the two world wars, the two were inextricably linked: on the one hand the peasantry had to be politicised into the same mould, obedient to the state and the Party; and, on the other, the desperate needs of the outdated and battered economy made it imperative that the curriculum stressed technical subjects. But initially also:

"in order to break down old customs and habits, many progressive concepts were introduced, including coeducation at all levels, genuine student self-government, abolition of examinations, and liberalised discipline."

(op.cit. p 182)

The state, from the beginning, kept its hands on the reins of education. The Constitution of the USSR (1923) organised education on a republic, as opposed to a union, basis where progressivism could function to an extent, but:

"through the Constitution (it) reserved for the Union the establishment of 'the bases...of general principles in the domain of popular education.'"

(Dukes 1990, p 408)

This retention of central power was rooted in communist ideology. In order for the workers to succeed in their revolutionary aims the state, initially, had to have absolute control of events:

"Marx and Engels accepted to the full the traditional socialist hostility to the oppressive state...at the same time they recognised the need to establish a powerful state machine to consummate and establish the victory of the revolution through the dictatorship of the proletariat."

(Carr, op.cit. p 137)

Under Stalin the grip of the Party tightened and schools became ever more instrumental to the realisation of Party aims. The first 'Five Year Plan' drafted in 1927 and finalised in 1929 set targets for investment concentrated in heavy industry where labour productivity was to rise by 110%. Similarly, agricultural output would rise by 55%. This excessive emphasis on a planned economy created shortages of grain and a wages depression. The peasantry had to be re-vitalised as an acquiescent hegemonous mass and this meant that indoctrination, in the guise of 'education' was needed. Thus:

"The various liberalising reforms of the 1920s were largely done away with and replaced with

a stress on technical achievement, discipline, and heavy, unrelenting indoctrination."

(Kort, op.cit. p183)

There had to be a retreat from democratic reforms and innovations, from any sense of curricular freedom, towards a more traditional state-centred approach:

"The emphasis on technical education remained pronounced, as did the large dose of ideology in the curriculum, but at secondary level the authority of teachers and exams alike was re-established, and the (abolished) universities were restored."

(Acton 1986, p 241)

This indoctrination meant that the curriculum had to be sabotaged:

"History was rewritten to suit the needs of Stalin and the state, from questions concerning the origins of the Russian state to the history of the Bolshevik Party...Russian expansionism, for example, suddenly became a progressive historical force beneficial to the people it enveloped, while tyrants like Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great became great builders and statesmen."

(Kort, op.cit. pp183-184)

As Acton (1986) remarks, "The Soviet State embarked upon a programme of social engineering without precedent in human history" (p 217).

Here then is an instance of state and education fusing

together, through the force of the power and authority of the state, in a mutual purpose. This was, indeed, a 'national' curriculum whose intent was not merely to provide a common curriculum menu for its children and students but an ideological initiation into a political doctrine which was a total intrusion into and denial of educational freedom and democracy.

Lenin's vision of a withered state was turned on its head by Stalin. In the first year of the assumption of Bolshevik power Lunacharsky, People's Commissar for Enlightenment, had envisaged that he would "provide advice and guidance for the spread of education, but implementation would be left to the spontaneous enthusiasm of local soviets" (Acton, op.cit.p 193); schools, as institutions, would "merge into the wider community as the barriers between intellectual and manual labour, between learning and production were broken down" (ibid. p 240). This freedom was rescinded with a vengeance through the 1930s when the push towards rapid industrialisation took precedence over everything else:

"...the tendency away from experimentation and improvisation towards regularised inculcation of basic skills...now became much more pronounced."

(Dukes, op.cit. p 279)

The manipulation of education towards Party interests went so far as to include the positive discrimination of educational opportunity in favour of Party members. This was especially so in technical and production-related subjects where there were concerns about sabotage and political disloyalty in the spheres of economic and industrial management. There was, throughout the 1930s, initial discrimination in favour of recruiting children of workers by current occupation to places in higher education.

Comparisons with the exclusive educational opportunities available for the more wealthy sectors of English society are irresistible. Here was a 'class' system operating in Soviet Russia based on political affiliation in a not too dissimilar manner from the (continuing) exclusive education of the Establishment, conformist Tory (and aspiring Labour) squirearchy at prestigious public schools in Britain.

The Soviet education system was the cardinal means for achieving complicity with the political order:

"The education system did all it could to ensure that successive generations of pupils should appreciate their good fortune in belonging to Soviet society. That message permeated the entire school curriculum...By the early 1980s...virtually

the whole of society had been brought up on an intellectual diet controlled by the Party."

(Acton, op.cit. p 297)

The fact that, eventually, the system collapsed and the forces of individualism became too persistent not to triumph, is an indication perhaps of the paradox of the limitations that exist in any state's control of the education process and a prime motivator for the state's incessant desire to control the education of its citizens.

d). Common Issues

It is clear that there is a limitation to the extent of any state's control of the education process, and a parallel constraint upon educational freedom because of the encompassing authority of the state. This needs some explanation and clarification.

Education delivers a heightened capacity for understanding the social and political processes at work in any society and thereby creates opportunities for critical reflection. At the same time the control of education allows the state to manipulate the selection of those to whom this opportunity is given and to sift the educational opportunities available through careful gradation of educational availability. Slaves and resident aliens in ancient Greece were not given any share in the formal public education available, for example, and it has been noted that educational opportunity in the Soviet Union favoured the children of Party members.

In this country the situation has become more obscured since class distinctions have become, to some extent, more fluid and blurred, although still a factor of British culture. In ancient Greece, society was strictly and rigidly hierarchical and educational opportunities were distributed accordingly. So it was in Victorian England, as will be seen (Chapter 2), and the

English state education system, basically structured in Victorian times, has consequently never been at ease with the currents of egalitarianism and social mobility which have swept through the present century.

The persistent influence of the public schools and the seeming indifference of the Labour party in office to advance their demise is an interesting caveat to a truly egalitarian system of education. The two-tier system would be an irrelevance were it not for the fact that the public schools are still the main educational conduit to positions of power and influence in this country as Paxman (1990) makes clear.

It could be argued that in this country changes to the funding arrangements for students of higher education introduced since the Conservatives assumed office in 1979, and the under-funding of higher education in real terms, represents an underlying educational restriction favouring that sector of society which can afford to fund more easily its own children through the system. Schemes which propose to make students pay back academic grant funding through future taxation or loan repayment may deter students of less privileged backgrounds from embarking on university education at all, thus denying them access to the higher strata of power, control and

influence. One might term this a 'patricianisation' of higher education.

The needs of the state and the needs of the individual function within a delicate tension in the schooling process. Through curriculum selection and priority the state keeps in check the social order. [This is universal to all states.] In ancient Greece the emphasis was on moral education through rhetorical discourse providing future citizens with a clear understanding of the law and a loyalty to preserving and upholding its rule; in France the revolutionary powers gave their newly emancipated citizens a course of 'Republican Morality'; while children of the new Soviet state were initiated into the political philosophy of the new order and given a distorted and biased view of world history.

In England the National Curriculum introduced in 1988 and revised in 1994/5 re-asserted and strengthened the state's control over the education of its future citizens, and skilfully re-aligned the balance of its content towards a perception of national need which favoured economic interests and a significant emphasis upon a national cultural programme which far surpasses global concerns.

There is much to commend a national curriculum, and the arguments for a common curriculum are well known, but there are dangers too. Roland Meighan (1995) has identified four areas of concern with the concept of a national curriculum.

Firstly, he reminds us that there are some dangerous precedents of totalitarianism (Hitler, Stalin, Tito), each of whom sought an inculcation of patriotic identity through an imposed national curriculum; secondly, Meighan suggests that such a curriculum imposes national belief-systems upon pupils:

"The USSR had no space for religion except as part of historical studies. The UK version has compulsory Christianity. Other countries have compulsory Islam, or whatever religion geographical accident has determined as the local belief system."

(p 27)

In Poland:

"The dictatorship of the 'Reds' requiring Marxism as a compulsory study, is now replaced there by the reign of the 'Blacks' (ie. the clergy) requiring Catholicism instead."

(ibid.)

Thirdly, there is the epistemological problem of selecting some knowledge and rejecting others; and, fourthly, there is the argument which says that the concept is immoral:

"A member of a home-based educating family, Peter Jones, expresses it thus: 'We can no more ordain learning by order, coercion

and commandment than we can promote love by rape or threat.'" "

(ibid.)

The issues then are freedom and democracy, concepts of enormous importance. Each of the comparative examples examined in this chapter have been totalitarian states (even the Greek city state had elements of totalitarianism with their slave regimes) and thus their rigidly prescribed curricula were logical and to be expected. The question is raised as to whether a highly prescriptive national curriculum can be justified in a supposedly democratic country such as England.

As the power and scale of the state has grown, education has been progressively distorted and perverted by its demands. In France the educational idealism of the revolutionaries in the 1790s was quickly destroyed by economic and military pressures. The educational objectives outlined in the first post-revolution Constitution had vanished within a few years; similarly in Russia the need to embark on a rapid programme of industrialisation and, later, re-armament needs completely obscured broader educational objectives. Similarly, the administration of a world empire meant that English education from the nineteenth century onwards was preoccupied with the provision of an officer-class for the military machine and a vast army of administrators to subjugate and control its

imperial interests. The post-imperial world from 1960 onwards presented a vacuum within the English system which fostered an illusory freedom for radicalism which has been sharply rescinded since the mid-1970s. The 'Great Debate' might have been better termed the 'Great Retreat'.

There is also another factor which appears to be common to the processes of interaction between state and education and this can be called the *focus source*. By this is meant a phenomenon which acts as a rallying point for a sense of nationhood which imbues an educational programme with a sense of 'nation'. For the Greeks this focus source was Homer and Greek epic poetry; in France it was fervent loyalty to the emperor and his imperial quest; in Soviet Russia it was an emphasis upon the supremacy of the communist ideal. In each case education had a national dimension and this was enshrined within the curriculum both overtly and covertly. It could be argued that the programmes of study for history and for English in the 1988 National Curriculum are an attempt to put back an element of national *focus source* in the English educational model which was perceived to have been lost.

The major *focus source* in the development of the English system has been the Church, because the Church has been deemed to be a source of moral, and therefore social, order, and it will be

seen, through a detailed analysis of contemporary parliamentary debates, that this focus has hardly been diminished despite the apparent fragmentation of sources of moral authority within an increasingly secularised society.

The Church as a *focus source* has been paralleled historically in the Soviet Union by the development of what Robert Bocock calls:

"...its own equivalent civil religion and a socialist 'liturgical' year in the ritual occasions it has developed since the revolution in 1917."

(p 220 in Bocock & Thompson (1985))

It has been seen that the Party manipulated education for its own ends in a process which exemplified the extremes of the distortion of truth. Pedagogical integrity was sacrificed for a throttling politico-social control of the citizenry until, after the deliberate obfuscation of reality through three generations the realisation of truth emerged.

In France it is the state itself which is the prime focus source. The autocracy of Louis XVI was continued through Napoleon Bonaparte and bequeathed to the modern French constitution of the succeeding Republics in the actual power of the President and, therefore, the dominance of the central

power. There exists in France a much stronger feeling of 'state' than in England through its enduring centralised tradition and this firm structure of nationhood has spawned an education system which, through its institutionalised structures, is intimately associated with the state. The student riots of 1968 represented a disquiet felt about this perceived lack of educational independence and, although they contributed to the downfall of De Gaulle, they did not destroy the close relationship between education and the state.

In the Athenian city state the focus source was a common cultural literary heritage which fostered a sense of Hellenistic pride. The epic tales of Homer provided a common perception of the ideal Greek in the form of 'the hero' who possessed enviable qualities of physical prowess and moral rectitude. The Greek model presents no direct comparison with that of France or the Soviet Union of course because the structural scale was smaller and the social and political context less developed. The sense of (Athenian) citizenship was, however, paramount and provided the pivotal centre of the educational programme. The strong political legacy of classical Greece on modern European structures has led to this thread being unbroken despite widespread philosophical unease. As the nation state became increasingly socially fragmented through the processes of industrialisation during the nineteenth

century it was inevitable that the state would be led towards an assumption of control of the means of education.

Having established this comparative historical background it will now be necessary to review the development of this process in England in order to better understand contemporary events. One thing is already clear. The precedence for some sort of educational altruism on the part of 'the state' is doubtful. In Athens, France and the Soviet Union the *citizen* was enshrined with a theoretical supremacy which was, in actuality, subservient to the impersonal but pervading shadow of *the state*. In England the power and influence of the citizen has been made less distinct and defined by an enduring stratified social structure which has seemingly withstood the challenge of post-war egalitarianism.

Many would argue that there has been such a radical educational retrenchment through the 1980s and 1990s that the whole educational system is more and more becoming concerned with basic instrumental ends which pay more attention to the needs of the state than the development of the individual. This historical development now needs scrutiny.

Passing reference must be made to the growing inter-dependence of states and, in particular, to the possible formulation of a

greater European 'state'. The historian Eric Hobsbawm claims that:

"The great stability of Western liberal capitalism in the period after 1945 has ended. We have entered a different period in which the possibilities of maintaining welfare states and national macro-economic management on the level of the nation state are eroded - and the scope of national political control of the conditions of life in a particular country have been very much diminished."

('The Independent', 31st May 1995)

If this is so, then the relationship between state and education will have to undergo a radical development. Caught, as it will be, within a paradox of obeisance towards a national or a supra-national culture, the situation will be interesting to say the least. Will the humanist curriculum be bolstered or threatened? Will an emphasis upon British history be rendered less, or possibly more, vital?

And who will be in control? In a new millenium when the world will undoubtedly make a reality of the concept of the 'global village' in both communications, economic and, possibly, political terms, the question of values will be thrown wide open as new, post-national norms come into being. It might be imagined that a common currency of money will have to exist, eventually, beside a common educational currency. If that speculation becomes a reality then the relationship between

education and the state will be transformed beyond our current
imagining.

Summary

The involvement of the state in education is not a new phenomenon. The state has always, obviously, had a vested interest in the education of its citizens and educational activity is influenced by existing cultural value-systems. Education is, then, by virtue of this relationship, a political activity. However, the involvement of the state in the structural details of education systems is a new phenomenon being, in this country, little more than a century old, although a precedent was set in Revolutionary France in the 1790s, as has been seen.

The concept of statehood is a complex notion. In this country, with a weaker sense of 'statehood' than, say, France, it is especially so. The perceived distinctions between 'state', 'society' and 'sovereignty' are not distinct in this country, and the fact that this particular state is a union of four countries, each with its own sense of identity makes these distinctions even more blurred.

All states are responsible for the maintenance of their social order. Their very survival depends on it. The involvement of education in this process, and thereby of schools, is an important connection between the state and education.

The development of the form of statehood in Britain reflects a multi-dimensional historical background where the idea of statehood has been influenced by significant cultural and philosophical ideas including feudalism, absolutism, constitutionalism, liberal democracy and representative government.

There is a fundamental tension in the exercise of governmental power because all governments are concerned with the 'common good' as well as the promotion and prospering of sectional interests. States do not only wither from invasion as did the city-states of ancient Greece; or from tyranny, such as that experienced by Revolutionary France; but also from a general feeling among the people of discontentment, as in the case of the Soviet Union.

The school, as an instrument of state apparatus, reflects this tension, referred to above, in its ambiguous devotion to the enablement of a general improvement in educational opportunities and the particular encouragement and ideological favouring of specific social groups.

The twentieth century has seen an enduring battle between

conflicting and competing ideologies. This has created something of a dilemma for education because, being concerned with the promotion of values, education has become contentious and used as means to the promotion of particular political viewpoints, both intentionally and unintentionally.

Schools, by their involvement in the mechanisms of social and economic mobility, vocational selection and the reproduction of the division of labour, are also involved in the reproduction of an unequal society. Political intentions are usually present in the structural provisions which enable educational processes to occur. An exemplification of this is found in the characteristics of "Thatcherism" which include processes of manipulative legitimation, the promotion of power conflict, and its use of rhetoric.

The National Curriculum introduced in 1988 has re-affirmed the traditional, rationalist curriculum dominated by high-status knowledge. Schools, as channels of cultural distribution, have therefore continued to operate as preserving agents for the status quo, compelled to contribute to the maintenance of a society stratified through both ideological conviction and social practice.

Central to consideration of ideology is the notion of

'hegemony'. Preserving the status quo has been a key role of schools. The concept of change is seen by many as a deterioration from a supposedly past 'golden age'. Keeping society at an acceptable evolutionary pace has, therefore, been a function of schools which has been widely approved and expected in populist terms. This goes some way to explaining the acceptance and approval of the broad sweep of Thatcherite reforms in education.

Schools, in this framework, cannot be neutral, anymore than education can be value-free. The obvious implication for this is that schools are involved in choices - of curriculum content, delivery, assessment and evaluation. The political dimension, the fact that state education is sponsored by the state, creates an in-built ideological conflict in the state system as political ideology is juxtaposed alongside educational ideals.

All states have to contend with some common moral and ethical dilemmas which centre upon the question of the determinant factors concerned with educational opportunity. Even classical Greece, bastion of democracy, operated, in its city-states, an elite, hierarchical and exclusive system of education.

Similarly, Revolutionary France, with its high egalitarian ideals found itself re-introducing educational fees within a very short space of time, soon followed by Napoleon's elitist reforms. The USSR, committed to an ideological vision of equality and the emancipation of the worker, developed a totally instrumentalist model which ensured the erosion of intellectual freedom and the subservience of the individual to the impersonal but omnipotent state.

Two of these three examples of 'state-sponsored' centralised systems of education, France and Russia, reveal a common, cross-cultural and enduring dilemma at the heart of any relationship between state and education which is concerned with intellectual freedom.

Education, by its very definition, is concerned with a process of intellectual exploration of experience, postulation, supposition and philosophical enquiry without boundaries and limits. States have many boundaries, besides the physical, which are, essentially, self-preserving ones of political and social construction. 'The State' is a mental phenomenon as well as a physical one. The implication of state loyalty and obedience, in-built into any notion of 'citizenry', gives the state a legitimate interest in formal education but also pits

the infinity of educational enquiry against the finite social freedoms permitted by the state.

The three examples reveal other subsidiary, but nonetheless important, factors at work. One of the most important is the state's economic needs which compromises the integrity of the educational process and conditions the selection and status of educational values. The ideals of the Constitution of post-monarchical France at the end of the eighteenth-century were compromised and, finally, crushed by the realities of the appalling economic conditions engendered by civil anarchy and European warfare. The massive programme of industrialisation of the USSR in the 1920s and 1930s warped the free pursuit of educational enquiry into an instrumental model which gave scant regard to concepts of freedom and equality and communistic egalitarianism.

Finally, human frailty, in its individual as well as its communal forms, is an inherent factor in the state/education equation. The tyrannical operations of Napoleon and Stalin ensured that education served not its own ends, but those of corrupted ambition, imperial and totalitarian ideology.

These themes are current in contemporary Britain. Intellectual freedom is thwarted by the instrumental needs of a struggling

economy and the ideological pressures of the new right. The ambiguity of the political pendulum - the uncertain shift between left and right - which has characterised the greater part of the twentieth century in Britain has been arrested in the sharp shift to the right by both Conservative and Labour. This has brought the relationship between education and state into sharper focus as the state has strengthened its control over the educational apparatus.

To lay claim to the advent of a new educational totalitarianism might be regarded as an exaggeration - but the controversy may be over the adjective rather than the noun. A survey of historical legacy in the educational field in this country will reveal that this totalitarianistic feature is certainly not a new development. It was present from the beginning.

2. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL SYSTEM OF SCHOOLING

a) Historical Contexts

In analysing the relationship between state and schooling in this country it is important to note the fundamental fact that in the years prior to 1870, which can be regarded as the year when the state (through Forster's Education Act) assumed the major coordinating responsibility for a national system of schooling, the state was a reluctant participant in the movement towards a unified and publicly-funded system. Indeed, any cursory reading of a history of English education concerning itself with the period from 1870 to, say, the mid-1940s would lead the reader to suppose that the state's involvement at all was based on incremental and reactionary impulses emanating from social, military and economic concerns and not from any particular burning desire to see its future citizens well-educated.

There are questions which need to be explored which concern the ends and the means of the schooling process in the period which culminated in the 1870 Act. Were the ends connected with political socialisation, the gentling of the masses, or were they a reflection of a beneficent desire to spread the fruits of education to that stratum of society which had been denied them previously? Were the means mainly inspired by religious

fervour, not to mention denominational bigotry, or political economy, or were they driven initially by the concerns of those who held power with the intermittent discontent of those members of the lower classes who had been displaced from country to town in the transition from an agrarian to an urban society? It will be seen that all these factors, and others, played a part; but in order to fully understand how a unitary system of state schooling came into being in 1870 and, more significantly, why it was established, it will be necessary to explore social and political issues which developed through the nineteenth century which have left a stubborn legacy for the system as it exists in the closing years of the twentieth century.

A further point too is the fact that the growth and development of schooling in the nineteenth century increased the exercise of authority by the state simply because, as Simon Frith points out:

"The schooling of working class children in the nineteenth century, whether by charitable individuals, by religious organisations, or by the State, involved the exercise of authority."

(in McCann 1977, p29)

The fact that this era in British history was characterised by an adherence to the principles of laissez-faire, of the

liberal, non-interventionist state, may explain, it could be argued, the reluctance of the state to get itself directly involved in the propagation of schooling. It would be misleading though to jump to conclusions. There were other factors which need to be explored in addition to this.

Any social or political analysis of this period must take into account the radical changes that occurred as a result of what could be termed the onset of a 'new age', which might be called, as it often is, 'modernism', caused by an accelerating industrialisation which had been gathering momentum since the beginning of the century. Thompson (1988), writing about the period around 1830 says that:

"Tailors outnumbered coalminers, and there were three blacksmiths for every man employed in making iron."

(p 25)

By the end of the century there had been a massive change most singly represented by the fact that in 1831 just over one million people were town or city dwellers and in 1901 this figure had risen to over nine million. This demographic explosion was a significant factor in the realisation of a national system of schooling through the consequent widening of the franchise in favour of the town-dwelling industrial middle

class who gained the vote three years before Forster's Act. Other legislation, notably the Factory Acts which increasingly emancipated children from employment in mills and mines, also played their part.

The establishment of the beginning of a national system of schooling occurred, then, during a succession of decades characterised by demographic and occupational pattern changes which were dramatic to say the least. Educational legislation of the time must be viewed with the realisation that it had a functional role as an instrument to help accommodate this move towards greater urbanisation and industrialisation.

Another central factor which must be examined is the idiosyncratic nature of what can only be described as 'the English tradition'. As Andy Green (1990) points out:

"England was the last of the major nineteenth century powers to create a national system of education and the most reluctant to put it under public control."

(p 208)

This is important, for many would argue that this country, prior to the Education Reform Act of 1988, had an under-developed educational system with ill-defined aims and objectives in comparison with ^{that of} many of our European neighbours.

Indeed, the Act of 1870 only created a foundation and:

"it was only in 1899 that a single authority was created to oversee education. State secondary schools were not created until 1902 : one hundred years after their inauguration in France and Prussia."

(ibid. p 209)

A consideration of these historical issues may inform our understanding of some recent trends which have been concerned, to some extent, to shift the balance of responsibility (though not authority) away from the state and towards parents and the local community. It could be argued that there is some analogy to be found between the voluntaryism provided by the religious societies of the last century and the moves towards industrial sponsorship and financial autonomy in City Technology Colleges and Grant Maintained schools facilitated by the Education Reform Act of 1988.

What will be made clear is that the social and political motives behind the moves to provide popular education were not particularly those pertaining to mid-Victorian thinking but rather a reflection of England's indomitable social structure, rigidly stratified, which has existed since feudal times.

b) The Socio-Political Roots Of The English Schooling System

It is possible to argue that current rhetoric in the 1990s concerning the desirability of diversity, industrial and commercial sponsorship and local funding initiatives in the school system can be linked by a historical thread to the voluntary basis of schooling which provided virtually the sole means of education of the poorer classes until 1870. That part of the 1988 Act which apparently established the legal mechanism to sponsor de-centralism through enhanced power of local communities to fund their own alternatives to local authority schools, in the form of Grant-Maintained Schools or City Technology Colleges, may appear to be an attempt by the state to fracture the unitary system which was begun by the 1870 Act and consolidated by the 1902 Act. The fact that the state has concurrently established a National Curriculum to stop 'any horse bolting the stable door', as it were, to bring the curriculum under control, in other words, is another matter and, it could be argued, directly related to the fact that the education system continues to reflect the persistent hierarchical stratification of English society. The Elementary Education Act of 1870 was introduced to provide a utilitarian and restricted educational diet (some would say 'training') for the lower classes while the privileged, ruling classes enjoyed a separate system. It will be argued that the 1988 Education

Reform Act was passed to bolster this division which had been perceived as crumbling under the assault of egalitarianism.

During the first half of the nineteenth century there was a ferment of ideas concerning education which were directly attributable to the growing industrial revolution. As Musgrave (1968) makes clear, at the beginning of the century there was little demand for mass education. For the majority of occupations it was simply unnecessary. Labour was in easy supply and:

"demand for raw labour to learn many new jobs created by technological change could easily be met by workers moving off the land or, especially in the mid-1840s, by Irish immigrants."

(p 7)

However, if there was no practical need of mass education, there was certainly an established theoretical basis for an educated workforce. Adam Smith had advocated this in his 'Wealth Of Nations' in 1776 and even Bentham, the chief advocate of laissez-faire, had said that the state should become involved in educational enterprises if the private sector proved inadequate.

It is important to remember that until well into Victoria's reign British parliaments were aristocratic. The vested

interests of members of both Houses did not extend to the provision of education for the working class and:

"The working class view of education was far less formed than that of the other classes. The members of this class did not question the way in which the middle and upper classes defined their own education and were only beginning to formulate their own educational needs."

(ibid. p 11)

Norman (1976), in his analysis of the relationship between church and society in the last two hundred years, remarks that:

"Parliament, in the first half of the nineteenth century, had a limited view of its own responsibilities - limitations which the impact of Political Economy reinforced - and the education of children was something which public men were willing to assist financially but not undertake directly."

(p 56)

Altruistic motives by educated activists on behalf of the development of educational provision for the working class were few and far between in the early years of the century but grew in relation to the accelerating social changes created by the economic new order which was burgeoning in the wake of industrialisation.

'The British and Foreign School Society', founded in 1808, and the 'National Society For Promoting The Education Of The Poor

In The Principles Of The Established Church' which was founded three years later, were teaching 1.5 million children by 1860 in just under 7000 schools (Thompson 1988, p146). The two societies were set up by the two religious traditions, that of the established church (The National Society) and the Dissenting, non-conformist movement (The British And Foreign School Society). As Thompson points out, it was the congregations of church and chapel which provided the funding for the voluntary schools (although the schools were not free) and thus:

"Religious instruction was central to the voluntary schools, doctrinal and catechismal in the National schools, more neutral scriptural teaching in the British schools; and the school day was likely to have a religious rhythm of prayers and hymns."

(Thompson 1988, p144)

This involvement of the churches, both established and non-conformist, with the education of the masses has had a pervading influence upon the development of education in this country. Whereas many countries have developed secular systems of government this country has a Church which appears reluctant to disestablish itself from the governance of the state. Cruickshank (1963) says that:

"Throughout the middle ages education was under the complete control of the Church. In the sixteenth century the main groups of Reformers of this island, Anglican and Presbyterian,

assumed a like control, claiming in accordance with the principle of 'cuius regio, eius religio' that Church and State were one."

(p 1)

It can clearly be seen that the religious difficulties which exercised the minds of clerics and politicians increasingly throughout the nineteenth century were, in reality, masking social and political concerns over the maintenance of the established order and the stability of social order.

Anglican opposition to the establishment of secular control of education through School Boards was vehement after the 1870 Act came into being. It represented a determined move to maintain the Church's position within the political framework through an exclusive control of schooling. A public notice in Luton in 1871 issued by the Church of England gave six reasons why ratepayers should not vote for a School Board in Luton:

- "1. Because it is a leap in the dark.
2. Because the Voluntary System is a complete success where it is adopted.
3. Because the School Board is an untried scheme.
4. Because when once you elect a School Board you cannot get rid of it.
5. Because we are already burdened enough with Taxation.
6. Because if you adopt that mode of working the Act, you may be compelled not only to educate,

but Feed and Clothe the Children."

(quoted in Horn (1989) p 17)

Hardly sentiments of a Christian nature, but certainly the scaremongering tactics of an organisation more concerned with the exercise of power and influence than the educational enlightenment of children.

It will be seen how the religious dimension was prevalent in the debate on the Education Reform Bill in 1987-8 (Chapter 5) and it is a fact that the voluntary schools have preserved much of their separate identity and independence through all the reforming encroachments of the state, particularly in 1944 and 1988. The White Paper which set down the ideas for the Education Bill being debated in 1992 makes clear the Government's continuing support:

"The Government continues to attach great importance to the dual system of county and voluntary schools...The contribution of voluntary schools provided by the Churches and others cannot be overestimated...They provide powerful reinforcement of the spiritual and moral dimension of education which is of great importance to children...The Government wishes to see the role of the Churches and other voluntary bodies in education preserved and enhanced."

(Choice & Diversity: A New Framework for Schools
1992 6.9/6.10)

It is true that:

"...by the 1830s the Bible-based system of education was meeting with challenge and by the 1850s it had been practically supplanted by a new orthodoxy, that of political economy"

(J.M.Goldstrom in McCann 1977, p93)

but the influence of organised religion has remained a dominating one in the first place because it was the churches which took the lead in promoting the establishment of schools for all social classes and, secondly, the link between the promotion of the gospels and the inculcation of a moral code to secure social harmony has been rigorously inter-twined. After all:

"The rich man in his castle,
The poor man at his gate,
God made them, high or lowly,
And order'd their estate."

In the first half of the nineteenth century the new industrial middle class fought:

"to oust the aristocracy from power and clear the road for the development of a capitalist order."

(Simon 1960, p 128)

In this enterprise it sought the support of the non-conformist lobby and the (mainly Tory) establishment countered with the

support of the Established Church. Thus from the very beginning religion was a rallying point for both radical change and reactionary conservatism. This is a contemporary theme too: controversy about statements of concern at inner-city deprivation by Archbishop Runcie in the 1980s and the imbroglio over gay clergy in the 1990s symbolise an unease among the traditionalists that the Church should be anything other than a 'pillar of the state'.

The new nineteenth-century middle class contained a significant number of radicals who were intent in their desire to promote mass education. It was a political necessity to realise this aim in the interests of building a better nation but:

"this was to act in direct opposition to the policy of the Tory administration whose answer to social discontent at this stage took the form of direct suppression...Inevitably the Tory party was also obsessed with the idea that education would be turned to revolutionary ends."

(op.cit. pp 132-133)

The Whig party differed from the attitude held by both the Radicals and the Tories for although they were not opposed to educational reforms as such:

"they necessarily saw it as a means of habituating the people to the existing social order and the dominance of the landed aristocracy rather than, in the

Radical sense, of consolidating support
for the middle class."

(op.cit. p 134)

The Radicals alone maintained that the working class would respond in a responsible and productive way to educational opportunities whereas the Tory tactic was simply one of "suppression combined with religious indoctrination" (p 136). Simon develops his analysis by suggesting that the utilitarian view of education propounded by the Radicals was "idealistic and admirable" but, fundamentally, the voice of "one class whose interests could only be met by the sacrifice of the many" (p 148).

Even a perfunctory study of this battle of ideas reveals that the warp and weft of class politics and religious bigotry stained the fabric of radical idealism from the start. Many would argue that this stain has never been eradicated and that the state, aided and abetted by the Church, has kept the course of educational development firmly under control by a whole plethora of controls, both overt and covert.

Brougham's Bill, introduced in 1820, which advocated a national system of compulsory elementary education failed for these very reasons and also from the fact that the economy at that time could not countenance the absence of cheap child labour.

The resolution which Roebuck introduced to the House in 1833 is usually celebrated for the fact that, in its wake, the first financial commitment to education was made by Parliament. *Hansard* records that on August 17th:

"Mr. Sinclair expressed his surprise and regret that Ministers should have deferred the Estimates until such a late period of the Session, when so few Members were in town."

(20/732) (*Hansard* references)

Whereas Mr. Cobbett, who undoubtedly spoke for the absent majority, could see that no benefit could accrue from education. All it did was:

"to increase the number of schoolmasters and schoolmistresses - that new race of idlers."

(20/735)

Undoubtedly a parliamentary opinion which, in some quarters, has persisted into the late twentieth century.

Roebuck's speech deserves attention. It is clear that his radical vision had little chance of being realised through the auspices of a parliament dominated by the interests of the landed aristocracy of the time who had been served notice by the new middle classes, through the passing of the previous year's Reform Bill, that the monopoly of power and privilege enjoyed by the aristocracy and nobility was not entirely

unassailable. Roebuck's secular system, if it had been adopted, would have given this country a much more defined and creative framework of schooling than that which eventually emerged and one which, most pointedly, would have had stronger educational credentials. In this sense Roebuck's speech to the House, spoken in 1833, is startling and refreshing to read today.

Education, Roebuck asserted, was not just an instrumental pursuit:

"Education means not merely the...acquiring of knowledge, but it means also the so training or fashioning the intellectual and moral qualities of the individual, that he may be able and willing to acquire knowledge, and to turn it to its right use."

(20/142)

In words very similar to those of Callaghan in his 1976 Ruskin speech, Roebuck maintains that education must so equip an individual that:

"he may become a useful and virtuous member of society in the various relations of life."

(ibid.)

And that:

"his moral, as well as his intellectual powers, must contribute to this great end, and the true

fashioning of these to this purpose is right education."

(ibid.)

Clearly, Roebuck's vision of education is, to a large degree, a utilitarian one but it is in the development of his vision, which he describes at great length and in considerable detail, that interest lies.

The source of his resolution lies in the fact that voluntary effort had proved inadequate. A plan was needed to make education compulsory for all children between the ages of six and twelve. Initially this would take the form of "moral training" during infancy for it was during this stage that this field was "all-important".

Reading must occupy a place of primacy in the curriculum because:

"It is, in fact, the foundation stone - if it be not thoroughly secure at first, all future additions will be useless."

(20/157)

In his most radical proposal Roebuck contemplates a system where all classes of children are, at first, educated together before being separated by social and vocational classification.

Initial schooling should take the form of 'Primary Instruction':

"and be the same for all, The maker of pins and the maker of laws...When actual knowledge beyond this comes to be imparted, then comes a consideration of the future destinations of the scholar. Any comprehensive system of education would contemplate and include all classes, and for that purpose a series of schools would be adopted rising from infant schools to the all comprehensive university."

(ibid.)

Here Roebuck acknowledges the radicalism of his plan:

"But in the present state of the public mind, this is more than I dare contemplate."

(ibid.)

Throughout the speech Roebuck's Utopia is clearly pictured. The education of all classes "is imperfect" and the system itself should be viewed as a whole:

"The infant school will never be properly conducted while the university is imperfect. Reading will never be properly taught while philosophers are wondering in ignorance."

(20/158)

This comprehensive view of an education system was certainly well in advance of its time, but Roebuck clearly envisaged a system that was "intimately bound together".

Social harmony would persist if every man received a good political education:

"He should be made acquainted with the circumstances on which his happiness as a member of society is necessarily dependent; and also he should know the general principles of the Government under which he lives."

(20/158-159)

Roebuck foresaw that universal enfranchisement was imminent. He acknowledged that the mass of the people would soon "have power". He wished the people to be "enlightened, in order that they may use that power well."

There would be three types of school: Infant Schools, where children of all classes would receive primary instruction; Schools of Industry in each parish which would impart scholarship and a knowledge of some trade; and Normal Schools where more able pupils would learn to become teachers.

Roebuck accepted that the poor had to learn a trade but, in another visionary statement, he maintained that all children should receive as broad an education as possible:

"a taste for art...music and singing...natural history, and of the nature of our own physical

system...political economy..."

(20/161)

Funding for this system should be found through taxation if private subscriptions proved inadequate.

The response Roebuck received in the House was predictable. Lord Althorp was not alone in suggesting that an imposed national system would curtail voluntary efforts. Mr.O'Connell suggested that:

"The House ought not to pledge itself on this subject without a previous inquiry before a committee...One of the best resolutions they could come to was to govern as little as they could. They might afford facilities for education, but they should do nothing more."

(20/169)

Mr.Hume added that:

"the more the people were instructed, the more were the means increased of keeping the people tranquil and their institutions stable."

(20/172)

Whereas Sir Robert Peel condemned the scheme as being incompatible "with England's tradition of freedom".

The motion was withdrawn.

The scenario Roebuck envisages is not too far distant from that

which was familiar to Aristotle. The emphasis upon moral training from the very beginning of the process is significant, yet predictable. The concept of future rulers being educated at first with those to be later ruled is an Athenian idea which could not possibly have taken root in nineteenth-century England. The arguments voiced against Roebuck's proposals are seminal to those which still occupy the agenda of politicians today, and not only those of the far right.

Although Roebuck was unsuccessful in his attempts to initiate a form of state-sponsored education, he was representative of a growing body of opinion which was convinced that the state needed to play its part. As the century passed its mid-point and the industrial urbanisation of society gathered momentum through the Victorian era, the state reluctantly drifted into a position of control.

c) The 1870 Elementary Education Act

The secularist cause never had a realistic chance of success because of the opposition of the landed aristocracy who dominated parliament; but in the period which followed Roebuck's unsuccessful attempt, major social, economic and political changes occurred which made Forster's Bill both necessary and successful. A sharp demarcation of allegiance between the Tory Party with the Church of England and the Whigs (later Liberals) and non-conformist groups created a long and stubborn battle which hindered any progress towards a unified system of popular education. It is important to realise, however, that the issues at stake were political and not religious; in reality both major political parties exploited religious issues for political ends. The cause of this dispute owed more to the relationship between labour and the economy, and the shift in the balance of power between the landowning aristocracy and the new industrial middle class than it did to religious convictions.

What was also at issue was the status and position of the Established Church in the new emerging social order. Walter Bagehot, in his celebrated and much quoted book 'The English Constitution' (1867), declared that:

"Our Constitution is full of curious oddities, which are impeding and mischievous, and ought

to be struck out."

(p 265)

It is probable that he was not alluding to the Established Church, but the words are apposite, for the Church of England, in its unyielding grip on the law-making machinery of Parliament, has consistently warped the process whereby any system of schooling might proceed unhindered towards the business of the provision of education.

That it has been able to do this consistently (the Education Acts of 1870, 1902, 1944 and 1988 all provided more discussion of religious substance than educational in both Houses) reflects its interest in maintaining 'the establishment', a factor which will be explored shortly.

The rivalry between the two religious societies, as well as that between the churches and the secularists, promoted fierce debate in Parliament during the stages which led to the passing of Forster's 1870 Education Act. The Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, for instance, maintained in the early years of the new queen's reign that:

"Religion must be the essence of all education, and if it is driven into a corner, if it is placed, so to speak, on the outskirts of secular teaching, what must be the impression

made both on the children and the teacher?"

(quoted in Cruickshank 1963, p 35)

This echoed the remarks made by the Bishop of London in 1839 who had voiced his concern that the separation of secular and religious education:

"would thrust religion into the bye-ways and corners, deprive religion of her due honour and degrade her from her just supremacy."

(quoted in Hurt 1971, p 20)

Norman (1976) makes the point that:

"The question of national education in England ...raised principles of religious Establishment in a form which, due to Nonconformist pressures, made the issue one of the most intractable the Victorian Church had to face."

(p 203)

It was the introduction of state aid through grants for the voluntary societies in 1833 which snared the state into an involvement with the provision of a system of schooling and ended the sole jurisdiction of education by religious bodies. There was a growing interest in the question of there being a more comprehensive system of schooling but the prevailing view was that the state should support the voluntary system which was deemed to be doing a satisfactory job. Indeed, Lord Norton, who had been Vice-President of the Education Department towards

the end of the 1850s, made the point in 1874 that state-aided education was similar to poor relief and must not be extended for fear of upsetting 'the social equilibrium' (Horn 1989, p 42).

The financial implications were rarely overlooked too. The Lord Chancellor, giving evidence to a Parliamentary Enquiry of 1834, expressed his concern that if the state were to "interfere" and make it the duty of every Parish to educate all children then voluntary funds would be withdrawn and the state would be faced with a financial liability of £2 million a year (quoted in Maclure 1986, p39). Even as late as 1861 the Newcastle Report set up three years previously to 'inquire into the state of popular education in England' concluded that:

"on the ground that our education is advancing successfully without it, we have not thought that a scheme for compulsory education to be universally applied in this country can be entertained as a practical possibility."

(quoted in Maclure 1986, p 75)

Religious interests, in reality through the two prevailing societies, occupied the territory of schooling to an almost exclusive extent and certainly blocked any significant advance of any secularist approach in the first twenty years of the societies' existence. Even as late as 1855 one M.P. in the

Commons could command respect by voicing the view that a secular educational system:

"would be contrary to the direct command of God, who has pointed out to us in the clearest manner, from Genesis to Revelation, that Life is not to be gained through the tree of knowledge."

(quoted in Rich 1970, p 26)

Even as late as 1902 the Secretary to the Board of Education was able to express the following hope [without Hansard recording any subsequent laughter:

"Some day we shall realise that religion is and always must be an integral part of education, and then we shall see religion set to education like perfect music unto noble words, and at last in the fullness of time there will descend upon our schools the blessings of peace."

(115/1042-1043)

It is important to remember that the mid-nineteenth century was a pre-Darwinian age and that a fundamentalist acceptance of the scriptures was the accepted mainstream theology of the time. The teaching of good and evil, as interpreted through the Bible alone, was initially the main concern of the voluntary schools run by both societies. As Thompson (1988) says, the outcomes of the voluntary schools:

"were founded in religious convictions and belief

in the necessity of providing a godly and religious upbringing for the children of the working classes."

(p 144)

Green (1990) makes the point that:

"Many claimed that state involvement in education would lead to secular schooling and based their opposition on this premise. Anglicans still feared loss of control and non-conformists still doubted that the state would deal even handedly as between Church and Dissent."

(p 272)

Cruickshank (op.cit.) makes clear in her detailed description of this struggle that:

"In an age of deep spiritual concern...opposition to the secular solution was overwhelming."

(p 7)

and that:

"The educational standpoint of the Voluntaryists was simple and straightforward. They assumed two premises: firstly, that education must be religious or it would be worthless and, secondly, that the State must not meddle with religion."

(ibid. p 6)

This is highly significant because although a secularist influence based on the rising interest in political economy would generally dilute this conviction in the period roughly between 1830 and 1850, the fact remains that schools were initially regarded as moralising and evangelical institutions

in the first place, adjuncts of church and chapel. The secular curriculum was admitted afterwards, as a pre-requisite for receipt of state financial aid, inescapably so after the introduction of the Revised Code of 1862 with its system of 'payment by results' which Hurt (1971) describes as "a significant victory for the state in its struggle with the Churches for control over education" (p 202).

Religious education has order precedence over the national curriculum in the Education Reform Act of 1988; it is the first issue to be dealt with. This ordering of priorities has, it can be seen, a long and persistent history. Echoing the contributors to the 1870 and 1902 debates referred to above, there were those in 1988, in both Houses, who clearly felt the need for religion to be at the heart of the curriculum (see Chapter 5).

In his evidence to the Newcastle Commission (1861) the future Bishop of Manchester maintained that it was only necessary to keep "the peasant boy" at school until the age of ten as the skills a boy needed for life consisted of the ability to spell ordinary words he may use, to read a paragraph in a newspaper, write his mother an intelligible letter, understand a common shop bill, a basic understanding of the whereabouts of foreign countries,

"and underlying all, and not without its influence, I trust, upon his life and conversation, he has acquaintance enough with the Holy Scriptures to follow the allusions and the arguments of a plain Saxon sermon, and a sufficient recollection of the truths taught him in his catechism, to know what are the duties required of him towards his Maker and his fellow man."

(in Maclure 1986, p 75)

The persistence of this emphasis on godliness within the curriculum, as will be seen, reflected a concern for social and hierarchical stability, especially in the teaching within the Anglican schools of the British Society. Goldstrom (1977), in his detailed analysis of the content of the curriculum provided in the voluntary schools of the two societies between 1830 and 1860 reveals the extent of the narrow educational diet on offer to working class children at this time:

"Taking the two societies together, if one looks at the teaching matter to be found in the schools...the lessons look thoroughly indigestible. In the Anglican (teaching manuals) there are references on most pages to the Commandments, God, the Thirty-Nine Articles and the Life Hereafter...(the preface to the Nonconformist manual) remarked that no other work of ethics or moral reasoning could equal the Holy Scriptures since God was the author, Salvation was the end, and Truth the subject."

(in McCann 1977, pp 96-97)

The National Society, as the instrument of the established Church, was committed to the preservation of the existing social order whereas the nonconformists' schools had an element

of social democracy about them (Goldstrom 1972), but as Johnson (1977) points out the Anglican Church was an institution:

"closely associated with the rural order, allied to agrarian capital and the governing groups and dovetailed politically into the Tory Party."

(in Donajkowski 1977, p 96)

Consequently, it promoted:

"a conservative and hierarchical conception of society that stressed stabilities and continuities rather than progress. This was necessarily reflected in its educational practices, making many Anglicans suspicious of educational utopias."

(ibid.)

The taxonomy of a detailed and systematic body of knowledge which was introduced into English schools in 1989 is related to this phenomenon. It is an antidote to a more exploratory approach to learning which was perceived to be threatening the social fabric of the nation. The fact that, as Gillian Sutherland points out:

"the vast majority of the members of the middle and upper classes who made the case for action on working class education in Parliament (in the mid-nineteenth century) wished to make the existing social structure run more smoothly"

(in Thompson (ed) (1990) p 129)

is interesting insofar as it relates to contemporary political motives which are similar and emanate, it could be argued, from the essentially conservative make-up of British society. Sutherland poses the vital point that:

"The interesting question is not *whether* a given education scheme is designed as social control but *what* sort of society is it intended to produce?"

(ibid.)

Throughout the eighteenth century and onwards to the 1870s the existing social structure was believed by most of the populace to be the will of God. In her analysis of the content of sermons preached during the early and mid-Victorian periods Jennifer Hart reveals that:

"Again and again people are told that they must do their duty...Children should be taught to be satisfied with any, even the humblest lot, and to discharge their duties with contented acquiescence. Any attempt to banish social distinctions would be a rebellion against the appointment of God."

(in Donajgrodski 1977, p 109)

Among her conclusions Hart suggests that:

"Many of the clergy, as others, were not unmindful of the practical, worldly advantages of their doctrines - in particular of the need to get manual work done and of the dangers of educating children above their station in life."

(op.cit. p 110)

The schools operated by the two societies prior to the 1870 Act

provided a curriculum which had little chance of promoting an educated under-class which would have the intellectual tools for dismantling the existing social order. Even reformers such as David Stow, who created the Glasgow Infant School Society in 1827, and who advocated attractive school buildings, pictures and objects in the classroom, centred the curriculum on the Bible with a weekly diet which was as follows:

"Monday - Bible biography
Tuesday - Bible history, or illustration of animal nature
Wednesday - Moral duties, from Bible examples or precepts
Thursday - Miracles from the Old or New Testament
Friday - Bible history, or illustration of animal nature
Saturday - Parables, Promises etc."

(quoted in Silver 1965, p 145)

Goldstrom (1972) remarks that:

"The quarrel over the content of school books continued throughout the rest of the century, as the indexes to the House of Commons and House of Lords papers testify."

(p 66)

Concern about keeping the mass of the population acquiescent, docile and, above all, obedient was, is and always will be contained within the agenda of a ruling class. Its persistent topicality among parliamentarians, the clergy of the established Church and the landed and propertied aristocracy

was increasingly evident from the beginning of the nineteenth century. In part this stemmed from fears instigated by the events in France from 1789 but, more strikingly, from the demographic and economic changes which occurred in Britain throughout the first half of the nineteenth century.

In 1801 London was the only place in the country with over 100,000 inhabitants. But, as Thompson (1988) points out:

"By 1831 there were seven - Manchester, Glasgow, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Birmingham, Leeds, and Bristol - and together with London they contained one sixth of the total population. This fraction, it can be argued, was both the central core and the advanced guard of modern urban society."

(p 28)

It was in these cities where:

"the most pressing and acute tensions and contrasts developed, here that new habits and lifestyles were evolved which ultimately percolated through to the rest of the country, and here that familiar and accustomed patterns of behaviour were most strongly challenged."

(ibid.)

It is hardly surprising that education should be viewed as a panacea for these shadows which threatened to darken the existing social light and that the wrath and reason of an ever-watchful God should have been installed at the centre of a monotonous curriculum. Although the Metropolitan Police had

been founded in 1829 it was not until 1856 that counties were obliged to establish such forces and only from the mid-1860s and early 1870s was the country being effectively policed (op.cit.,p 329) and so the movement to clear the streets of children engaged in petty crime and even worse demeanours did not particularly stem solely from a general desire to see them educated.

The Inspector at Mr.Gradgrind's school tells a class that:

"You are to be in all things regulated and governed...by fact. We hope to have, before long, a board of fact, composed of commissioners of fact, who will force the people to be a people of fact, and of nothing but fact."

(Dickens : *Hard Times* p 52)

Dickens' satirical picture is tainted with more than a modicum of truth. Children who could learn, memorise and mechanically recite the order of the books constituting the Old and New Testaments were unlikely to have the energy to indulge in larceny or brawling on the streets.

Social unrest which began to be felt in the 1830s, the decade of the parliamentary Reform Bill and the first stirring of the Chartist movement, had an effect upon this stifling curriculum approach as did a growing acceptance of the principles of political economy, but leading educational reformers such as

Kay-Shuttleworth, First Secretary of the Committee of Privy Council on Education during the 1840s, were still convinced that "religious instruction was the essential foundation on which this desirable (secular) superstructure might be built" (Thompson 1988, p145).

Instructions to H.M. Inspectors, issued by the Committee of Council on Education in 1840, expressed this feeling clearly:

"Their Lordships are strongly of opinion that no plan of education ought to be encouraged in which intellectual instruction is not subordinate to the regulation of the thoughts and habits of the children by the doctrines and precepts of revealed religion."

(quoted in Maclure 1986, p 49)

If there was such apathy in Parliament towards Roebuck's vision in 1833 why was there a general all-Party agreement that a national system of compulsory education was necessary by the late 1860s ? Put simply, the answer is that change demanded it.

The Newcastle Commission of 1861 was the last major expression of laissez-faire, if not apathy, with regard to education. It produced no reform, no legislation - indeed, in its view on child labour, it was positively reactionary:

"if the wages of the child's labour are

necessary...it is far better that it should go to work at the earliest age at which it can bear the physical exertion than that it remain at school."

(vol.1, p 188)

The period from 1850 to 1870 was a period of dynamic change. By 1850 Britain was the richest country in the world despite the poverty endured by a huge proportion of the working class. Best (1979) quotes likely per capita incomes of the UK, France and Germany of 1860 as being £32.60, £21.10 and £13.30 respectively and this wealth was now distributed among the middle classes who were reaping the rewards of the, by now, established industrial order as well as the inherited wealth of the landowning classes.

Factory Acts, which had succeeded on to the statute books because of improved technology which diminished the need for child labour, created social pressures:

"Thus in Manchester in 1865 of those between the ages of three and twelve 6 per cent were at work, 40 per cent at school and 54 per cent were neither at work nor at school."

(Simon 1960, p 29)

International Exhibitions such as those in London (1851) and Paris (1867) revealed the rate of industrial progress of competitor nations and pointed to the need for an educated (in the sense of basic numeracy and literacy) and ordered (in the

sense of God-fearing) workforce.

Most important of all were the changes of attitude caused by the electoral reforms of 1832 and, more pointedly, 1867. As Simon (op.cit.) points out:

"The new government of 1867 was elected on the promise of widening the franchise. In fact, Disraeli's Reform Act of 1867 gave the vote to the urban working class, and they promptly voted into power the liberals who had undertaken to initiate some action on education."

(p 30)

Herein lay another complication. The general enfranchisement of the adult population since 1832 has democratised the whole political system and in so doing has greatly diversified the nature of the demands upon the educational system. As the contest between capital and labour, landowner and industrialist, and conflicting class interests has been fought, the state education system has been the recipient of an enduring bloody nose.

There is also a sense in which the educational system which the 1870 Act set up had already been anticipated. In 1840 the first two HMIs had been appointed to oversee the efficient use of parliamentary grants to voluntary schools which Roebuck's moves

had initiated. In 1852 the grant was £160,000 but by 1859 it had risen to £836,920. The creation of an Education Department in 1856 was made necessary by this increasing bureaucracy. Gladstone's government was committed to reducing expenditure and as government had to match the funds raised by voluntary means it became incumbent upon his administration to take full control of the reins of an animal which was quickly spiralling out of Treasury control.

All these matters were taken up by Parliament after Forster had introduced his Bill with the stated object:

"to complete the present voluntary system, to fill up the gaps."

(199/443)

But dominating all the debates, in both Houses, was the issue of religion.

"We want a good secular teaching for these children, a good Christian training, and good schoolmasters"

(199/457)

Forster had declared, and he quickly addressed the matter of religion by stating that there was no intention in the Bill to eliminate religious teaching because "out of the religious difficulty we should come to an irreligious difficulty". While

respecting the rights of the various minorities,

"an enormous majority of the parents of this country prefer that there should be a Christian training for their children - that they should be taught to read the Bible."

(199/458)

To prevent religious teaching in schools would be to ban the Bible which would be "a monstrous thing". It would though be impossible to prevent dogmatic teaching and thus a dual system was the only way forward. Although Forster closed his remarks by declaring that the nation's industrial prosperity depended upon the establishment of a sound system of elementary education and that this would also ensure "the safe working of our constitutional system" the concerns of the vast majority of those who contributed to the debate as the Bill passed through its parliamentary stages were religious ones.

Mr.Dixon called the attention of the House:

"to the enormous change that would be brought about by this Bill in the relations of the State to education, and through education to religion."

(199/1920)

Dixon proposed an amendment that religious instruction should be determined by central government and not local authorities. The ensuing amendment debate lasted three evening sittings and

was a very tense affair. Mr. Vernon Harcourt said:

"We have been told that we are delaying the Bill. Well, no doubt that is so; and we intend to delay it, because our conviction is that so far as the religious part of the Bill is concerned it is objectionable in theory and impossible in practice. But though we may have delayed the Bill, we do not desire, and we never have desired, to delay the cause of education."

(200/225)

The commitment to education reform was there but the juxtaposition of religion to the system was of utmost concern because religious loyalties reflected social certainties and, ultimately, the security of the status quo.

The religious difficulty was left to be settled during the committee stage and the Bill proceeded to its third reading where, sensing victory, Forster declared that Members:

"will not regret that we have not...built a wall around the schools which are to receive the outcast and the destitute, through which a ray of Christian light could not penetrate, and that, in the interests of freedom, we did not get Parliament to declare that parents who desire for their children religious combined with secular instruction should not be allowed to have their wishes gratified."

(203/762)

After the 1870 Act had established the Dual System whereby Board Schools and Voluntary Schools stood in an uneasy and

financially inequitable co-existence the state was irredeemably committed to developing the national network of schooling as 'the majority shareholder'. The churches, through both societies, struggled to find the funding to build and maintain its own schools with a large degree of success. Within a decade of the 1870 Act the number of denominational schools had risen from 8000 to 14000 (Cruickshank 1963, p 47) but, inevitably, many eventually had to be taken over by the School Boards and the voluntary sector was overtaken in numbers by Board Schools.

Voluntary Schools survived though in conspicuous numbers and the Education Act of 1902 strengthened and secured their position within the system. Indeed, the Bill:

"took up more parliamentary time than any Bill previously before the House; during its passage it was held up chiefly by opposition attempts to reject it or alter its religious character."

(Cannon 1964, p 148)

Little had changed since 1870:

"During the committee stage the debates read like those of a theological rather than an educational Bill; in Lloyd George's words, 'for hours this House swirled round and round in the vortex of a mad frenzy of theological conspiracy.'"

(ibid.)

Cannon concludes that interest in religious issues probably

preoccupies those in positions of leadership and that religious education is seen by many who hold positions of power "as the panacea of the nation's social ills" (op.cit., p 160). Although there is undoubtedly some truth in this, the position is more complex and needs to be viewed in a wider context. The 1870 Act owes its birth to more than issues connected with the religious contribution to social order. The pace of social change caused by the industrialisation of the economy was a phenomenon of ever-increasing speed and the social control of the re-alignment of the social fabric of the nation was the legitimate concern of the governments of the time. Religious controversy was a surface manifestation of deeper structural changes connected with the whole social and political panoply, all of which branded the educational system with a mark of importance as an instrument of national cohesion and social control. What was significant too was the source of educational control which was wrested from the Church, denied the educationalists, and placed firmly in the hands of government.

d) Buttressing The Establishment

The Establishment, Paxman (1991) maintains, is:

"one of those ideas, an abstraction, which like imagination's vision of God, has potency because of its vagueness. The vision keeps regenerating itself by adjusting to new orthodoxies and extending its embrace to those who might threaten it."

(pp 3-4)

Henry Fairlie, writing in 'The Spectator' in 1955, suggested that the Establishment involved "the whole matrix of official and social relations within which power is exercised"; and it is this concept of power being exercised which makes the issue of the relationship between the system of education (in its entirety - both the private and maintained sectors) and the potency of the Establishment so important, for, it will be seen, the continuation of the private sector and the establishment and control of the maintained sector of education have been, and still are, vital mechanisms for buttressing the Establishment.

It has already been suggested that the 'religious difficulty' which so bedevilled debate on the virtues of establishing a national system of schooling inside and outside of parliament was symptomatic of a wider concern for maintaining the whole existing social order; and that the root cause of uncertainties and vulnerabilities lay in the fact that the new industrial

middle class had upset the existing balance of power within the established order. This was part of the 'shock' of the advent of modernism, paralleled at the end of the twentieth century, with the reluctance to admit the metamorphosis to a new 'postmodernism'.

Following Paxman's analysis it can be seen that the new interloper quickly became a part of the Establishment and its interests adapted themselves accordingly. As Simon (1991) remarks:

"Once the middle class felt itself to be in the saddle, the task of teaching the working class to recognise its claims seemed much less urgent."

(p 165)

This is a standard, perhaps one should say 'classical', pattern. Self-interest always, finally, wins hearts and minds. Many would argue, for instance, that the 'triumph of capitalism' in the 1980s was directly attributable to the fact that the prospect of individual material prosperity proved more tempting than the pursuit of a truly "classless society". Indeed, it would be hard not to agree with Simon (op.cit.) when he says that:

"It can be argued that this (educational) reconstruction, carried through in Victorian times, still determines the basic characteristics

of the educational structure as it exists today
- roughly 100 years later."

(p 24)

With this analysis, it is tempting to see the educational 'reforms' of the Thatcher era as being a mechanism to stem the progressivist tide with a reactionary re-positioning of the education system more firmly back in the (more hierarchically secure) Victorian mould.

One pillar of the Establishment which has exercised more influence over the development of education in this country than any other has been that of religion, specifically the Established Church.

The relationship between religion and education in this country has always been a direct and close one. It was the religious foundations which spawned the country's first educational institutions and it has been noted that the voluntary schools founded in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century were first and foremost educational centres for the propagation of the Christian faith and denominational loyalty. Curtis (1963) makes the point that:

"...most people, Churchmen and Dissenters alike,

agreed that religion was an essential part of education"

(p 237)

but it could be argued that religion has, in this country, been at the centre of educational matters throughout the period of central state involvement in the schooling process simply because the Church is one of the four estates of the realm.

In the nineteenth century, as Paxman (op.cit.) says:

"the Church of England saw itself lying deep and steady beneath the nation, the ballast which kept the ship of state on an even keel."

(p 199)

Paxman goes on to suggest that the Church derived its strength from the fact:

"that it existed in the territory which lay at the heart of the Establishment, the area where public life and private morals collided. If the Establishment was about shared values, the Church of England was the arbiter of what those values were."

(ibid.)

Following this line of argument it can be seen that it was inevitable that parliamentary debate centred upon the question of religion so closely and so persistently simply because education itself is intimately concerned with the selection and transmission of values. The fact that the established Church

"was born not merely out of the Reformation, but out of nationalism" (op.cit., p 201) is not without significance and explains much about the reason why religion and education for the masses have been such constant bedfellows during the past two centuries. The public schools have always had an easier time with God simply because He has always been perceived as being a member of the Establishment club. Paxman (op.cit.) noted that pupils at Rugby were still, in the 1990s, "required to turn out for compulsory chapel on three weekday mornings and once on Sunday" (p 169) and:

"In the stained-glass windows at Radley the school buildings were painted into the background of the Last Supper, almost as if Christ wore the old school tie."

(ibid.)

If education was going to be given to the working class then it had to be of a sort which would aid the economy, identify potential ability in order to carefully recruit useful talent for service to the status quo, and, above all, keep the mass of the people acquiescent, grateful to their betters, and morally righteous.

It is then unsurprising and perfectly logical that a concern for religion has featured so strongly in all educational reform.

The 1870 Act had to address the problem of the religious conflict between the demands of the established and nonconformist churches which it did through the Cowper-Temple clause which specified that no specific denominational teaching was to be taught in schools; the Cross Report of 1888, looking into the working of the Elementary Education Acts, considered the arguments in favour of secular education and the exclusion of religious teaching in schools and concluded that it was "of the highest importance that all children should receive religious and moral training" (p 127); the position of voluntary schools was strengthened and guaranteed by the Act of 1902 which initiated better financial support so that, as Balfour made clear in the Commons, they could "worthily play their necessary and inevitable part" in the educational system (24th March 1902); the 1944 Act provided a financial settlement which further enhanced the security of the voluntary sector by making provision for such schools to become 'Aided' or 'Controlled', the former being eligible to receive grants to cover teachers' salaries and some maintenance charges. The 1944 Act specified that:

"...the school day in every county school and in every voluntary school shall begin with collective worship on the part of all pupils in attendance at the school..."

11.25(1)

and

"...religious instruction shall be given in every county school and in every voluntary school."

II.25(2)

Both these specifications were vigorously defended and maintained in the 1988 Act, as will be seen, and have been strengthened in subsequent legislation.

In determining the reasons for this persistent influence of religion upon education and the development of the schooling system in this country it is necessary to consider some historical factors.

Other countries, both Catholic and Protestant, have developed secular systems of schooling and, in this respect, the system operating in England and Wales is almost peculiar and idiosyncratic. In France, for example, the education system owes much to the atheism of the revolutionary state which evolved in the 1790s and the influence of the Napoleonic civic reforms of the first decade of the eighteenth century. In the USA the ethos of the school has been closely bound up with a fervent nationalism which has seemed to put the lexicon of the Constitution on an equal footing with the scripture of the

Bible. In this country, as Linda Colley (1992) suggests, 'patriotic identity' has been 'yoked to religion' (p 44). It would seem then perfectly logical, given that schooling is inevitably involved with the process of transmitting (national) cultural values, that the religious influence upon the whole concept of schooling in this country should be highly conspicuous.

Colley's argument is based on a perception that this island state has clung to its reformed religion, even to the extent of altering its laws of regal succession (in 1689 and 1714), because of a sense of bigotry, prejudice and fear of Catholic Europe. This feeling helped fuse a sense of national identity amongst the whole of the British people throughout the eighteenth century. The prejudice was:

"a way of seeing (or rather of mis-seeing) Catholics and Catholic states which had grown up since the Reformation if not before, which was fostered by successive wars with France and Spain, and which encouraged many Britons, irrespective of their real income, to regard themselves as peculiarly fortunate."

(Colley 1992, p 36)

Colley points out that the Toleration Act of 1689 had permitted dissenters to worship freely simply because this was seen at the time as a pragmatic reform designed to "unite their

Majesties' Protestant subjects". The fact that non-conformists "were able to penetrate almost all levels of the political system up to and including Parliament itself" (p 19) provides a historical context for the period of rivalry between the two sources of voluntary school provision which culminated in an acceptance by politicians that both needed to be supported from the 1830s by grant aid. The important fact was that both societies' schools were Protestant and therefore inextricably tied up with the preservation of the state. For it was a fact that:

"The image that many Britons nurtured of their land was coloured and made more roseate by their overwhelming Protestantism. And it was on this strong substratum of Protestant bias from below that the British state after 1707 was unapologetically founded."

(op.cit. p 43)

'The Times' put the matter into words succinctly in May 1843:

"The Church is the main element of stability in the constitution of the country; she is always on the side of the law; while her enemies of every kind, whether Dissenting, Romish or infidel, have all their alliances with movements which tend to disorganise society."

(quoted in Rich 1970, p 40)

It is a fact that from the 1830s the religious content of the curriculum of the voluntary schools was challenged by the growing influence of a subscription to the needs of the

national economy. However, the religious conception of education in this country is a factor of the utmost significance, not as a matter of historical interest but because the influence of religion, reflecting the religious dimension of the state, has persisted to this day and, many would argue, warped the clear perception of truly educational aims both within the educational establishment and among the general public. In the former case this emanates from the institutional development of the schooling system which was initiated by the Church and other religious organisations, and in the latter instance rests upon the politically calculated role of the school as an agent of social control.

Thompson (1988) says that:

"It was not surprising that the ruling classes should think of the school as an instrument for conditioning and controlling the lower orders. That was precisely how the upper and upper middle classes viewed their own public schools: they were instruments for conditioning their boys into becoming upright manly characters who did not cheat, sneak, or whine, and who could lead without being needlessly cruel to animals or servants."

(p 145)

Is this perception of the school, both the elitist Public Schools and the state elementary (and post-1902 state secondary school), as being an institution where character-formation and,

thus, the stability and preservation of the status quo, is the central concern, simply a historical phenomenon or is it a current reality?

In considering this question one is drawn back again to the anomalous nature of the English state. Colley (op.cit.) presents an analysis of the forging of the British state which is clear and compelling and which lays much emphasis upon the religious influence upon the state both at the level of political influence upon Parliamentary debate and, through a persistent appeal to sentiments of anti-Popery with its connotation of constitutional instability and foreign interference, upon the mass of ordinary people. The resistance to demands for Islamic schools having access to state funding in Muslim-dominated areas in England today is symptomatic of this continuing characteristic.

In the White Paper "Choice And Diversity" presented to Parliament in the summer of 1992 the first chapter considers, in some detail, the very purpose of schooling. Interestingly the chapter is prefaced by words of Ruskin written in 1862, the year of the Revised Code and 'payment by results'.

On the first page the Government asserts that the purpose of

the school :

"has always been to ensure that children acquire a basic knowledge and a capacity to learn, and that they enter the outside world as happy and rounded, as balanced and qualified as possible: that central aim will always be there, cascading down through the generations."

(1.2 p 1)

It appears then that the question posed above has been answered. Schools exist to provide a 'basic' knowledge and to promote young adults who will be 'happy', and thus not prone to political agitation and discontent; 'rounded', and presumably aware of their cultural heritage and obligations; 'balanced' and therefore not of an extreme disposition; and, finally, 'qualified' in order to contribute to the GNP.

Children must "go to school, stay there and learn" so that truancy does not lead to "problems for the community" (p 5).

For it is a fact that:

"Regular attendance at school and taking advantage of a good education within a strong moral, spiritual and cultural context, are not only essential to becoming well qualified and to growing up well balanced, they are also one of the best deterrents against criminality."

(1.27 p 6)

Furthermore:

"The Government believes that religious education in schools is important and central to that ethos..."

Schools should not be, and generally are not, value-free zones."

(1.29 p 7)

The White Paper makes clear to the reader that the Government expects schools to inculcate "a clear vision of the values within it, and those of the community outside" (1.30). Children must grow up "understanding what is right and wrong" (1.31) and that:

"There are many opportunities for pupils to develop in this way, particularly through the act of collective worship; through the teaching of the National Curriculum together with religious education..."

(1.32)

This is followed by the rather Orwellian phrase:

"The Government is convinced that it must do all it can to help schools develop in this way, as so many have done already."

(1.32)

Such a perfunctory scan of this Paper should leave few in doubt that the influence of organised religion upon the schooling process in this country is alive and well and possibly thriving in late twentieth century Britain. It is not only Ruskin who is a pertinent source of quotation. Other Victorian worthies could just as well be speaking today for it would appear that much of Victorian thinking is still with us, having come "cascading down through the generations":

"Perish all state assistance", the Bishop of Oxford said in 1848,

"if the education given by it was the mere stuffing the heads of children with secular education instead of training them up in the nurture of the Christian Church."

(quoted in Rich 1970, p37)

Even though the Bishop represented a vested interest in the promotion of the Church these words echo the concern of many in the Commons and the Lords, as has been seen, in the debate on the Education Reform Bill in 1987-88 in preserving the central place of religious teaching within the curriculum. It was this factor, it will be remembered, which had led Kenneth Baker to agree to amend Clause 2 of the Education Reform Bill:

"to ensure that RE is statutorily identified as part of the basic curriculum to be provided for all pupils by all maintained schools and that it takes its place before the core and foundation subjects."

(Hansard 1443/422)

Four years later, in the debate on the second reading of the proposed Education Bill following the publication of the White Paper, the Government made clear its intention to strengthen the status of religious education within schools. The Secretary of State, John Patten, made this abundantly clear in his

opening speech to the House:

"It is quite simply shameful that, following the 1988 Act, two thirds of local education authorities have yet to revise their religious syllabuses."

(213/639)

Patten had begun by claiming that successive Conservative administrations had "successfully cast adrift the attachment to uniformity and conformity", which many would argue was a less than subtle slur on the post-war pursuit of egalitarianism. The religious and moral concerns of the 1988 Act "were to be given fresh impetus" (213/638). The "shared values" that the White Paper had spoken about had to be promoted through the curriculum and "Proper regard should continue to be paid to the nation's Christian heritage and traditions" (p 37). These sentiments were echoed by many Conservative Members. George Walden, for instance, was concerned that presently:

"Nothing is taught about the history of the Christian religion, let alone the Bible"

(213/657)

whereas Michael Alison was grateful that there was a campaign by the Government:

"to ensure that religious education syllabuses are brought properly up to date...and that 'mainly Christian' means that most syllabuses have features of Christian religion that are properly taught, which means that there should be room for only one, or at the most two,

other world religion or religions."

(213/657)

Such posturing by representatives of the Right barely disguises the aspirations of the Establishment to preserve their own position and identity. The concerns are, basically, the same as they were in 1870 and 1902 because the nature of British society is, at its heart, still elitist and bound by hierarchical considerations.

The Secretary of State reassured the House that the Inspectorate would be examining:

"the spiritual, moral and cultural ethos of a school...the chief inspector and his colleagues will be giving greater attention to that and setting great store by it."

(213/658)

Alison persisted with his fears, suggesting that it would be "damaging" if non-Christians, or "those hostile to the Christian religion" were allowed to carry out inspections of the "spiritual and moral aspects of school life" (213/659). One is driven to wondering whether a public declaration of each inspector's spiritual affiliation will eventually become a prerequisite for employment by OFSTED, the organisation newly responsible for recruiting Registered Inspectors.

The Debate on the Second Reading of the Bill did not occupy itself with religious concerns to the extent that the debates on the Education Reform Bill had done but, when concerns were expressed, they centred on the nature of religious and moral content within the curriculum, perhaps most openly expressed by Lady Olga Maitland who declared that:

"The time has come to stop being apologetic about being a Christian country. We should be proud of it. We should not allow non-believers to undermine our traditions ...it is a tragedy that the teaching of the Christian faith has become woefully neglected in the face of multiculturalism which is promoting minority faiths at the expense of Christianity - the faith allegiance of the vast majority of the people of this nation."

(213/818)

Further:

"(Children) have a right to understand our Christian history, which provides our moral and cultural heritage."

(ibid.)

The rhetoric betrays much that is not actually said. It is 'them' and 'us', the English and the non-English, the docile conformers and the nonconforming activists. It is 'our' heritage, not 'theirs'. It is, essentially, the interests and preservation of the status quo, the rule of the Establishment, which, whether it is threatened by the multicultural lobby of

the latter decades of the twentieth century or the nonconformist groupings of the mid-nineteenth century, is the paramount cause.

Clearly, with regard to the schooling of the masses, control, moral coercion and the safe management of change are still factors of concern to the Establishment. There has, of course, been no call for a Clarendon Commission for the 1990s, no effective moves on the part of governments of Right or Left in the period since the War to investigate the condition of the private sector. The National Curriculum is not obligatory in such schools, a factor which reveals much about both the true purpose of the National Curriculum as a means of tightening control and buttressing the apparently threatened position of the Establishment, and the status of public schools as agents of that Establishment.

It is perhaps surprising that the Labour Party in government has failed in each post-war administration to tackle the issue of the private sector, a fact which indicates the true scale of the education system's continuing and integral servicing of the hierarchical and elitist structure of British society.

R.A. Butler, in his memoirs, has made it clear that in the deliberations which led to the passing of his Act of 1944 he

was determined to save the private sector from state interference. The Fleming Committee, looking into the matter, had been established in 1942 but it did not publish its Report until one week before Butler's Act received the Royal Assent, a fact which made Butler privately rejoice that:

"The first class carriage had been shunted on to an immense siding."

(Butler 1982, p 120)

The post-war Attlee Government, with an overwhelming popular mandate for social reform proved no threat to the private sector because:

"There was a sustained belief that in a new socialist Britain...there had been a substantial shift of opinion. Improved access to universities, better sixth forms and wider opportunities in maintained secondary schools were believed to make public schools less relevant."

(Gordon, Aldrich & Dean 1991, p 207)

However, in the midst of the period of egalitarianism in the next Labour government a Commission "headed by the far from radical John Newsom" and with "relatively limited terms of reference" (op.cit. p 208) was set up to investigate the practical realisation of the 1964 Manifesto promise to "integrate" the private sector within the state system, an objective which, interestingly, was reaffirmed in the 1966 Manifesto.

Anthony Crosland, whose socialist credentials were beyond doubt, made his position as Secretary of State clear by declaring that he wanted to see no "half measures" with regard to the integration of the private sector within the state system. "We must either have a proper reform or none at all" he declared in 1965 (Times Educational Supplement, 1st March). However, when introducing his proposal for the Newsom Commission which would look at the issue, he told the Cabinet that "This is a strictly insoluble problem" (Simon 1991, p 321) which suggested lack of firm political will. This was the same Anthony Crosland who had written in 1956 that:

"We shall not have equality of opportunity so long as we maintain a system of superior private schools, open to the wealthy classes but out of reach of poor children however talented and deserving."

(quoted in Bell 1980, p 96)

The Commission's Report, published in 1968, concluded that it would be difficult to assimilate the private sector "at this stage" because public opinion may not have been ready to support such a measure; the cost would undoubtedly delay the implementation of other educational reforms; the local authorities showed no signs of enthusiasm at the prospect of administering such schools; and there was no evidence that pupils with boarding needs could fill all the places that would become available. Instead, the Commission proposed that "at

least half" of boarding pupils at such schools should be recruited from the state sector. The Report was universally condemned in both educational and political circles and published without Government comment.

The survival of the independent sector during this period of educational reform, say from 1944 to 1976, reflects the deeply entrenched conservative nature of this country's political and social character. For any Party, Right or Left, to threaten the dismemberment or assimilation of those schools outside the state system would be to invite tremendous controversy and unrest. As Lawton (1994) makes clear, Butler knew the risks:

"Had Rab been more visionary (that is, less Tory) he could have solved the public school problem...Butler...clearly did not wish to risk failure or even controversy within the Conservative Party."

(p 25)

Lawton speaks of a "real opportunity" being "missed" (ibid.) but it is hard to see that Butler, even if he had wanted to, which, given his background, is unlikely, had an actual 'opportunity' to tackle the public school question. Even in the heady days of idealism at the close of the war, the Establishment was firmly in control of the country's socio-political fabric. Crosland, had he lived and fought his corner

on this issue, would also have courted unpalatable, and undoubtedly unacceptable, political controversy

It should not be forgotten too, that public schools are a central part of the 'myth' of *Englishness*, as many films of the post-war era affectionately bear witness (the *St. Trinian's* series, for example).

Ironically, although perhaps not so surprisingly, the Conservative Party appears to have taken a more feasible policy direction in their attempts to privatise the state sector since 1988.

The Black Paper era of the 1970s, Callaghan's Ruskin Speech and the Great Debate focussed attention on the perceived failings of the state system to the benefit of the private sector, in the sense that their safety and prosperity was enhanced by comparison. It is evident that:

"after 1976, there was little real attempt to weaken their position...Labour leaders now seemed content with symbolic gestures including the publicized withdrawal of their own children from independent schools."

(Gordon, et al. 1991, p 210)

The Labour Party will not successfully build its 'New

Jerusalem' unless it tackles the central position that public and independent schools occupy in both English education and society. It is probably true to assume that all post-war Labour administrations have discovered, as they occupied the central hall of government, the powerful and pervasive influence of the public school network in the multifarious corridors of power.

Paxman (1991) makes the point that every nation has its elite:

"but the distinctive quality of the British elite is the way in which it is still dominated by the products of a tiny number of schools, which make their selection at the age of thirteen, and for attendance at which - scholarships aside - the *sine qua non* is parental wealth."

(p 157)

The fact that the new nineteenth century middle class demanded access for their children to this previously exclusive preserve of the aristocracy and, in fact, expanded it by creating new institutions such as the City of London School (1837), Liverpool College (1840), Cheltenham College (1841) and Marlborough College (1843) [for instance], bolstered the connection between private education, privilege and power. The fact that the proportion of pupils in private schools rose from 5.8 per cent to 7 per cent in the ten years prior to 1988 shows that this situation is not only of historical interest but is a continuing reality.

The gulf between the two educational systems is vast. While inner city schools in the state sector, serving what Anthony Sampson (1992) points out is a growing underclass, grapple with the interminable problem of managing devolved budgets in order to purchase basic resources and, at least, maintain current staffing levels, the boys at Eton in 1989:

"were entertained in a concert by Dame Janet Baker, heard Dr. Henry Kissinger expound on international relations, Nelson Mandela's lawyer on the state of apartheid, and listened to the chairman of the Conservative Party, the director-general of Fair Trading, the chairman of Scottish and Newcastle Breweries, the director of Oxfam, two bishops, one junior minister and a Cabinet minister."

(Paxman 1991, p 166)

Seemingly, with the exception of the partridge and the pear tree, many people of influence and prestige are still happy to spend some of their valuable and pressured time on the public school circuit and in doing so are giving acknowledgement to the fact that it is this sector of the education system, along with Oxford and Cambridge, which matters and has real importance. Prime Minister Major looking, in the words of Anthony Sampson (op.cit.), like "a classless totem surrounded by more class-bound followers" (p 24) had, in 1992, a cabinet of 21 of which only four (including himself) did not attend public school or Oxbridge; and Paxman (op.cit.) points out the staggering statistic that out of 1500 ministers of all parties

between 1900 and 1985 no less than one fifth were old Etonians (p 167).

There is one other factor which has influenced the relationship between state and school in this country and contributed to the character of curriculum development here. If religious bigotry and cynical concerns about possible social unrest were catalytic to the initiation and development of state-aided education in England, then the country's growing imperial status was also an important factor. As Horn (op. cit.) says:

"Edmond Holmes, later to be Chief Inspector for Elementary Schools, wrote in 1899 of the village school as having a 'national, not to say imperial' role. 'It's business is to turn out youthful citizens rather than hedgers and ditchers;... preparing children for the battle of life (a battle which will...be fought in *all* parts of the British Empire)."

(p 56)

The fact that the state school system was begun and developed during the zenith of Britain's imperial era left a marked legacy on the system itself which has persisted to this day in contemporary concerns about the discipline and sense of national identity felt by many disaffected inner-city children, especially those from Afro-Caribbean backgrounds, and an insistence by government that history syllabuses concentrate on

British history rather than an approach from a global or even European perspective.

One can see a historical linear connection between the new legitimisation of team games in physical education programmes in the 1990s and the recommendation to teachers from the London School Board of Inspectors in 1875 to stress team games as:

"a way of creating an *esprit de corps*, and a readiness to endure fatigue, to submit to discipline, and to subordinate one's own powers and wishes to a common end."

(Horn, op.cit., p 60)

The Empire Day Movement, founded by the Earl of Meath at the beginning of the century was observed by English schools for almost half a century; indeed the writer remembers Empire Day (May 24th) being commemorated in an infants' school as late as the mid-1950s. A greater link between state and school would be hard to imagine, a firmer buttress to the Establishment difficult to conceive.

e) The Victorian Legacy

Any assumption that there took place a conspiracy on the part of the ruling class, intent upon preserving the established social equilibrium, against the people by means of an establishment of a centralised system of education would be a travesty of the truth. There was no conspiracy.

It is an easy assumption to make unless one understands the nature of the relationship between government and nineteenth-century society in England which was essentially, one could even say proudly, minimal. As Jose Harris says:

"The aim of the government...was not to determine the structure and working of society...Rather, it was to provide a framework of rules and guidelines designed to enable society very largely to run itself."

(in Thompson (ed.) (1990) p 67)

Traditionalists would say that this is the essential cornerstone of English governance, the independence of local democracy founded upon a strong lineage of guilds and aldermanic authority, parochial councils and other sundry regionalised and local bodies. It is the depth of this tradition that has caused such an outcry at the centralising tendency of Thatcherism. Put simply, it is not 'English' to

have an education system run from Whitehall, the fount of such authority and control rests with local government and the churches. It is not to be antiquarian to express such thoughts for until 1988 this was the reality of the situation. Popular apathy about the 'gift' from government of individual autonomy in the form of 'parent-power' over school selection stems from the tradition of Victorian municipality which is stronger here than an American-style individualism. Put simply, the English were happy with their school system governed from within the Town Hall. As Edward Heath made clear in the House of Commons in 1988 (see Chapter 5), the demise of local authority control of the education system owed more to the antics of a minority of extreme-left councils than to a desire to see an end to the Victorian construction, strengthened by Butler's Act, of a national system locally administered.

The perception and growing realisation that the workforce had to be better educated was a pragmatic one in an international climate of growing competitiveness; the fear that increasingly crowded, and slum-infested, cities could be centres of social unrest was real enough, particularly after 1848, 'the year of revolutions'; and the fact that education had been in the hands of the churches who enjoyed, throughout the first industrial century, a 'boom' of influence not experienced since the seventeenth century; all created the conditions whereby the

state would be drawn inexorably into a position of control and monopolistic influence over the means of formal education.

Furthermore, the rapidity of social, economic and demographic change during the Victorian period caused the state to take an active interest, based on social, moral and economic concerns, in *what* was being taught in schools. This involvement in the curriculum was formalised by an increasingly rigid centralised control of curriculum content which was allowed to drift into a more decentralised model through the major part of the twentieth century and thus, in order to reassert control over social, moral and economic direction, had to be reclaimed by the Centre in the 1980s.

Roebuck's vision of an education which meant more than a simple acquisition of knowledge inevitably sank without trace in the era of Foster's elementary schools which, workhouse-like, gave ladles of carefully graded knowledge to the working classes sufficient to render them more productive but limited to maintain them in their preordained station. It would have been useless asking for more: this was hardly education, it was more pedantic servitude. It is hardly surprising that schools, operating on a nineteenth-century model, have felt confused about their role in a subsequent century which has seen the

social, political, educational and vocational aspirations of the ordinary man and woman rise to such unforeseen heights.

The decline of religion throughout this century, particularly since 1945, with the consequent relative diminution of the Church's political and social influence, has further intensified the process of state involvement in the education process, though, as will be seen, the Established Church has fought, and continues to fight, a lingering rear-guard action.

In trying to understand contemporary developments, the social and political context which existed at the time the state first became formally involved in the provision of mass education, in 1870, cannot be overlooked for it was 'character-forming' upon all subsequent development between education and the state in this country. Put simply, many of the attitudes of the state towards education were persistent despite societal changes through the twentieth century, and it could be argued that much public perception and expectation of education is rooted in a legacy of Victorian values, a legacy which has been further perpetuated by Thatcherism's alliance with these values.

The fact, for instance, that religion is still a principal issue in educational debate owes much to the fact that the Victorian age was so consciously religious. Education is

inevitably and rightly concerned with moral development and it has been seen that this understanding runs back to ancient times; but, it will be shown, debate over the Conservative reforms of the 1980s concerned itself not just with the preservation and strengthening of social hegemony and the nurturing of young citizenship, but with detailed points of Christian doctrine. Religion and morality have been seen, quite erroneously, to be one and the same thing. David Hargreaves argues that this part of our Victorian legacy should be discarded:

"The best way to improve moral education would be to abolish religious education in state schools, since for many people religion is not the basis of their morality and ethics. In its place we must develop a moral, ethical and civic education which could be genuinely held in common by people from different faiths and cultures and (unlike RE) preached and practised by all teachers."

(*'The Independent'*, 19.7.95)

The validity of this argument is overwhelmed by the politics of the situation; the fact is that the churches have a vested interest in maintaining their involvement in schools through the National Curriculum in order to legitimate their authority in the political structure of the nation.

The re-alignment of curriculum content and priority to match the increasingly technological and scientific needs of industry

and the economy throws into relief the instrumental emphasis of national educational concern, a theme perfectly paralleled by Victorian concern for a literate and numerate workforce to help run 'the workshop of the world'. The fact that English education has been concerned still with an industrial world when an age of scientific technology has overtaken it has both hindered the national economy and helped sustain a curriculum which remains essentially characterised by nineteenth century interests which were, in their turn, reflective of the European Renaissance and the ancient world. The state then, for its part, has been both critical of education for its apparent failure to help Britain remain competitive in economic terms, and guilty, through its support for the traditionalism of the curriculum, of causing it.

It is important to understand that the denial of an appropriate curriculum to the needs and reality of the late twentieth century owes much to political ideology. As Lawton (1994) says, to the Tories,

"Technology...is to be treated with suspicion because it is often unfamiliar, innovative and potentially disruptive of the social order."

(p 143)

A return to English values within the new curriculum - the battle over Shakespeare, Nelson, classic literature, and the

historical forging of this island state through the repulsion of invasion and the building of a mighty empire, so that future citizens are imbued with a love of "This England" - is indisputably connected to a fear of national splintering; a romantically gothic view of the past; and a resistance to admitting that this country is irredeemably multi-cultural.

So the three Victorian themes - religious piety, social hegemony, and economic prosperity - are all still in place in the educational equation. But the nature of the state has changed out of recognition. The minimalist state with its emphasis on self-help and voluntaryism has been replaced by a state which is active and interventionist and where there is a greater expectation and demand on the part of the people *for* action by the state. Here are the *tragedy* and *comedy* of Thatcherism, the very reason why the Education Reform Bill, with its inconsistencies of power to the centre *and* the individual, was possible.

Thatcherism in the 1980s, as will be outlined later, attempted to arrest this phenomenon of state dependence, nurtured by the post-war welfare state, and return to some form of Victorian minimalism on the part of government, but contradictions within its philosophy and practice did not allow this to happen. This

is an important point, for much of the reforms in education since 1979 have been 'Victorian' in spirit, but difficult to implement because the Victorian era ended in 1901 and, with it, the minimalist state.

Ainley (1993), in his succinct and compelling analysis of current trends in educational policymaking, explains that the 1870 Act was nurtured by patrician and paternalistic attitudes, that the new elementary Board Schools were to be "an elementary and second-best preparation for labouring life" (p 77); the grammar schools and redbrick universities were seen as vocationally serving the middle class for non-manual professional occupations; and the elite private schools were seen as totally separate in this rigidly class bound system. Ainley asserts that until recently this was the view of successive Conservative governments. Ainley maintains that the educational reforms of the 1980s were an attempt "to preserve this hierarchical system at all costs (p 79). This has been attempted by marketing education which has had the effect of strengthening the traditional selective system "in which failure is the norm" and by continuing a system in secondary schools where:

"a third of those attempting A-level entrance exams for higher education fall at the first fence, and for the rest the grades they obtain

determine their level of entry to an elaborate hierarchy of colleges and universities."

(ibid.)

It is all as if the egalitarian concerns of the twentieth century had never occurred. Apparently, it is full-circle. One is left considering whether this has been a deliberate mechanism of change (ie. 'no change'); an intrinsic inevitability because of the hierarchical nature of British society; or a conscious bolstering of the divisive system of education first established by Victorian polity. It will be shown that the causes are a combination of all three.

Does the schooling process buttress the established system through the transmission of conservative values or does it allow for change? Or does change (or the demand for change) arise through some form of default through a system of wider influences? Certainly the fact that we are now a global society diminishes a state's monopoly of influence, as evidenced by the collapse of communism which escalated, domino-fashion, as daily media coverage spread the sense of agitation and realisation of hope across the far side of the 'iron curtain'.

The feeling of 'state' in Britain is not widespread. The British prefer to talk of 'government' because the sense of individual freedom in this country is strong. 'Government' is a

transient entity, the state is permanent. But the state has encroached upon the territory of private activity to an enormous extent throughout the twentieth century. Although the culture of voluntaryism has not been extinguished in England, it is the state which has assumed control of the basic social and welfare agencies. As the state has burgeoned education has become one of the principal apparatuses of state. It is indivisibly a part of the state machine and its activities are circumscribed by the state. Put simply, education is on a leash. Its journeys cannot be infinite, its purposes cannot be limitless. Anarchy must always be checked.

This hypothesis has never been better validated than in the suppression of the educational freedoms which began to be realised in the wake of post-war reconstruction from 1945. The restrictions and curtailments of educational freedom felt by many within the educational world since the mid-1970s have led to a wistful remembering of a previous time when the schooling process was considered to be truly an educational one.

Further analysis will show, however, that educational policy-making was far from altruistic in this period, and that the Victorian legacy of instrumentalism was too deeply embedded to permit a promising educational chrysalis to turn into a butterfly and escape.

Summary

In exploring the impetus behind the introduction of Forster's Bill in 1870 it is readily apparent that the state did not enter into a closer relationship with educational systems structures willingly. There were concerns about civic order and the maintenance of social control, but there was no conspiracy on the part of the state to usurp education for its own ends. The fact that usurpation has occurred is undeniable but this has been an evolutionary trend that has mirrored the rapid 'nationalisation' of previous private, voluntary and individual concerns which has happened since late Victorian times when municipalization began in earnest.

The state became involved through the supply of financial aid to the religious voluntary societies and it was with them that the state assumed that the provision of education would remain. It is indisputable that the authority of the state grew through its assumption of increasing control of education following 1870, but this was an unintentional by-product of the 1870 Act and subsequent legislation in the educational field.

The voluntary roots of the education system have created an idiosyncratic model in England where the 'warp and weft' of class politics and religious bigotry still persist. The

intractable Victorian issue of religious rivalry between the Established Church and the non-conformists still finds expression in contemporary parliamentary debates, as will be seen. Education is still deemed to be entwined with religion and secularism is equated with a view of education which is somehow seen as less worthy than that which has religion as its cornerstone. The hierarchical nature of society, seen through nineteenth-century eyes as being ordained by God, has thus been continually legitimated by the education system, an endorsement re-affirmed by the religious clauses of the 1988 Act which obscure the distinctions between religion and morality in the call for civic propriety and national obedience.

The diversification of demands on education since the general enfranchisement of the population, stemming from the reforms of 1832, has drawn the state into an increasingly manipulative role. Central to this has been the state's control of the curriculum which, despite all the social, economic and technological upheaval of modernity, has remained firmly rooted in the nineteenth-century classical and religious mould. The religious development of a sense of national identity, centred on a reformed, stubborn and narrow Protestantism, has ensured the continuance of the religious angle to curriculum perspectives. The detailed, prescriptive curriculum ordained

by the state in 1988 exemplifies the continuance of this factor.

This nineteenth-century approach to the education system has ensured the preservation of the class divide within the schooling structure, both through the continued promotion of, and limited access to, high-status knowledge. Even such a staunch Labour visionary as Anthony Crosland could only make gestures towards dismantling educational privilege when he was in a position of power to enable him to attempt to change things. The recent crumbling of resistance by Labour to the market-model of education which only serves to enhance social divisions through an inequality of opportunity - perhaps best exemplified by the Labour leader's decision to send his son to an opted-out school in 1994 - illustrates the persistence of this phenomenon.

The country's imperial legacy has also been an important factor in the development of the character of the educational system. For decades the system inculcated imperial values and perceptions which have since become endemic to the nature of the curriculum. The 1988 National Curriculum offered a blatant, even brazen, view of the world which was firmly seen from the viewpoint of middle-England. Resting on an assumption of an enduring greatness and prosperity which, in fact, had been

diminishing rapidly throughout the twentieth century, the curriculum offered in English schools became more and more irrelevant and anachronistic - basking in nineteenth-century humanism while twentieth century science and technology continued to propel other European state education systems towards the new millennium.

The three enduring Victorian themes of religious piety, social hegemony and economic prosperity, still dominate the educational agenda in Britain. None of these themes is strictly 'educational', but, more precisely, they are socio-economic and political. Such themes address the state of society rather than the educational interests of the individual. To some, these concerns are inevitably going to dominate the agenda of a state-sponsored system. Others, however, point to a era during this century when education appeared to be gaining ground in its own right. It is to this myth of a supposedly 'Golden Age' that this study must turn.

3. THE MYTH OF A 'GOLDEN AGE'

a) The 1939-45 War And The Spirit Of Post-War Reconstruction

The second world war wreaked destruction over the whole continent of Europe. The whole economic infra-structure was wrecked due to the scale of war damage made possible by the increasing omnipotence of twentieth century science and technology. The war was not, like the previous European conflict, a war between nation .states *per se* but, rather, a contest between ideologies. Fascism, the apotheosis of the state, was opposed by liberal democracy, which championed the rights of the individual.

It was not, however, only Fascism and Nazism which were ended in their contemporary forms but also the ideology of imperialism, essentially a nineteenth-century phenomenon, which received notice of its imminent demise. As Lewis (1978) says:

"In the sense that the nineteenth century did not really end until 1914, so the twentieth century did not truly begin until at the earliest 1945, and possibly not until the bigger (nuclear) explosion of 1950 changed the facts of life for all to see."

(p 7)

This is a significant claim, given the fact that the English system had evolved to serve the imperial machinery. The public schools had provided an effective and efficient civil service,

both at home and in India, and military and naval officers to police the empire; whereas the state elementary schools had provided a basically literate and numerate working underclass which kept the machinery productive and well-serviced. The King of England was still the Emperor of India in 1945 but this was soon to change and the great transition from imperial power to a member state of a European conglomerate, which took place over the rest of the century, contributed to the re-alignment of not only the character of English education but also its *raison d'etre*. It will be seen how the Thatcher government, prompted by the reactionary ideology of the New Right, reacted to this evolution by rebuking modernism and denying *post-modernism*, so that education was made to turn away, for the present, from the challenges of the new age to come (Chapter 6).

Hitler rose to power through the chaotic legacy of the Great War. The political, economic and social malaise of the inter-war years, particularly following the collapse of the western markets in 1929, formed a bitter reality after the escapist 'twenties. The desire for change, for an escape from the inter-war stagnation, had been gathering a slow momentum throughout the period but the severe financial constraints affecting the whole of the west had prevented policymaking being translated into action.

In educational terms in Britain, the one beacon beckoning progress had been the Hadow Reports of 1926 and 1931 which addressed the question of adolescent education. The two major parties, by now Labour and the Conservatives, both had viewpoints which centred on attitudes towards selection. Archer (1979) remarks that:

"If the Conservative ideal was one of selection and differentiation, the Labour reaction to Hadow was the endorsement of differentiation without selection, in other words a preference for diversity of provisions in conjunction with the positive principle of hierarchical integration."

(p 577)

This, then, has been the ideological battlefield for three-quarters of a century in this country and this scenario prompts the question as to why, given such opposing ideological positions, was there such unanimity of political agreement over the 1944 Act and, in particular, the divisive tripartitism it allowed? This will be dealt with at some length later and it will be seen that the confluence of radical political ideas, educational theory and economic reality are not easy bedfellows.

The two ideological standpoints of the dominant parties remained unchanged, and unimportant in the sense that the

struggle for economic survival claimed precedence over social reform throughout the interwar years, particularly the 1930s. It was the war itself which unlocked this inertia. As Jose Harris says:

"After Dunkirk when Churchill became Prime Minister and Labour entered the coalition, the pressure for change became yet more powerful."

(in Thompson (ed.) (1990) p 89)

The war was:

"a golden opportunity for intellectual and reformist groups committed to various forms of social and governmental reconstruction."

(op.cit. p 92)

Furthermore, there were those who urged the government:

"to treat the management of the war economy...as a model for a new relationship between government and society after the return of peace."

(ibid.)

A broad agenda calling for a change towards a more beneficent, caring state was being assembled even in the early, darkest days of war. The Beveridge Report (1942) created enormous interest and enthusiasm for a system of social security. Simon (1991) describes its reception:

"A queue a mile long formed down the road from the Kingsway HMSO Centre for copies - a total of 635,000 were sold...Home Office enquiries revealed that there was an extraordinary

anxiety among the public at large that somehow the report would be 'watered down or shelved'."

(p 72)

This general anticipation and expectation of radical social redefinition and change created an encouraging context for educational reform. At the outbreak of war over half of elementary school pupils were still being educated in unreorganised all-age schools despite the widespread acceptance of the reforms advocated by the Hadow Report.

The President of the Board of Education, R.A. Butler, has highlighted in his memoirs the connection between war and consequent social reform:

"The crisis of modern war is a crucial test of national values and way of life. Amid the suffering and the sacrifice the weaknesses of society are revealed and there begins a period of self examination, self-criticism and movement for reform."

(Butler 1971, p 91)

Besides this general clamour for social improvement the war also highlighted the national need for effective scientific and technological education and training. German advances in these fields had produced a near calamitous situation with the attacks by V1 and V2 rockets on London and the early successes of the U-boat fleet had created havoc with Britain's merchant

shipping. The Percy Report (1945), dealing with technical education, and the Barlow Report (1946), dealing with the development of scientific manpower and resources, attempted later to address these concerns which, as has been seen, were not new ones and which were the consequence of the continuing dominance of the old-humanist tradition within the English curriculum.

Interestingly the call for educational reform came not only from the Left but also from the Board of Education itself. Recognising the public mood the Board set about trying to preempt the issue of reform by colluding with the spirit of the times for:

"They could not afford to be over-cautious lest outsiders, rather than Board of Education officials, be asked to design the 'New Jerusalem', a fate no civil servant could contemplate with equanimity."

(Barber 1994, p 15)

At its base 'in exile' in Bournemouth, away from the disruption of the Blitz, much work was done in planning for a new post-war scenario. The issues addressed were centred on the urgent need for secondary re-organisation but this also meant that the dual system (of county and church schools) and the raising of the school leaving age, as well as the position of the public

schools, had to be addressed. Education's own 'Beveridge Report' was the White Paper which emerged in 1943 from the thinking at Bournemouth. The Paper was prefaced with the statement that "Upon the education of the people of this country the fate of this country depends". Its aims were far-sighted and its idealism, given the fortunes of the armed services at the time, highly impressive. The Government's wish was "to secure for children a happier childhood and a better start in life" and, maintaining this child-centred vision, the Paper declared that:

"The war has revealed afresh the resources and character of the British people - an enduring possession that will survive all the material losses inevitable in the present struggle. In the youth of the nation we have our greatest national asset. Even on the basis of mere expediency, we cannot afford not to develop this asset to the greatest advantage."

(quoted in Maclure 1986, p 206)

The stagnation of the 1930s and the social welding created by the need to repel the common enemy in wartime presented such favourable conditions for post-war reform that many of the usual political obstacles were dispelled. As Simon (op.cit.) explains:

"...a set of reforms that might have had to wait years for implementation were, under the pressure of war and its probable political outcome, as well, no doubt, of the developing

progressive consensus, now conceded with no argument whatsoever."

(p 60)

Lawton (1994) makes it clear that the visionary ideas contained in the Green Paper came from the civil servants working at Bournemouth and that his contribution was a *political* one:

"What Butler did - and did extremely well - was to provide the political authority without which the ideas in the Green Paper would never have become an Act."

(p 22)

It is not difficult to see why there was a demand for social reform during the war and in its wake. The process of civilian evacuation from the large cities under attack from German bombing brought into sharp relief the differences between the working class sub-culture of the city and the comfortable middle class life of rural England. National adversity inevitably encourages coalescence and, undoubtedly, the experience of the second world war brought to the surface:

"a greater feeling of common spirit and a willingness to consider social reform."

(Bernbaum 1967, p 104)

Butler (1971) has described how:

"the revelations of evacuation administered a severe shock to the national conscience; for they brought to light the conditions of

those unfortunate children of the 'submerged tenth' who would also rank among the citizens of the future...The challenge of the times provided a stimulus for rethinking the purposes of society and planning the reconstruction of the social system of which education formed an integral part."

(p 92)

The social awakening effected by the evacuation process is significant. It is important to realise the extent of class immobility at this time for, as Barber (1994) points out:

"This was an era when, until evacuation, less than half the population left home even for a single night during any given year."

(p 3)

War, by virtue of its many exigencies, creates a different relationship between the state and its people. In this particular war the threat of imminent invasion was ever-present, particularly after the fall of France in 1940, and the Draconian powers adopted by the government, which virtually entailed the suspension of local democracy, were broad and all-pervasive. In the war:

"for the first time for many centuries, local authorities ceased to be the main intermediaries of power between the citizens and the state... Centralised control over people and resources far exceeded that of any other combatant power, with the possible exception of Russia."

(Jose Harris 1990, p 89)

Thus the equilibrium between people and state was changed and the extent of the change and the length of its duration contributed to the generation of a climate of opinion that led to the emergence of the post-war welfare state (p 91). The outcome of the 1945 general election may have caused Churchill surprise but others, through observation of public opinion and pointers such as the anti-Tory bye-election results during the war, should have served notice to any observer that Labour, with its commitment to a planned economic and welfare state, was to be handed the reins of power once the war was won.

The war demonstrated, as never before in the country's history, that the mechanics of social and economic activity could be successfully directed from the centre. But the war also affirmed that the people, the volatile but powerful electorate, could also galvanise reform and rudely inform the political agenda. This was a much altered picture from that of 1870 or even 1902 when, in both cases, the electorate was neither universally enfranchised, or as well-informed. This had enormous implications for, and repercussions upon, education.

In 1945 Labour, with a landslide mandate from the people, was intent upon creating a society where there was universal access to a good education, comprehensive health care and the promise

of social security. It assumed office when the country was virtually bankrupt and yet expectations for the speedy realisation of a 'New Jerusalem' were high and widespread.

Education reform had been the first pillar of the new society to have been put in place, by a Conservative-led coalition too, but it was left to the new administration to put the Act into effect. It will be important to see how this was done because this was a seminal time in the history of education in this country. For the first time legislation had been enacted allowing a government to oversee the establishment of a truly national system of education which was regulated from the centre through a new ministry, which brought together county and voluntary schools and provided linear progression through the primary and secondary phases.

The point of issue is this: Did the educational reforms stemming from the war and the 1944 Act represent the beginning of a 'Golden Age' in which educational opportunity was promulgated for its own sake, or was this a continuation of the state's instrumentalist approach disguised as egalitarian reform? One is tempted always to interpret the role of government in educational policy terms as being that of a regulator of social control - taming the aspirations of the

common man by the ebb and flow of policy sweeteners which protect the hand of the ruling establishment whilst beguilingly parading as democratic emancipation.

The growing curtailment of the progressivist movement since the mid-seventies lays bare the myth of any 'golden age' in our recent educational history because the generation who claimed their maturity in the wake of the second world war were the same generation who assumed the reins of power and influence from the first Wilson government onwards: Rab Butler may have mused that the private sector had been safely "shunted into a siding" in 1944 but it was Shirley Williams a generation later who fudged the issue again and compounded this by acting as midwife during the Callaghan administration's "Great Debate" when reactionary forces truly broke the dam.

It could be argued that it would have been difficult for the (National) wartime government not to have embarked on measures to secure radical educational reform given the mood of the times with its insistent and growing popular call for change. Churchill was not enthusiastic about the prospect of assembling a new Education Bill during the war and he wrote to Butler and told him so:

"...I certainly cannot contemplate a new

Education Bill...Your main task at present is to get the schools working as well as possible under all the difficulties of air attack, evacuation, etc. If you can add to this industrial and technical training, enabling men not required for the Army to take their places promptly in munitions industry or radio work, this would be most useful."

(13th September 1941)

Butler's Permanent Secretary at the Board, Sir Maurice Holmes, wrote an encouraging letter to him to try to dissuade Butler from being downhearted about Churchill's apparent veto on a new Bill:

"The delay is of course disappointing, particularly to those of us who, like myself, cannot hope to accompany you into the Promised Land, but that you will lead the Children of Israel there, I do not doubt."

(quoted in Butler, op.cit., p 95)

In his memoirs Butler reveals the extent of his determination and vision:

"Churchill's Minute was quite definite...But, having viewed the milk and honey from the top of Pisgah, I was damned if I was going to die in the land of Moab...I knew that if I spared him the religious controversies and the party political struggles of 1902 and sidetracked the public schools issue, I could win him over."

(ibid.)

Even if the Conservatives had held onto power in 1945 the educational mandate had already been enacted during the previous year with all-Party support. As it happened the period immediately following the war and the election of Attlee's Government was one of searing austerity when, to quote Arthur Marwick's rather apt Churchillian prose:

"...the country lay in a crepuscular zone with the shadows of the night as firm upon the landscape as the heartening hints of the rising sun."

(Marwick 1990, p 18)

There were other priorities, a surfeit of pressing needs, chief among them housing which initially eclipsed the directing of scarce resources to secure the speedy implementation of Butler's Act:

"The worst shortage was of housing. Substantial numbers of families lived in 'pre-fabs', flat-roofed boxes made of asbestos sheeting, while rosebay willowherb flowered in purple patches across the untouched bomb sites."

(Lewis 1978, p 11)

The 'Golden Age' could not have begun in practice then in 1945. Plans had been laid and intentions declared but implementation was stifled by the parlous state of the economy which persisted through Attlee's administration and beyond.

But it was not only economic factors which imposed constraints upon the realisation of reform. It will be argued that 'the system' itself, the hierarchical, class-bound organisation of social relations within this country retained its hold on events and ensured that the education system did not ultimately veer from its prime, instrumentalist aim of servicing the needs of the state and the upholding of its class system, as it has done since the inception of state involvement with schooling. The call for a more egalitarian society had to be answered and the education service was at the heart of this process, but the unfailing, underlying motivation was always a fundamental concern to buttress the state, to service its economic needs, ensure its social hegemony and stability, and nourish the existing hierarchical stratification of society.

The fact that this agenda clearly remains unaltered nearly half a century later attests to the fact there never was a post-war 'Golden Age' in English educational history but, rather, an accentuated instrumentalism generated by post-war social and economic necessity and a deceptive illusion that, through the progressivism in the primary sector and comprehensivisation of secondary schools, the educational development of the individual child was at last being recognised by the system as being paramount.

Control was effectively loosened by the progressivist reforms of the 1960s and '70s; the apathy and careless husbandry of central government during this time which allowed local government, the professionals and the unions to make all the running; and the demise of the grammar school which took away the pivotal means of hierarchical selection. Control has been regained through the imposition of a curriculum determined and assessed by the centre. The old equilibrium has been restored.

In seeking to clarify intentions and outcomes it will be necessary to examine the incubation of the 1944 Bill and examine its impact after its enactment.

b) The 1944 Act And Its Implementation

No one can doubt that the Education Act of 1944 was a milestone in English educational history. Its main measures were:

- the establishment of three separate stages of education: primary, secondary and further; which replaced the old 'elementary' system;
- to make County and County Borough Councils responsible for the provision of educational facilities;
- to upgrade the Board of Education into a full Ministry with the minister having extensive powers;
- the abolition of all fees at maintained schools;
- the raising of the school leaving age to 15 and an intention to raise it again to 16 later;
- the expansion of LEA services (medical inspections, school meals, scholarship awards);
- the reformation of financial arrangements for church schools.

Debate of the Bill took 86 days in total. It was introduced in the Commons in December 1943 and its Third Reading was completed there in May 1944. Lowndes (1969) speaks of "tense moments",

"...but nothing to compare...with 1902...Instead there was a manifest determination in every quarter of the House that however many amendments might demand discussion nothing should be allowed to wreck the ultimate passage of the Bill."

(p 242)

Butler handled the passage of the Bill with consummate skill.

At the opening of the Second Reading Butler declared that the Bill's measures would replace a rudimentary education with "the broader training of a citizen for all" (Hansard 396/211). This was a key feature of the Bill and, subsequently, the Act, namely a determination that there would be secondary education "for all". Furthermore, the secondary stage would be designed:

"...not only to provide an academic training for a select few, but to give equivalent opportunities to all children over 11, of making the most of their natural aptitudes."

(396/211)

Reading his memoirs one is led to the conclusion that this was sincerely meant by Butler but this parity of status was never realised between grammar, modern and technical schools and one is led to ask why this was so. One is led to conclude that within a hierarchical society parity of status within any organisational structure is both illogical and undesirable. Although the Bill had vision and breadth in the sense that Butler spoke about the provision of various types of education being accessible to all "whatever their social or financial circumstances" (396/222) he was also adamant that:

"traditions and standards which have been a feature of our British education, should, as far as possible, be preserved. There is no desire to 'level down'; there is only a desire to bring everybody ever upward."

(ibid.)

Thus, in Butler's vision, the Bill before parliament sought to widen the educational franchise but within a system which retained and protected social divisions. At all costs the status quo was not to be rocked. The private sector, including direct grant grammar schools, could be ignored because the House must await the final report of the Flemming Committee which may be expected "in a few months" (396/224). The Bill was concerned with the synthesis it tried to create:

"...between order and liberty, between local initiative and national direction, between the voluntary agencies and the state, between the private life of a school and the public life of the districts which it serves, between manual and intellectual skill and between those better and less well endowed."

(396/232)

Clearly, this was a Bill connected to an equation of a social model which was, certainly in Butler's judgement, threatened by the prospect of a new order sensed after an expected military victory (when the National Government was disbanded Butler did not believe the Conservatives would win the 1945 election).

It is not being suggested that any political party engaged in a conspiracy to preserve the existing social order but merely that vested interests, class loyalties and social dispositions inevitably help shape the direction of political ideas,

policies and manifestations of action. Butler was the driving force behind the new Education Bill and he was a politician of the patrician mould. He had spent his boyhood in India in some style, attended Marlborough, taken some time afterwards to live in France to acquaint himself better with the language, taken a First at Cambridge and then travelled round the world for a year before entering politics. It would, with such a background, have been surprising for Butler to have introduced a Bill to the House which advocated any measures which promised radical egalitarianism, a general "levelling down". The widening of the educational franchise was, of course, a progressive and noteworthy measure, but it did not represent a departure from the traditional concern of the state in looking after the interests of the status quo.

Professor W.J.Gruffydd, speaking from the opposition benches during the Second Reading of the Bill, brought this point into focus:

"...there is no basis of education except the integration of the nation as a whole to which every class and every rank, both of labour and of leisure, must contribute. Some of us believe in democracy but we go on educating the democrats of the future in separate cages."

(396/421)

It was easy, Gruffydd continued:

"to pay lip service to democracy because democracy in war time seems to be a popular battle-cry when we are fighting Hitler."

(ibid.)

It can be seen, even from a brief perusal of the debate on the Second and Third Reading of the Bill, that once again the dynamics of the conflicting interests of Right and Left, of conservatism and of radicalism, were incisive influences on the nature and extent of the reform and development of the education system despite the common bond of war that united all shades of the political spectrum to a large extent in the general approach towards post-war reconstruction.

Although it was the religious question which occupied most debate in parliament as it had done in 1902, Butler's management of the passage of the Bill, seen mainly in preparatory consultations with leaders of all the main Churches, enabled this thorny issue to be resolved - although the Catholics were never fully satisfied.

Initially the juxtaposition of religious, and therefore political, interests and educational aims appeared insoluble. The Archbishop of Liverpool declared in May 1942 that "We shall

continue to struggle for denominational schools even though we have to fight alone" whilst the leader of Britain's Catholics, Cardinal Hinsley, wrote to 'The Times' saying:

"No equal opportunity will exist for a minority who are saddled with extra and crushing financial burdens because of their definite religious convictions and because they cannot accept a syllabus of religious instruction agreeable to many."

(both quoted in Butler 1971, pp 99-100)

Churchill cut Cardinal Hinsley's letter out and sent it to Butler "with a curt covering note saying, 'There, you are fixed'" Butler records (op.cit. p 100).

The proposals outlined in the Bill, that a church school could opt to become 'controlled' or 'aided' and that in both an agreed religious syllabus would be taught (Butler records that Churchill always referred to this as the "County Council Creed") achieved enough support to guarantee Butler's Bill would succeed, although not before Butler had conducted many difficult and delicate negotiations with the Catholic hierarchy.

Butler records that Archbishop Temple, representing the interests of his Anglican flock, "was determined not to allow a

religious quarrel to hold up educational advance" (Butler op.cit. p 103). However, Butler also stresses the point that he had pointed out to the Archbishop that 543 voluntary schools out of a total of 731 were on the government's Black List of schools which needed reorganising, most of them being over 40 years old. The financial implications for the Church were plain to see and 'controlled-status' was an attractive proposition to lay on the negotiating table.

Chuter Ede, Butler's Parliamentary Secretary, winding up the debate on the Third Reading, suggested that:

"...while (religious) principles have been fought over vehemently...there has been recognition that the interests of the child and the nation must prevail over any sectional interests."

(399/2140)

And to apparent general assent he declared that:

"We have laid down in the commencement of this Bill, for the first time, that there is to be a national policy in education...The child... is equally an asset to the State, and this Bill lays it down that he is to be considered in relation to national policy."

(399/2143)

At last matters had been brought out into the open.

Significantly it was education which took pride of place in the government's plans for reconstruction and this probably led to the spirit of goodwill and encouragement which saw the Bill safely through its passage in both Houses. The fact that the second reading of the Bill coincided with the uplifting news of the liberation of Rome also probably played its part.

It would be wrong, however, to attribute the conception and birth of the 1944 Act to the war alone - this would be a false reading of English social history. It is true that the period between the wars was a "period of stagnation" (Simon 1991). There had been an inevitable recognition following the 1914-18 war of scientific and technological deficiencies but reform had been stifled by the economic malaise of the period, a situation which was not remedied until and because of the second world war. Education's pre-eminence in the reconstruction queue was therefore due to it being a pending item of a long-established agenda rather than the manifestation of a sudden desire for educational reform in an egalitarian age. Its roots lay in the familiar demand for general national efficiency. As Bernbaum (1967) says in his study of social change and the schools between the wars:

"The education system became more egalitarian, slowly but surely those who demanded greater facilities and opportunity gained a little more each time. Technological progress, change in the occupational

structure and two world wars all helped to identify problems and change values and beliefs associated with the education system. Finally it was becoming clear that arguments in terms of economic efficiency, individual opportunity and social justice were counting for more and more."

(p 115)

The three areas that Bernbaum cites could not exist in complementary harmony. National economic efficiency does not sponsor individual opportunity and social justice in comprehensive terms; capitalism entails loss as well as profit, losers as well as winners. Subsequent developments since 1944 have shown clearly that, despite an apparent false dawn, education has remained shackled to economic efficiency. It has always been seen in instrumental terms, and, further, even in the context of periods of nineteenth and twentieth century concerns for individual opportunity and social justice, it is the state of the economy, the barometer of social stability and hierarchical continuity, that has generated so called 'reform' in the English education system.

This is made nowhere more clear than in the period since 1944, a time when the three issues that Bernbaum identified above have been gathered in synthesis and juxtaposed one against the other until the state triumphed against, and in spite of, the individual, and the needs of the economy, once again, suppressed the pursuit of greater educational goals.

The actual implementation of the 1944 Act took many years to achieve. The raising of the school leaving age took over twenty years and the school building programme made necessary by the reform of the school phases was badly hampered by the period of economic austerity which followed victory in 1945.

However, there were other factors which affected the implementation of the Act which were not primarily economic but, rather, related to the determination of the Establishment to survive intact in the midst of a call for greater equality. The status quo was threatened with instability as, in Bernbaum's terms (op.cit.), concerns for individual opportunity and social justice became more dominant.

Central to any realisation of the relationship between the 1944 Act and the interests of the Establishment is the obvious fact that the new legislation allied itself firmly with the school of psychometry which maintained that intelligence was fixed and could be quantified through testing. This produced an era of what Simon (1991) terms 'educational fatalism' (p 158) and served the interests of the existing social order very well indeed:

"What was being constructed in terms of an educational system was, in fact, a near perfect means of social control - or, in

another sense, of buttressing the existing social order."

(op.cit. p 159)

Simon makes the additional and important point that this system had been formed under a Labour administration and thus had the support of all the main political parties until at least 1951.

Thus the imposed tripartite system fitted the established order very well indeed. The comprehensive schools movement, which was to splutter into practical existence in the 1950s, would have to wait nearly twenty years to gain momentum whilst the momentum was firmly directed towards simply making the existing reforms work through the increasing provision of teachers and school buildings.

A government pamphlet "The Nation's Schools", issued in May 1945 - before the post-war election - had argued against the comprehensive concept. The new 'Modern' schools were to be for non-academic children (ie. the mass of the working class) "whose future employment will not demand any measure of technical skill or knowledge" (quoted in Simon, op.cit., p 105). The pamphlet had been drafted by Butler and Ede and brought out the day after the war ended when it was, naturally, overlooked by the celebrations that ensued. The pamphlet was argued against at the Labour Conference in 1946 and it was not

re-issued. However, significantly, it was not withdrawn either.

The 1944 Act allowed tripartite systems to be established by most LEAs. It must be said that the very flexibility of the Act also allowed comprehensive secondary school reorganisation from the late-60s onwards, although some LEAs, such as the London County Council and Coventry, embarked on a comprehensive multilateral pattern from the outset.

Although tripartite models were meant to be fluid, in the sense that pupils could, if it was felt that they had been inappropriately 'graded' at 11+, transfer between types of school (which the 1943 White Paper had described as "diversified...but on equal standing"), in practice they continued to legitimise a system where the Morant grammar school remained supreme.

Why did the Labour government of 1945 allow this development? One of the major reasons was the general acceptance of the psychological theories of intelligence prevalent at the time and given particular status by the Norwood Report (1943) which saw pupils in terms of those:

"interested in learning for its own sake;
pupils whose interests and abilities are
markedly in the field of applied science

or applied art; and pupils who deal more easily with concrete things than with ideas."

(T.E.S. 31st July 1943)

Barber (1994) points out that Cyril Norwood, the Committee's chair, was "an enlightened but conservative former headmaster of Harrow" and that G.G.Williams:

"the Board of Education's overt elitist, was involved not only in picking the members of the committee, but directly in its deliberations."

(p 55)

Butler's comment in a written note to Williams, which Barber quotes, that "this well-written report will serve our book very well - particularly its layout of the secondary world", gives credence to the theory that Butler had in mind a far-reaching Education Bill, but not one which would shake the establishment. As for the Labour Party, reference has already been made to the considerable political obstacles that would confront any Party if action was initiated to abolish the independent sector.

Attlee appointed Ellen Wilkinson as Minister of Education when his administration took office in 1945 and it might have been thought that her appointment would have initiated measures to encourage the spread of multilateral schools under the auspices

of the new Act and, indeed, as Wilkinson was from the Left of the Party, to attempt to further the cause of equality by abolishing the public schools. She had been known as 'Red Ellen' on the Jarrow March and she had a fiery temper but she did not seize a 'revolutionary moment', according to Hennessy (1993), because she was inundated with measures needed to address the need for building accommodation required to allow the school leaving age to be raised to fifteen by April 1st 1947, a clause in the Butler Act which she successfully fought for and won before her untimely death days after the cabinet had agreed to the implementation.

Wilkinson was Minister at a most inopportune time for radical reform given the austere financial context, and any 'revolutionary moment' would have been an illusion - the government, with its back firmly pressed against a wall, could not have added the abolition of the independent sector to its, already wide-reaching and radical, programme of reforms. The Establishment were unaffected by the introduction of the National Health Service, the nationalisation of the railways and coal; the loss of India had long been anticipated; but battle would have been enjoined if the

hallowed portals of Eton, Harrow and Charterhouse had been threatened.

Hennesy quotes a minute recorded by Wilkinson in 1946 in response to a draft submission by the Senior Chief Inspector of Schools for a pamphlet to be called 'New Secondary Education'. After reading the submission, she recalled:

"I wondered why I felt deep down angry...this pamphlet is fundamentally phony because it subconsciously disguises the real question that has to be answered, namely, 'What shall we do to get miners and agricultural workers if a hundred per cent of the children able to profit from it are offered real secondary education. Answer...give the real stuff to a selected 25 per cent, steer the 75% away from the humanities, pure science, even history."

(p 159)

Yet this anger could not be translated into virulent action, framed in a response which would 'blow the gaffe'.

To a large extent, Wilkinson's acceptance of tripartitism was based on a naive concept of a supposed parity of occupational esteem. This primitive socialist stance was expressed in the following words by Wilkinson:

"Not everyone wants an academic education. After all, coal has to be mined and fields ploughed, and it is a fantastic idea that we have allowed,

so to speak to be cemented into our body politic, that you are in a higher social class if you add up figures in a book than if you plough the fields and scatter the good seed on the land."

(quoted in Archer 1979, p 585)

This viewpoint was the official line, the reasoning behind the tripartite system. In theory it is logical and even fair, but in practice this model is blind to the hierarchical structure of class relations in Britain and to the residual centring of power and influence in this country which is based in sources such as the City and the professions, inherited landowning families and the like, all of whom owe their education to the public schools and the grammar schools.

George Tomlinson, Wilkinson's successor, had a great respect for the grammar schools and saw them as a means of educational opportunity for less privileged children as did Wilson throughout his terms of office. Neither men seemed to take account of the passions aroused over the question of selection by examination at 11+, the very issue which ended the bipartisan peace of education through the first decade after the war.

Florence Horsburgh, the new minister in Churchill's 1951 government, was not someone to look to for social revolution having:

"earned some notoriety before the war in her constituency in Dundee by...suggesting that, if food were short, people could always boil up bones for soup and then hand them on to the next door house."

(Howarth 1985, p 182)

At the Conservative party conference in 1952 a motion deploring any attack on the tripartite system was passed. In the following year Labour promised to abolish the 11+ selection system. Eccles, Horsburgh's successor, declared in 1954 that he would "never agree to the assassination of the grammar schools". Thus, the lines were drawn over an educational battlefield. Political philosophy, founded on social theory, was now overtly tied to educational policymaking.

It is easy to allow an analysis of the social trends which occurred after the war and through the '50s to be couched in images of a paternalistic state improving the lot of its ordinary citizens through reforms in education, social welfare and health and, indeed, it cannot be denied that in material terms these were, certainly as the '50s progressed, years of increasing comfort and security for the vast majority of people. But it can be argued that insofar as fundamental social change was concerned there was less of a social revolution than might be imagined simply because the Establishment, as it always does, re-positioned itself, re-grouped and, buoyed by

thirteen years of unbroken Conservative rule, emerged from the war and the call for radical change which occurred in its wake, virtually unscathed.

The sifting mechanism which the 1944 Act established guaranteed that this would be so. The Act did not pose a threat to the established order. As later studies were to show:

"...middle class children were far more likely to do well in the eleven-plus than working class ones who came from a background where academic pursuits were not encouraged."

(Marwick 1990)

J.W.B. Douglas, in 'The Home And The School' (1964), made the indisputable point that:

"it is likely that in the pre-school years the mental development of many children is stunted by the intellectual poverty of their surroundings."

(p 128)

A further buttress to the established order was the outcome of the deliberations on post-11 examinations reform. The General Certificate of Education (GCE), first proposed in 1947, was, unlike the School Certificate it replaced, a single subject examination (again a victory for the Right) and therefore advantageous to the children of middle class households where traditional approaches to study would be encouraged.

As the economy began to expand again after the war, fuelled by the new consumer boom, educational aspirations rose as new occupational opportunities began to arise with the advent of new industries and widening developments in science and technology. Examinations therefore became an even stronger currency in the opportunity market further strengthening and legitimating the 'sifting' process in schools.

The 1944 Act did not represent or effect a threat to the status quo. Its legislative framework held until 1993 and in that half century educational debate only questioned how children were to be systematised. The 11+ selection process was dampened down, it would be an exaggeration to say that it disappeared even though it was discredited for it continues to exist through metamorphosis in other guises and through other shapes and colours, and the grammar schools were decimated. But the essential framework of control from the centre, of careful manipulation and regulation by the body politic has continued, through both expansion and recession, and the decades following Butler's Act are:

"the story of how the Conservative and Labour Parties in turn used the new central powers to direct organisational change along two different lines...the next thirty years were also the

history of other groups fighting back to repel organisational unity."

(Archer 1979, p 583)

This distaste, even rebellion, against uniformity is a common cultural characteristic in this country. The desire of government to impose it is, therefore, both bizarre and not conducive to social harmony and equilibrium. From the mid-1950s until the economic downturn in 1973 there was a period of astonishing educational growth in terms of resources which encouraged an optimistic and relaxed view of the system ushered in by the 1944 Act. It will be necessary to examine this period in some detail, giving particular attention to the political manipulations of both major parties, before examining the changing educational climate which quickly followed.

c) The Age of Expansion : 1956 - 1972

The Crowther Report (1959), written at the end of this decade, maintained that:

"If we are to build a higher standard of living - and, what is more important, if we are to have higher standards in life - we shall need a firmer educational base than we have today. Materially and morally we are compelled to go forward."

(quoted in Maclure 1986 p 247)

This affirmation that education was inexorably linked with material prosperity was a fair summation of the contemporary outlook. The 'fifties had begun as a continuance of the grey period of austerity which had been the inevitable legacy of a war which had drained the nation's resources to crisis proportions. In 1951 the cost of living was rising by one per cent a month (Booker 1969, [p 86]) yet six years later the Prime Minister was able to claim, "Indeed, let's be frank about it; some of our people have never had it so good" (Harold Macmillan 20th July 1957).

Education was slow to receive the benefits of the sudden release from the constraints of an economy dogged by the damage of war. As late as 1954 Butler, by now Chancellor, let it be known that LEAs should "not plan for future expansion but for a period of consolidation" (quoted in Simon 1991, p 166).

The end of restraint and the beginning of a sudden, and dramatic, acceleration in terms of expansion and further development of the education system was the result of social and economic factors as well as increasing tensions in the developing Cold War between the Warsaw Pact and NATO. Once again educational development was given impetus from indirect, non-educational sources. Enthusiasm was generated from what education was perceived to promise. It was a means to an end and the end belonged to the state.

Simon (op.cit.) recounts in great detail this new phase which saw a new Minister, David Eccles, take over from Florence Horsbrugh. The school building programme accelerated in the middle of the decade, a political necessity as the new housing estates in the predominantly Labour supporting areas of urban conglomerations needed more school places to cope with the 'baby boom' rise in the population and the government needed urban votes. Eccles proved himself a shrewd politician by using this tack with the Cabinet when he presented his first Paper to them:

"We could bring into education some of the feeling of expansion and success which has been the mark of the housing drive."

(12th November 1954)

- an observation which would have fortuitously pleased the then Minister of Housing, Macmillan.

But it wasn't only the necessity of providing enough facilities for a rising school population that kick-started the beginning of educational expansion; other, broader factors played their part too.

1956 saw the invasion of Hungary by the USSR and the following year Sputnik 1 was launched, an achievement which stunned the West and created an urgency towards gaining scientific and technological superiority over the communist states.

C.P.Snow, in his Rede Lecture delivered in 1959, concerned himself with what he saw to be an increasing division of culture around two polarities, that of the scientific and the non-scientific, and thus, because of the increasing developments, especially in technological terms, in the USA and the USSR, between Britain and the two main super-powers.

The division between the scientific and non-scientific was, Snow suggested, exacerbated by our "educational and social idiosyncrasies" (p 3). In the view of scientists, he continues, "literary intellectuals" have no foresight or vision, but only

give thought to "the existential moment" (p 5) and thus between the two exists a distrust, even a hostility. Scientists in a natural way "have the future in their bones" (p 10) but he believed that "the pole of total incomprehension (of things scientific) radiates its influence on all the rest" (p 11).

Furthermore:

"If the scientists have the future in their bones, then the traditional culture responds by wishing the future did not exist. It is the traditional culture, to an extent remarkably little diminished by the emergence of the scientific one, which manages the western world."

(ibid.)

Snow criticises the English education system for its propensity for rigid specialisation which he identifies as a social phenomenon connected to elitism. He succinctly describes the process whereby educational institutions in the nineteenth century benefited from the industrial revolution in financial terms because the new wealth generated an increased demand for schooling but he castigates them for the fact that they turned their backs on the intellectual culture of this revolution:

"The traditional culture became more abstracted from (the revolution) as it became more wealthy, trained its young men for administration, for the Indian Empire, for the purpose of perpetuating the culture itself, but never in any circumstances

to equip them to understand the revolution or to take part in it."

(p 23)

In cultural terms our society, Snow maintains, is too fond of its traditional, existing crystallised pattern. The Russians and the Americans were adapting to the new age founded on the industrial and, more recently, technological revolutions but here we were too fond of the familiar pattern and unable to summon the will to break it.

Snow explored a theme which has a major relevance to any study of education and its political context because politics is concerned with the definition, transmission and acceptance of cultural values. The Cold War was, largely speaking, a cultural rather than military conflict and it would have been surprising, not to say illogical, if it had not had an impact on perceptions of education and schooling. When the economy eventually permitted an advance on the educational front after 1956 the spirit of the 1944 Act was thwarted by the reality and concern with the tense international political arena. The Suez embarrassment, the rebuttal of the Hungarian uprising and the launching of Sputnik 1 brought into sharp relief the divide between the cultural affinity of the education system and the reality of the actual world in the mid-twentieth century. The education system with its structure still primarily concerned

with the classical-humanist curriculum of the nineteenth century, reinforced by the introduction of the GCE examination system in the early 'fifties further legitimating Snow's existing and familiar "crystallised pattern" of single academic subject hierarchy, continued to turn its back on a revolution which had had its origins at the beginning of the previous century.

T.S.Eliot had explored the notion of culture, including its relationship with education, in some detail in "Notes Towards A Definition Of Culture" (1948). In this essay Eliot had suggested that the most important question that could be asked was:

"whether there is any permanent standard, by which we can compare one civilisation with another, and by which we can make some guess at the improvement or decline of our own."

(p 18)

Eliot maintained that the period in which he was writing was one of "decline" and that "the standards of culture are lower than they were fifty years ago" (p 19). This "lowering of standards" was ascribed to the increasing abandonment of:

"the study of those subjects by which the essentials of our culture - of that part which is transmissible by education - are transmitted."

(p 108)

Seemingly Eliot stands full-square with the old humanists and yet, in the same breath, he warns that children must not be trained

"merely to receive the culture of the past, for that would be to regard the culture of the past as final."

(ibid.)

Whilst recognising the fact that "a new civilisation is, in fact, coming into being all the time" (p 18) Eliot is wary of the role education can and should play in this process. Reminding his readers that education cannot alone be seen as a cultural transmitter he expresses concerns about the upholding of social cohesion through shared family values which should not be deliberately levelled out through formal school education. Above all Eliot is a conservative and not a revisionist. One is reminded of lines of his from 'Little Gidding' which suggest an advocacy of refinement and not root and branch reform:

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.

These two examples of philosophic argument frame the decade

which saw an opportunity arise for education to move considerably forward once the economic ravages of the war had subsided. They exemplify the fact that there was a concern and a sharp consciousness that education was on the one hand intricately connected with the prospect of the development of a new social order and, conversely, allied to the preservation of traditional patterns and values. As the visionary gleam of post-war hopes and aspirations turned sour with the growing polarisation between east and west, educational policymaking in this country returned from its brief foray into idealism back towards its instrumental base.

The machinations of east and west which rumbled through thirty years from the late 'forties played a major part in helping education in this country expand and develop but, and this is a seminal point, the thrust of this expansion was characterised by a desire for a maintenance of political parity with the two emerging and competing 'super-powers'. This fuelled the drive for expanding and better educational opportunities and facilities. It was establishment-led because it would benefit the establishment through the preservation of national prestige and influence particularly in an age of disappearing empire. Its focus was science and technology because the Cold War was a race to win the laureate of scientific and technological

supremacy; thus, its basis was political but it was, in part, also philosophical, an intensification of the epistemological arguments between the 'old humanists' and 'industrial trainers', the classical and modern schools of curriculum thinking, between the intellectual right and left.

The emphasis on science and technology forced the pace for the expansion in higher education which was truly phenomenal through the 1960s. In quantitative terms this could be called a 'golden age' but the 'sixties marked no change of motivational emphasis. Instrumentalism was still the basic driving force behind all the expansion. The need was 'to catch up', to modernise, to provide university places for more and more students to create a better educated, more proficient and, essentially, more productive workforce in what was now an optimistic economic climate.

But what of the changes and reforms in the school sector - the de-streaming of the primary school and the radical reform of the secondary schools? Did this represent a strand which would break the existing and long-founded relationship between state and school? The Plowden Report (1967) initiated a major re-think of principles and practice in primary schools and the reorganisation of the secondary sector along comprehensive

principles was a major change accomplished relatively quickly.

Educational expansion in this period was centred upon higher education - the creation of new universities and polytechnics proceeded at an astonishing rate through the 1960s - and this phenomenon had its roots both in egalitarian demands for access to higher education and in the concern to 'keep up' with the technological achievements of the superpowers, a factor already alluded to. This left the LEAs and the professionals a clear run for a long while to activate reforms and innovations at school level and, although progressivism in the primary sector and comprehensivisation of the secondary schools was a political issue, both the Wilson and Heath governments, of 1966-70 and 1970-74 respectively, allowed these activities to proceed relatively unhindered. By 1972, for instance, the Secretary of State, Margaret Thatcher, had approved 2,300 proposals for comprehensive re-organisation and rejected only 92 (Archer, *op.cit.*, p 762).

If this age of expansion can clearly be understood in terms of Britain's economic boom years and the growing material aspirations of the working class, what is less clear is the rationale behind this apparent loosening of control by central government over the direction that schools were allowed to

follow in both curricular and methodological fields.

The English tradition of teacher autonomy is chimerical. It is a celebrated and cherished educational myth that needs debunking. Whilst it cannot be denied that teachers in primary schools exercised a great deal of freedom from the mid-1960s until 1988, that freedom was circumscribed by a multitude of constraints:

the need for adequate basic skills;

the traditional expectations of pupils' parents

the 'secondary school' factor - the nearing approach of the traditional Morant curriculum

the inherent conservatism of the vast majority of teachers

the divide between progressivist theory and general classroom practice

the widespread confusion about the definition of 'progressive education'

the influence on public opinion of the conservative tabloid press

These factors, and no doubt others, all played their part in 'keeping the show on the road' during what has come to be regarded as an age of progressive and experimental reform.

The progressivist reforms were a very public affair and yet

government kept itself on the sidelines during this time. The curriculum garden, whilst no longer 'secret', was allowed to grow apparently wild and untended until as late as 1976 when Callaghan insisted upon some fundamental weeding.

There were precedents for government action and intervention. It is a fallacy for anyone to presume that there has been no tradition of a centralised curriculum in this country. The Victorian elementary school was hidebound with curricular regulations and the Morant Code of 1904 was nothing if not specific and detailed.

It could be argued that it is the twentieth century itself which is the cause of the release and the reclamation of the curriculum by central government. The explosion of knowledge boundaries and the shifting interplay between class relations in the drive towards egalitarianism since 1918, after the end of the Great War and the birth of the communist movement, led to a retreat from 'curriculum certainty' which, in the desperate reactionary grasping after order and conformity by both Conservative and Labour, has allowed the classical concerns of Aristotle and the later European Renaissance to emerge complete, unscathed and triumphant. This theme is further explored later (Chapter 6).

Summary

The Second World War was a turning point in English history for it marked the death-knell of British imperialism and thus, for reasons implicit in the previous chapter, it signalled a change in education. However, post-imperial attitudes were slow to change and, despite the popular demand for, and the expectation of, a 'New Jerusalem' in 1945, far from a new egalitarianism, it was the old elitism which held sway, buttressed by educational reforms which sustained, rather than abolished, hierarchical social privilege.

This was principally because the 1944 Act sponsored structural reforms which were based on the concept of tripartitism which described a theoretical parity of esteem between three kinds of secondary schools which, in reality, was never realised.

The move towards individualism, towards an emphasis on personal development and fulfilment, encouraged by the 1926 and 1931 Hadow Reports, had been starved of realistic credibility because of the long recession following the economic collapse of 1929. Instead, a persistent emphasis upon the collective needs of the state endured, crystalised more emphatically through the demands of war, given continuing encouragement by the Labour administrations of 1945-51 committed ideologically

to the concept of centralised planning, and by the subsequent Conservative administrations of the 1950s who were content to maintain a *laissez-faire* approach to a system which did not appear to be threatening sectional vested interests.

The post-war consensus accepted an unprecedented level of statism which allowed the state's involvement in education to be both non-controversial and confined to providing better and more material resources. The 1944 Act did not alter the curriculum, which continued to perpetrate an inequality of opportunity through class divisions by its rigid adherence to a separation of 'high' and 'low' culture, packaged in different types of school, and a view of ability in terms of innate, fixed intelligence legitimated by psychometric testing.

The success of the collective war-effort made centralism acceptable, even desirable. The spawning of the welfare state, of which education, with its 'free secondary schooling for all' slogan, was the first manifest reform, created a culture which has come to be seen as some sort of 'Golden Age' in educational terms. This is a misleading version of educational history for the progress achieved was strictly in material terms, an achievement that owed more to a long period of economic success and booming consumerism, than to any altruism of the part of politicians. The 1944 Act ushered in substantial reforms, but

they were structural and did not 'rock the boat'. The Act sought to extend the educational franchise but within a system which retained and protected social divisions. It is not being suggested that this was a deliberate policy, but simply a situation where vested interests helped mould new legislation. The demand for social justice, prompted by the experience of a war which demanded collective cooperative effort, was satisfied little by little to the very edge of the system's boundaries - but not beyond.

The comprehensive system of secondary schooling could not develop properly on any wide scale because of the consensual support for tripartitism and the belief that the grammar schools would be able to satisfy the meritocratic ideals of the post-war years. But these ideals served the middle-class and thus the 'system' was safe. The fact that Wilson, Heath and Thatcher were products of the grammar school system served the model well.

The instrumentalist view that education was inextricably linked with national material prosperity was thrown into sharp relief by the launching of the Soviet *Sputnik* in 1957. Educational expansion and modernisation, seen in the proliferation of new universities and polytechnics, and a new emphasis upon science and technology, seemed to be ushering in a new set of

educational values which were more honestly egalitarian and relevant to the modern era. As will be seen, this was a chimera. The Cold War made the need for curricular reform more urgent but, as will be seen, the outcome was not change but retrenchment.

The de-streaming of primary schools and the comprehensivization of state secondary education, together with wider opportunities for access to higher education, were not so much moves towards satisfying individual aspirations but, more, a reaction to the needs of the state as a slow realisation spread, post-*Sputnik* and post-Suez, that the country's status was in question.

The advent of economic crisis in the early 1970s quickly put the state at the centre of educational concern when, ideally, it should have been the other way around. The *laissez-faire* approach of government which had been in existence since the beginning of the 1950s was drawing to an end, prompted by these factors. The sudden change in the educational climate was about to be felt, and the foundations of a new and more fundamental relationship between education and the state laid.

4. THE CHANGING EDUCATIONAL CLIMATE : 1944 - 1988

a).The Political Aspect Of Education

It is interesting to explore the development of education in so far as it relates to contextual political theory and practice. Criticism of the Education Reform Act of 1988 is focused on the apparent fact that it re-defines the post-war consensus established by the 1944 Act and shifts decision-making and monitoring within the state system firmly to the centre. Critics argue that this re-alignment has created a more politicised system. It could be argued though that rather than this being the case, the fact is that the reforms established by the ERA have simply brought into sharper focus the political controls and restraints which have been exercised over the English educational system since the mid-nineteenth century.

The 1944 Act established a *national* system but, in truth, the system was already a national one, firmly shackled to the political machinery of the state. Butler's Act created a unified organisational structure which allowed for some diversity of approach but the direction the system took was always in the *national* interest and when this was seen not to be the case more direct controls were enforced both through indirect means, such as the abolition of the Schools Council, which was seen to have become too maverick a body, and overtly

direct action culminating in the Education Reform Act of 1988.

The schooling process does not operate within a social vacuum and its relationship with its social context is not a simple one. Maclure (1976) speaks of:

"the splendidly confused, complex but organic connection between education and society."

(p 25)

Writing in the very year when Callaghan's Ruskin Speech was about to unleash a process of increasing governmental interventions which would eventually make the connection unconfused and clear, Maclure had reason to celebrate the 'splendid confusion' of the time.

Current controversies regarding the purpose of education must be viewed in the light of many perspectives, not the least of which is cultural perspective - a factor which this thesis must explore in greater depth later - but the point remains, as Kogan (1975) suggests, that:

"Education is perhaps the most socially volatile of all collective activities because it incorporates so much at once: the hope that man may change himself so as to be happier, more productive, and a good neighbour; and the hope that social arrangements can incorporate both the best of the past and the promise of the future."

(p 26)

These aims are all political concerns. If politics are:

"those processes of discourse through which members of society seek to assert and ultimately reconcile their wishes"

(Kogan, 1978, p 15)

then it is clear that all educational activity is inately political. What Kogan omits to deal with adequately is the fact that it is the prevailing social view of the hierarchy of knowledge which makes education such a political activity. This factor will be addressed in some detail in the final section of this thesis.

Education has become increasingly heavyweight in political terms but this is not a novel situation. It has been seen how education, specifically as it relates to religion and the inculcation of spiritual and moral values, has frequently been the centre of political controversy and, parallel to this, constantly tied to the fortunes of the national economy. It could be argued that one of the greatest periods of development in educational terms occurred in the thirty or so years after the second world war simply because there was a decline in the prestige of the established church and the economy enjoyed a sustained period of growth.

Later analysis of events will show that the new Conservative

government of 1979 continued the process of a re-appraisal of the education system which the previous Labour government had been engaged in and which, in its turn, had been a continuation of concerns exercising the Heath government in the wake of economic difficulties following economic and political upheaval in 1973 and 1974.

It will be necessary to consider the broader concept of what could be termed 'educational politics'. The last two decades have seen a period of concerted and concentrated activity in this area which has been unprecedented in post-war history in this country. 'Education' is now inextricably associated with 'politics', a relationship which was less clear in the years of the 'secret garden' throughout the 1950s and early 1960s.

Margaret Archer has defined 'educational politics' as the attempts:

"to influence the inputs, processes and outputs of education, whether by legislation, pressure group or union action, experimentation, private investment, local transactions, internal innovation or propaganda."

(in McNay & Ozga (1981), p 39)

This broad definition embraces all the different facets of political activity in education which have been so conspicuous in recent years. Education has moved from the political

backwaters to the mainstream of the general political manifesto in a comparatively short space of time. Furthermore it is not only occupying a high-profile in national terms, but in local terms as well. To analyse educational politics now involves:

"...examining group interaction at the levels of the school, the community, and the nation, and the interrelations between them."

(op.cit., p 43)

The interaction between the state and its constituent set of local communities is of focal interest in any consideration of educational politics since 1972. The breakdown of a general picture of bi-partisan political conflict between left and right, represented by a union-dominated Labour Party, claiming the general allegiance of the working class, and a Conservative Party rooted in the grouse-moor image of the shire counties can be thought of as having begun during the Heath government of 1970 - 74. The oil crisis and the confrontation with the National Union of Mineworkers to some extent threw the economic and political apple-cart up in the air and put an end to a period which, domestically, had been firstly a period of reconstruction after the war and then a period of upward social and economic mobility for a large proportion of the population.

The events which signalled the end of the Heath government also caused a radical change in the Conservative Party. Thatcherism

represents the end of the post-war consensus (Hall, 1988) and the new leader of the Party lost no time in imposing her own ideology upon the Party after her assumption of the leadership in 1975, an ideology which, it will be seen, initially owed much to other sources, notably Keith Joseph, and had a profound effect upon social policies including education.

Writing in the year of the ERA's enactment, Stuart Hall maintained that the whole social infra-structure of Britain was in a process of change as a result of Thatcherism (Hall, 1988, p5) and that, furthermore:

"This recomposition is transforming the material basis, the occupational boundaries, the gender and ethnic composition, the political cultures and the social imagery of 'class'."

(p 5)

This eclectic influence upon the nation's collective social consciousness is a factor which must be explored for it remains a fact that the ERA was the *culmination* of a process of change brought about by a shift in agreed aims which had been developing with rapidity since the mid-70s. This climatic change has been so pervasive and successful that the whole educational agenda has been changed and radical discourse legitimated and made truly conservative.

It has been argued that all influences upon education are political in character and that education and politics are inextricably inter-linked. Evans (1985) identifies six contexts besides the purely political which influence educational development - demographic, economic, scientific and technical, social, religious and philosophic. Even on a cursory inspection it is clear that each of the six have a political dimension. Each one of the six features strongly in the new vocabulary of the newly legitimated discourse of education as will be seen.

These socio-political influences upon education have grown in the past quarter of a century since the 1944 settlement began to be called into question. Increased social mobility, changing patterns of demographic and generational settlement, employment instability, the demise of traditional industries in favour of more diverse technological occupations, and, most poignantly perhaps, the questioning of traditional values have ensured that education has risen to the top of the political agenda.

It will also become apparent that the Thatcher government, in tackling the imposition of its educational programme, was aided and abetted by a series of social and economic events which proved catalysts to the legislative success of their

ideological aims and, in some cases, actually contributed to the formation of policy itself. Lawn and Grace (1987) make the point that:

"The Central State had in one sense to do nothing more than to exploit the possibilities arising from the crisis of the social democratic consensus and to exploit its own political and ideological advantages in a situation of economic recession."

(p 20)

This is a significant point for it highlights the premise that imposed change is best placed to take root and grow in a time of perceived or actual national decline. Radicalism can overcome a national tendency towards conservatism and incremental tinkering when 'the chips are down'. It has also been seen that at the other end of the spectrum, when national fortunes are riding high and there is a general 'feel-good' factor in the air, such as there was in 1945, opportunities for radical change are also present. Many would argue that educational reform owes more to the fear of urban lawlessness, readiness for war, post-war euphoria and national economic concern than any altruistic educational motive. The 1988 Act was passed when the 'enterprise economy' of mid-Thatcherism was at its zenith.

It will be logical to consider now the character of the new ideology of the right which began to be ascendant from the mid-

70s, upon Margaret Thatcher's assumption of the leadership of the Conservative Party, and which has significantly influenced educational development since the election of 1979.

b). 'Thatcherism'

The Thatcher government which was elected in 1979 had one overriding mission: to destroy the institutionalised structure of social democracy and replace it with a creed of individualism based on enterprise and initiative. It could have been expected then that education, the first pillar put in place in the new post-war social consensus, would eventually be overhauled by the new administration.

Referring to the drafting of the first Queen's Speech of her Government, Margaret Thatcher has written that she was "determined to send out a clear signal of change" (Thatcher 1993, p 38). It cannot be overstated that 1979 marked the beginning, in active terms, of a complete reversal of political direction. The Conservative Party had campaigned since 1945 on a platform which eschewed the interventionist approach of a planned economy but, in practice:

"in the fine print of policy, and especially
in government, the Tory Party merely pitched

camp in the long march to the left."

(ibid. p 7)

The trade unions had exerted a great deal of power and influence in the 1970s, bringing down the Heath government in 1974 and, through the 'winter of discontent', the Callaghan administration in 1979. The Government that Thatcher led wielded a mandate for change and the government was expected to 'govern' with strength and determination.

Jones (1989) claims that:

"In adopting measures to lessen disadvantage, to expand the public sector, and constrain the influence of market forces, social democracy, whatever its mildness, had erected institutional barriers to economic restructuring and encouraged public attitudes which were uncondusive to it."

(p 36)

The new government seized the social policy initiative and began a process of reform which aimed to reconstruct policy on a market basis characterised by economic efficiency and consumer choice. The growth and development of the welfare state which had been a consensual aim since the mid-1940s was arrested and sentenced to a steady advancing decline in 1979. Ball (1990) makes the point that the social reforms which characterised the era of social democracy were "clearly and decisively" ended (p19) and then "significantly restructured

and re-positioned" (p79). Education was not a prime target, there were other initial priorities such as the economy and the unions, but it was inevitable, following the raising of its profile by the previous Government that its time was near.

The moral regeneration of the nation was one of Thatcherism's prime objectives. The Welfare State had damaged morale, motivation, self-respect and self-responsibility by being 'intrusive' and 'nannying' (Dale 1989, p 92). It had:

"removed the incentive to do a fair day's work for a fair day's pay and to behave in decent, upright ways. The education system...cannot escape blame for this, taken over as it has been by alien, progressive, morally relative and socialistic doctrines..."

(ibid.)

The Thatcher administration had, first, to deal with a long-standing economic malaise which had festered throughout the years following the collapse of fixed exchange rates in 1971-2 and the oil crisis of 1973. Social policy initiatives were not forthcoming during the first period of government in a positive way, it was more a case of terminating past trends rather than initiating new ones. It was during the second term of office (1983 - 87) that 'Thatcherism' began to tackle social policy with the direct application of principles used during its first

term of office in economic policy.

"The most important pledges in the manifesto fell into three groups. First, we promised to accelerate privatisation, which was fundamental to our whole economic approach...The second...concerned Trade Union Reform...The third...related to proposals related to local government."

(Thatcher, op.cit., pp 283-4)

Ball (op.cit.) identifies three aspects of policy which were used to restructure and re-position education: the setting up of controls over expenditure on education; the attempt to "reorient and redefine" the meaning of 'education'; and the disciplining of professional workers within education through new forms of control [p 79].

Each of these three strands has indeed transformed the whole picture of education in the period under consideration. It is misleading to assume, as Ball seems to suggest, that the developments in education, which culminated in the ERA, were conceived within a grand strategy. Cuts in expenditure were certainly part of a general opening gambit applied across the board, a policy firmly consistent with a philosophical adherence to a free market system; but the controls over teachers were, as will be seen, formulated as part of a reactive move against perceived political militancy on the part

of teachers during their industrial action of 1985 - 86. There was a large element of luck too in that the increased politicisation of the teaching unions, especially the National Union of Teachers, lent much public support to the Government's efforts to restore control over the state school sector.

In the wake of post-Falklands triumphalism 'Thatcherism' became more strident and bolder as it made forays into areas of social policy. It became clear that underpinning this radical change of direction was a transformation within the Conservative Party itself through what Hall (1988) calls the "neo-liberal and monetarist 'revolutions'" (p 163). The ascendancy of the 'new right' can be seen clearly in the evolution of legislation proposed and enacted during the middle years of the Thatcher administration in health and social welfare policy as well as that of education. The equation between the individual and the state was altered.

Statism was the enemy and the individual was the cause to be liberated. There was to be no search for a new consensus. As Hall says:

"Thatcherism's project was to transform the state in order to restructure society: to decentre, to displace, the whole post-war formation..."

(ibid.)

The third Thatcher Manifesto of 1987 was, it could be argued, the most 'Thatcherite'. Thatcher herself says that:

"In our first term, we revived the economy and reformed trade union law. In our second, we extended wealth and capital ownership more widely than ever before."

(Thatcher, op.cit., p 572)

But the 1987 Manifesto, she says, "went to the heart of my convictions" (ibid.). Its agenda was social policy, and educational reform would be one of the central concerns of Thatcher's third term.

In order to achieve its gargantuan transformational task 'Thatcherism' has, through sheer necessity, had to juxtapose individualism with authoritarianism. This needs to be examined and explained.

c). Contradictions Within Thatcherism

There is a paradoxical, yet essential, contradiction within Thatcherism between individualism, promoting the means whereby the individual is free from the shackles of state interference, and authoritarianism manifest in measures which enhance the power of the state. 'Nationhood' is an enduring theme of

Thatcherism but so too is 'individualism' promoted through enterprise, initiative and effort.

Thatcher's view of socialism was that it "had played on the worst aspects of human nature" (Thatcher, op.cit. p 625):

"It had literally demoralized communities and families, offering dependency in place of independence as well as subjecting traditional values to sustained derision."

(ibid.)

This comment highlights another paradox in that Thatcherism stands for tradition as well as innovation. It looks back to the nineteenth century and yet recognises that there are deficiencies of readiness for the twenty-first century. Whitty (1989) makes the point that:

"what is distinctive about Thatcherism as a force within British conservatism is its capacity to link the neo-conservative emphasis on tradition, authority and national identity/security with an espousal of neo-liberal free market economics and the extension of its principles into whole new areas of social activity including the provision of welfare."

(p 330)

The collectivist monoliths in the guise of union power and influence and local authority autonomy have to be dismantled by force in order to liberate the spirit of free enterprise. The ends justify the means. The task is one of re-education, of

"eradicating ingrained habits" (Jones 1989).

In the educational arena this process can be seen at work in the educational policy documents and legislature of the '80s which gives increasing power and influence to parents whilst simultaneously concentrating more power and influence in the hands of government by increasing its control of the DES and HMI.

There is a logic within this apparent paradox: the state needs to be strong in order to protect the market from:

"vested interests and restrictive practices and prevent the conditions in which it can flourish being subverted either from without or within."

(Whitty, in Moore & Ozga 1991, p 108)

The power of the state is utilised to:

"remove anything that interferes...with the development of an appropriate sense of self and nation on the part of the citizens who will be making their choice in the market."

(ibid.)

Thus it can be seen that Clauses in the ERA which invest the Secretary of State with so much power and influence, both apparent and real, are symptomatic of central Thatcherite strategy. It is also clear that the ERA is a piece of

polycymaking which is, in its philosophy and practice, mainstream Thatcherism. The two opposing poles of Thatcherism create an instrumentalism which justifies the inconsistency.

d). Thatcherite Populism

Rather than moving with the mood of popular opinion, Thatcher's government set the political agenda throughout the 1980s. It was able to do this, firstly, because of the weakness of the political opposition, especially within the Labour Party which was torn apart by internal strife in the first years of the decade; and secondly because of a public weariness with industrial unrest which had characterised the '70s.

It could be argued though that there were two other ideological reasons why its radical programme continued to be given the support of the electorate in three consecutive election victories (notwithstanding the fact that the 'first past the post' electoral system combined with an ineffective and divided opposition grouping aided the continuance of a Conservative administration).

In the first place the Government placed the consumer to the forefront of its public agenda. By equating rising unemployment and poor economic performance with alleged falling standards in

schools the Government prepared the ground for an acceptance, once again, of a diversified system. This Government, in contrast to the last (Labour) one was putting the consumer first. This Government would look after the interests of the consumer and make the producers subservient to the needs and aspirations of the consumer. Thus, "popular discontents" were "harnessed" to Thatcherism which helped maintain its acceptance by the public in general (Hall 1988, p 6). As Apple (1989) says:

"Since so many parents are justifiably concerned about the economic futures of their children - in an economy that is increasingly conditioned by lowered wages, unemployment, capital flight and insecurity - rightist discourse connects with the experience of many working-class and lower-middle-class people."

(p 7)

Apple further explains public support for Thatcherism throughout the '80s in terms of collective 'panics' over falling standards and illiteracy, the fear of violence in schools, and the concern with the destruction of family values and religiosity - all of which helped make the ascendancy of the right in the sphere of education so successful.

Secondly, and this is an essential point in understanding the whole context of all legislative reforms throughout the 1980s in areas of social policy, the government which came to power

under Mrs. Thatcher's leadership in 1979 was essentially a government driven by a clear and lucid ideology, a newly-reconstituted Toryism, a Messianic blend of traditional Conservative values and neo-liberalism. It is an ideology which was legitimised in the wake of Heath's downfall in 1975 when Thatcher, a conviction politician *par excellence*, began to lead the Party to the right, opening up a widening gap in what had to some extent been, at least in pragmatic terms, a consensual political stage.

e). The Ideology Of The New Right

The scale of the collapse of the world economic order in the mid-1970s created the conditions for a new policy agenda to emerge in the west. The problems encountered by the Callaghan government in the late '70s were merely examples of a general discontent and fracturing of hegemony throughout the free world (this is dealt with at more length in Chapter 6). Cheap energy and stable money had been the precarious pillars upon which western economies had relied. Now, suddenly, new political solutions had to be sought and it was the political right which took the initiative in both Britain, under Thatcher, and the USA under President Reagan.

It can be seen that, in this situation of social and economic uncertainty, the forces of conservatism in Britain drew upon an ideology which was an alloy of classic Toryism - the desire to conserve civil order, to value national heritage, to acknowledge authority and allegiance - and a new conservatism which saw salvation from disorder in the rigorous mechanism of the market.

Gamble (1988) argues that in this period of crisis the challenges to the authority of the state were evident in three main areas: citizenship rights which social democracy guaranteed through public agencies such as trade unions; representation which was corporate in character; and economic management which was not stemming the growth of inflation and unemployment. In all three areas the state was seen by the neo-conservatives as being weak and ineffective (pp 13-20) and it was this perceived weakness of the state which the new Government of 1979 set about to reverse.

If the influence upon the new educational climate of the New Right can be seen anywhere in a clear, tangible form then it is in the components of the attainment targets and programmes of the study of history within the National Curriculum which fail to acknowledge the development of modernist, or even postmodernist, thinking. Kelly (1990) makes the point that

History is the "school subject 'par excellence' in which one can recognize the value component, in which one can detect most readily the values of the planners" (p 98). The concern to protect traditional cultural norms and the national heritage, in white-indigenous terms, is evident throughout.

The 'General Requirements for Programmes of Study' (1991) include the necessity for pupils to "develop knowledge, understanding and skills related to cross-curricular themes, in particular citizenship..." (p 11) Although reference is made to the need for pupils to have the "opportunity to study developments in Europe and the non-European world" (p 33), it is made clear that the history curriculum should concern itself foremost with "important episodes and developments in Britain's past, from Roman to modern times" (p 15). In Key Stage 2, for instance, non-European study (within an optional supplementary unit) may include Ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, Assyria, The Indus Valley, The Maya or Benin: in the main, all past civilisations related to the birth of European civilisation and culture.

It would be difficult to argue that there was no intrinsic and practical worth in studying the historical development of the country in which one lived. However, to present a historical syllabus entirely centred around Britain, Europe and the

Classical world reveals rightist values which preclude the existence of cultural developments from other regions of the world which, in an increasingly internationalist and multicultural society, would offer a contribution towards greater social cohesion and racial understanding.

Stephen Ball (1990) draws attention to the influence of the New Right (specifically the 'Hillgate Group') upon the curriculum through their influential work in the years directly preceding the ERA. Their preservationist stance was centred around a claim that the traditional values of Western societies were in danger of being eroded by the development of 'relevance' in the school curriculum where lessons were adapted to the "emotional repertoire" of the student (Hillgate 1987, p 3). Multiculturalism, it was claimed, challenged:

"the traditional values of Western societies...the very universalism and open-ness of European culture is our best justification for imparting it."

(ibid.)

The New Right succeeded in their defence of the traditional, high culture, curriculum. The politics "of and in the school curriculum" (Ball 1990, p 47) was one of its major concerns in the 1980s. The Prime Minister herself needed little convincing. In her speech to the Party Conference in 1987

Margaret Thatcher said:

"Children who need to be able to count and multiply are learning anti-racist mathematics - whatever that may be. Children who need to be able to express themselves in clear English are being taught political slogans. Children who need to be taught to respect traditional moral values are being taught that they have an inalienable right to be gay."

(9th October 1987)

f.) Ideological Sources Of Thatcherism

Hall (1988) makes the point that Thatcherism has instituted a variety of strategies in the area of social policy but it has "never for a moment neglected the ideological dimension" (p 274). In this respect Thatcher's government broke the mould of a series of previous administrations that were pragmatic and philosophically malleable. The bi-partisan adherence to social democracy which had existed since 1945, with its Butskellism and generous social welfare programmes, was abruptly halted.

In considering the notion of ideology Salter and Tapper (1981) offer a definition of its function as being "the attempted legitimation of particular group interest." (p 53) This sociological interpretation is taken further when they suggest that:

"...if a group is to stake any claim to a place in the higher echelons of society then it has to possess an educational ideology which incorporates goals as well as means. It has, if necessary, to be able to legitimate in educational terms its conception of what the social order should look like."

(p 65)

The elevation of the status of the consumer in education, promoted by all the major Acts relating to education in the 1980s (1980, '81, '86 and '88), can be interpreted as measures which, in real terms, give advantage only to articulate and

well-informed parents and thus could be charged with being socially-divisive. The 1986 Act, which broke the monopoly of the LEAs on school governing bodies in favour of individual parental representation, and the ERA itself, which further eroded the status and power of LEAs and provided opportunities for a diversification of the unitary system, can be seen as statements of encouragement to a social model which owes more to a concern to uphold a hierarchical nineteenth century social order than a more egalitarian one based on social democracy.

Concerns about the weakening of hegemony were further fuelled by the new right through their attack on educational theorists:

"for promoting curriculum interests, such as multicultural or anti-sexist education, which are seen as undermining traditional values, social roles and respect for authority."

(Moore & Ozga 1991, p 5)

This concern for 'nation', a classic theme of Conservatism, influenced educational policymaking throughout the 1980s. The debate on the provisions for religious education in the Education Reform Bill have already been referred to; the lack of effective provisions for children whose mother tongue is not English and for children who have statements of special educational need in the ERA do not suggest anything other than apathy for their education; and the controversy over the

History Working Group's (Anglo-centric) recommendations which occurred in 1990 (see Chapter 6) gives evidence to a determination by the right that traditional values were, at all costs, to be restored to the educational agenda. The pattern has already been noted: the Greek concern to foster an appreciation of Homer's epic stories to inculcate a notion of 'Greeklom'; the inclusion of 'Republican Morality' in the curriculum in France in the 1790s; and the stress on Lenin-Marxism in the Soviet curriculum.

Intellectuals from the right, such as Roger Scruton, had done a great deal to set this course. In a damning indictment of education inspired by 'propaganda' of the left, Scruton suggests that:

"Like most of the radical movements which grew to immaturity in the 1960s, Third Worldism is dedicated to the dismantling of authority - or at least the system of authority upon which Western self-confidence and Western institutions have been founded."

(1985a, p 17)

The rejection of traditional history, informing a pupil of his own country's history, culture and institutions, is always, Scruton maintains, combined with an assault on traditional Christian values. (p 54) The "Third Worldist" seeks to:

"revise the child's allegiances, to sever the

natural attachment to the ancestry, country, customs, religion and institutions which have formed his pupil, and to cast him loose into the 'global village'".

(ibid.)

Thus it is not particularly surprising that in launching the National Curriculum Working Group on History the Secretary of State said that:

"the programmes of study should have at the core the history of Britain, the record of its past and, in particular, its political, constitutional and cultural heritage."

(13th January 1989)

Who is to argue against this case? If education has a role in transmitting cultural values, and few would claim otherwise, then that culture needs to be defined, and its history will be at the heart of this definition. But who will frame the outline of the definition? This intractable problem is the very epicentre of educational debate. It will be addressed in detail later. Suffice it to say for now that it is indisputable that the Conservatives have taken a course which is purely political, as opposed to educational, in so far as they were elected on a manifesto platform which clearly indicated their ideology (individual enterprise, anti-statism, British interests before Europe etc.) and these 'democratically-agreed' values must be advanced through the state's education programme. In this sense, it is inevitable the Conservatives

would have a view on the curriculum, and that the walls of the secret garden would be irrevocably torn down. By defining knowledge and ascribing it detailed content in definite boundaries the Tory's National Curriculum has legitimated the factional ideology of the right and made it mainstream cultural currency.

Scruton, a member of the influential 'Hillgate Group', is representative of a number of commentators from the 'new right' who exerted an indisputable influence over the refinement of ideology and therefore of educational policy formation in the 1980s. It was the Hillgate Group which argued consistently for a (neo-conservative) prescriptive curriculum and a (neo-liberal) expansion of market mechanisms into the education system (Whitty 1989) and thus, helped in the creation of the central paradox of the ERA between 'freedom' and 'control' which has been referred to previously. The paradox was incidental if it helped in the realisation of longer-term goals, particularly the extinguishing of influences espousing curriculum directions which, the Group believed, lead to political indoctrination.

Scruton belongs to the 'control' school of the new Right. For him:

"The emphasis is always on authority, hierarchy and the maintenance of social order."

(Chitty 1989, p 213)

The main purpose of schooling:

"is to instil a respect for the family, private property and all the bodies which uphold the authority of the bourgeois state."

(op.cit. p 214)

For Scruton the state must be strong to guarantee order and if that implies a diminution of individual liberty then that is inevitable and admissible. Writing about family policy, Thatcher herself says that:

"...so much hung on what happened to the structure of the nation's families that only the most myopic libertarian would regard it as outside the purview of the state."

(Thatcher, op.cit. p 631)

Although other groups, such as the Institute for Economic Affairs and the Centre for Policy Studies, exerted considerable influence on the formation of Conservative policy, the Hillgate Group were particularly influential in the educational forum and their pamphlet "Whose Schools ? A Radical Manifesto" (1986) was widely read.

Lawton (1989) suggests the existence of four ideologies competing for educational predominance within the political spectrum - 'privatisers', who object to government interference

in the provision of education; 'minimalists', who see the necessity of providing a basic, core, education as long as value for money could be demonstrated; 'pluralists', who advocate a state system of equal effectiveness and esteem as the private sector, with parents free to choose either; and 'comprehensive planners', who advocate central planning and a common curriculum for all. Lawton suggests that there is evidence to suggest that the Conservative Party contains adherents of the first three of the four ideologies (p 48), but the prevalence of the privatisers and minimalists helps explain why:

"Mr. Baker chose an obsolete, subject-based model for planning his national curriculum. Politically he was under great pressure to move further in the direction of privatisation and minimalism."

(p 58)

Lawton is right in terming a subject-based model 'obsolete' but the model is far from disused. Its longevity though is far from assured (see Chapter 6).

Scruton (1984), engaged in the pursuit of defining conservatism, exemplifies the influence of the intellectuals of the new right upon Conservative policy in the Thatcher era. Education, seen as a rational activity pursued for its own

ends, is firmly related to 'authority' and the transmission of 'culture' [p 148].

It is:

"One of the undesirable consequences of making education (or rather the attendance at school) compulsory at law...it becomes impossible to construe the teacher's authority as acquired by parental delegation..."

(op.cit., p 148)

Scruton's defence of education as an 'end' in itself and not a 'means', alongside his advocacy of 'standards' through selection (p 156) suggests the promotion of a society which is far removed from the egalitarian model which was the preoccupation of politicians and theorists for much of the post-war period. But then, Scruton has no time for theorists, claiming that the nation's children "have to suffer daily from the fraud of Education Theory" (p 153). The stratification of society is a natural phenomenon and the attempt to provide equality of opportunity "is simply a confused stumble in the dark" as it is neither possible nor desirable. Not everyone is going to benefit or even be able to fully participate in education because some people come to educational institutions better prepared. Any society contains many "walks of life" and citizens should be free to engage in any of them. What is

important, of course, is that "the way of life forms part of the civil order" (p 157).

The "conservative dogma", for Scruton, is that:

"the order of the state must be objective, comprehensive, and commanding of allegiance, so that the contrasting conditions of society can achieve their ideological gratification in the condition of subjecthood, without recourse to lawless self-determination. Without this completion in establishment civil society remains always on the brink of fragmentation."

(p 184)

The state, then, has to make itself strong. It does not allow itself to be defeated by its enemies, whether they be a foreign power (1982) or the National Union of Teachers (1985-6); it seeks justification for its apparent authoritarianism by reminding its critics that social democracy and consensus politics have been demonstrable failures; it derives its populism by pointing out that the Opposition in power will ensure a return to the social fragmentation and unrest of the 'Winter of Discontent'.

Clearly, the Thatcherite ideology owes much to the influence of Scruton and others from the cultural right who were intent on 'purifying' Conservatism after the dalliance with social democracy in the 1970s. But Thatcher herself had sat uneasily

in Heath's cabinet in that decade. After Heath's famous U-turn away from radicalism in 1972:

"I had my doubts, but as a first-time Cabinet minister I devoted myself principally to the major controversies of my own department...Yet all my instincts chafed against this."

(Thatcher, op.cit., p 13)

Thatcher's own background, early political experiences and innate bourgeois instincts made a radical break with previous policy and practice inevitable in 1979.

In educational terms, the new reforms were to be a precise mirror of Thatcher's brand of Conservatism: the preservation of the old traditional order of 'Middle England' through the reaffirmation of the hierarchical, rationalist classical curriculum.

This neo-conservatism within the thinking of the New Right is complemented by the liberal notion of a market order and a free economy. Liberal political economy gives free rein to the market without any concession to concepts of equality or fairness. It is the very antithesis of the planned economy of the collectivists. Furthermore, its precepts have been applied to social, as well as economic, affairs by its proponents, most notably F.A.Hayek by whom Thatcher herself has acknowledged

being influenced.

Hayek (1944) has written that:

"The liberal argument is in favour of making the best possible use of the forces of competition as a means of co-ordinating human efforts, not an argument for leaving things just as they are. It is based on the conviction that where effective competition can be created, it is a better way of guiding individual efforts than any other."

(p 27)

The principal aim of this liberalism is *laissez-faire*, the absolute resistance to intervention in any form by any artificial regulation in the workings of the market by any external force:

"Economic liberalism...regards competition as superior not only because it is in most circumstances the most efficient method known, but even more because it is the only method by which our activities can be adjusted to each other without coercive or arbitrary intervention of authority."

(ibid.)

In this context the Education Reform Act begins to resemble a cohesive piece of legislation with clear political intentions. The "rich mix" of Thatcherism (Hall 1988), this amalgam of authoritarianism and liberalism, of dictator and freedom fighter, is revealed as the child of both the neo-conservative and neo-liberal factions of the New Right. Its policy

manifestations - the curtailment of union power and influence; the reduction in funding (in real terms) of the public sector; the encouragement of the home-owning, share-buying proletariat; the privatisation of anything and everything that it is possible to privatise - show a consistency and, more importantly, a logic which, on first consideration, it may be hard to see. It certainly explains the splendid isolationism of the private sector which the Conservative government has been conspicuous in protecting as not so much a protection of class interests but an ideological commitment.

Protestations by Government spokespersons that it is not the intention to lead services such as education and health towards full privatisation begin to seem incredulous and illogical. It may be that only the sanction of the ballot box has retarded this process. Hall (1988) in discussing Keith Joseph's ideological antipathy towards the state sector makes the point that:

"What he forgot is that the majority of parents who were expected to provide the cutting edge of this populist strategy had nowhere else to send their children except into the hard-pressed, crumbling, under-resourced schools in the public sector."

(p 82)

This apparent insensitivity to social reality was commented upon by Sir Ian Gilmour, a member of the Cabinet, when he

criticised government policy in 1980:

"It was a performance of some effrontery, which began with an assault on the prime minister's own favourite political thinker. 'In the Conservative view,' the Lord Privy Seal suggested, 'economic liberalism a la Professor Hayek, because of its starkness and its failure to create a sense of community, is not a safeguard of political freedom but a threat to it.'"

(quoted in Young (1989))

Gilmour's comment draws attention to the fact that the market has no subjective conscience. Operations in the market involve chance, speculation, the possibility of losses as well as profits, and the ascendancy of some over others.

This, more than any other argument, should logically exclude education from the market place - because education is concerned with morals, with the fostering of 'community', whereas the market is concerned with benefiting the individual. Scruton himself says that to engage in education is "to envisage a form of community" and that the ends of education are involved with the preparation for social interaction (Scruton 1984, p 154).

To those that accuse the market of being insensitive to the needs of the individual and the health of the community, Hayek maintains that moral justification of the market is irrelevant: its attraction lies in the diversity of possible outcomes which it offers. Inadequacies in the market mechanism only exist

when 'non-market' agencies with inherent elements of central planning distort the free-flow of supply and demand. Where needs exist, including social and welfare needs, the market can satisfy them, Hayek claims, and in a more efficient way. (Gamble 1988, p 51).

To have faith in this argument then, the free market creed of the liberal arm of the New Right, begins to assume a softer, less callous, shape. The newly-elected government of 1979 inherited a mixed socio-economic system that had evolved since 1945; one where private industry and nationalised industries and locally provided and privately available services co-existed. Thus, in Hayekian terms, there was an unsatisfactory and inefficient situation whereby one set of production and service units was influenced by market notions and the other set by administrative considerations.

Throughout the 1980s it can clearly be seen that the Government were engaged upon a process of weakening and dismantling the public sector in a firm and consistent routine of controlling public expenditure by reducing the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement, emancipating the workforce from restrictive (union-inspired) practices, and maintaining a strict monetarist policy which included removing all currency exchange restrictions. This move towards a market arena increasingly

encroached upon educational policy, especially when signs of economic recovery appeared during the second term of office. Thatcher was attracted, for instance, along with Keith Joseph, to the idea of education vouchers:

"which would give parents a fixed - perhaps means-tested - sum, so that they could shop around..."

(Thatcher, op.cit., p 591)

Could the analogy with the market place be made more explicit ?

It is also necessary to examine another parallel source of influences, besides strictly ideological ones, upon education in the period being considered - those which emanated from a view of education as being a vocational pursuit.

g). Education And The Economy

J.R.Hough has pointed out the fact that there is a long history of attributing Britain's economic woes with criticisms of the education system not only in the period since 1945, but regularly throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (quoted in Moore and Ozga (1991), p 9).

In contemporary terms it was the Crowther Report (1959) which

articulated the twin task that education has in needing to educate the individual to promote personal development and growth whilst at the same time helping prepare the individual to contribute to the needs of society through vocational means:

"Primacy must be given to the human rights of the individual boy or girl. But we do not believe that the pursuit of national efficiency can be ranked much lower."

(Crowther Report, 1959, Section 86)

This is the crux of the problem: the juxtaposition of state and individual interests. How far can the state accommodate the needs, interests and aspirations of the individual? Surely only insofar as the interests of the individual serve the state. This is mutually satisfactory if the two are combinable, but if there is a conflict of interest, then the situation is irreconcilable and the state will predominate. The threshold of conformity, compromise, revolution or anarchy will have been reached.

The decade which followed the publication of the Crowther Report was one of unprecedented growth in the education system, especially in the provision of higher education. The affluence and optimism of the times was accompanied by an assumption that widening educational opportunity was not only a worthwhile egalitarian trend but also necessary in order to maintain

expansion in economic terms. If emerging methodologies were questioned, the general thrust of this expansionism was left unquestioned (Dennison, [McNay & Ozga (1985)]).

The Education White Paper of 1972 optimistically envisaged this growth continuing both in the schools sector (including nursery education) and in higher education. The economic crisis, triggered by the oil crisis of the following year, initiated a completely different era in educational development. The rise in oil prices was directly related to a serious decline in the rate of economic growth; massive increases in inflation; rapidly rising rates of unemployment; and persistent currency instability (Ball 1990, p 78).

More specifically, education was tarnished with a less glowing image, associated directly with the economic difficulties with which the country grappled in the wake of the events of 1973. As Jonathan (1990) says:

"In Britain, the recession of the early 1970s, and the subsequent response to it by a government committed to the ideology of individualistic libertarianism has led to the scapegoating of education so that job shortage has been politically re-interpreted as skill shortage, with schools seen as a major contributory cause of youth unemployment."

(p 184)

The setting up of the Assessment of Performance Unit (APU) in 1974 represented an expression of continuing concern and marked an interesting and significant point of time for the DES when it was directed by government to involve itself directly with issues of assessment and the monitoring of standards. The gate to the secret garden had been pushed open.

Initially the APU was seen by politicians as being concerned purely with assessing pupil performance but its activities gradually and significantly expanded into the monitoring of national standards, becoming increasingly centred on activities involving the collection of data for curriculum evaluation (Hargreaves & Reynolds 1989, Kelly 1990).

A change of government in 1974 did nothing to halt this strategy of spotlighting alleged shortcomings in the education system. A change of Prime Minister, however, had a pronounced effect. Callaghan's speech at Ruskin College in 1976 and the 'Great Debate' which followed it in 1977 could be described, one might say, as the fuse which led to the fireworks of 1988 - though there must have been many following the somewhat innocuous debate in 1977 who assumed it would only be a 'damp squib'.

Callaghan was concerned about "the complaints from industry

that new recruits from the schools sometimes do not have the basic tools to do the job that is required." Students in higher education were showing a propensity for choosing studies in the humanities rather than the sciences or technology and there were those who elected to remain in academic life ("very pleasant I know"). The ratio was unbalanced:

"There is no virtue in producing socially well adjusted members of society who are unemployed because they do not have the skills. Nor at the other extreme must they be technically efficient robots."

(Times Educational Supplement, 22.10.76)

Here, at least, was a tacit acknowledgement of Crowther's manifesto seeking the educated individual as well as the trained member of a national workforce, but it was the latter concern which was at the centre of the speech and the ensuing, government-sponsored, debate. The juxtaposition of individual and state had been found wanting and the state was insisting on redressing the balance, or imbalance, and re-aligning the dislodged equilibrium. The needs of the state had to be paramount. The luxuries of sociology and media-studies had to be replaced by the necessities of economics and engineering.

The DES, by launching the Debate, signalled a new interventionist role; went some way into pacifying the authors of the Black Papers that it was, at least, investigating their

criticisms; and indicated concern about the activities of LEAs and school staffs (Dennison [McNay & Ozga (1985)], pp 28-29).

There has been a direct relationship between a stagnation in economic growth and the retrenchment of the education service since the mid-70s. Since 1979 this has been more pronounced because government economic policy has been based on monetarist precepts which have countered the Keynesian interventionist model which preceeded it. This contraction has been accompanied by inevitable political and social introspection centred upon criticism of the effectiveness of education to tangibly contribute to economic recovery. Economic uncertainty, and the decline in national confidence created by it, has created the conditions in which questions about the legitimacy of content and the efficacy of methodology are bound to be raised.

Dale (1989) identifies three key problems which are always present on the agenda of education systems: direct support for the capital accumulation process; the provision of a wider social context not inimical to the continuing capital accumulation process; and the legitimisation of the work of the State (p 96).

In the period from 1944 until the beginning of the economic

malaise in the mid-70s there was no conflict between the perceived agreed aims of schooling and the capital accumulation process because there was virtual full employment and an expectation that investment in education would continue to produce national economic growth. Subsequent economic decline and rising unemployment brought this assumption into question.

Similarly, the empowerment of class, gender and racial groups in the last twenty years has imposed demands upon the education system which require the development of a curriculum responsive to wider needs than just vocational ones (a need the new National Curriculum appears to have ignored).

The 1944 Act imposed a system which was a vehicle for implementing the post-war settlement to ensure social and economic recovery. Education was seen as 'a good thing' throughout the '50s and '60s, but in the post-Black Papers era schools and the schooling process have been subject to critical evaluation and now concepts of equality and quality are key arguments (Dale 1989).

Mathieson and Bernbaum (1988) argue convincingly that critics who attribute recent economic decline to deficiencies within the education system fail to take sufficient account of the pervasive influence of nineteenth century liberal-humanism

which has created a curricular hierarchy dominated still, despite the domination of scientific and technological advances in society, by the humanities. In comparison to more successful countries, in economic terms, such as Germany and Japan, whose curricula are centred upon a pursuit of scientific and technological proficiency, Britain is still producing managers of industry and commerce who have been educated more thoroughly in studies of classic literature than computer studies.

Ball (1991) speaks of the industrialists' evident concern "with the need of education to adapt itself to the realities of production and business" (p 102). He claims that changes prompted by new theories of learning and epistemology which were intended to enhance the learning process have coincided with:

"technological changes in industry, affecting the labour process and modes of production, which require new kinds of attitudes and competences from employees."

(ibid.)

Thus education is seen by the schools-industry movement as being out of step with the reality of the contemporary workplace. Ball goes on to say that the teacher is caught in the middle of all this, criticised on the one hand by cultural

restorationists "for throwing out traditional practices" and on the other by industrial trainers who see schools perpetuating the nineteenth century anti-industrial bias (p 129). One is led to reflect upon the view of Williams (1962) who maintained that our curriculum:

"was essentially created by the nineteenth century, following some eighteenth century models, and retaining elements of the medieval curriculum near its centre."

(p 172)

Both Ball (op.cit.) and Ruth Jonathan (1990) make the point that the climate in which education takes place has changed since the late 1970s because of the concern that schools should better prepare pupils for the world of work. This is one area where consensus has been maintained between all the major political parties and the TUC and CBI. Indeed, Hall (op.cit.) maintains that the industrial and business classes of society have now been entrusted with the task of "guardians" of the education system, charged with bringing the system into line with the spirit of 'the enterprise culture' (p 4).

Kelly (1989) pinpoints the essential fact about this drive to re-orient education towards better serving the needs of this new culture:

"Fundamentally...the case is an instrumental one,

concerned with what education is *for* rather than what it *is*. And schooling is seen as largely, if not entirely, concerned to ensure vocational success for the nation."

(p 236)

It is inevitable then, Kelly maintains, that this process is elitist "in its effects if not its intentions." (ibid.)

h). Selective Expansionism

The 1972 White Paper represents the last public policy announcement characterised by a general tone of expansionism which had permeated central policy throughout the 1960s. The difficult economic climate which followed persisted throughout the rest of the decade and into the '80s.

Since 1979 there has been a shift away from general expansion and a cautious economic retreat, which by necessity followed, towards selective expansion in order to advance ideological aims. Resources have been directed towards inculcating greater degrees of diversity into the system, exemplified by the introduction of City Technology Colleges and Grant-Maintained Schools, and fostering closer links between education and the world of work through schemes such as the Youth Opportunities

Programme (YOP), the Youth Training Scheme (YTS) and the Technical and Vocational Educational Initiative (TVEI).

Kelly (1990) makes the point that these schemes have implied a shift of emphasis within the education system back to that of 'the industrial trainers' with schools "being funded from sources with very clear strings, of an instrumental and vocational kind, attached" (p 39).

Of particular significance is the fact that the TVEI scheme was established under the control of the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) which was an organisation under the control of the Department of Employment. The prime aim of the Department of Employment in the 1980s was to encourage the development of an enterprise economy and to cut unemployment through the provision of training opportunities for employment and redeployment.

This emphasis on 'training', rather than 'education', is important. It could be argued that the fact that the Thatcher government invested in training through initiatives such as TVEI and sought to control the scope of education through the imposition of a narrow national curriculum reveals much about comparative values held by that particular government. One

could argue that *education* benefits the individual whereas *training* is advantageous to the state.

Taylor (1985) is helpful in identifying the values conventionally associated with 'education' and 'training':

"Education is often depicted as soft, person-centred, moralized, academic, critical, contemplative, radical in attitude but traditional in form, theoretical, norm-referenced, enclosed, a consumption good rather than an investment."

(in Worswick G.(ed.) 1985, p 109)

In contrast, 'training' is seen as:

"hard, task-centred, materialistic, practical, oriented towards action, criterion-referenced, pragmatic, innovative in structure but conservative in substance, unselective, open, a valuable national investment."

(ibid.)

These definitions suggest that the emphasis on 'training' and the curtailment of the 'excesses' of education is a perfectly logical characteristic of the Thatcherite programme which was committed to a no-nonsense, pragmatic approach to economic regeneration. To allow freedom in education is to promote social and occupational mobility, cultural enlightenment and the intellectual means for political subversion; to specify and direct a confined and bland curriculum is to preserve the status quo and perpetuate social docility through a limited

educational perspective. The conclusion to this dissertation will argue that the balance between *education* and *training* in the schooling system has been heavily in favour of the latter, and that this needs to be redressed.

In order to create an educational 'market' parents and industrialists have been given precedence over educationalists. Consumers before producers, as the scathing references by Government to educational 'producers' in the debate on the Reform Bill have revealed.

Tomlinson (1989) makes the point that in order to establish an education 'market':

"it is necessary to break down the notion and system of a publicly planned and provided education service."

(p 276)

It is perfectly logical therefore that resources should be targeted in favour of measures designed to bring the market into being rather than perpetuating the strength of a system that, in political terms with the electorate, a government is trying to debunk. For there to be a market, there must be choice. The concept of a cohesive and organic education service must be dismantled in favour of differentiation and selective consumer choice.

The 1988 Act marked a watershed, the end of one type of relationship between education and state and the beginning, or re-affirmation of another. This legislation must now be examined in some detail.

Summary

The schooling process operates within a complex web of political relationships which inform the structure of the state. These involve the social stratification of the population, the national economy, and the prevailing ideology of the governing power. There has been an increasing politicisation of education in England which can be seen to have been prompted by several factors and events: the economic crisis occasioned by the sudden rise in oil prices during the Heath administration of 1970-74; the breakdown of the bi-partisan consensus during the 1980s when the division between the right and the left widened; and the domination of the political agenda by Thatcherism which effectively occurred after the victory in the Falklands conflict ensured the re-election of the Conservatives in 1983.

The questioning of traditional values in the 1960s and 1970s has been inverted by the philosophy of the new right and used ideologically to reclaim ground perceived to have been lost to the cause of the left with the burgeoning welfare state, whose advocacy of 'dependency culture' had to be arrested, and the Victorian values of self-help and individualism re-established. Thatcherism was able to achieve this by taking advantage of a generally accepted analysis of a nation in decline.

Thatcherism's mission was to dismantle social democracy and replace it with an individualism based on enterprise and initiative. It was concerned with a national moral regeneration and thus educational reform was an inevitable part of its legislative programme.

Education has been re-structured and re-positioned through the destruction of consensus and the encouragement of diversity. The unitary structure has been broken up but this has been replaced by a unitary curriculum to ensure the propagation of Thatcherism's ideological agenda. This 'divide and rule' pattern has been derived from a juxtaposition of individualism and authoritarianism, a paradox logically derived from the libertarian and authoritarian strands of Conservatism.

Another contradiction has been that Thatcherism stands for tradition *and* innovation. Its ideology and practice looks back to the values of late nineteenth-century England in the fervent hope that these values can be translated and transplanted to an England of the twenty-first century.

The devolvement of power and decision-making into the hands of parents, as consumers, has destroyed local democracy in the form of local government control of the system, but LEAs have been seen as urban citadels of socialism, and thus their

impotence has been a natural objective. The power of the state has been used to 'free' the individual, a strategy that has been popular by virtue of the fact that the discourse of the right has been harnessed to popular concerns and misconceptions such as 'standards', 'choice', and alarmist data about illiteracy.

An ideologically-led government has legitimated an ideologically-led curriculum with specifically-centred cultural perspectives and limitations. This Anglo-centric, mono-religious, mandatory curriculum enhances the position of the state in the educational apparatus and ensures the continuation of national hegemony along traditional hierarchical lines.

This authoritarian control is fused with economic liberalism, a creed that says loudly 'let the market decide'. This is a manifesto which is at odds with education, for education is concerned with moral choices and the fostering of 'community', whereas the market is concerned with the ruthless betterment of the individual. In the market there is a negative drawback - there must be winners and losers; educational activity is always *positive*.

The problem remains that the state cannot accommodate the wishes and aspirations of every single individual; there always

has to be a Benthamite compromise of seeking the greatest happiness for the greatest number. Thus the instrumentalist approach of seeing education in terms of economic necessity being justified by the argument that general economic improvement benefits the whole of society simply defies the reality of the situation because, in a society with such divisive social hierarchies, outcomes are not experienced in equal measures.

To see education as an activity which is out of step with the needs of new economic patterns is to confuse education with training, and conceptualises education in a very narrow and inaccurate manner.

5. THE EDUCATION REFORM ACT 1988

a) An Analysis of the Education Reform Act

i. The Dismantling of the Post-War Settlement

It could be argued that the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) represents not the beginning of a new education manifesto but rather the culmination of a process of change, a process, as has been shown, that was part of a wider socio-political movement away from the post-war consensual culture of the welfare state towards that of an individualistic enterprise culture.

This shift, which has encompassed a change of perception not only of education, but also of the economy and society itself (Maclure 1989, p 155), has not suddenly occurred since 1979, when the Conservatives came to power, but further back to concerns expressed during the Labour government's 'Great Debate', following James Callaghan's Ruskin Speech in 1976, and in the 'Black Papers' from 1969.

Central to this metamorphosis has been a misplaced assumption that the aims of education were generally understood and agreed upon, a premise which implies that there is a fixed consensus

of agreement concerning the aims of society in general. This view posits an optimistic view of society which ignores its dynamic qualities and susceptibility to capriciousness.

It is an assumption too which presumes a general agreement about the nature of knowledge. The prevalence of this assumption is revealed in the fact that the curriculum itself was hardly mentioned in the 1944 Act; it was not until the curriculum was perceived to be deviating from its classic composition and form during the 1970s and 1980s that the state became involved in actions to restore and strengthen its traditional guise. The educational theorists were blamed for this deviation. They were seen as left wing activists who were politicising education for politico-social ends. Interestingly, the Labour party, in government and in opposition, have joined in the condemnation of the perceived curricular excesses and found common cause with the Conservatives in advocating a national curriculum structured along old humanist lines.

In the period since 1944 there has been a radical transformation of society. The whole concept of childhood has undergone a fundamental change, for example, influenced by young people having access to a new consumer power and also being affected by the breakdown of traditional family structures with the consequent risk of loss of security and

stability. This has incurred implications for the socialising role of education. The role of the school as an instrument for teaching moral values has been enhanced with the diminution of the family in modern British society and the decline of the churches. Far from weakening the hold of the state, this social trend has, it could be argued, strengthened it by giving the state unimpeded influence on the moral development of its citizens. This influence has been enhanced, of course, through the central tightening of control over educational content.

British society is now a pluralist, multicultural one and, it could be claimed, consequently less homogeneous than it was forty years ago. In that context the issue of curriculum content is contentious and problematic, a factor to which the ERA makes no concessions. By imposing a curriculum which is traditional, nationalistic and mainly academic, the state is bolstering social hierarchy and promoting a world view among its future citizens which is value-laden and ideologically rigid. The question one has to ponder is whether this has been a deliberate act or is somehow merely incidental or accidental. Lawton (1994) suggests that "an opportunity for modernization was missed" [p 98], but it is tempting to interpret the situation as being more one of conscious avoidance.

The idealism of the post-war era, characterised by a pursuit of

egalitarianism which found expression in radical social legislation enacted by Attlee's government, has been bruised by social and economic challenges as the post-war recovery drive was overtaken by international movements of labour and capital.

The 'real' world has impinged upon the arcadian landscape that the social planners pursued after the election of 1945. The unstable economic climate which has been a feature of British life since the early '70s has ensured that education has been viewed increasingly in instrumental terms. As Maclure says:

"The rhetoric has changed - moved away from a concern with 'the whole person' and 'education for life' to a much more sceptical insistence that education must be useful in some directly marketable way - producing employable skills or nationally-needed expertise or character attributes required by industry or commerce."

(Maclure 1989, p 156)

The Education Reform Act is a piece of legislation which is, as will be seen, founded upon a re-worked ideology of the Right and a concern for economic efficiency. The Act is more concerned with the state than with the individual because it has, at the centre of its agenda, a national curriculum which is meant to restore the traditional values that the right perceived as having been under threat through the years of

social democratic consensus politics following the end of the second world war. It has consigned to the past the spirit of the 1944 Education Act by demolishing its triangular partnership between government, local authority and teachers and imposed instead a new set of direct partnerships between government, educational institutions, parents, commerce and industry. The Act has put the state firmly back in the driving seat. Control has been regained by the state.

Kelly (1990) agrees with this point that education systems "can be used, and have been used to promote particular value systems" (p 25). The Act is the product of a political and ideological confrontation: it is legislation seeking to re-assert the values of the political right after a long period of domination, in education at least, by the progressivist left.

The ERA deals with the following main issues:

1. The National Curriculum and Assessment
2. Open Enrolment
3. Finance and Staff
4. Grant-Maintained Schools
5. Higher and Further Education
6. Finance and Government of Locally-Funded Further and Higher Education
7. Education in Inner London
8. Various Miscellaneous Provisions

Practically all these issues are concerned with exercising greater control over the educational state apparatus. It is an

assertion of central control and authority and a denial of local freedoms and democracy. It is an assertion of democracy from the centre based on the authority in 1987, the year the Bill was introduced, of popular support expressed through a landslide electoral victory in 1983. Having defeated the Argentinians, the miners and the teachers, Thatcherism was riding high in 1987. The government was in a very commanding position to re-form the education system.

One of the most significant features of the ERA is that it deals with the curriculum of schools. As has been mentioned before, the 1944 Act had conspicuously omitted any consideration of curriculum matters relying, instead, on the catch-all dictum of educating pupils according to their "age, aptitude and ability."

The 1944 Act was administrative in emphasis and a central part of the strong egalitarian current produced in the wake of the second world war, part of the process of finally extending the general franchise to all adults. The tripartite partnership between central government, local government and the organised teaching profession, which the Act produced, operated in such a way that there was a diffusion of power over the distribution of resources and the organisation and context of education which ensured that no one partner had a monopoly of control.

The school curriculum was left in the hands of LEAs and their teachers with little direct interference from central government. This enabled the curriculum to be developed during the progressivist years of the 1960s and 1970s with the consequent government backlash. This reaction by government, though, was not simply a knee-jerk reaction against an educational trend, it was part of a wider concern for stability and order, traditional values and economic pride, in a decade that had seen disturbing riots in Toxteth and Tottenham and a debilitating economic malaise which was only just being (temporarily) beaten.

In the immediate post-war years social expectations were high and education was viewed as a means to a higher and more comfortable end in the context of an increasing substantiation of equality of opportunity.

Kelly (1990), speaking of Butler's Act, maintains that:

"This was an Act whose intention was to establish an education system appropriate to the 'brave new world' which was to emerge from the experiences of the Second World War, and which was to reflect those democratic principles that had gained ground during that conflagration, whose stated purpose had been to protect them."

(p 35)

The 1944 Act was a part of the post-war settlement.

"This settlement, based on a high and stable level of employment...created 'a framework within which political equilibrium, economic activity and social improvement would be balanced' (Middlemass, 1986 p341)

(Dale 1989, p 97)

Butler's Act was one of the mainstays of the egalitarian philosophy which pervaded policy-making in anticipation of an allied victory in the war and the fruits of the peace which would follow. It followed in the footsteps of previous legislation which sought to develop a publicly planned and provided education service and in that spirit attracted cross-Party support in Parliament. Central government was cast as the guardian, maker and keeper of the rules, conventions and limits of educational policy making and LEAs and their teachers were trusted to 'put flesh on the bones' of the Act (Dale, 1989 p96). The Thatcher government took the view that LEAs and their teachers had put flesh on the bones which was not to their taste. The decade after Thatcher's assumption of power saw education at local level being increasingly deprived of autonomy and independence, particularly with the strengthening of parent-power through the 1986 Act which altered the composition of school governing bodies and introduced a more perspicacious model of school accountability.

The 1988 Act replaced the philosophy of egalitarianism

"with something which rejects the ideals which lay behind (the 1944) Act - perhaps because of our failure in forty years to attain them - and propounds a very different set of values."

(Kelly 1990, p 51)

ii. Education Re-directed

The ERA sought to re-establish traditional values, as espoused by a Conservative government, particularly by the re-aligned forces of the Right within the Conservative Party which had rapidly gained ascendancy since Thatcher's assumption of the leadership in 1975.

The curriculum was to be "balanced and broadly based" 1(2) promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development not only of pupils but also "of society", an early pointer to a persistent theme of citizenship. This curriculum would prepare pupils for "the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life" (ibid.).

Thus, in its opening statement, the ERA reveals its deeply political character. This is blatant political ideology. The enterprise culture of 'Opportunity Britain', the expectation of emergent responsible citizenry with knowledge and skills ready

to put at the disposal of a nation confident of its future again, is hardly disguised in these words. It could be claimed that not since Crosland's Circular 10/65 requesting LEAs to submit plans for secondary reorganisation on comprehensive lines had such a piece of educational legislature been so nakedly motivated by political intent devoid of pragmatic expediency. However, in 1965, as in 1944, the concern was organisational and, although both these instances concerned social and hierarchical systemization, the Act of 1988 is unsurpassed in English educational history for its ideological impudence

One can argue that this is hardly surprising. 1988 was probably the apogee of Thatcherism. Many political battles had been won, much of the 1979 and 1983 agendas had been realised and a third term had been secured. The ERA was thus conceived with much confidence and expectation of success. This is a factor which accounted for much of the radicalism of the Bill and is an issue will be explored in more detail later.

The National Curriculum is to consist of "knowledge, skills and understanding...which pupils...are expected to have"; "matters, skills and processes which are required to be taught"; and there were to be "arrangements for assessing pupils...for the purpose of ascertaining what they have achieved..." 2(2).

The significance of this definition cannot be overlooked. This, simply put, is centralised control of the curriculum, the certainty of which is ensured by national assessment procedures and the assumption by the Secretary of State of the powers to establish the National Curriculum and "to revise that Curriculum whenever he considers it necessary or expedient to do so" 4(1). This part of the Act created great concern during the passage of the Reform Bill through parliament as will be seen. Its minimalising by the government was a threadbare argument as was later shown by the revision which took place in 1994 which was to stay in place *for a minimum* of five years. This is not to put the case for a static, unreforming curriculum, but the point is made that the control of future curricular reform lies now with government, the state, and not in professional hands. The creation of government quangos to oversee the mechanisms of review and reform of the curriculum should convince few that state control isn't cut and dried.

The ERA aimed to create a 'social market' in education. In a speech to the Adam Smith Institute in April 1991 Norman Lamont, Chancellor of the Exchequer, explained that in health, education, privatisation and competitive tendering within the public sector, the aim was to ensure that:

"the discipline of the marketplace and pressures for improved performance must be brought to bear

on all producers...Experience teaches us that the state is at its best when it is setting standards, for example in literacy or in public health, or in regulating behaviour, such as preventing the abuse of monopoly power."

(reported in 'The Independent' 13.4.91)

Education is thus to be viewed as a 'commodity', the state to act as the arbiter of quality control although the question as to who might regulate the abuse of monopoly power in the case of the government's total control of the education service is unclear.

In order to create this social market in education the notion of a publicly planned and provided education service has to be dismantled. The market:

"is to achieve more effectively, efficiently and equitably all that the Welfare State as the cornerstone of the post-war settlement promised and, it is argued, failed to achieve."

(Dale 1989, p 116)

Tomlinson (1988) makes the point that the market principles upon which so much of the ERA is modelled are not compatible with acceptable approaches towards curriculum planning:

"Education needs to be seen as a commodity to be purchased and consumed. There must be significant differences between goods on offer to make choice apparent. The consumer (the parent for the child) must be assumed to know his or her best interest. Hence different kinds of school need to be created, to replace

free, universal provision and access based on principles of equity."

(p 9)

What Tomlinson seems to fail to grasp is that with a centrally-imposed national curriculum, where its content, assessment and review procedures are all under the total control of government, traditional approaches towards curriculum planning become obsolete.

The discourse throughout the Act employs the vocabulary of the market. Whitty (1989) argues that the state's strength has to be used to remove anything that interferes with the development of the free market,

"Thus...it becomes imperative (at least in the short term) to police the curriculum to ensure that the pervasive collectivist and universalistic welfare ideology of the post-war era is restrained."

(p 331)

The market needs the initial protection of the State in order to create and maintain the conditions under which it can operate effectively. Thus:

"The new settlement is not then premised in the replacement of the State by the market,

but on the essential symbiosis of a small strong State establishing and defending the market that funds it."

(Dale 1989, p 116)

Consequently the powers of the Secretary of State outlined in the ERA are extensive, and the fact remains that throughout the Act the intention to offer choice and diversity is sharply contrasted by a series of orders without options.

Hartnett and Naish (1990) draw attention to the fact that the prominence given to assessment procedures reflect concerns seen in the Revised Code of 1862 and that the subject-based curriculum is practically a restoration of the traditional grammar school curriculum (p 3). Kelly (1989) makes a similar point when he points out that it is political pressures from the right which have caused the ascendancy of traditional subjects and testing programmes rather than theoretical debate which has largely "been ousted" by these pressures (p 223).

The matters dealing with Religious Education and the inclusion of the directive that schools must hold a "collective act of worship" each day were contentiously debated in Parliament, especially in the Lords, as will be seen, and point to further influence from the political right as well as being indicative

of the pervasive influence of the 'Old Humanists' (Williams 1962).

The 'Old Humanist' tradition places education above politics, claiming for it an intrinsic superiority, manifest in a traditional curriculum promoting access to:

"those cultural values implicit in great art, literature and academic pursuits of all kinds, to offer initiation into 'the best that has been thought and said'."

(Kelly 1990, p 34)

That the compulsory act of worship was to be "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character" 7(1) and that the RE syllabus should reflect the fact "that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian" 8(3) apparently ignored years of curriculum development in the field of multicultural education in favour of a more reactionary political insinuation of nationhood. This reflects cultural concerns of the right and this too will need to be examined.

The curtailing of any excessive influence by the educational lobby is promoted by empowering the Secretary of State to appoint the members of the new overseeing bodies, the National Curriculum Council and the School Examinations and Assessment Council. Both bodies are charged with keeping their own areas

under review, advising the Secretary of State and "to carry out such ancillary services as the Secretary of State may direct." 14 (3,4). This centralisation of power caused much concern in both Houses of Parliament, as has already been mentioned, but there was little fear of them not being approved with a three-figure parliamentary majority.

Other measures giving rise to fears of the curtailment of independence are directed at the academic world in the provisions for higher and further education. These are historic in themselves for they threaten to destroy the idea of universities as independent institutions and make them subservient to the State. Academic freedom is now affected by changes to funding procedures:

"...of such a kind as to encourage increased emphasis on those subjects and those areas of teaching which are regarded as being most useful to the economy..."

(Kelly 1990, pp 39-40)

Once again, the funding bodies, the Universities Funding Council and the Polytechnics and Colleges Funding Council, are constituted by members appointed by the Secretary of State. There is to be close scrutiny of the distribution of research grants and, indeed, "if a university or college fails to comply

with the conditions which the Council attaches to any payment, all or some of the money can be reclaimed with interest" (134).

This, then, is to be an era of value for money, of economic efficiency and of accountability. It will be seen later how economic considerations have weighed heavy in their influence upon the development of education in its broadest sense since the mid-70s, but a further influence of change, embedded at the centre of the government's philosophy since 1979 has been the belief in the pre-eminence of the consumer. It is this part of Conservative ideology which has spawned the remainder of the ERA's major reforms and initiatives. The clauses in the Act relating to open enrolment of pupils is a deliberate attempt to increase the power of parents as consumers. Schools were now to admit pupils to the extent of their physical limits. The Conservative's 1980 Education Act had limited admissions if a higher number of pupils would have prejudiced the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources. Now, within the space of a few years, that principle was abandoned in favour of a mechanism based purely on market forces. Quality control was now possible: schools which consumers emptied would have to close.

Ball (1990) claims that:

"At the heart of the (ERA) is an attempt

to establish the basis of an education market. The key provisions of the Act replace the principle of equal access to education for all with the principle of differentiation in the market place."

(p 61)

The elements of this market, he suggests, are choice, competition, diversity, funding and organisation. Ball further suggests that:

"The exact same principle which operated in the first term of the Conservative government with regard to British manufacturing industry will be applied to schools."

(op.cit. p 65)

Thus schools, Ball maintains, are:

"to become businesses, run and managed like businesses with a primary focus on the profit and loss account...The parent is now the customer, the pupils in effect the product."

(op.cit. p 68)

Clearly, the spirit of the 1944 Act has been replaced by:

"something which reflects little more than stark economic manipulation."

(Kelly 1990, p 39)

The requirement for LEAs to submit schemes for the Local Management of Schools, putting control of individual schools' budgets firmly in the hands of the consumer through governing bodies recently re-constituted in favour of parents and the

local community; the establishment of City Technology Colleges, directly financed with the aid of business sponsorship; and the opportunity given for schools to opt out of LEA control and become Grant-Maintained were all moves to destroy the influence of LEAs, particularly inner-city Labour-controlled ones, and re-establish social control which was perceived to have been lost.

Searle (1989) suggests that re-establishing social control was an important theme in the debate leading up to the enactment of the ERA:

"As Foster's Act was designed to head off the successful and growing initiatives of popular education that had come with the Chartists and the emergent trade union and labour movements, so the Baker Act and the national curriculum have an important function in smothering some of the progressive energy that has been flexing itself within British schools in the 1970s and 1980s."

(p 39)

While the Education Reform Bill was in preparation the Government issued discussion documents which attracted 18,000 replies. Haviland (1988) quotes that submitted by the Ealing branch of the Campaign for the Advancement of State Education (CASE) at length. The submission does not mince words. It maintains that the Government had ignored the potential contributions of experience and research, intent on producing a

Bill motivated purely by political dogma. The 'emerging consensus', which Ealing CASE define as the need to ensure that all pupils have equal access to a broad and relevant education using nationally agreed objectives and guidelines, has been replaced by a determination:

"to create a polarised education system in which the national curriculum will deliver 'academic success' in the minority of schools whilst underfunded schools, which will form the majority, will be shackled with a narrowly based, highly controlled and inappropriate curriculum which uses frequent tests to demonstrate to pupils their 'failure'."

(Haviland 1988, p 5)

In line with many other respondents, Ealing CASE draw attention to the fact the the proposals made no mention of multiculturalism, did not address the inequalities of sex or class, and centred on a curriculum with a narrow subject orientation.

iii. Contradictions And Inconsistencies Within The 1988 Act

The 1988 Act changes the whole power structure of the education system. In seeking an ideology upon which the Act is based one is faced with a dilemma because the Act contains contradictions and inconsistencies. It can be seen as a piece of legislation

with a deliberate and preconceived political purpose; as a punitive response to the supposed militancy of the left within the teaching profession and educational world in general; or as a piecemeal amalgam of measures aimed at 'putting the educational house in order.'

Kelly (1990) makes the point that there was no weight of research behind the drafting of the Bill:

"One can think of no other field of human endeavour where it would be regarded as intellectually, or even morally, acceptable to institute such major changes of policy and practice without attempting first to obtain some supporting research data."

(p 69)

Knight (1990), in his detailed analysis of the development of Conservative policy in education in post-war Britain, makes clear though that, in political terms, there had been a long and detailed policy review of education. Knight maintains that from 1975, the year of Margaret Thatcher's assumption of the leadership of the Party, education policy became preservationist in character. During the autumn of 1975 Thatcher launched an educational policy review to develop ideas and formulate proposals for the Party's next election manifesto. This exercise took three years to complete.

The development of the educational debate within the Conservative Party from this time, which Knight describes, offers an explanation for the political character of the ERA. The policy review initially focused on the issues of 'standards' and 'freedom', parental choice and involvement, and:

"the reintroduction of national standards in the 3Rs (which had been abandoned by Labour in 1966); a strengthening of the schools inspectorate to ensure that these standards were made effective in classrooms; greater emphasis on religious education and school discipline; and the discouragement of the practice of using children as guinea-pigs for the purpose of trying out new teaching methods."

(Knight 1990, p 101)

Over the decade from 1975 the Conservative Party's education policy developed in a direction preoccupied with arresting the march of progressivism and reasserting a neo-traditionalism, based not only on a 'return to basics' but also an alliance with the needs of the national economy:

"what has been termed the 'new vocationalism' making schools more responsive to employers' and parental needs by the introduction of curricula concerned with the new technologies and relevance to the world of work."

(op.cit. p 168)

Sir Keith Joseph's call, at the 1984 North of England Education

Conference, for the curriculum to have 'breadth', 'relevance', 'differentiation' and 'balance' marked the starting point of a direct aim on the part of the Government towards shifting the objectives of education more in line with Conservative ideology, with 'standards' and thus, inevitably, with objectives for attainment at the end of stages of learning. In line with employers' demands:

"the examination system would be gradually shifted from an emphasis on relative values to stressing absolute values (from norm-referencing to criterion-referencing)."

(op.cit. p 170)

The call for the raising of standards and a greater affiliation between schooling and the future employment of pupils was one which had been made by Callaghan in 1976. Indeed, there had been a general political consensus regarding education since that time. The break in that consensus was marked by Kenneth Baker's appointment as Secretary of State in 1986. The progressive radicalism of his proposed Bill was perhaps initially revealed by his announcement, at the 1986 Party Conference, of proposed City Technology Colleges:

"It was emphasized that the new colleges...would be completely independent of local authority control, a fact which drew sustained and rapturous applause from Mr.Baker's audience and which apparently 'chilled the blood' of

Philip Merridale, the Conservative leader
on the Council of Local Education Authorities..."

(Chitty 1989, p 201)

Making it clear that the Treasury had approved extra public money to help finance this initiative, Baker maintained that the colleges would "develop enterprise, self-reliance and responsibility, and would broaden parental choice" (ibid.) but it was clearly the blatant introduction of the private sector into the state education system - at the public expense too, and was quickly criticised within the profession as being a bolstering of privilege, a fracturing of the comprehensive system and model which forced a much too early choice of curriculum specialisation for pupils.

Baker, interviewed on television in December of that year, announced that he intended to introduce a major Education Bill in the new year:

"Although there was no intention to 'chill and destroy the inventiveness of teachers', Mr. Baker warned that 'there would have to be more direction from the centre as far as the curriculum was concerned'. The proposed 'national curriculum' should be seen as part of the move towards central control in the interest primarily of the pupils, far too many of whom were at present allowed to be 'aimless and drifting'."

(op.cit. p 203)

The tiles of the 1988 Act's mosaic were gradually being laid in place.

The traditional curriculum provided the model for the Act's national curriculum not because it was deemed appropriate on philosophic or epistemological grounds for what it consists of, which is the basis upon which Conservative intellectuals such as Roger Scruton would argue (Scruton 1984), but rather for what it omits. At the 1984 Party Conference Joseph had called for the depoliticisation of school curricula. He acknowledged "there had been complaints of indiscipline, illiteracy, innumeracy and of bias." (Knight, p 173) The Government would now address these concerns by becoming increasingly interventionist. The scale of the reforms needed would, in a short space of time, result in proposals for major legislative change because, as Knight says:

"If the government's vision of what education should be embraced policies to encourage young people to have an understanding attitude towards the imperatives of work, then it also embraced policies to prevent the erosion of traditional morals and values in state schools."

(ibid.)

Keith Joseph's concern for the depoliticisation of the curriculum is ironic, for the national curriculum introduced by the 1988 Act is highly political not only for what it includes,

but also for what it excludes. Curriculum selection will always be a political activity because it will involve selections based on cultural values, but the 1988 (and the revised 1994) curriculum is a clear espousal of values cherished by the Conservative party.

If the political character of the 1988 Act can be explained with reference to socio-political concerns simmering within the Conservative Party since 1975, then its apparent contradictions and inconsistencies present a more confusing puzzle.

Bash and Coulby (1989) neatly divide these into two groups of inconsistencies, ideological and structural.

Six ideological contradictions are identified by them. Briefly they are:

a) the contradiction of advocating a 'new vocationalism' and yet sanctifying the traditional subjects through a mandatory curriculum which takes little or no account of the needs of new technologies and changing patterns of working life;

b) the contradiction of advocating both freedom, of choice and differentiation for example, and yet severely neutering

curriculum freedom by imposing tight central control in a marked shift "towards epistemological totalitarianism" (p 114);

c) the inconsistency of allowing more devolved decision making at local level, through Local Management of Schools (LMS) and more democratic governing bodies alongside increased central control directly administered by the Secretary of State and his directly appointed handmaidens, the National Curriculum Council and the School Examination and Assessment Council;

d) the inconsistency of government advocacy of Britain as a nation in the international marketplace and a national curriculum whose "terms of reference and aspirations are not those of a pluralist society but of competitiveness within the frame of a narrowly conceived nationalism (p 117)";

e) the contradiction explicit in the approaches towards children with special educational needs in the 1981 and 1988 Acts;

and

f) the contradiction between populist capitalism, espoused in the rhetoric of freedom, and the encroaching state power that this masks. Attractive offers such as easy access to shares in

previously nationalised industries are "used to conceal the practice of privilege and the radical redistribution of wealth and power away from the working class" (p 120); giving the parent-consumer the right to opt a school out of local authority control only adds to centralised influence as grant-maintained schools rely directly on government for funding.

Structural contradictions derive from the fact that Britain is not a homogeneous entity in either cultural or structural terms:

"Not only is British society riven by deep divisions of class, race and gender, it is also characterised by a state apparatus that is frequently at odds with the demands of capital, despite the supposed identity of interests."

(op.cit. p 124)

Bash and Coulby identify several contradictions emanating from this hypothesis, four of which are:

a) the fact that schools and houses are spatially fixed: thus consumer choice is tied to residential privilege and can only be exploited by parents who have economic means to do so;

b) consumer choice is at odds with educational efficiency.

Threats of closure or amalgamation of schools by a local educational authority would probably result in schools choosing to opt-out and thus LEA rationalisation plans would be put in jeopardy;

c) social cohesion is always threatened by the operation of the market because individuals have different desires and operate within the context of an unequal distribution of resources (buying power); market tensions therefore threaten law and order, a traditional priority of Conservative governments;

and d) social control, which Bash and Coulby cite as the underlying rationale of the 1988 Act, is juxtaposed against corporate freedom. Government support for private development and sponsorship, they suggest, should be judged against the "backcloth of government disengagement from welfare" (p 130). Encouraging industry to sponsor City Technology Colleges is problematic on several counts, not least of which is the simple fact that businesses are not philanthropic enterprises but structures to generate profit for their shareholders. Bash and Coulby suggest that CTCs, if sponsored by industry, must provide something in return. What this return might be is unclear as yet, they suggest, but undoubtedly CTCs will provide

schooling for a "potential elite" while other schools in the area:

"compete, in a market distorted by the presence of the CTC, for customers and funds in order to operate the national curriculum effectively."

(op.cit. p 130)

Bash and Coulby view the ERA as a blatant instrument of social control. Lawton (1989), like many other commentators, agrees with this. In his view, the national curriculum is a "crude framework for the testing programme", part of a system of accountability and control (p 38).

Lawton adds weight to the view that the Act is [more] concerned with political, [rather] than educational, ends. He criticises the Act on the grounds that it is 'bureaucratic', impervious to raising the quality of the teaching and learning experience; that it proposes an 'obsolete' curriculum structure; that it is concerned with market forces rather than curriculum planning (a point which Kelly (1990) makes strongly); that teachers are not seen as partners in the educative process but merely as 'routine workers'; that the national curriculum does not apply to the independent sector, therefore "reinforcing the suspicion that it is a device for accountability and the control of teachers"; and that the Act has a technicist attitude to the

curriculum where time and syllabuses are more important than good teachers (Lawton 1989, p 30).

What is presented in the ERA is, in Lawton's view, an "anti-scurvy curriculum" (op.cit. p 32), a list of ingredients thought good for consumption by the masses. Research and development undertaken by psychologists, philosophers and sociologists in the past forty years has been ignored (pp 30-33).

There is another implicit contradiction here for, as has been described earlier, if Thatcherism stands for anything it stands for individualism: to ignore the needs of differing individuals in their psychological, philosophical and sociological settings by imposing a rigid, narrow, subject-orientated educational experience upon them in their formative childhood is to anathematize the celebration of the individual.

In trying to understand more fully the intentions of the ERA, to gauge the expectations of those who fostered the Bill and the fears and reservations of those who opposed it, it may be illuminating to consider the political debate which ensued during its passage through Parliament.

b.) The Education Reform Bill Before Parliament

The Education Reform Bill took approximately nine months to become law. Its passage through the stages of parliamentary scrutiny was, in fact, curtailed by using the guillotine device to shorten debate and ensure that the Bill became law before the summer recess of 1988. Jack Straw, the Opposition spokesman on Education referred to the fact that Rab Butler had steered the 1944 Act through two previous years of careful and, in many cases, heated debate; indeed, so strongly did the Opposition feel about the proposed timespan for consideration of the Bill that they ensured that a 'Consultation Debate' prefaced the Bill's Second Reading in an attempt to secure a increased allocation of time but the motion was lost because of the size of the government's majority in the Commons.

Although the 1987 Bill was the culmination, in part, of concerns about education which had been voiced for more than a decade, there were major differences between this Bill and the one which Rab Butler introduced in December 1943. The difference centres on the consensual agreement of aims and objectives which Butler had worked hard to secure beforehand by careful consultation with the churches and in the welcome reception given to his White Paper the previous summer. Butler listened carefully to criticisms and astutely modified his

Paper so that the Education Bill would have a successful passage through its parliamentary stages.

Baker's Bill was not so carefully prepared, and nor did it have to be with such a large party majority in the Commons. The government knew that many of its measures, such as the abolition of the ILEA (which was a measure included quite suddenly during the parliamentary stages), would not receive cross-party support. Scrutiny of the debate on the Bill reveals a government giving only token consideration to valid criticisms. Straw's contribution to the debate, as education spokesman, was impressive but proved a predictable and impotent exercise. There was a general agreement about the need for a national curriculum, though the nature and character of that curriculum provoked heated argument. For the first time, though, the curriculum was actually given detailed consideration by parliament and the contributions from members on that subject reveal much about attitudes of both right and left. From that point of view alone the debate is worth detailed study.

By far the most significant area of concern for this thesis is the doubts and cautions, if not alarm, felt and expressed about the radical shift of power and authority given to central government. Butler's partnership between central and local

government and the education profession is shattered by Baker's proposals. Here, the debate revealed inconsistencies of thought and hedging on the part of members. The desire to see a curtailment of politically-motivated extremism is tempered by a concern that too much control in the hands of government could lead to tyranny of a different sort.

Reading the whole parliamentary debate one is left with the impression that the Bill was pushed through its stages, that even though there was a general consensus on major issues, such as a National Curriculum and some form of local financial delegation, scant regard was paid to the points raised by the opposition parties.

Politically the government was in a strong position during the time the Bill was being debated. It had set the political agenda throughout the 1980s, especially since its second term of office, and the opposition was weak, the Labour Party because of its internal strife and the Liberals and SDP because of the disintegration of their alliance after the 1987 election.

The democratic credentials of the 1988 Act are beyond the scope of this study, for that would involve an intricate analysis of the very nature of the British political system, but the point

needs to be made that the Act, controversial, reflective of narrow party ideology and, in part, hastily conceived, changed the whole structure of the English education system irredeemably. Undeniably, it is an example of political will stamping its wishes on the institutional mechanisms of the education process. The deliberations in parliament during 1987 and 1988 represent the very heart of the process of interaction between politics and education which is problematic, contentious and philosophically challenging.

Ashford (1981) makes the point that policymaking in British politics is very much the concern of the political elite, in the form of the Cabinet:

"Adversarial confrontation within Parliament is not meant to improve policymaking but to bait the ruling party and if possible to embarrass ministers."

(p 277)

The debate on the Bill exemplifies this point well.

In studying the debate which took place in both Houses between November 1987 and July 1988 it is important to remind oneself that the parliamentary process is, by definition, a political one; that the great debating chamber which is the House of Commons is a place where politicians make or break their

careers; and that both Houses, the Commons in particular, are arenas of theatre with an audience of fellow Members, journalists and, through the media (radio at the time) and public galleries, the general public.

Reading '*Hansard*' is, indeed, the experience of reading the script of a play. It is in places passionate, amusing, entertaining and for the most part interesting. The Members who contributed to the debate on the Bill were highly-informed, although most stuck firmly to their political colours, and many of them were ex-teachers.

The purpose of studying the debate is to attempt to glean further insight into the ideological currents which were to sweep the Bill onto the Statute Book and to examine the arguments of the Government and Opposition (the two main Opposition Parties were mainly united in their points) in the hope that the rationale behind the Bill, and therefore of the Government's wider policy and intentions, can be more clearly revealed. Governments and individual spokespersons can issue prepared statements, White and Green Papers, books outlining their own political philosophy, but open debate can often illuminate an individual's true nature more brightly, although one must be aware at all times that some seasoned politicians can mount a display of dazzling footwork even in the most

passionate moments of a debate. Study must peer behind the rhetoric and identify the true heart of the ensuing discourse.

i) The Commons' Debate

The first fact that can clearly be identified is that the Government are apparently unconcerned about achieving any form of consensus, which, it has been noted, had been one of the hallmarks of Butler's Act.

Jack Straw, opening the Consultation Debate on the 26th October 1987, said that the Government were proposing:

"The greatest and least considered upheaval of the education system that this country has ever seen."

1425/81

(all such references relate to 'Hansard')

He continued by pointing out that the proposals on the national curriculum had been published on the 24th July when the House was finishing for the summer recess and when schools and other educational institutions had closed down for the holidays. Paddy Ashdown, soon to become leader of the Liberal Democrats, echoed this later when he said:

"We have had a single-handed attempt to re-write

education over the brief months of the summer holiday when most are away."

1425/93

The Opposition parties expressed much anger and frustration over the proposed timescale for debate, further exacerbated when Straw reminded the House that Baker had said at his Party's Conference the previous month:

"I do not intend to delay implementing our policies. I have no intention of changing our manifesto commitments."

1425/84

So much for parliamentary democracy, legislative scrutiny and open debate. The government's presentation was an arrogant one and, with its majority, it could allow itself to be sure of victory. When the initial skirmishes had subsided the debate revealed the extent to which the government were operating from an ideological position which had been assembled, albeit incrementally, since 1975 and which has already been outlined. The writing had been publicly on the wall for a long period of time and, no doubt, the quality of opposition in the debate from Straw and others, probably owed much to a cognizance of the government line.

Baker began his defence of the government's actions by pointing out that many of the concerns being dealt with in the Bill were

ones which had the support of all the major political parties and, indeed, had been initially voiced by the last Labour Prime Minister in 1976. He claimed that the government

"were responding to the concerns and worry of parents about standards";

1425/87

that the proposals for financial delegation built on the "best practices of a number of local authorities"; that open enrolment:

"puts right a basic injustice of parents denied their choice of school where places exist and are unused";

(ibid.)

and that Grant-Maintained Schools would

"restore diversity to our state system."

1425/88

'Standards', 'choice' and 'diversity'. In his concluding remarks before commending the Bill to the Commons at the end of its third and final reading, Baker maintained that these were what the Bill stood for, along with 'freedom'. The Bill represents, then, a manifestation of classic Thatcherism and further underlines the fact that, unlike any Education bill before it, it is not merely concerned with administrative and structural matters, it is dealing with root and branch reform

from a clear ideological standpoint.

Two contributors to the Consultation Debate were anxious to proceed to detailed consideration of the National Curriculum and their points illustrated the breadth of the spectrum of ideological viewpoints which would surface in the main debates to follow. The Conservative member, Timothy Raison, argued that:

"It would be sad if the state education system is forced to remove classics from the curriculum ... (the Secretary of State) should clearly say that one of the most crucial objectives in our education system is the transmission of the great things in our culture and civilisation from one generation to the next."

1425/104

Whereas Hilary Armstrong, a Labour backbencher, maintained that:

"Process is as important in education as content... unless the process and the content go together, the content will never be put across. That is the tragedy. The Secretary of State seems to have no understanding of that."

1425/105

These two early contributions do indeed expose the polarities of the educational argument. The right is keen to see the restoration of the product-based, hierarchical humanist curriculum, the left is concerned with the liberating process of education.

This curriculum debate was a novelty. There had been ^{little} debate on the curriculum leading to the 1944 Act, and ^{only once} was the curriculum mentioned within it. The debate on the Bill that became the ERA however, produced cogent arguments on a wide variety of curriculum issues. The fact that the ERA is a reactionary piece of legislation, re-orientating the mainstream back to traditional values and away from progressivism owes more to the government of the day having a large parliamentary majority rather than to any unanimity of aims and objectives within the Palace of Westminster. But the contributions themselves expose cultural and political themes both universal and, with regard to religion, particularly English.

The Bill itself was presented on the 20th November 1987 and the second reading was inaugurated on the first of December.

Baker, in his opening statement, made the point that the education system had operated over the past forty years on the basis of the framework of the 1944 Act but that it was now

necessary to "inject a new vitality into that system." He then introduces the terms "producer" and "consumer". Throughout his arguments Baker claims that his Party, the Conservatives, are the Party of the consumer, that is the parents, and the Labour Party are the party representing the interests of the producers, by which he means teachers, and by inference, their unions.

The inference here is that the schooling system has acted as a divider and not a unifier in the social fabric. In other words, there has been dissent and the ever-present threat of anarchy and revolt. It will be necessary then for government to reassert that role of the school which is concerned with imbuing within future citizens a feeling of loyalty and, more specifically, conformity. There will have to be 'Republican Morality', its equivalent, that is, within the classroom. Shakespeare, like Homer, will have to be reinforced. All this was to come.

There is no post-war consensus, no common agreement about the pursuit of a 'New Jerusalem' as there had been in 1944, and although the implementation of Butler's Act was initially enacted by a government with a landslide majority, its period in office followed a period of national struggle which had involved a unity of purpose manifest in a cross-class cohesion.

Now the scenario was different. There had been a widening of the polarity between left and right, there had been crippling strikes and public rioting. These measures derived not from a general consensus but from a need to impose order and sure control.

The system, Baker claims:

"Has become producer-dominated. It has not proved sensitive to the demands for change that have become ever more urgent over the past ten years."

1430/771

Clearly Baker is referring to the demands of commerce and industry for he then goes on to say that the consumers of education must be given a more prominent role in decision-making in order that schools and colleges can:

"deliver the standards that parents and employers want."

1430/772

Thus the purpose of the Bill is:

"to secure delegation and to widen choice."

(ibid.)

The vocabulary of the market place is thus legitimised and Ball's picture of schools as businesses, referred to earlier,

is exemplified.

The role of the school as a service to the state, rather than the individual, is clearly given prominence. The needs of the individual are set in the context of the demands of the state. Future citizens must achieve greater educational standards to meet the needs of the (troubled) economy; there must be a greater element of social training, through religion and a heightened understanding and appreciation of the country's heroic virtues, to create a stronger sense of national order and complicity.

It would be naive to criticise these intentions if they were accompanied by parallel concerns for the individual. The argument is simply that there is no manifestation in the Bill of a desire to see happy, fulfilled and satisfied citizens of the state emerging into this ordered and calm society. The agenda is corporatist and economic and insensitive to the condition of the individual.

In a somewhat defensive tone Baker acknowledges that many may be concerned about the amount of power given to the holder of his office but he "deplores" the idea that Secretaries of State could write or alter the National Curriculum "at his will or whim." This is overcome by a clause, he reassures the House,

which provides that the National Curriculum Council must first study any new proposals - a weak argument indeed considering how subservient the Council is to the Secretary of State, a point which has already been made. Needless to say this clause did not find its way into the ERA. In the Act itself the Secretary of State has the power to "establish" a National Curriculum and to "revise that Curriculum whenever he considers it necessary or expedient to do so." (4,i,ii)

The proposals to allow schools to opt-out of local authority control are to be welcomed, Baker maintains, because:

"For the first time in eighty years [LEAs] will face competition in the provision of free education..."

1430/778

Then follows a classic piece of Lilliputian logic:

"...so standards will rise in all schools as we introduce a competitive spirit into the provision of education..."

(ibid.)

And the 'coup de grace':

"...and at no extra cost to the consumer."

(ibid.)

This may make amusing reading in Hansard but the point being made by Baker represents a serious declamation of values related directly to economy, efficiency and value for money.

It could be easily argued that this concern had been an ever-present one throughout the 1970s and 1980s, but the proposal to enact legislation which would break the monopoly of power and responsibility of the LEAs within the state system was new, although many had seen the writing on the wall during Keith Joseph's tenure of Baker's office when educational vouchers had been considered.

Paddy Ashdown warned that the Bill is:

"designed to destroy local government by sucking out its power and drawing all that power into the centre."

1430/805

Whereas Edward Heath, the former Prime Minister, had been more specific:

"We are going through the whole of this process because of the madness of Brent, Harringey and two or three others out of more than a hundred education authorities. That is what it is all about."

1430/794

Of all the measures engendered by the Act, it would be this one, the dismantling of the Butler partnership, which would so blatantly assemble power and control at the feet of the Secretary of State. This clause would effectively assassinate

local democracy in education and transform the system into an economic enterprise.

The Opposition arguments centred on the fact that the Bill was, in their eyes, divisive and conducive to the growth of a two-tier system in view of the opt-out provisions. It was 'selection by the back door', the promotion of a state system which bolstered privilege.

The Government argued that the Bill ensured less control and not more through greater choice and local decision-making.

It was left to Norman Tebbit to steer the argument back to the market place and more partisan interests:

"We shall hear nothing from the official Opposition about the interests of the consumer and everything about the interests of the producer."

1430/808

After over two hundred hours of debate in Committee the House debated the Bill again on the 23rd March 1988, prior to its third and final reading, under a guillotine timetable. Three clauses were debated in particular which deserve attention with respect to throwing light on political philosophy and

intention. These referred to the National Curriculum not being applicable to the private sector; the position of religious education within the curriculum; and academic tenure and freedom.

Derek Fatchett, for the Opposition, opened the debate and criticised the Government's argument which had been made earlier that the National Curriculum could not operate in the private sector because private schools were subject to the ultimate sanction of the market place. If, Fatchett maintained, one of education's purposes was the transmission of shared cultural values, the philosophy of the market place and the National Curriculum diverge:

"because one cannot at the same time - because it is inconsistent - give absolute freedom to the market place because the market place may operate in divergence, in conflict, with the values of the education system and the culture that one is trying to transmit from generation to generation."

1443/370

Many commentators, as will be shown, have taken up this glaring inconsistency, namely that a prescriptive and mandatory National Curriculum is at odds with a free market philosophy.

Fatchett's explanation was blunt:

"There is a simple explanation of why the

private sector will not be covered by the National Curriculum - because the Government believe in privilege."

1443/372

Timothy Raison was baited by this allegation:

"Fundamentally, the answer has to do with who provides those [independent] schools. The schools in the state sector...are provided by the state and by the local authorities. The schools in the independent sector are provided by other people. In a nutshell that expresses the essence of the argument...Indeed, independence is the essence of that sector."

1443/372,373

Frequent interventions by Conservative backbenchers mark the strength of feeling of many members of that Party who were intent on preserving the independence of the private sector. Raison's argument that the private sector is untouchable because of its independent funding is attacked on the grounds that section 71 of the 1944 Act empowers the Secretary of State with powers of supervision and control over the curricular activities of private schools. This point was not convincingly shielded by the Government.

Paddy Ashdown claimed, quite logically, that the Government were introducing not a 'national' curriculum applicable to the

whole of the nation's schools but a 'state' curriculum which would perpetuate hierarchical divisions in society. Contradictions in the logic of the Government's philosophy were again cited:

"...at the very centre of the Government's arguments on the Bill is that they are seeking to give independence and freedom to schools and to parents. Nowhere in the Bill is this more nakedly revealed as a fraud than in the fact that the Government will not give parents in the maintained sector the right and the freedom which are being given to parents in the independent sector."

1430/378

There was much concern at the proposed status of Religious Education within the Bill. It could be argued that this strength of feeling derived from two sources.

Firstly, concern over the position of Religious Education (and a collective act of worship) represents a defensive, rear-guard action concerned with the preservation of national culture. Twenty five years previously Williams (1962) had pointed out that:

"Our whole way of life, from the shape of our communities to the organisation and content of education, and from the structure of the family to the status of art and entertainment, is being profoundly affected by the progress

and interaction of democracy and industry, and by the extension of communications."

(p 12)

Members from the cultural right (it would be false to claim that the argument was a straight split down the *political* divide) linked the inclusion of RE and daily acts of collective worship with the maintenance of discipline, Sir Rhodes Boyson going so far as to advocate the somewhat eccentric notion of playground assemblies with umbrellas in situations where a school hall could not accommodate the whole school together; and members from the cultural left drawing attention to the fact that in multi-faith Britain it was important for children to understand the major tenets of the world's principle religious faiths.

Secondly, the Church is still one of the strongest pillars of the State. Its influence on government is still strong and its contingent in the House of Lords gives it a permanent influence over the executive's policymaking process. Butler had trodden a very delicate but successful path in his dealings with the Churches in the mid-1940s and now Baker announced that he had reached "a new settlement" with the Churches. He announced to the Commons that:

"The Churches wish local discretion to be retained.
I acknowledge their desire for even greater emphasis

to be placed on religious education alongside our National Curriculum proposals. We have therefore agreed to amend Clause 2 to ensure that RE is statutorily identified as part of the basic curriculum to be provided for all pupils by all maintained schools and that it takes its place before the core and foundation subjects."

1443/422

This was one of the sections of the Bill which achieved a general measure of support across the House. The debate itself illustrated well the intricate relationship between curriculum and culture and the importance of religion in British culture. As Howarth (1985) points out:

"There is a deep-seated tendency in Britain to confuse morality and religion."

(p 78)

Ascribing the root cause of an apparent decline of moral standards to the diminishing influence of the churches, and in the flouting of the 1944 Act's clause on daily religious worship in schools, was to ignore a myriad of other contributing factors, many of them government-led, which could have been cited by more objective and fair-minded critics. This is an issue which will be addressed in more detail later.

The third issue which caused much concern was that of academic freedom. This appeared to be threatened by the Bill's proposals on the funding of higher education which, again,

seemed dependent upon the whim of the Secretary of State through the new funding bodies that were being proposed. Paddy Ashdown claimed that interference with academic freedom had always been "the first act of a tyrannical and despotic state" and continued:

"It is a fundamental freedom and human right that lies at the heart of our democracy. It is important that academics should have the right to study what they want to study according to their own curiosity, not to government diktat, and to say what they believe to be the truth. That is fundamental to the nature of our society."

1443/591

Baker answered this charge with an assertion that the Bill protected academic freedom because it proposed establishing proper appeals procedures for an academic who feels "that he is victimised and that he will be dismissed because his views are unpopular". Academic freedom was about "protecting academics from other academics", he maintained - an argument that Sir Ian Gilmour called "wafer-thin" and Ashdown termed "threadbare." The matter was not resolved and it was hoped that the issue would receive much more attention in the Lords.

Baker introduced the third reading by proclaiming that the Government are:

"for choice, freedom, variety, diversity; pushing

individual responsibility to its limits. The Opposition are for planning, allocation and decision-making on behalf of parents."

1443/801

This was true. The Opposition had suggested throughout the previous debate that there was no evidence to support the fact that parents actually wanted to be intricately involved in the managerial decision-making within schools and colleges. However, the Government were determined to argue their case enlisting the apparent support of parents wherever they saw the opportunity to do so, even though - as had been pointed out to them - bodies such as the National Confederation of Parent-Teacher Associations and the Campaign for the Advancement of State Education had registered their opposition to the Bill's proposals.

It was a matter, Baker continued, of ideological conviction that the Government knew that the Bill's proposals would move the education system forward:

"Competition for custom, for pupils, is the best self-regulating mechanism for higher standards all around. Those who foresee a divide opening up between successful and 'sink' schools ignore the dynamic nature of competition."

(ibid.)

This analogy with an economic market was scathingly attacked by

Straw as "free market nonsense". Ashdown was more succinct:

"The secret aims of the Bill are to diminish the power of local government, to centralise the power over education in the hands of the Secretary of State and to reinforce privilege in our education system."

1443/811.

Out of 2004 amendments moved, only 113 concessions were made by the Government. The Bill was passed and moved to the Lords for their consideration where it was presented on the 11th April 1988.

ii.) The Lords' Debate

The debate on the Bill in the House of Lords, which began on the 18th April, presents itself as an impressive piece of scrutiny of proposals submitted by the lower House. Hansard reveals a different character of debate concentrating very much on broad ideology and less on political rough and tumble.

Baroness Hooper opened the debate with a refreshing reference to the value of education in developing the individual as well as servicing the needs of society. Straining at the leash of her concern for the individual however is an animal whose

collar is firmly labelled 'National Economic Prosperity':

"It is becoming increasingly clear that, both as a trading nation and as a society of individuals, we need to improve the standards achieved in our schools."

1211

It was the Government's intention, she announced, to ensure that schools and teachers could exercise their full professional responsibility "within and supported by a framework of agreed national objectives." That meant:

"Removing unnecessary shackles...while maintaining a framework with national currency."

(ibid.)

The supposed alliance with parents, the consumers, is enlisted again:

"There is a welcome and growing realisation even among teacher unions that they must work with the grain of public concern rather than opposing reform."

1212

The subject-based National Curriculum is needed because individuals need to make sense of themselves and the society in

which they live. Thus:

"the curriculum must give an important place to the liberal subjects..."

(ibid.)

Much later in the debate, when individual amendments were being tabled, much was made of the fact that integrated approaches to the curriculum were in danger of being made obsolete by the pressures which the National Curriculum would exert on the timetables of schools. Particular concern was expressed for areas of the curriculum which had been developed over the last twenty years in response to societal changes such as health education, business studies, European languages and integrated and global approaches towards the humanities. It was pointed out repeatedly, as it had been in the Commons, that the curriculum being proposed was one more suited to the nineteenth century than the twenty first.

Hooper concluded by echoing the point made by Baker in the Commons that local authorities needed to become more competitive in order to improve their efficiency. The provisions for establishing City Technology Colleges were a response to this need along with Grant-Maintained Schools.

Baroness David, replying for the Opposition, echoed Paddy

Ashdown by claiming that the hidden aims of the Government were to centralise power. She doubted the democratic credentials of a Bill which sought to extend powers downwards to parents and governors and away from elected local authorities:

"The solution of education problems is not the primary aim of this legislation; that aim is political. With the array of appointments that the Secretary of State can make, and can approve or disapprove, the Conservatives are going to be in untrammelled control."

1223

The Fisher and Butler Acts, she continued, were consensus measures. This was a "shoddy attempt" to impose measures which commanded no universal agreement among interested parties.

Baroness Blackstone, an academic with strong credentials for speaking for the education lobby, called the Bill "a piece of social engineering based on the ideology of the market place". She claimed that the Bill would wreck much of what the Butler Act had achieved:

"by destroying his carefully constructed partnership between central and local government, by selling parents a phoney, cut-out version of choice and by reconstructing many of the inequalities in education provision which people in all parties have worked so hard to remove since 1944."

1242

There was a long debate on the Bill's proposals concerning academic freedom, eloquently defined by Lord Swann as:

"Independent enquiry and the pursuit of truth, wherever that may lead and in whatever area of knowledge."

1247

Agreement was forthcoming about the desirability of ending automatic security of tenure but peers were concerned that academic freedom was closely related to this. Lord Jenkins proposed an amendment which broke the impasse by re-defining 'academic freedom' in a way which did not contravene the Government's intention and yet satisfied the anxieties of the academic lobby:

"To ensure that academic staff have freedom within the law to question and test received wisdom, and put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, without placing themselves in jeopardy of losing their jobs or privileges they may have..."

(Section 202(2)(a))

The Committee Stage of the Lords' consideration of the Bill was very contentious indeed over the issue of RE and collective acts of worship. Controversy centred on the nature of both rather than their inclusion. The perceived status of the Christian religion was at the heart of the matter. Attempts by some Opposition peers to demonstrate a greater acknowledgement

in the Bill of Britain's multi-cultural and multi-faith nature were all defeated and, although it would not be true to say that there was evidence of any deliberate racism within the speeches made by any peer, there was a substantial defence made of traditional values and a desire for a strong element of indigenous nationalism within the proposed curriculum by a large number of peers of all the major political colours.

This topic was further debated in the Report Stage of the Bill and an extra day had to be found in order to accommodate the number of peers who wished to contribute to this particular part of the debate.

It was in the sections dealing with RE and the collective act of worship, in addition to the amendment concerning academic freedom, that the Lords made its influence most greatly felt on the ERA. The specification that both RE and the collective act of worship should be mainly of a Christian character was included at the insistence of the Lords.

This religious thread is the element that distinguishes English education from so many of its foreign counterparts. The ancestry is clear enough: the position of the Established Church in the model of the executive power structure of the nation and the voluntary legacy of schooling provision have

given religion a peculiar, though historically logical, position in educational matters. More than that, recalling Howard's words quoted above, religion is still associated intimately with the educative process because of the casual inter-mixing of concepts, religion and morality, and the indisputable fact that education is about moral values. This is a theme to which this thesis will return.

The Bill was returned to the Commons with amendments and returned quickly on the 27th July, receiving the Royal Assent two days later.

The educational debate which took place in both Houses of Parliament between November 1987 and July 1988 was long and thorough and exposed a number of arguments and concerns which had been in existence for much longer. Some concerns were still in metamorphosis and muddled, others were clear cut divisions between classic socio-political positions. The ERA does represent the culmination of a long period of transition from a devolutionary partnership model characterised by innovation and creativity to a centralised system 'policed' by national assessment procedures. This was not a novel phenomenon.

The emergent Act was based on the clear-cut and indissoluble

ideology of the right and, although it was opposed by virtually the whole educational establishment, it undoubtedly expressed common cause with traditionalists whose view of knowledge, as discrete, examinable and eternal is the antithesis of those who hold the view that knowledge is something of a far more problematic nature.

It is to this dilemma that this thesis must finally turn. In doing so, the canvas must be enlarged and the context broadened; for to understand a political relationship, in this instance that between education and the state, the epochal position must be plotted. By this is meant the following: is this reaffirmation of 'the traditional' the beginning, continuation or ending of a period? Is this restoration of Victorian values a moribund defiance of progressivism or a stubborn reincarnation of an inherent national conservatism?

Summary

The 1988 Education Act was the culmination of a process of re-orientation within the education system which had been anticipated by several key moments such as Callaghan's 1976 Ruskin Speech and Keith Joseph's 1984 North of England Conference speech. Although the Act was the product of virtually no educational research, it was the apotheosis of cumulative years of political thinking concerned with education. The Act is founded on a re-worked ideology of the right; it promotes a certain value system which, in simple terms, can be considered as being neo-traditionalist.

There had been a common assumption that the aims of education were known and agreed upon and that basically education was an *apolitical* process. The naivety of this notion was exposed as the widening gap between left and right occurred, following the gradually dismantling of Butskellism through the 1970s.

The bi-partisan consensus on educational direction had also masked the irreconciled debate about the nature of knowledge itself. Although 'old humanism' still pervaded the school curriculum, there were those who were forcefully advocating other models which reflected a concern for individualist and

egalitarian issues, as well as those who were concerned for more industrial, technical and economic relevance.

The transformation of society since 1944 - the growth of demographic pluralism, an increasingly technological society, and the advent of the 'nuclear family' - characterised a nation with shifting values in the drift to postmodernism (see Chapter 6). The Thatcher administration sought to arrest this development with key pieces of social legislation, of which the ERA is one.

The Act re-asserts control over the education system. It is an example of Thatcherite authoritarianism, where the power of the state is maximised in order to offer, in theory, the opportunity of freedom to individuals. The dictum that some will be enabled to take more freedom than others is ignored and thus the concept of equal opportunities is diminished.

Keith Joseph had called for the National Curriculum to be 'balanced and broadly based' in 1984, but the outcome was a curriculum which was contained within narrow and shallow confines. Education was viewed as a commodity, with parents as customers and pupils as products, and the role of the state was to be that of arbiter of quality control. The state, then, seized the initiative and took the power into its own hands to

a greater extent than ever before, perhaps since the days of 'payment by results' more than a century before.

The argument that all this was incompatible with acceptable approaches towards curriculum planning was negated as such previous approaches were now rendered obsolete. In the process of achieving this, of course, the influence of the (leftist) professionals was successfully diminished.

Further control was effected through the establishment of unelected, and therefore totally undemocratic, quangos such as the NCC, SEAC and the two higher education funding bodies. The introduction of LMS further enhanced the power of the centre by withdrawing the financial power of the LEAs. Social control was enhanced by the smothering of progressivism through the totality of these measures.

Inconsistencies within the Act are evident in that there are contradictions between a concern for vocational requirements and a curriculum which is so traditionally-centred; a concern for freedom of choice is juxtaposed against measures which enhance central control; devolved decision-making is offset by the establishment of non-elected quangos; a concern for the position of the country as an international trader is not served by a curriculum which is narrowly centred on Great

Britain; the 1981 and 1988 approaches to special educational needs issues are inconsistent; and issues of populist capitalism depart from a trend towards an increasing encroachment of state power.

The ERA offers a common, national curriculum for a nation which is more than a unitary conglomeration of people. The new mandatory curriculum pays scant regard to the new cosmopolitan, pluralist character of the British population. It re-affirms an in-built prejudice in favour of the (white) middle class through its promotion of a curriculum which is still centred on high-status knowledge. It is, in every sense of Lawton's highly descriptive phrase, an "anti-scurvy" curriculum (q.v.).

The 1987/8 Bill was not as carefully crafted as Butler's had been in 1944. Kenneth Baker had not done his homework as thoroughly as Butler had done, but Baker's presentation of the Government's case was deftly handled and his presentational skills were beyond question. Jack Straw had mastered the *educational* argument and his opposition to many, if not most, of the clauses in the Bill was intelligent and well delivered.

Many issues which found their way into the Act were introduced at a late stage into the debate on the Bill (the abolition of the Inner London Education Authority, for example) and the parliamentary guillotine on debating time was freely used.

The need for the introduction of a National Curriculum was the one issue which commanded support from all sections of both Houses, but there was no consensus on the type of curriculum this should be. The importance, historically speaking, of this debate was the fact that, for the first time, the nature of curriculum content was thoroughly debated in Parliament by politicians.

The government, of course, was not concerned with consensus (an agreed objective in 1944) and with a large parliamentary majority it need not have been.

Baker's claim that the government's aim was to secure popular reform by introducing measures to promote better standards in school, and more choice and diversity for parents, was a shallow camouflage for ideologically-motivated measures designed to curb the influence of the left and re-orient education along traditional lines once again.

The polarities of the educational debate, which had been

gathering pace for the past twenty years, are clearly on display during the debate. The Government are intent upon both debunking the progressive developments in education since the 1960s and breaking the partnership established in 1944 between government, local authority and teacher unions.

The issues of contention, in both Houses, were:

- the centralising of power
- the maintenance of the religious dimension
- and - the perceived threat to academic freedom in higher education.

The debate in the Lords was better, in qualitative terms, for it addressed in greater detail these three concerns; indeed, forcing many amendments to be enacted concerned with the religious issue. In addition, the issue of the retention of a traditionalist curriculum of discrete subjects was vigorously dealt with in the Lords, many considering such a model to be obsolete.

In their enthusiasm for the promotion of an education market, many on the Government benches had obviously overlooked Keith Joseph's call, in 1984, for the curriculum to be *relevant*. The debate in Parliament on the Education Reform Bill, just a dozen

or so years away from the millennium, could be called vigorous and detailed. But it certainly wasn't forward-looking.

6. THE EROSION OF CERTAINTY

a) Dealing In Anachronisms

As the millenium rapidly approaches one is drawn towards a qualitative analysis of the twentieth century. Impressive images of scientific and technological achievement - the eradication of many diseases and infections, Armstrong stepping onto the surface of the Moon, radio and television transmission - juxtapose themselves besides The Somme, Auschwitz and Hiroshima.

The pace of invention and discovery has been frantic and this has been matched by the development of ideas. There have been positives and negatives here too of course. The proliferation of aesthetic movements - cubism, surrealism, minimalism and so on - have been spawned on an ocean whose political currents have been dominated by the ideological war between totalitarianism and democracy.

The violence of this basic conflict has found expression in physical war, the two world wars, Korea, Vietnam and others; and in a violent war of words made explicit and immediate through the medium of telecommunication. The disunity of mankind has been visible and audible to most of the world throughout most of the century. It has been made abundantly

clear that there is little harmony in the world.

It could be argued that, in ideological terms, the twentieth century has been a continuation of the nineteenth century. The dialectical struggle between Marxist-Leninism and Liberal-Democracy began in the last century; the warring between nation states, and the class struggle, were thought to have had their main thrust in the age of Empire. However, from a European perspective, imperialism has had a lingering death. Whilst some thought the nineteenth century ended in 1914, others felt it persist^{ed} until 1945.

In all this maelstrom one trend is certainly evident; fragmentation. Of ideas, of direction and, above all, of certainty. It is this central fact which gives the relationship between education and state in England such an inherent tension; namely, the false, one might say blind, or perhaps dishonest, certainty upon which the whole education system is conceived and sustained. This needs explanation.

Perhaps Burstyn (1986) puts it succinctly when she remarks that:

"Those chosen to govern Plato's ideal state needed to learn wisdom; the education proposed for them, in the liberal arts, grammar, rhetoric, and logic, has been acclaimed as

an ideal in western society for centuries.
That ideal is an anachronism today."

(p 178)

The National Curriculum introduced into English schools in the late twentieth century is, basically speaking, that given in the Greek city-states, reinforced through the renaissance and given Newtonian precision in the Enlightenment. Its common characteristic, unchanged through more than two millennia, is its linear, closed quality. It is monolithic, a finite structure with symmetrical design, classifiable, attainable and unquestionable.

It is also ancient, widely discredited, incomplete and suspect. It belongs, as was seen earlier, to the classical landscape, to the orderly and systematised world of the ancient Greeks. But there, of course, lies its attraction in a century of chaos and near annihilation. It is a known and familiar commodity

In England the magnetism of the traditional curriculum is all the more alluring because of its hierarchical structure which mirrors the country's abiding class system. The discrete subject boundaries with their closed borders, so easily selectively distributable and gradable, find a welcome in a state which is such a reluctant meritocracy. A curriculum which is built around knowledge-acquisition and knowledge-retention

is well-suited to vocational sieving through the medium of traditional testing from the age of seven, for the knowledge is an enduring core, harvested every summer in Elysian exam rooms.

This all bears little relation to Hiroshima of course, or the epic struggle between communism and democracy. But this is exactly the point. The English education system through this turbulent century has not only ossified, it has retrogressed to the year 1904. As it happened, Robert Morant built his own educational mausoleum.

In order to understand this phenomenon it is crucial to remember the motivation for state involvement in education in the first place. This, as was seen, was an instrumentalist action and derived from economic and social concerns. An educated and orderly, obedient workforce was needed.

Nothing has changed. There may be new technologies; a new mobile, ethnically-diverse, multi-faith population; a different productive base, centred on service industries rather than heavy industrial plants; the country is no longer an imperial power; but the state needs an educated and law-abiding underclass and it has ensured, through recent reforms which have, in fact, been consensual across the political divide, that the education system delivers just that.

The energy of progressivism, which advocated more open learning, more questioning and investigation rather than a deference to a continual re-mining of nuggets of traditional knowledge, has been doused in a stream of invective and alarmist rhetoric which has relied more on a trust and an assumption of native conservatism than rational educational argument.

This view is given credence in the debate on the Education Reform Bill. The main drift of the debate was reviewed in the preceding chapter but, besides the surface argument, there exists a more residual sub-text to the debate which is representative of the conservative socio-political concerns felt by many in the House which, in turn, reflects wider popular themes related to the anti-modernist stance of the British middle class.

Significantly, for example, it is religion which provides the first agenda item for the Secretary of State to respond to during the Bill's second reading: will it be compulsory and will it be tested? (1430/773). Significant because religion is concerned with the legitimacy, and social and moral order, of the state, presumably deemed more important than economic

performance or vocational satisfaction. In the House, Anthony Coombs was to claim that:

"The fact that religious education needs strengthening is not in any doubt...Too often in our schools, religious education has degenerated into comparative religion and even into humanism."

(1443/403)

The discourse is heavily value-laden (*degenerated, even*) and the missing word, 'Christian', is unnecessary. The point Coombs is making, of course, is that a dangerous cultural dilution must be stopped. Sir Hugh Rossi makes the same point, but makes it sound practically conspiratorial:

"Is my hon. Friend aware that in the Inner London Education Authority the great religious emphasis this year is on the fact that it is the year of the dragon?"

(*ibid.*)

Timothy Raison, advocating all children having a knowledge of the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer, acknowledges that local ethnic diversity must be recognised and respected but that Christianity must be "at the heart" of religious education because:

"It is not possible to grow up, play a full part in life and derive the benefits of society if a person is cut off from something which was

of such fundamental importance in shaping English civilisation."

(1443/409)

One might argue that it is not possible for an indigenous white English child to fully understand the nature of his country's multicultural and multi-faith quality without a basic acquaintance with the major tenets of Islam, Sikhism and Rastafarianism. Raison's argument, shared almost universally by the whole House, is elitist, arrogant and certainly pre-modern. It belongs to the nineteenth century and the colonial missionaries and is an anachronism in the closing years of the twentieth century. The contributions to the debate on this subject are tokenistic in their approach to the pluralism of British society and the innane comment by Harry Greenaway reveals the persistence of the idea that teaching religious education which is mainly of a Christian character will subdue the masses:

"Never has there been a greater need for an assertion, an improvement and a re-establishment of religious education in schools. There is considerable social violence not only at football matches but in many other areas..."

(1443/416)

If religion provides one example of sub-textual cultural retrospection, then the debate about the nature of the curriculum itself provides an even clearer illustration of a

resistance to modernity by the political right.

Merlyn Rees, a former Labour minister, expresses concern about any changes that may threaten the university examining system (1430/778), but his concern for the *status quo* is offset by a long and articulate attack on the Bill's proposals from the opposition benches concerning the threat to the principle of comprehensivisation. This topic also reveals the retrospective, reactionary and essentially nineteenth-century outlook of the proposals.

Jack Straw claims that:

"Under the guise of higher standards the Bill will label children as failures at the ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16, impose selection and segregate children by class and colour."

(1430/781)

Giles Radice develops this attack:

"(The Prime Minister) positively revels in the idea of a return to selection. To her, the golden days were those of grammar schools and the 11-plus. She always forgets about the other schools - the secondary moderns - to which those who failed the 11-plus went. She forgets the heartache, the divisions and the sheer waste of talent which report after report to this Parliament revealed. She forgets that what this nation needs is not only an education system that prepares the elite but one that provides a good education for the whole nation. That is what we should be aiming for."

(1430/797)

Paddy Ashdown, in talking about the Government's "concealed agenda" (1430/805) claimed that the Bill would:

"produce an education system that is wooden, inflexible and totally without vision."

(1430/805)

It would produce a system:

"which is narrow and infused with the ideology of the Government of the day when Britain needs a system that is flexible, broad based and continually developing to meet the future."

(ibid.)

This was the crucial point, of course. The Bill was proposing an imposed curriculum which certainly was not flexible. The implication was that the Government had a view of education which was at odds with the nature of contemporary society which was deliberate, muddled or erroneous. To adhere to the first view is to acquiesce with conspiracy theory, to believe the second is perhaps plausible, to believe the latter is beyond question. To re-construct an education system which owes more to the relic of an industrial society than to the challenge of an emerging postmodern society, not to mention a century or so of modernism, is careless to say the least. As Ashdown said, the proposals would:

"produce an education system that will run the risk of turning schools, once again, into narrow factories churning out raw material for industry

when they should be institutions to enhance individuals for the whole of society."

(1440/806)

Mildred Gordon, a Labour member representing an East End constituency claimed that the Bill would "put the clock back". It was simply a "return to elitism" (1440/819). Michael Heseltine responded by explaining that the Secretary of State was "pointing to a less comfortable model" where it would be "more difficult, more arduous and more demanding for those who go through the education process" (1440/820), presumably a market reference to declining employment prospects. 'Sink or swim' would be the order of the day for:

"Instead of a system which seeks to obscure everyone's ability for fear that the less able will lose out, we shall have a much franker and more stimulating environment where success is recognised and measured."

(ibid.)

In other words the grading process of schooling would be brought into sharper focus, the hierarchy of society would be reinforced, the traditional social structure would be preserved, and the last vestiges of egalitarianism, an anathema from the bad old permissive 1960s, extinguished.

The enlightened comments of the Welsh Labour member Dafydd Thomas elucidate clearly the arguments against preserving a

narrow subject-led curriculum in the late twentieth century. The Bill, in Thomas's estimation, is "crudely revisionist and instrumentalist" (1440/830). Members were witnessing a return:

"not only to Victorian values, but to the same type of authoritarian approach to pupils and children as existed in those days...All the criticisms in education history of the payment by results policy apply to this Bill. They demean education and reduce it to a cramming exercise and to the recall capacity of pupils."

(ibid.)

Showing a heartening knowledge of recent educational developments, Thomas continued:

"The definition of subjects runs contrary to all the approaches that have been developed in curriculum development over the past 30 years. The whole notion that one can divide and package the curriculum into subjects cuts out the trans-curriculum approach that has been so useful in schools."

(1440/831)

Thomas knowledgeably refers to the Bullock and Cockcroft Reports and ends by pointing out the other main misfit between the curriculum proposals and contemporary society which illuminates the philosophical stance of the political right:

"The other approach that is undermined by this subject-led curriculum is the commitment that is apparently in the rhetoric of the Government but never in the practice, to education for a multi-cultural society...this approach of a

subject-based curriculum will prevent the sort of innovation in multi-cultural education that we require."

(ibid.)

The final example of an issue in the debate on the Bill which provides a sub-textual pointer to the prevalence of an anachronistic approach is that concerning the independent sector. Several members from opposition parties wanted to know why the proposed national curriculum would not apply to the private schools when, as more than one member pointed out, there was provision in the 1944 Act for the Secretary of State to intervene in the curriculum arrangements of independent schools.

Derek Fatchett asks the question repeatedly but receives no answer for a long while. In answer to his question as to why Cabinet ministers, whose children attend independent schools, do not intend to apply the national curriculum to their own children, Fatchett is driven by a responsive silence to posing his own answer:

"There is a simple explanation...because the Government believe in privilege."

(1443/372)

The answer (to which reference has already been made in the previous Chapter), when it is eventually given by Timothy

Raison, is more specific, though in reality not dissimilar:

"Fundamentally, the answer has to do with who provides those schools. The schools in the state sector - if I may use that term - are provided by the state and by local education authorities. The schools in the independent sector are provided by other people. In a nutshell that expresses the essence of the argument."

(1443/373)

An opposition member, Roger Stott, proclaims this a "rather spurious justification" and it is left to Angela Rumbold, summing up the debate for the Government, to return the argument to the economic field:

"The main feature about independent schools is that they are independent...The discipline on independent schools is largely that of market forces."

(1443/394)

The missing element of this argument is an admission that there are those who control the market, that is the 'haves', and there are those who are victims of the market, the 'have nots'. The whole edifice of the 'market place' proposals in the Bill crumbles under the admission that some people deal in coppers and others in gold.

The whole debate, in both Houses, reveals a sub-text which exposes a polity addressing the late twentieth century with a

nineteenth century agenda. As Paddy Ashdown said:

"As we approach a period of change even greater than that which we have experienced until now, we cannot predict what will be required of the British education system in the mid-1990s. We should encourage innovation and experimentation. Instead we have a framework for a national curriculum which, far from being responsive to the needs of the day, can be altered only through Parliament."

(1443/379)

Put crudely, Britain, made great and powerful and given a sense of nationhood through its achievements in the industrial era, has not been at ease with modernity in the twentieth century and even now treads warily towards the postmodern era. Its education system, initiated in the industrial zenith of its worldwide influence and for reasons attributable to that era, never came to terms with the demands of the present century.

This dichotomy between the dynamic evolution from pre-modern to post-modern and the corresponding virtual suspension of the concept of formal education in classical aspect needs further explanation. This can be achieved only by giving further consideration to the social and cultural context.

b) Defining Modernism and Postmodernism

To attempt to define these two concepts is to enter a semantic minefield. The 'modern' can fuse in our minds with bland usage of the terms 'avant-garde' or 'contemporary' but this would be to narrow the meaning of the word 'modern'. It would be tempting to veer away from the general and concentrate instead on an aesthetic emphasis on the word; to canter through a revision of the effect of the 'new' at the beginning of the modern period in music, art, drama and literature; but that would beg the question of chronological dating. When did modernism begin ?

Smart (1990) suggests that there is:

"a tendency to equate the emergence of modernity with the Enlightenment and the advent of a 'tradition of reason' at the turn of the eighteenth century"

(in Turner (ed.) 1990, p 16)

whereas others date it back to the time of St. Augustine (op.cit.). For the purposes of this study it is simply important to accept that the initiation and development of state involvement in education in England has taken place in modern times. Indeed, considering that the Board of Education first began its work when the French Impressionists were heralding the transition towards the modern era, state

education in England could be considered a 'modern' phenomenon.

The concept of 'postmodernism' presents even greater problems for not only is there a common vagueness about its meaning, its very existence is doubted by some, and its definition is entwined with the necessity of an agreement on the parameters of modernity.

The dialectical necessity will be *relevance*. The focus of this discussion must be that connected to the relationship between education and the state. This will involve a consideration of cultural, political and social changes in Britain during the time since 1870, but it will also reveal a stubborn attitudinal paralysis, held in popular general terms, and specifically by the Right, which has ossified the development of educational structures and institutions and created, in terms of social, economic and vocational needs, a dysfunctional and anachronistic educational service.

i) Opposing the 'New'

'Modern' is seen as a pejorative term by many. It has connotations with 'unattractive' and 'displeasing' in the sense that there are those that would view a 'modern' building, say the National Theatre, and term it unattractive because of its

modern-ness, or would view abstract art as being displeasing and impossible to understand. 'Modern' music, say that by Webern or Stockhausen, is not popular in the sense that Beethoven or Brahms is, on the basis of audience size for public performances of works by either composer, and an outing to view the abstract works of art which are contained in the Tate Gallery may be considered a more difficult cognitive visit than viewing familiar 'old masters' at the National Gallery.

This is not to patronise popular taste. It is simply to draw attention to the fact that the twentieth century, which can be considered 'the modern era', to pinpoint its start in a particular year is irrelevant here, has seen a growing fragmentation of cultural hegemony. The fact that Webern and Stockhausen's works have existed for decades is to highlight the longevity of this disparate journeying. As Wexler (1990) says:

"In modernity, high culture is separate from mass culture, and culture is separate from everyday social life."

(in Turner (ed.) 1990, p 168)

It could be argued that modernism has seen the growth of uncertainty and the advent of a postmodern condition, in its

yearning for meaning, confirms it. The reality of the capability of mass destruction seen in the spectre of The Bomb, the discovery of our own insignificance in the universe through the advances in the exploration of the solar system and beyond, the destruction of arcady by the encroachment of industrial blight: all these modern phenomena have eroded our sense of security and well-being so that the attraction of the past, with its certainties and more easily defined textures and parameters, becomes more alluring.

This seductive retrospection has been a feature of cultural development since the questioning of Galileo disturbed the slow linear progression of thought in the Renaissance. It has been characterised by the wistful re-visiting of the classical era in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the bizarre flirtation with the gothic in Victorian times. Mankind does not skip with carefree abandon towards the unknown future, it holds tightly onto the known hand of the past.

Simply because modernity has been characterised by a violent fragmentation - of ideas as well as actions - which has arrested the two-dimensional linear development of western history and thrown in into a multi-dimensional uncertainty, an evolutionary acceleration perhaps, the attraction of the past has been all the more powerful.

In Britain the trauma of modernity has been made particularly intense because of the pivotal position the country held in the pre-modern world. In the industrial era Britain held paramount position through its empire. In the era of nation states Britain dominated the world. The erosion of this position has occurred during the period of modernity and it is unsurprising that during the fragmentations which have characterised the twentieth century, Britain should have clung so stubbornly to its late nineteenth century psyche.

The fact that some (such as Boyne & Rattansi 1990, for example) see 'modernity' having been caused by urbanisation and the industrial revolution, essentially a nineteenth-century phenomenon with Britain at the centre of this process, is perhaps gently ironic - for it is a tempting conclusion to assume that popular mythology regards the rural, agrarian landscape of pre-industrial Britain's "green and pleasant land" as having more appeal in the mass collective mind than the sprawling and blighted industrial vistas of Leeds or Manchester.

ii) The Postmodern Condition

If the twentieth century has been, in many respects, traumatic,

then there can be no guarantee of solace in the twenty-first century. As Crook, Pakulski and Walters (1992) make clear:

"The shock of modernisation was that things were never going to be the same again but it at least offered the reassurance that the direction in which things were going to change was, at least in principle, perceptible...the shock of post-modernisation is that directionality is totally unclear; the only certainty is continuing uncertainty."

(pp 2-3)

In postmodernism the quest is not so much to search for meaning, but to understand 'meaning' itself. As Kanpol (1992) says, postmodernism "denies a world held together by absolute, universal truth and reason" (p 218). What is central is an appreciation of difference, of the fact that every individual sees the world from his or her perspective. Thus:

"There cannot be one reality. Any claims to what is real or true can only be ruptured or deconstructed until such time that another perceived reality receives similar intellectual scrutiny."

(op.cit. p 219)

This might appear to be an isolationist, lonely concept but this is far from the truth because, Kanpol, explains, such an aspect encourages dialogue, cooperation, pluralism, democracy and community,

"that incorporate a myriad of differences,

realities and truths as ingredients of a democratic society."

(ibid.)

Thus an *educational* model begins to emerge where this "relentless deconstruction of meaning" (p 220) prompts an open discourse of learning, discovery and investigation. The change in emphasis is not confined, though, to the process of learning, there are implications for the learner too. As Brooker (1992) points out:

"This shift from questions of epistemology (ways of knowing) to questions of ontology (ways of being and acting in the world) becomes then an expression of what some see as fundamental in the very transition to postmodernism."

(p 21)

The implications of this for the whole structuring of the educational process will be explored in the final part of this chapter.

Schools, by their very purpose as well as their sponsorship, conspire in the free and unhampered quest for meaning because as Harris (1979) points out:

"Education, by serving the ruling interests in a class society, and by doing this in a disguised way, actually gives people a

distorted view of the world, and offers
a misrepresentation of reality."

(p 164)

If modernism was concerned with a shocking destruction of previous sure 'realities', then postmodernism can be viewed as a positive attempt to redefine reality through an acceptance of its non-existence or its multi-existence. Thus, postmodernism stands diametrically opposed to the rational view of the world taken by the ancients, refined through the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, and re-assembled, Fordism-like, for students in classrooms since the days of Thomas Gradgrind, and before and since. The implications for epistemology are clear, and will be returned to later.

Modernity, with all its confusions and violence, both aesthetic and ideological, still represents the continuance of systematisation in the Aristotlian tradition. Consider the array of "isms" in the modern era. Note how, with every new political leader there is a desire, an assumption, a need, to ascribe a label: 'Thatcherism', 'Majorism', 'Blairism', 'Reaganite', 'Wilsonian'. Every fragmented splinter of twentieth century thought and action has its label.

Postmodernity, on the other hand:

"is typified by dedifferentiation, blurring of boundaries and disintegration of separate domains."

(Wexler 1990, p 168)

Postmodernists do not recognise the 'certain' or the 'exact'. As Rosenau (1992) puts it in her vivid portrayal of the postmodern approach, post-modernists:

"criticise all that modernity has engendered: the accumulated experience of western civilisation, industrialisation, urbanisation, advanced technology, the nation state, life in the 'fast lane'...post-modernism challenges global, all-encompassing world views, be they political, religious, or social."

(p 5-6)

Representation, Rosenau claims, is a modernist concern (p 92). There is a fundamental problem with language in any of its forms. If, as postmodernists argue,

"language produces and reproduces its own world without reference to reality, then it is impossible to say anything definite because language is purely an artificial sign system and cannot assure truth."

(p 79)

Dant (1991) draws attention to the fact that there has been a shift in emphasis away from "the attempt to sum up the whole of

society" (p 2) towards an interest in philosophy and language:

"Since the mid-1960s social theory has been influenced less by sociologists and more than ever before by linguists, anthropologists, historians and philosophers."

(ibid.)

The link between knowledge, ideology and discourse is now considered irrefutable. The search for 'truth' through the discovery of knowledge has been declared futile. Indeed, the anti-representationalism of postmodernism implies a denial of truth:

"Representation assumes the possibility of a true image being reproduced or represented; postmodernists say this is impossible, and truth, to the extent that it strives to re-present reality, is fraudulent."

(Rosenau, op.cit., p 80)

The educational implications of this are plain to see, in terms both of content and methodology. The postmodernist perspective demands a wholesale new approach towards knowledge and the learning process itself.

Lawson (1985) paints a negative picture of postmodernism, terming the current era as being one of crisis where "our most cherished beliefs" have been called into question (p 9). In his view we have become impotently introspective, rendered

inarticulate through non-neutral language, signs, theory and text because we are uncertain of meaning which was previously found in God, phenomenological experience, empirical observation and through a subscription to common sense (p 10). He continues his downbeat analysis by declaring that:

"Deconstruction, by unsettling the theories with which we have surrounded ourselves, serves to indicate that our account of the world could be different. In the process deconstruction is able gradually to shift the structures within which we operate - as if one day we might awake and find ourselves in a new era, beyond the closure of knowledge."

(p 113)

To an educationalist, this could be, perhaps should be, an exciting prospect. Deconstruction is, by its very definition, an educational process. It points the way to a new model of education, a model which, it could be argued, has been trying to assert itself during the modern era but which, for socio-political reasons which have been stated or inferred already, has been suppressed, discouraged and actively legislated against. For it is clear that postmodernism is a consummate threat to a knowledge-bound educational model by its advocacy of an approach to learning which emphasises process rather than content.

Conversely, it could be argued that a process-led,

progressivist approach to education complies with the emerging philosophic stance of postmodernism and, therefore, is more relevant to current times than the traditional model given extended legitimacy by recent legislative reforms. In real terms, the sociology of knowledge has been overshadowed by the politics of knowledge. The rationalist, knowledge-led curriculum model is one which offers political control through content specification and the social limitation of access to this content. The progressive postmodernist approach appears to loosen this authority control by advocating the abolition of boundaries.

Central to the future direction of education, particularly its structural form and its relationship to the state, will be a clearer definition of the actual socio-political characteristics of the postmodern age. Brooker (1992) suggests that it is unclear whether the historical period which will be known as 'postmodern' will be characterised by "a radical social and economic break or an intensification with capitalism" (p 26). Certainly the attitudinal shift in the 'New' Labour Party under Blair's leadership in the 1990s suggests an extension of its longevity in Britain well into the next century. It will not, it could be suggested, be in the sphere of political ideology that state education will be

moulded, as it has been since its inception, but, rather, in that of scientific and technological innovation. It is this phenomenon which will dominate the postmodern era and this will be further explored later.

First, the issue of knowledge itself must be examined - for the new technology is already having its impact in this field. Practical implications of this must be preceded by some philosophical considerations. It is to this task that this study now turns.

iii) The Knowledge Conundrum

If modernity clings to the belief:

"that in principle the deep structure of reality is knowable, that it is intellectually penetrable"

(Boyne & Rattansi 1990, p 7)

then the postmodernist discounts this entirely. The whole current rationale of epistemology is thrown in doubt. As Rosenau (op.cit.) explains:

"Post-modern answers to questions of how we know what we know, how we go about producing knowledge, and what constitutes knowledge itself are very different from those of the most conventional versions of modern social science."

(p 109)

For Rosenau there are only three things which remain:

- an absence of knowledge claims
- an affirmation of multiple realities
- an acceptance of divergent interpretations

(p 137)

and thus the emphasis is one of *process* and not content.

Can it be, then, that the concept of progressivism in education, exemplified in practice by many projects from Neill's

Summerhill (see Neill, 1962) to Stenhouse's Humanities Project (1970), was an idea reaching out to a postmodern condition? Such a hypothesis is an attractive and logical supposition in the context of the definition of the development of anti-modernism suggested above. The 'threat' of educational progressivism, characterised most openly in the Black Papers from 1969, represents one strand of the Right's reactionary, some would say defensive, assertion of the need to continue the old (pre-modern) order.

Kelly (1995) draws attention to the point that mankind has a hankering for certainty, for a security of how things are and are going to stay, and that this is particularly evident in times of political and social upheaval and uncertainty [p 55-56]. It is not beyond the bounds of the improbable that the anti-progressivist reaction and the call for a return to more traditional values in the field of education was prompted by the dissident political climate of the time - the repression of the 'Prague Spring' by the Soviets, the Paris riots, and the civil unrest of the black population in the USA at the close of the 1960s.

While it is true to say that a rationalist approach to curriculum planning with its protective fostering of a fossilised knowledge-led model has no place in postmodernist

theory, it is conversely true that postmodernist abstraction has no place in a 1904/1988 model conceived in an Aegean dawn.

The former could be considered an educational model and the latter a political one in the sense that the postmodern view of the educational process is investigative, heuristic, open-ended and free, whereas the classical model is prescriptive, enclosed and overwhelmingly flavoured with a set course and a known destination. The modern quest for understanding is characterised not by an appetite for the revelation of more truth (knowledge) but by "a greater clarity of thinking" (Kelly, op.cit., p 63) made possible through a refinement of definitions and a more detailed consideration of the modes and styles of intellectual discourse. The emphasis on 'how' has become more important than that of the 'what'.

Thus, the social and cultural tensions created by the postmodern, not to mention the modern, challenge to the traditional, orthodox, rationalist approach has been mirrored in the development of educational policymaking in England throughout the period of state involvement in education. Schools have been marshalled to help preserve the *status quo* and, in the process, educational development through debate, experimentation and trial has been restricted, carefully and increasingly discouraged and prohibited, in order to prolong

the illusion that education could, in practice, be an opportunity for development and emancipation from restricted circumstance. In reality, schools have continued to play the same sifting and containment role that they were expected to perform a century ago.

The development of the process-model of education has been a manifestation of the movement from modernism to postmodernism in the social sciences. Its suppression has been a reactionary attempt to arrest this cultural trend. The motives of this attack are connected to the universal desire for certainty, for the continuation of things as they are - but the political and cultural conservatism of this country, the triumphant ascendancy of market capitalism in particular since the end of the 1970s, has militated against the successful transition to a process-led educational model and, instead, entrenched the knowledge-led approach which plays such an important part in helping to regulate and control the social hierarchy and the employment market.

This has been, it is being suggested, a symptom of anti-modernism; a dogged attempt to turn away from social and cultural phenomena which have characterised the twentieth century. Basically, these phenomena have been ones that have questioned and challenged the pre-modern condition: the

hierarchical organisation of society; the Copernican-Newtonian concept of an ordered and pre-ordained world; and the linear and incremental revelation of knowledge. That this view of existence has remained fixed, allowing for some re-positioning and re-calculations since the renaissance, for over two millennia has made it difficult to dislodge. Modernism, by which is meant the subordination of traditional approaches to life, work and art by those which accompanied the onset of Fordism, abstract representationalism and mass consumerism, was a cognitively abrupt and disorientating awakening simply because its central message was 'newness' and the 'old' had become inately and pleasingly familiar. If Webern and Stockhausen did not please our ears, and Eliot's poetry is difficult to understand, then this merely reflects our hunger for certainty - tonal harmony and scanning metre - which modernism was not offering and which the twentieth century has failed to provide.

To deal in 'known' knowledge is easier than to confront abstract uncertainty. To encourage uncertainty is to prompt questions which may undermine the certainty of institutions deemed essential to uphold the status quo. The re-affirmation of the traditional epistemological rationale, legitimised by the major piece of English educational legislation at the close

of the twentieth century, defies the reality of the advent of postmodernism:

"Post-modernists question any possibility of rigid disciplinary boundaries between the natural sciences, humanities, social sciences, art and literature, between culture and life, fiction and theory, image and reality in nearly every field of human endeavour...They consider tight definitions and categorisations of academic disciplines in the university context simply to be remnants of modernity."

(Rosenau 1992, pp 6-7)

Indeed, postmodernists seek "to 'locate' meaning rather than 'discover' it" (p 8).

This view is in stark contrast to the thinking behind the National Curriculum introduced in England in 1988. Writing about the genesis of this Curriculum, Margaret Thatcher recounts her battles with the History Working Group. The learning of history "requires knowledge of events" (Thatcher 1993, p 595) and thus:

"no amount of imaginative sympathy for historical characters or situations can be a substitute for the initially tedious but ultimately rewarding business of memorizing what actually happened."

(ibid.)

Thatcher describes that she was "appalled" at the emphasis,

"on concepts rather than chronology and empathy rather than facts"

(ibid.)

The emphasis was on "interpretation and enquiry as against content and facts" and, worse, there was "insufficient weight given to British history". The weight of political, rather than educational, influences continued during this curriculum planning process. The advent of a new Secretary of State did not, in the Prime Minister's view, strengthen the rationalist cause:

"John MacGregor was far more inclined to welcome the [History Group's final] report than I had expected. It did now put greater emphasis on British history. But the attainment targets it set out did not specifically include knowledge of historical facts, which seemed to me extraordinary."

(op. cit. p 596)

In a passage of great, and undoubtedly unintentional, irony, Thatcher recalls that:

"John MacGregor, under constant pressure from me, did what he could. He made changes to the history curriculum which reinforced the position of British history and reduced some of the interference."

(op.cit. p 597)

According to Rosenau (1992), history cannot be pre-packaged like this into periods as if it were "human cultural and intellectual heritage" to be passed "from generation to generation" (p 63), a description which more than neatly fits

the programmes of study in the history national curriculum.

Rationalist history is:

"a fabricated facade that legitimates hegemonic discourse and justifies arbitrary universalistic definitions of reality."

(p 73)

More than anything else, Rosenau claims, the whole epistemological basis of knowledge is based on 'truth'. But this is a concept which is an Enlightenment value and therefore "subject to dismissal":

"Truth makes reference to order, rules, and values; depends on logic, rationality, and reason, all of which post-modernists question. Attempts to produce knowledge in the modern world depend upon some kind of truth claim, on the assumption that truth is essential."

(p 77)

But for the sceptical postmodernist, truth is "either meaningless or arbitrary...there is no difference between truth and even the most obvious, distorted forms of rhetoric or propaganda" (p 78).

In the 1988 National Curriculum, Rosenau's claims are most clearly borne out. As Kelly (1995) points out:

"the subjects which constitute the National Curriculum have been both selected and defined by political agencies. And so that National

Curriculum is a perfect example of a curriculum whose implicit values reflect the ideology of the government agencies which planned it..."

(p 79)

A further paradox, exposing the muddled rationale behind the National Curriculum, is the emphasis on memorisation alongside the enthusiasm for information technology. Thatcher's reaction to the English Working Group's Report in October 1988 reveals her disappointment that:

"Although there was acceptance of a place for Standard English, the traditional learning of grammar and learning by heart, which I considered vital for memory training, seemed to find no favour."

(Thatcher 1993, p 595)

Yet, in 1982, designated "Information Technology Year", Kenneth Baker himself had been responsible for the initiative which put a desk-top computer in every secondary school. Thatcher speaks of being "fascinated by the technology itself" (op.cit., p 271) but clearly saw no connection between the advent of IT and the lessening of the need for memorisation. The inference is that the National Curriculum is certainly not, despite all the political rhetoric, a model for the twenty-first century. No amount of window dressing, in the form of novel terms such as 'Design Technology' and 'Information Technology', the daring (but limited) allowance of calculators in mathematical computation, and the occasional glance towards a novel not

written by Trollope or Dickens, is going to convince anyone that what has been prescribed and laid down in law is not an educational model that has a pedigree connected to a known and revered past and an antipathy towards an uncertain future.

The fact that Britain is so pre-modern in its institutional outlook has perpetuated an education system that is ill-equipped to face the challenges of a new post-modern century. Schools have to train as well as educate their pupils, the instrumental purpose of schooling cannot be denied or overlooked, but, by this rigid adherence to an outdated and discredited approach to the process of education, neither task is done adequately or with any relevance. As Scott (1990) says:

"The dilemma of modern education is that it must attempt to create two quite different beings, economic man (and woman) and the educated citizen...A system of education which did not produce school leavers or graduates with practical skills would be utterly deficient. But work and life are not the same."

(p 156)

The fusion of the education and employment departments to create the Department of Education and Employment (1995) exposes the Government's definition of education as the Victorian instrumentalist vision that most educationalists always thought it to be. What is so depressing is the confirmation, through this and countless other governmental

policy decisions and directives, that:

"Education continues to be regarded as merely the transmission of knowledge, knowledge itself as non-problematic and the curriculum as a statement of the knowledge so to be transmitted."

(Kelly 1995, p 155)

This is not how it should be. If the postmodernist stance is to be embraced, as it should be, then knowledge cannot be regarded as certain and sure. The purpose of education would be to equip pupils with the disposition to challenge knowledge assumptions,

"to evaluate and, if necessary to change it...they must learn to tolerate, even to embrace, difference - social, cultural, moral and political."

(op.cit., p 97)

In the next century new technology will certainly cause a greater assault on the traditional model of knowledge-led curriculum planning to occur. Ainley (1993) suggests that this new technology will prompt "a second industrial revolution" with computers "substituting for brain in the way that steam had previously replaced muscle" (p 3). This will render the current National Curriculum obsolete.

More than this, though, the whole process of education may have to be thought through from the beginning. The implications for the state in this metamorphic process will be profound.

Summary

The twentieth century has been both sublime and ridiculous; the former by the unparalleled achievements that man has realised, and the latter through the futile destruction that has been caused by him.

It has been characterised by an uncertainty, by a great searching which has revealed doors opening onto new knowledge which, in their turn, have exposed an infinite series of other new doors. Knowledge has proved to be unattainable because of its very infinity, matching the newly-known infinity of the universe. The sense of order, which Aristotle sought, has proved to be an unattainable state of mind in a world which, through the century, has been marked by a cumulative fragmentation of ideas and direction.

This dissolution of certainty has created a bizarre mismatch between the functioning of education and the reality of contemporary experience. A knowledge-led model, taking as its prototype the Victorian public school, is attempting to equip pupils for an adult life in a century that will see no retardation in the acceleration of innovative scientific and technological development.

Much of this situation is derived from the very idiosyncrasy of

the 'English condition' which is characterised by a nostalgia for tradition and a suspicion of change. It is also symptomatic of a class-bound, hierarchical society which shuns a global internationalist approach, evidenced by a grudging toleration of multiculturalism, a fear of European federalism, and a wistful veneration of the traditions and customs of 'olde England'.

In the drive towards educational reform, the rhetoric was of modernisation, the need to make the system relevant, but the reality was a desire to return to the certainty of an age of traditional values and familiar, circumscribed means and ends.

This unfolding uncertainty makes the contemporary moment hard to define. Is this still the age of 'modernism' or have we embarked upon a new 'postmodern' age? Modernism began when the impressionists blurred the straight lines of reality in Paris in the 1880s; or it began in England and Germany in the competitive dash to industrialise the economic means of production to such an extent that world domination became possible through trading strength as well as military might. The actual advent of modernity is an arguable point, but what is indisputable is that when the twentieth century began, modernism had also arrived.

From its very inception modernism inspired suspicion, confusion and, often, fear amongst the rightists. In this country, with its wealth and status as a great imperial power founded firmly in the nineteenth century, modernism has been held at bay throughout the twentieth century as a rearguard psychological action has been fought against inevitable decline and loss of status. England's education system, founded somewhere between "Tom Brown's Schooldays" and "Hard Times", has remained, been preserved, jealously guarded even, in its nineteenth century fiction, while the facts of the twentieth century have been ignored, denied, overlooked and only occasionally admitted.

The result has been that the education system sponsored by the state has been forever out of date, irrelevant and a contributing factor to Britain's economic and technological decline. The maintenance of its hierarchical quality, both in terms of rigid divisions between types of school and types of knowledge, and academic and vocational selection mechanisms, has further kept England rooted in its Victorian past. The educational 'reforms' of the 1980 and 1990s have merely reinforced this. This is the 'bizarre' condition of English education at the close of the twentieth century.

'Postmodernism' does not offer a restoration of order and certainty but, instead, tries to define more accurately the

disorder of modernity by examining the concept of 'meaning' itself. One could argue that this task is a positive, constructive one, in that postmodernism appears to be seeking a more certain orientation amidst the unfolding uncertainty of experience. The Athenian search for *knowledge* is replaced by a search for the *meaning* of knowledge.

The conclusion must be that education must be re-defined, both structurally and philosophically, to match this postmodern condition. It is to this task that this study must finally turn.

7. CONCLUSION

EDUCATION & THE STATE : A NEW RELATIONSHIP

a) Knowledge & The New Technology

It has been seen, and is well known, that the whole basis of educational activity since ancient times has been concerned with the search for knowledge through rationalist enquiry. There has been an assumption that, through careful, patient and painstaking research through scientific observation, philosophical rationalisation and artistic endeavour, knowledge (Truth, the revelation of God, etcetera) would be incrementally accumulated by mankind. Epistemological categorisation of knowledge into discrete subject headings has been seen as helpful in this process by its assumption of logical order.

Educational process has been viewed in terms of knowledge acquisition and schools have been organised to facilitate this through an emphasis on a liberal curriculum which quickly became characterised by a weighting towards mathematical, literary, scientific and moral studies and enquiry. The overriding task for the pupil has been to memorise knowledge content and testing and assessment procedures have concentrated on measuring this achievement.

As the twentieth century has evolved, knowledge, through modernism's ultimate drive to fragment the classical boundaries

of epistemological labelling into ever more sub-headings, has become more classified; the river of knowledge broken down into countless small rivulets and streams in an attempt to deal with the accelerating discoveries and realisations of the modern era. Education, like every other branch of enquiry in the modern era, has been *ism-ised* into numerous schools of thought. This has reflected the uncertainties of the modern experience, the deconstruction of consensus, and the proliferation of pluralism as the linear journey mankind has been following in attempting to understand experience has reached a major junction of alternative choices.

To continue to believe that education can be viewed in terms of knowledge acquisition is simply to ignore the evidence of this modern reality. The acceptance of multi-reality, offered by postmodernism, is the only logical route to take. The re-affirmation of 'Victorian values', exemplified by the Tory reforms in education in the late 1980s, is merely the codicil of an apotheosis of a time when experience was considered to have been more palatable and easily explained.

Such a reactionary withdrawal from the reality of the present cannot exist forever. The awesome acceleration of scientific and technological achievement and innovation will ensure it does not.

It would not be legitimate to indulge in much fanciful speculation about the impact of new technology in the future. Suffice it to say that there is little doubt that it is going to be great. The ability to compress access to current human knowledge into small, relatively easy to handle computers is already a reality. More, significant is the ability of this new technology to manipulate this data - predict, project, calculate, interweave and instantly recall it.

What price the biological human acquisition and recall of knowledge in *this* new reality ?

The advent of this new technology raises some profound questions. Firstly, what will it mean to be 'educated'? Certainly, it will not, thankfully increasingly cannot, be measured in quantitative knowledge terms. Knowledge will still be essentially a part of the definition, but the emphasis will shift from content to process: the ability to manipulate knowledge as part of an enquiry process will be central. This will require manual and mental dexterity with technological computer programs. Knowledge required will not be subject content but program content and appropriate program selection. This is not to say that some things about reading, writing and 'arithmetic will not need to be known, because they will, but the whole, notion of 'basic skills' will be radically transformed.

The whole basis of human everyday survival will become involved with technologised means of discourse and operative functions. Will it be necessary to be mentally numerate when the buying and selling of goods is processed by technology, when home shopping, already a reality, is the norm ? What value will handwriting have in a near future era when the technological means will exist to enable voice sounds to be processed into printed words ? What wider literacy skills will be needed when the bulk of reading experience is displayed on a monitor screen rather than a printed page ?

Clearly, and soon, much of the contemporary curriculum will be obsolete and redundant and there will have to be a wholesale revision of its nature.

Or will there ? Could it be that governments will be given the opportunity for further facilities for exercising social control over its citizenry by withholding access to these new skills ? Might not high-status knowledge and low-status knowledge be replaced by high-status technology and low-status technology ? Are the seeds of this not in place already ? Few inner-city primary schools have the resources to invest in more than a basic collection of basic computers with limited software in the 1990s; yet, it is a sure bet that many schools in the independent sector, or in the leafy glades of middle

England, where fundraising is less difficult, have already begun giving their pupils a headstart in their preparation for life, and vocational opportunities, in the new century.

Depressing as it is to contemplate, there is little likelihood of the hierarchical privileges being made redundant in the education system. The new relationship between education and the state may, indeed, exacerbate and strengthen them.

A second question will be 'what constitutes first-hand experience' ? Television, video and computer simulation programs are criticised on the one hand for their obfuscation, limitation and, ultimately, denial of actual physical sensory experience. That early learning experiences today are so often characterised by such passive, second-hand experiences is widely lamented by teachers and others concerned with education. On the other hand, the use of televisual experience as an educational tool, and the need for a familiarity with computer keyboards are seen as essential components of any worthwhile curriculum, including the 1988 National Curriculum. This philosophical agnosticism must be resolved.

One way forward would be to bolster the notion of 'balance' in the curriculum. The experiential possibilities and

opportunities afforded by new technology should be regarded as extending and enhancing 'real' experience.

Another inevitable development will be the final abandonment of the view of knowledge which attempts to rationalise it into discrete compartments. The new technology will offer opportunities for such open-endedness and cross-curricular approaches that the traditional curriculum cannot be allowed to survive unless the state conspires, for reasons of control and social subjugation, to preserve it. This raises a whole new set of issues.

b) Issues of Democracy & Control

New technology already allows access to information (knowledge) which far surpasses that available through literacy skills. Whereas the careful gradation of knowledge into 'high' and 'low' culture; the 1944 notion of grammar, secondary-modern and technical classification; and structural arrangements such as 'streaming', have kept control very much in the hands of the state, the new technology threatens this arrangement by making access to all kinds of knowledge more universal. Attempts by the state to restrict this knowledge by denying access to this technology, in a similar way to the popular denial of 'high culture' through selective educational admission, has already

been thwarted by the very consumerism which the Conservative government has sought to encourage.

The effect of this will be, eventually, to create the necessity for a new relationship between the state and education. New technology will offer rich opportunities for home-based education (the Open University principle on a massive scale), and schools, as separate state-controlled institutions, will be diminished as monopolistic providers of education and educational opportunities. Indeed, it is hardly fanciful to imagine the time in the not too distant future when schools, as separate external physical institutions, will cease to exist.

This would all imply a rise in individualism of course. Education experience may become exclusively a part of the 'Internet Culture' and thus the control function of education would be fractured, if not completely broken. The state would have to introduce some form of legislative initiative in order to guarantee an educated workforce and a compliant citizenry, but it could be argued that the whole notion of statehood will, inevitably, have changed too and thus projected models based on the current equation simply will not suffice.

It has been seen how the evolution of the state in this country has undergone a long and complex development and that the

prevailing political ideology of any state profoundly influences educational structures within that state (Chapter 1). The sudden change in the political complexion of France in the 1790s and in Russia in the 1920s provoked a radical transformation in the educational schemata; in England too, 1979 proved to be a watershed year and the subsequent changes to the whole basis of state education have been no less dramatic though, to date, bloodless. At this *fin de siecle* the whole notion of British statehood is being challenged by the prospect of greater European integration. This could be the herald of much more widespread integration and amalgamation which could have enormous impact on the development of the relationship between states and their education systems.

It could be argued that the first moves towards this change have already begun to happen with these current moves towards political globalisation (The European Union, the Russian Federation; the emergence of economic areas such as the Pacific Rim; North-South and East-West dialogue and cooperation) and that the future exploration and colonisation of space will render Planet Earth ever more unitary (this argument presupposes that the nationalistic conflicts at the end of the twentieth century are merely the result of the end of the Cold War in Europe and the de-colonisation of Africa, Asia and elsewhere).

The scenario promises to offer opportunities which are more democratic, in terms of educational opportunity and access, than have been the case, but the question as to whether the state (or whatever form might follow the 'state') will have a role in this new educational action, and what that role might be, is problematic and uncertain.

If the state has been involved as a provider of education in order to ensure an educated workforce and a compliant citizenry, then it will be useful to consider possible future patterns of employment and notions of citizenship.

c) The Development of the Concepts of 'Work' and 'Leisure'

The system of schooling initiated in this country in 1870 had two main aims. The first was to improve the basic education of the country's workforce, and the second was to contribute to the civil order of society. It is clear, from the preceding chapters of this dissertation, that these aims have not significantly changed. The debates in both Houses of Parliament which preceded the Act of 1988 had a similar agenda to that which preceded the Acts of 1870, 1902 and, to a lesser extent, 1918 and 1944.

This linkage has its source in the popular perception of work

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and leisure which has existed throughout the period in question (ie. since Victorian times). Put simply, this sees work as hierarchical - governmental, managerial, administrative, clerical and manual; skilled and unskilled - and virtuous. To be unemployed is an undesirable and unattractive condition. Leisure is restricted, supervised and bureaucratised to the extent that the state has set the parameters for acceptable and unacceptable leisure times and pursuits; thus, leisure must be socially acceptable, its means and ends must be state-approved.

In 1870 it was an indisputable fact that the workforce was ill-equipped, in educational terms, to play its part in the industrial enterprise which was, by then, accelerating; it was true, as well, that the ruling class had reason to be concerned about civil order (the rapid growth of the population in urban areas, the recent Chartists' challenge, the memory of European revolutions in 1848, and so on). At the heart of the unsatisfactory state of affairs with education today is the fact that conditions have changed but the rationale has not. Education is still being seen as a provider of vocational skills when many of these skills are being rendered obsolete through changing practices prompted by new technology; the civil disorders experienced in the closing years of this century (Toxteth and Brixton in 1981, for example) were partly the result of a myopic social policies which did not face up to

'full employment', the very notion of "employment" itself will, in all probability, have to change because of the future further development of technological innovation and invention. The notion of "education for life" will then assume a definition with more literal integrity. It will not be necessary or logical to continue with a curriculum which promotes skills, attitudes and qualities more appropriate for a twilight age of post-industrialism when what will be needed is a curriculum for the brightening dawn of a technological and even post-technological era. 'Employment' will need to be seen not only in terms of being income-related, but in solely, or partly, recreational terms.

The body which is concerned with governance (one hesitates to speculate about the survival of 'the state') will need to ensure, as will individuals themselves, that everyone is equipped with the basic skills necessary for economic survival and the discharge of social activity as well as the possession of attributes which will enable and impel people to seek satisfying and acceptable forms of leisure pursuit. The availability of more leisure time - which may form the bulk of a person's day and, eventually, all of it - will compel this new definition and perception of education itself.

The question referred to earlier concerning definitions of

first-hand experience will need to be addressed. Education will surely have failed if the advent of leisure time is characterised by a scramble towards the keyboard and monitor to experience passive fantasy and aggression. New technology offers opportunities to engage in exciting and creative adventure simulations but such opportunities must be complemented by physical and social pursuits which will be the legitimate source of concern and activity by the state if it is to promote a citizenry which is fully educated. The state, through the promotion of favourable conditions for physical and social activities to occur and prosper, will still be needed in the educational equation.

The pivotal change will be the de-institutionalising of education through the widening democratisation, perhaps even the abolition, of schools as institutions. The postmodern age with new technology will surely see the diminution of many collective physical institutional enterprises and organisations as the means of discourse, including economic and educational ones, become more centred on individual transactions carried out from a domestic base.

The optimist would see this development as exciting and full of creative possibilities when education, freed from the demands of vocational training and social conditioning functions, could

be more true to purely *educational* objectives. This would enable a new and clearer relationship between education and the state to occur - one which was more conducive to the individual rather than any sectional group, and, above all, one which was more honest.

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