

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

[illegible]

LAY PARTICIPATION
IN
EDUCATIONAL DECISION-MAKING

[illegible]

A thesis submitted for the award of the degree of M.Phil.
University of Southampton
1990

Nigel Gann



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

ABSTRACT

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF ADULT AND POST-COMPULSORY EDUCATION

Master of Philosophy

LAY PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATIONAL DECISION-MAKING

by Nigel Martyn Gann

The thesis is a study of the way non-professional people have been involved in formulating and implementing educational policy in England and Wales since the beginning of state support for education in the nineteenth century. The main focus is upon the theory and practice of lay involvement in the management of individual state schools, but there is also reference to lay participation in local education authorities.

The core of the work is a case-study of lay participation in the management of three innovative community colleges and upper schools in a midland county. These colleges were part of an experiment conducted in the late 1970s by the local education authority to delegate control over the policies and finances of community education to the members of the local community through their governing bodies and college management committees. The results of the case-study are supported by a history of politics and education in the county.

Many features of the experiment foreshadowed the educational legislation of the 1980s, and the thesis continues with an overview of the impact of these changes upon schools, together with a study of the situation in the three colleges ten years on.

The political and philosophical issues raised by the concept of participation in the public services in general, and in education in particular, are considered in the final chapter, in the context of the changes brought about by government legislation.

FOREWORD

The writing of this thesis came out of my experiences of teaching, first, in an inner city school which failed to acknowledge its critical impact on the attitudes to education formed by ordinary people and, later and more happily, in schools which saw themselves as an integral element in the wider community. The belief that, if they are to gain the confidence of the community, educational institutions must learn to operate as open access resource centres for lifelong education, therefore underlies this work. It is also implicit throughout that people deserve every opportunity available to enrich their lives through a variety of social and cultural experiences, and that the changes that necessarily happen to people so exposed are intrinsically educational. The most valuable opportunity that people can have is the chance to take power over their lives, both at work and in their unforced leisure. The first task of education, therefore, is to give people the ability to believe in themselves; then to show them all the possibilities that become open to them when they have power over themselves.

It follows that the nature of schools themselves will change if ever such ideas predominate, and I believe that the model of the Leicestershire Community College which forms the focus of the case-study here is a step in this direction. The most satisfying parts of the research to report were those where people spoke of changes which had happened to them because of experiences they had had through their contact with the colleges. If the modern school does ever reflect its Greek roots in the word "schole", meaning leisure, spare time, ease, it will be thanks to people like these.

I am grateful to Tom Whiteside and Sarah Tann, then of the University of Leicester, who helped me in the early days; and to Robin Usher of the University of Southampton who pointed me in the right direction in the final stages; also to the countless people in the colleges and communities who gave me their time.

The posts that I have held during the writing of the thesis - as a research fellow, as deputy, later acting, headteacher of a community School in Cumbria, and as manager of an innovative community education centre in Southampton - have brought me into contact with people who, despite many disadvantages, and regardless of the many risks involved, have displayed the courage of change.

Most of all, for their inspiration, I am grateful to them.

CHAPTER 1

The Administration of Education

The formulation of policy in English education takes place at a number of levels, and the officially-recognised model is not always a true reflection of what actually happens. Constitutionally, the model is a relatively simple one, and similar to the provision of other services in the welfare state. In reality, the model is considerably more complex, with a number of parties involved in running the school including the local authorities, the governors, the head teacher, other staff, the pupils, parents and, of course, central government.

Parliament is the ultimate decision-making body to which the Secretary of State for the Department of Education and Science is accountable. He or she is responsible for the formulation of policy based, theoretically, on the stated intentions of the government summarised in its official publications and speeches, such as its election manifesto and the Queen's speech of the parliament in session. In order to provide support for the Secretary of State's recommendations, the D.E.S. comprises a permanent, professional staff of civil servants, only some of whom may be primarily educationalists, and Her Majesty's Inspectorate. Constitutionally, such

professionals have no power to formulate policy, but are merely servants of the Secretary of State, with no political existence. At a change of government, they are presumed to transfer their unquestioning loyalty to the next incumbent. It is not within the brief of this study to consider the role of the D.E.S., except insofar as it affects the problems to which the study addresses itself. However, the increasingly interventionist role of the civil servant has been attacked by ex-Ministers [Benn, Castle, Crossman]. The relationship between elected representatives responsible for the governance of a state-provided service such as education and the professional administrators responsible for the day-to-day running of the service will be looked at more closely in a local context.

Parliament delegates responsibility for the education service to local education authorities, which are synonymous with the local county or county borough councils, metropolitan boroughs in the larger conurbations and, during the period under review, the Inner London Education Authority. Here, the local reflects the national model. The education committee of the local council, comprising elected councillors and usually dominated by members of the ruling party, is responsible to the whole council for the administration of the service within the broad boundaries laid down by Acts of Parliament (a small number of the Committee will at present be coopted rather than elected, representing sectional interests such as the church

and teacher unions). Again, the council will employ a chief officer, broadly analogous to the Permanent Secretary in the D.E.S., and a large administrative staff of permanent professionals, some of whom will be educationalists. The appointment of the Chief Education Officer (or Director of Education) is subject to the approval of the Secretary of State, and this is seen as a way of ensuring that he will have some educational, probably a teaching, background [Brooksbank]. The duty to provide education is laid upon the local authorities by the 1944 Education Act.

The relationship between local and central authorities in educational policy-making has been founded in custom and practice, rather than enshrined in law. Some have suggested that the overall responsibility for framing acts of parliament accorded to the Secretary of State gives little real power over the conduct of education throughout the country, [Griffith, Kogan 1975]. Others see the central department as wielding "enormous sway . . . The secretary of state's specific powers constitute a formidable list" [Regan]. This latter was written in 1977, eleven years before the secretary of state took to himself more powers, numbered anywhere between 150 and 300 according to the commentator. Kogan elsewhere suggests that chief officers do not feel unduly constrained by central controls [Kogan et al, 1973], and Ree implies that the quality of individual chief officers will

determine the extent of their control. Clearly, the advent of the Conservative government in 1979 heralded an era of attempts to restore responsibility for the structures, and therefore the quality, of education to parliament and, more particularly, to the Secretary of State. Other writers have suggested that the constraints set by central government have always been primarily financial ones [Redcliffe-Maud and Brooksbank]. Studies of local government operation may concentrate on the style and personalities of the councillors [Lee, Clements and Green] or of the officers [Ree, Kogan et al, and Sherwood]. Both Ree and Sherwood imply that the relationship between the chief officer and the professionals of central government can be vital in gaining access to funds for providing for educational innovation. A further possible perspective on educational policy-making is the traditional conflict view of central and local government, and other professional and lay interest groups, engaging in a continual struggle for power which, incidentally but necessarily, further removes the sphere of education from the influence of parent and child clients [e.g. Male and Dearlove].

There is little to be gained in seeking some definitive solution to these questions. No firm conclusions about the operation of local government can be drawn, even by attempting to compare those authorities that share some common elements of political control [Bulpitt]. In fact, we seem hardly to have moved forward in this area of research since the

individualism of local politics was noted thirty years ago [Birch].

However, there is more to schools than policy-making at government level, even if it be local government. The traditional autonomy of the headteacher in English schools has been well established. This, coupled with what has been called "the myth of teacher autonomy" [Whiteside, p.42] has spawned a range of literature concentrating upon the school and the role of the teacher [e.g. Lynd, Hoyle, Grace]. Studies of the workings of individual schools, whether they be primarily descriptive in intent [Berg, Davies] or analytical [Richardson, Lacey, Jackson and Marsden, Bernbaum] are common. The anthropological approach has brought about a number of case-studies attempting to embrace all the individuals and relationships within the institution [Woods, Ball].

Between these two monolithic structures, local government and the schools, there exists a little researched entity, the governing bodies. Not until 1969 was any comprehensive attempt made to study the functioning of these bodies, and, despite the continuing discussion of their role throughout the 1970s and 80s, there is still a shortage of literature on the subject.

The attempts to give significance to the role of governing bodies, first by opening them up to a wider membership, and second to grant them wider and more clearly

defined powers, cannot be divorced from the general movement over recent years to give "the public" a more meaningful role in local and national decision-making. This movement has surfaced in such varied guises as demands for local planning consultations, the inclusion of students on academic boards in establishments of higher education, and growing calls for a Freedom of Information Bill. The "complex oligarchy" of the network of British governance [Leigh] is increasingly subject to demands for democratic supervision.

Another facet of the movement, and one that cannot easily be disentangled from the school government issue, is that of parental participation and choice.

This work will look at the history of lay participation in decision-making in education, principally at the school level. It is, therefore, mainly a study of school governing bodies, and the quite dramatic changes that have affected them since the beginning of the 1970s. However, attention will be paid to other factors, such as the role of councillors, pressure groups and the press. Much of this will be in the form of a case-study of educational innovation in Leicestershire in the period before the Conservative Government's legislation of the 1980s.

In the final chapter, I shall consider some of the political theories which bear upon the complex issues of participation, accountability and the sharing of power, and attempt to place the case-study into a theoretical context.

CHAPTER 2

School Management 1839-1945

School administration operates on three levels:-

First, school management, i.e. those ostensibly charged with the direction of the affairs of an individual school, who may or may not choose to delegate parts of their responsibility to the professional teachers "employed" by them.

Second, the local level of school administration with more or less control over the first level, only for one period in history specifically elected for educational purposes, and eventually employing a large staff of professional administrators to whom, again, is delegated more or less responsibility.

Third, on the level of national government, which also exerts its influence in a number of ways: Through Acts of Parliament; through the actions of elected members responsible for the Department of Education; and through the more or less autonomous actions of professional administrators or educationalists employed directly by the Department.

While schools were provided by individuals or organisations for their own interested or altruistic purposes, the first level was clearly all-powerful. It is argued here that since local and national government became interested in

education, the influence of local people, such as parents, teachers, managers and governors, on educational policy-making suffered a setback in the middle of the nineteenth century from which it has only begun to recover in the late twentieth century.

It is suggested that the following elements can be traced in a brief outline of the significant developments in educational policy-making and administration from 1839 to 1945:

An intensive bureaucratisation at central government level;

a similar process at local level;

the failure of local government to represent a cross-section of the population both when educational representatives were directly elected, and when appointed by County or County Borough Council;

the emasculation of managers and governors of schools, intended to represent local interests, by vague definition of role and by their subsequent control, from above by the local authority and its officers, and from below by the headteachers. (Until the Education Act, 1980, the term "manager" referred to primary schools and "governor" to secondary schools. Until 1903, the term "manager" applied to elementary schools, and was in general usage. I have reflected these changes in my use of the terms, although the function of the roles is in no way different.)

The embryonic forms of governing bodies were the boards of trustees responsible for establishing and administering English schools of all types from the sixth century on. At first these were exclusively Church-run institutions, but by the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries there was a growth in the number of schools run by bodies of laymen, such as Guilds and Companies, and increasingly by respectable and respected local residents charged with the management of schools established by wealthy citizens. All matters concerning the school were in the hands of such trustees, including the maintenance of the building and the appointment of teachers, but while some governing bodies took an active and day-to-day interest, it is clear that many regarded the task as of little importance, and left the running of the schools to incompetent, at times even corrupt, headmasters. However, religious foundations remained the most likely financiers of schools, particularly the non-conformists among the middle classes, as these were most likely to give a practical education suited to the commercial expansion of the nineteenth century.

The gradual encroachment of state intervention in education during the nineteenth century did little to clarify the question of who was to directly control schools. The National Society, and the British and Foreign Schools Society (respectively Established Church and Non-Conformist) which established schools covering a large part of the country, with the assistance of government grants, were naturally managed by

clerics and church-centred laymen. Only with the creation of the Government Education Office in 1839, originally merely an adjunct to the Privy Council Office and presided over by the Lord President, did school managers find themselves answerable to a higher authority.

While official control was exercised by the Committee of the Privy Council on Education with the Lord President at its head, it became increasingly difficult to say who was in fact accountable to Parliament for decisions taken. In 1856 it was considered necessary to appoint a Vice-President responsible for all matters relating to education, who sat in the House of Commons. Confusion still existed, particularly as there was no body of men whose duty was wholly accorded to education. The Vice-President transacted most of the business and was able to maintain much closer scrutiny of day-to-day decisions. Thus action taken by the Secretary of the Education Office, R.R.W. Lingen (1849-1869) (approval by the President being largely a formality), consequently had to be referred more frequently to the elected representative. Nevertheless the implication is that "the initiation of policy came from the Department rather than from the Lord President" [Hurt, 1971, p.155]. The latter faded more into the background over time, and the Department became "the prototype of the modern government office in which political heads do not know of, and cannot supervise, every action of the subordinates" [ibid, p.157].

The Privy Council Committee appointed inspectors to determine the size of grant to be accorded to individual schools in November 1839 - one Church of England, one Non-Conformist. The subsequent growth of the inspectorate made it necessary for the Committee to establish more clearly the limits of responsibility: "You are in no respect to interfere with the instruction, management or discipline of the school, or to press upon them any suggestion that they may be disinclined to receive . . . ". Inspectors were there to recommend grant aid and to "afford assistance", not to "exercise control", and certainly not "to offer any advice or information excepting where it is invited" [Guidance for Inspectors, August 1840, quoted in Gordon]. School managers, therefore, were not inclined to accept any authority from Government or its representatives except insofar as to obtain the grant available, and some developed rather nefarious practices in order to secure this. Inaccurate reports of the moral and professional qualities of teachers and pupil-teachers, disregard for the Department's health regulations, and manipulation of attendance figures, are recorded as having taken place on a wide scale. Certainly there is evidence of deliberate fraud in the keeping of school accounts by managers. The attitude of some managers can be summed up by an extract from H.M.I. the Reverend Blandford's report of 1857. One group of managers said to him of their old schoolmaster: "He is very incompetent, but we like him for he gives us no trouble, and is

very civil" [quoted in Hurt, 1971, p.47]. In future controversies, for example, the introduction of the Revised Code in 1862, the major concern of school managers was over the size of their grants and the place of religious education in the syllabus, while the development of teaching styles was largely ignored.

Thus the desire, and later the need, felt by central government to coordinate and assist the efforts made locally to provide schools for the population limited the autonomy of school managers by controlling the financial resources available. The need to retain such resources became an overriding concern among managers, no doubt raising standards in a number of schools, but making the managers answerable to a centralised bureaucracy rather than to the local clients.

In future, government would take an increasingly important role in financing educational provision, and would consequently dictate more strongly the form it should take and the local management it felt appropriate.

The earliest model of school management available from official sources is concerned not with state-supported schools, but is to be found in the Clarendon Report on the governing bodies of Public Schools (1864). The Report recommended that the powers of governors should include:

"The management of the property of the school and of its revenues, from whatever source derived, the control of its expenditure, the appointment of the Head Master, the regulation

of the boarding houses, of fees and charges, of Master's stipends, of the terms of admission to the school, and of the times and length of the vacations; the supervision of the general treatment of the boys, and all arrangements bearing on the sanitary condition of the school

. . . What should be taught, and what importance should be given to each subject are therefore questions for the Governing Body; how to teach is a question for the Head Master." [Clarendon Report, p.6].

The 1870 Education Act did little to alter the management structures of schools already in existence but it did, on the other hand, introduce for once a structure of local educational administration which was directly accountable to the people. The Act established state control over education through the newly-created agencies, the School Boards. The influence of the Churches, however, was strongly exerted, especially that of the established Church, which still owned many of the buildings.

The country was divided into School Districts, coinciding with either boroughs or civil parishes. School Boards were created where the provision of education was insufficient, or where requested. The size of these varied between five and fifteen members according to the population of the District, elected every three years by cumulative vote (i.e. each elector having as many votes as there were seats, and distributing them as he liked among the candidates). The franchise was the same as the burgess roll in a borough, or ratepayers in a parish

(i.e. including single women and widows with property). Eligibility to stand was not restricted, however. As Hurt [1979] reports, "the school boards created under the Elementary Education Act were the most democratically constituted of all elected bodies of local government. Members, who sat for three years, required neither a property nor a residential qualification. Although voters had to be ratepayers, they were all treated equally. Each had as many votes as there were seats on the board" [p.75]. Boards were empowered to make bye-laws enforcing school attendance between the ages of five and thirteen, and could draw upon the rates by issuing a precept to the local authority which could not be challenged. Both the extended representation, and the considerable powers accorded to Boards, brought much criticism from Church and State. They were "considered to be breeding grounds for radical agitators" [Sutherland, p.87]. Indeed, Hurt suggests that the 1870 debate was at least partly a political one about "the extent to which the schools should be under popular control . . . Essentially it was a conflict between protagonists of differing visions of society, for whosoever controlled the schools could influence the education of the rising generations in a state that was moving slowly . . . towards parliamentary democracy" [Hurt, 1979, p.76]. Much of the debate was certainly concerned with the degree to which the Act would enable ordinary people to take over the management of the schools from the representatives of rank and the Established Church. The

National Education League, representing largely nonconformists and the newly enfranchised, stood for national, universal, free, compulsory, lay-managed education. Opposing it, the National Education Union, supported by a number of prominent HMIs, claimed that the Act was "An Act for the ejection of the present good men and true from all future management of schools" [quoted in Hurt, 1979, p.78].

Simon makes out a strong case for the effectiveness of radical representation on the Boards:

"Indeed, to review the work of Socialist members of School Boards is to find them working on the practical plane to realize, step by step, the aims summarised in their programme as 'state maintenance'. In addition to the many activities already described they pressed for the free use of swimming baths by school children, the right to take them on educational visits to museums and botanical gardens, the development of school libraries. They spoke up on School Boards for improved salaries for teachers, equal pay for men and women, the raising of the leaving age to fourteen and even sixteen. It was to make the work of the Boards better known to electors that they pressed for the policy of displaying minutes of the Board's meetings in the city libraries, of changing the time of meetings to the evening and of allowing free use of the schools for public gatherings. In all these ways they sought to extend democratic control over the schools, to broaden education, and so to realize in practice - even under the most difficult and

distressing conditions in industrial cities - that broad view of the role and purpose of education which formed so essential an aspect of the socialist outlook." [Simon, 1965, p.158]

However, elections for the Boards were often used for purposes other than educational ones: "In Wales, for instance, school boards formed with great political enthusiasm to oust the influence of the English landowning classes and the Anglican church quickly lapsed into educational apathy in many villages" [Hurt, 1979, p.82].

While the cumulative vote was designed to effect minority representation, and there was a strong feeling that rural boards in particular could become platforms for dissenters and radicals [Sutherland], there is little evidence that membership represented the social structure of the nation accurately. Simon [1965] suggests that in 1896 there were only between 500 and 600 working men, or around 3 per cent of membership, on the Boards. By 1903, when the Boards were disbanded, there were an estimated 370 women members. Such figures suggest that the 1870 Act had created only a limited potential for radical composition of the Boards, and that factors other than mere electoral eligibility would be required to make Boards "representative". In Ringmer in Sussex, for example, the School Board held its first meeting in 1896 and comprised a middle-class membership, the larger landowners of the district maintaining their loyalty to the National School, and the working classes being largely unrepresented: "The vicar acted

as chairman and of the other four members, one was a farmer and two were from families engaged in trade." [Ambrose, p.36]. Since the appointment of school managers was the responsibility of the Boards, what evidence there is of the social background of managers supports this assertion. Managers within the London School Board District in 1884 were classified as follows:

Leisured classes	31%
Church	21%
Ladies	19 %
Professional classes	10%
Working classes	4 %

A report by the Reverend J.P. Norris visiting Church Schools in Cheshire, Shropshire and Staffordshire in 1858 showed that:

- 37% of schools were managed entirely by clergy, the management committees being inactive or non-existent;
- 43% by clergy with a management committee;
- 9% by clergy and the local squire;
- 5% entirely by the squire and his family;
- 3% by a local industrialist;
- 3% by a local lay committee. [Gordon, p.10]

Contemporary writings suggested that suitability for school management was defined by the candidate's education and leisure-time, knowledge of the school being comparatively unimportant.

The foundations for the modern structure of school administration were laid by the 1870 Act. Section 15 stated: "The School Board may . . . delegate any of the Powers under this Act except the power of raising money . . . to a body of managers appointed by them, consisting of not less than three persons." The practice of grouping a number of schools under one body of management was also established, allowing a "school management committee" to cover all the schools in a District.

Thus, while on a national level, Forster's 1870 Act might be seen as a step towards involving the general public in school management, and the Boards as encapsulating opportunities for radical bodies to influence educational policy-making, there is little evidence of a significant change in direction. While "The School Board Chronicle" campaigned vociferously for universal School Boards and universal compulsory attendance at schools for 5 to 13 year-olds, it was unlikely that Boards would enforce such bye-laws even if they were passed, particularly by those Boards in agricultural counties such as Leicestershire, where no Boards enforced attendance [Simon, 1968]. In 1876, the Conservative Government further undermined the potential of the Act for widening direct representation, by allowing School Attendance Committees to be appointed by the local authority in Districts where Boards were not required. Even where active and conscientious Boards did exist, Ambrose suggests " . . . that all decisions except for those of the most trivial nature were made by higher

authorities. For example, the decision to change the annual examinations from November to April was specified by Whitehall (1883). No longer, as in the case of (the dame school), were the curriculum and form of education locally prescribed." [Ambrose, p.36].

While it has been suggested, by Gordon for example, that many managers played an extremely important role in their schools, being deeply involved in inspections, staff appointments, fund-raising, supervision of teaching, even paying daily visits to the school and teaching themselves, just how answerable they were to the parents and local community is less clear. J.P. Norris, as an ex-H.M.I., wrote in 1869 that the control over administration of schools by such as the parson, the squire and the mill-owner, led to the parents' attachment to a school being proportionately loose: " . . . and hence much of the evils complained of - apathy, want of cooperation with the teachers, irregular attendance, removal of their children for the most frivolous reasons" [quoted in Gordon, p.175]. J.G. Wenham in 1878 criticised the system in words which might not be entirely inappropriate a century later: "There is no training school or training for Managers. Many, indeed, have by great pains and application overcome this difficulty, . . . but some do not see their deficiency, or trust to the light of Nature to make up for it, without any special effort on their own part; and much mischief is the result." [quoted in Hurt, 1971, p.289].

Thus, while School Boards directly appointed managers where necessary, from amongst themselves or from the local community, direct management of the schools remained largely in the hands of clerics and interested laymen. The first level of school control remained indirectly elected - although the involvement of managers in the day-to-day running of the schools was far more immediate - while the second level was, in most parts of the country and over the greater part of Leicestershire, directly accountable by election every three years. However, by 1880 the regulations issued by the Board of Education, and the demands made upon schools, had become so complex that the HMIs were adopting a more overtly advisory capacity in their dealings with managers, such as assisting with the appointment of staff and recommending changes in school organisation. The Mundella Code, particularly, introduced such complexity that the inspectors became more or less indispensable. Similarly, through the 1890s, inspectors became more distanced from the managers with the demise of the annual inspections demanded by "payment by results", and the initiation of visits without notice. The inspectors thus became authoritarian figures, endowed with significant financial powers and able to descend on schools without notice. Managers began to feel estranged from their schools [Gordon, p.74], and the teaching profession and the Department of Education started on the long climb to ascendancy in educational decision-making which would reach its zenith in the mid-twentieth century.

Other vital individuals whose importance increased with bureaucratisation were the clerks to the School Boards [Gordon, p.147], whose status was yet further enhanced by the formation of the Association of School Boards in 1893. This body encouraged the professionalisation of clerks, while the inspectors appointed by many Boards ensured that local school inspection was carried out by professionals rather than laymen such as school managers. Thus the last two decades of the century saw the laying of the foundations of the present local government system of educational management.

Simultaneously, a revolution was taking place in local government in England. Redlich wrote in 1903 of "the marvellous increase in the efficiency of local government and the equally marvellous growth in its functions", and added that "the gradual substitution of a democratic for a privileged franchise has not done away with the governing classes . . . democracy was not found to have deprived the upper classes of political leadership". The debate leading up to the 1902 Act which swept away the School Boards and gave responsibility for education to the local authorities established in 1888, was concerned with the twin ideals of democracy and efficiency in school administration. For example, the Bryce Commission on Secondary Education (1895), which led to the establishment of the Board of Education, also recommended that separate local authorities for secondary education should be created. It further recommended that "governing bodies independent within their own

spheres of the Local Authority" should have supervision over management, teaching and curriculum matters, and that there should be cooperation between the head and his governing body, rather than an employer/employee relationship.

An attempt to make the professional administrator at the same time more powerful and more immediately accountable to the electorate, along the lines of the American model, failed with the defeat of Gorst's Education Bill of 1896. The duties of the local education authority were devolved upon County and County Borough Councils in 1902, despite strong opposition from non-conformists, liberals, radicals, and trade unionists. Each authority was to create an Education Committee consisting of members elected for a variety of reasons and on a non-specific manifesto. The era of direct election of local lay educational management had come to an end. Local authorities were compelled not only to take over all existing Board Schools, but also to take responsibility for the finances of Church-owned voluntary schools which remained under predominantly clerical management. These latter also retained the right to appoint their own managers.

The ensuing years saw a series of Regulations issued by the Board of Education designed to clarify the relationships between teachers, managers, local government, and central government. In the school year 1902-03, the Regulations read " . . . every school must be under the superintendence of a body of Managers responsible to the Board". It was possible for

the Education Committee of a local authority itself to be the managing body of a school or group of schools, thus bringing the grouping of schools into the era of the local education authority. In the 1903-04 Regulations, the word "governors" supercedes "managers" of state secondary schools for the first time. In 1904-05, the Regulations included a statement of policy regarding governors: "The Board regard it as of great importance both that local interest in the management of schools should be preserved and developed." In 1907-08, it was stated that governing bodies were to include a majority of governors appointed by the local authority "or elected by local popular constituencies". No record exists of the latter alternative being taken up. The Governing Body was to appoint and dismiss headteachers, subject to the approval of the local authority. In 1908, model instruments and articles were issued by the Board to be adopted by local authorities where desired.

The evolution of the role of school managers/governors under the control of central government can be seen quite clearly in the Regulations quoted above. Any doubt as to the dependence of the manager on his local authority could have been dispelled by reference to A.J. Balfour's speech in Manchester in October, 1902, reported in the Times (15.10.02) and quoted in Hurt [1971, p.263]: "I think some of the difficulty has arisen owing to a misunderstanding of one of the terms used in the Government Bill, the term 'managers'. I think it is very natural that anybody who saw the term 'manager' in

the Bill would say, 'These are the people who have got control of the schools'. It is a mistake, but it is a natural mistake. I do not think it is a mistake for which either the Government draughtsmen or the Government are responsible, because we have borrowed the term 'manager' from the preceding Act of 1870: 'management' and 'manager' are terms which do not carry with them the idea of 'control'." In 1918, the Fisher Education Act specified that teachers might not be managers of their own school.

By the 1920s a paternalistic structure of school administration had been built up over the country which effectively excluded parents and teachers, and which did not allow for the direct accountability of those elected members responsible for it. The relationship between local authorities and their clients is summed up by Professor J.J. Findlay, writing in 1923: " . . . for the very idea of elementary education sprang from pity for poor folk who could not organize, could not pay, could not realize what was good for their children. It is not surprizing, therefore, that the organizers of schooling from the first compulsory Act of 1870 to the last of 1918 treated 'the parent' as a prospective enemy, to be coerced by threat of summons and penalty." [Findlay, p.130].

Governing and Managing Bodies responsible for the schools under the control of Local Authority Education Committees were, in effect, sub-committees of the Education Committee. The

majority of governors and managers were to be appointed by the County or County Borough Council and the second tier authority, and so reflected their political structure. Thus educational policy-making came into the hands of lay politicians elected for their commitment to general issues other than education. Parliament retained the overall right to dictate the nature and structure of education through parliamentary bills, Board regulations, and conditional financial support, but delegated responsibility for the provision of elementary and secondary education to the local authority.

Meanwhile, the role of the professional administrator had grown since the days of the clerk to School Boards. The 1902 Act had stated that local authorities were to appoint a full-time education officer to implement the policies of the Education Committee. His status varied according to the authority, as did his title. The City of Leicester, for example, appointed a Secretary to the Education Committee, whereas the County of Leicestershire appointed William (later Sir William) Brockington to the post of Director of Education. The development of educational decision-making in the inter-war years was dominated by the evolution of bureaucratic structures of administration in local government, and did not see any changes in the participatory role of local politicians or lay public. Only local initiatives, such as those of Henry Morris in Cambridgeshire, attempted to redefine the governor's role. Morris wanted his Village Colleges to be governed by a body

responsible to the local education authority, and consisting of the managing body of the senior elementary school, members appointed by the County Council representing local interests to supervise the higher education provided, a representative appointed by the Senate of Cambridge University, and representatives of other local interests, for example, the Parish Council as owners of the Recreation Ground associated with each college [Baron and Howell, 1974, and Ree].

During the formulation of the next major piece of education legislation, it was the two major elements of professional interest, the headteachers and the chief education officers, whose cooperation was required in the drafting of the clauses on administration. Thus, after lengthy consultations with the Incorporated Association of Headmasters and the Association of Directors and Secretaries of Education, clause 16 of the 1944 Education Act merely stated that all secondary schools were to have their own instruments and articles of government (those of County secondary schools requiring the approval of the Ministry), and that the position of the head in relation to the governing body was to be settled in these articles. Two amendments which aimed to increase the effectiveness of governing bodies failed during the passage of the bill. The first aimed to secure parental representation, the second to limit the number of schools grouped under one body. The Ministry of Education issued a Command Paper following the Act, which set out its philosophy of school

government. This stated that there was general agreement that the interests of teaching staff, parents and ex-scholars should be represented on the governing body, but that there was felt to be no need for specific nomination of governors for such purposes, and it was left to local authorities to decide how far and in what ways these needs should be met. The response of the local authorities to this will be seen later.

Model Instruments and Articles were issued by the Ministry in 1945. In the Instruments, representative governors were to be appointed by the local education authority, and coopted. No persons employed "for the purposes of the school" were to be eligible. The Articles specified three areas for which the governing body was to be responsible: The inspection of school premises and keeping the local education authority informed of their condition; determining the use of the premises after school hours; appointing the headteacher, assistant teachers and non-teaching staff. Paragraph Eight of the Model Articles then attempts to define the roles of governing body and headteacher:

"(a) The L.E.A. shall determine the general educational character of the school and its place in the local education system. Subject thereto the Governors shall have the general direction of the conduct and curriculum of the school.

(b) Subject to the provisions of these Articles the Headmaster (sic) shall control the internal organization, management and discipline of the school, shall exercise

supervision over the teaching and non-teaching staff, and shall have the power of suspending pupils from attendance for any cause which he considers adequate but on suspending any pupil he shall forthwith report the case to the Governors, who shall consult the L.E.A."

The Ministry further recommended that there should be full consultation at all times between the head and his (sic) chairman (sic) of governors, and that proposals and reports affecting the conduct and curriculum of the school should be submitted formally to the Governors. The head should attend the meetings of the governing body, and arrangements should be made to enable teaching staff to submit their views and proposals to the governors through the head.

Following the major piece of educational legislation of the twentieth century, the situation can then be summarised as follows:

Central government retained overall control of education by legislation, regulations and advice issued by the Ministry, and financial support;

The elected members of the County and County Borough Councils, acting as the local education authority, were to appoint an Education Committee responsible for the provision of compulsory and non-compulsory education as provided by the Act;

Policies decided upon by the Committee were to be implemented by the Chief Education Officer and his

administrative team;

Governing and Managing Bodies of individual schools or groups of schools, appointed by the elected members of the local authority, were to meet three times a year to direct the conduct and curriculum of the school;

These were not to include staff of the school, and there was no specific provision for them to include parents and ex-scholars, although this was recommended by the Ministry;

The head's relationship with the governing body was to be determined by the local authority.

The status of the governing body, then, was viewed as largely peripheral to the central issues of educational policy-making. Its role as seen by central government, and by local government, was a purely functional one, where significant decisions on the structure and social role of education were to be taken by the local authorities. As will be seen in Chapters Three and Four, this left a wide field of policy-making open to the professional, whose full-time commitment, experience and expertise allowed a virtual monopoly of power.

CHAPTER 3

School Management 1945 - 1980

It is my intention in this section to isolate some of the features of the management and government of schools as constituted in the 1944 Act, as they have been identified by others. I will then look at some of the steps taken to increase the effectiveness of lay representation in school administration.

While the first major piece of research into school government [Baron and Howell, 1974] showed a tremendous variety of practice among local authorities within the limits set by the 1944 Act, the overall impression conveyed by their results is that effective school government was not generally regarded as an issue worth pursuing. This seems to have been particularly the case in County Boroughs. Of 78 County Boroughs in England:

21 (27%) had governing bodies for each school;

25 (32%) had governing bodies for groups of 2 or 3 schools;

12 (15%) had governing bodies for groups of 4 or more schools;

20 (26%) had one governing body for all schools.

Of 45 Counties:

22 (49%) had governing bodies for each school;

20 (44%) had a mixture of provision;

3 (7%) had governing bodies for groups of schools only.

Both official reports [Plowden, Taylor] and other writers [for example, Bacon and Ambrose] tend to support the view presented by Baron and Howell that governing bodies in the late 1960s "more than most of our institutions . . . show the inadequacy, in the urban technological and impersonal society in which we live, of earlier political and administrative models, with their over-emphasis on the decision-making as opposed to the decision-influencing agencies, with their narrow view of accountability, and with their assumption that participation of all kinds must be thought of in terms of the representation of major political and other interest groups. Because of their dependent position, managing and governing bodies display, often in an acute form, the atrophying influence of such models" [Baron and Howell, pp.212-13].

The impotence of governing bodies was the inevitable outcome of three elements constraining them: First, constraints imposed by professional educationalists, be they senior administrators or teachers; second, constraints imposed by the political elements of local government; third, the deliberate or unintentional failure of central government to define clearly the governors' role in school-level decision-making.

(a) Professional constraints

It has been observed above that the operation of the 1870 Act, by the establishment of School Boards, many of these being large urban centralised boards with responsibilities for a considerable number of schools, introduced the need for a full-time professional bureaucracy to cope with the increasingly complex demands of the system. The Mundella Act of 1880 made the framing of attendance bye-laws compulsory for all School Boards and Attendance Committees and further complicated the already tangled web of requirements for financial support, thus emphasising the need for professional administration. A profession needs a means of communication between its members in order to develop professional solidarity and credibility, and the formation of the Association of Clerks to School Boards in 1893 provided this. The 1902 Balfour Act enshrined the position of Secretaries and Directors of Education in law, and "this new breed fought tenaciously to free their authorities from the tight central control that the Board of Education hoped to establish. Men such as William Brockington in Leicestershire and Percival Sharp in Newcastle and Sheffield had, however, by the 1920s firmly established the importance and influence of the office . . . " [Brooksbank, p.22]. The centralising of the ratification of educational policy-making in County Councils elected on a variety of issues, led to the need for ever more full-time officials. Bacon suggests that "in the twentieth century, we have seen a gradual decline in the

availability of opportunities for this kind of lay participation, and a seemingly inexorable drift of power towards the administrator and the teaching profession" [Bacon, p.30]. A study of both contemporary and modern writings, however, suggests that it is unlikely that a golden age of lay participation ever actually existed.

With the growth in complexity of educational administration during this century, the termly meetings required of the governing body became increasingly less relevant to the day-to-day running of the school, which was essentially a matter for direct contact between the headteacher and the administrator, by-passing not only the governing body but the Education Committee itself. Vast increases in the budgets available to Education Departments gave more freedom to the officers running them, allowing them to augment or even override political decisions. The element written into the Instruments of Government of most schools in the country, that the clerk to the Governors is the Chief Education Officer or an officer nominated by him, allows statements of Education Department policy to be made directly to governing bodies when necessary. The importance attached to this role can be seen by the nomination of very senior officers, if not the Chief Officer or Area Officer himself, to the post in senior schools in many counties, whereas primary schools would normally have to make do with a low-ranking clerical officer. (In Leicestershire, for example, not only were junior officers

required to clerk a greater number of less senior establishments than did their superiors, but they were also paid less overall for the task.)

One of the major tasks of the administrative officer is to interpret Government policy to his Education Committee and to the schools in his charge. Such interpretations could be highly idiosyncratic, and framed to meet the individual requirements of the officer, as in a dispute in Lancashire in 1980. Here, the Chief Education Officer blocked a request from a member of the public to discover the identities of the governors at one particular school, on the basis that Department of Education and Science Circular 15/77 set out "the nature and extent of the information she (the then Secretary of State) considers should normally be made available to parents in written form". While it may be argued that the intention of the circular, to publicly disclose the identities of governors, was quite clear, the words "made available to parents" gave an education officer sufficient leeway to quote the circular as grounds for withholding this information.

Baron and Howell concluded that, more important than the structure of governing bodies in a particular local authority, "is the personality and interest of the chief education officer, and in particular the extent to which he can get his own way with the committee" [Baron and Howell, p.68].

Governing bodies must have frequently felt themselves to be the focus of a pincer movement by professionals when they

regarded the influence, if not power, of the administration on the one hand, and the daily practical control of the headteacher over the school on the other. Such suspicions can only have been confirmed by the publication of evidence submitted to the Royal Commission on Local Government in England 1966-69 (Vol.1 Report), where the D.E.S., the Association of Education Committees and the Association of County Councils all supported individual governing bodies of increased representativeness and influence, but the National Association of Divisional Executives and the National Union of Teachers showed considerably less enthusiasm [Royal Commission on Local Government, 1966-69]. However, the difference between County Councils' and County Borough Councils' attitudes towards governing bodies, exemplified in the figures given at the beginning of this chapter, is reinforced by Baron and Howell, where the County officers are quoted as being not generally in agreement with the views expressed "by some of their colleagues in the county boroughs that such systems were administratively too expensive, or that suitable people could not be found in sufficient numbers to serve as governors" [Baron and Howell, p.71].

Nevertheless, this research claims not only that governors themselves had grounds to feel that they had little to offer to the headteacher beyond, perhaps, a personal knowledge of the neighbourhood in which the school is situated, but that the majority of heads felt that, generally speaking, governors were

ineffective in the one field where it is often maintained that they could be of most use, that is, intervention with the local authority on the school's behalf.

The Taylor Report summarised the position:

"There was little evidence to show that, at the time of the study, the standard provision in the articles that 'the governors shall have the general direction of the conduct and curriculum of the school' was taken seriously. Heads invariably maintained that they were entirely responsible for deciding what was taught, although they kept governors informed of any changes of note. Similarly, the most frequent response from governors was that they felt that the curriculum should be left to the head and his staff." Furthermore, " . . . involvement in financial matters was very slight indeed and seldom went beyond receiving and formally approving estimates drawn up elsewhere" [DES, 1977(b), 2:9 and 2:10].

In the course of the introduction of more representative and influential governing bodies in Sheffield, pre-empting the Taylor Report (and discussed below), Bacon claims that the initial reaction of the headteachers was one of extreme concern. He suggests two apparently contradictory reasons for this: First, the concern of professional conservation of power, and second, the fear that the innovatory role of the head would be limited. Neither of these fears, claims Bacon, was borne out by events.

Confrontations between headteachers and their governors are apparently rare but, perhaps for this very reason, are well documented when they do occur. The best-known case, that of the William Tyndale Junior School, has been exhaustively recounted by all sides involved and many not, and will be discussed briefly below, as it illustrates a combination of elements conspiring towards the downfall of a school. Occasionally, however, a headteacher appears to overstep the imaginary boundary line of his sphere of influence, as when a Leicestershire junior school headmaster notified parents that his school would henceforward be closing down for the midday break. The chairman of managers, unusually for a junior school a County Councillor, made his response to this action quite clear: "A special meeting will be called to put (the headmaster) in his place. He can't make a decision like this without proper consultation. There's going to be a row over this." [Quoted in the Leicester Mercury, 29 March, 1980]. Whether this unusual bout of public frankness was the culmination of a long-standing disagreement between the head and his chairman is unclear, although the Councillor's discomfort may have been increased by his knowledge that the head was merely pre-empting a County Council decision by a matter of months. A brief perusal of the school's Articles of Management for a clear description of the place where the headteacher was to be put may have further discomfited the Councillor.

What evidence exists, then, suggests that, at the end of the 1970s, governors operated in very few areas of decision-making which were not challenged by either the authority's officers or headteachers. The full-time commitment and expertise of the professionals, if it did not actually by-pass the governing body, could whittle away at the lay representatives' broad policy decisions by the daily contact they had with the schools. Territories had been staked out, and the governing bodies found themselves in something of a no-man's land.

(b) Political constraints

The role of political parties in local government is particularly ill-researched [see Dearlove]. It is, for example, widely maintained that party politics only became a significant factor during the nineteen-seventies, and gained further impetus from local government reorganisation coinciding with the development of corporate management techniques. This, it is argued, permitted small groups of ruling party leaders to take direct control over the finances [see Jennings]. Whether this is the case, or whether what was seen was the culmination of the nationwide emergence of the Labour Party in the sphere of local government, a process which effectively began in the thirties, it is certain that by the seventies the lack of a party label was a serious bar to an aspirant county or district councillor [Hennock, p.13]. Although this seems to imply that

the British are a nation dominated by party political membership, the proportion of the population actually enrolled remains small. In 1977, the Labour Party recorded a membership of 6,754,000, but only 660,000 were individual members, the remainder qualifying through Trade Unions and Cooperative Societies. The Conservative Party does not publish membership figures, but an estimate in 1975 put it at about 1 million [Butler and Sloman]. The peak of party membership seems to have been reached around 1950, so there has been, if anything, a slackening-off of interest and involvement.

Nevertheless, while the parties saw themselves as the democratically elected representatives of the people, there is general agreement that the late nineteen-sixties saw an increasing demand for open government at all levels, "a growing recognition, both locally and nationally, that England needed a more open style of local government in which the existence of local interests and pressure groups was formally acknowledged, in the sense that new participatory structures were created to provide an avenue through which people could be consulted about those decisions most effecting [sic] their everyday world . . ." [Bacon, p.50; Pateman].

Bacon maintains that the impetus for this movement came principally from the Labour Party, suggesting that it was partly as a result of the broadening base of Labour support, enveloping middle and lower-middle class professional people with the time, money and will to have their say. A Sheffield

Labour Party manifesto for 1969 lends credence to this view: "Labour wants to promote the widest participation in the running of schools by parents, teachers, trade unionists, people from all walks of life . . . (the reorganisation of governing bodies) will be amongst the most ambitious attempts at local democracy ever attempted in a large city" [quoted in Bacon, p.51].

Sallis, writing with predominantly London experience, reports a contrary view: "A large number of authorities would be very reluctant to give up political majorities and/or chairmanships. The reluctance seems even greater, on the whole, in Labour-controlled authorities . . . Conservative authorities can afford to be more relaxed about the actual formal majority control, because they are usually so good at exercising discipline by various gentlemanly means, such as chairmanship, cooption, links through common adherence to 'circuits' of various kinds such as local firms, the Chamber of Commerce, the Rotary Club, sports clubs, etc." [Sallis, 1977, p.35].

The evidence seems to demonstrate the persistence of a paternalistic, party-controlled attitude to governing bodies whereby County Councillors of the ruling party, having the power to appoint their own nominees to the majority of seats on governing bodies, reserve them either for themselves or for their supporters. Both for these, and for others who are allowed to join in the game or watch from the sidelines, the lines of power are tightly drawn. It is not even clear whether

apolitical governors are appointed for what they have to offer, or merely as a sop to demands for wider representation: "I do not think the present system has led to schools being managed or governed badly. The problem is much more one of giving an outlet for the aspirations of those who would like to become Governors; in other words, any need for a change in the system is not educational at all, but is a purely social demand" [letter from Toby Jessel MP, 21/6/73, quoted in Sallis, 1977, p.41].

Thus Brooksbank suggests: " . . . since the mid-1960s that local government in England and Wales has become more and more political in its activities . . . With major areas of social policy such as housing, social services and education vested in local authorities it has also been remarked that the headquarters of the Conservative, Labour and Liberal parties have all significantly increased their activities in influencing the policies of local authorities, both individually and collectively through the associations of local authorities." [Brooksbank, p.16].

It could therefore hardly be expected that groups which had successfully sought inclusion in governing bodies in some parts of the country throughout the seventies, such as parents, would be able to wield much influence once there. Parents had very little political or organisational muscle with which to mount any opposition to those representing well-established interests. The very nature of the electoral process weakens

their position. Among the various methods used of holding elections, such as a letter sent home through the pupils, a special meeting, or a Parent-Teacher Association meeting, some secret, some open, Bacon found that barely four per cent of the electorate participated. Neither did those elected represent identifiable pressure groups or constituencies among the parents: " . . . rather they were chosen because they were well-known local personalities, members of local action groups, or simply people whose name came at the top of a list" [Bacon, p.123]. While this gave parent representatives considerable freedom of action, it did not invest them with an authority to be respected by governors appointed by more conventional if no more democratic means.

The process by which County Council appointments are made lies in the hands of the ruling party. Most frequently, in order to secure some continuity in the event of a change in ruling party after Council elections, the local parties put forward names in a ratio equivalent to the representation of parties on the Council. This process will normally apply to the appointment of representatives on all outside bodies. Minor authorities, where applicable, had a statutory right to nominations, which normally operated in a similar way. The governing bodies were appointed by the full Council, and could only be removed by them. However, any apparent mismanagement of this operation could rapidly lead to the breakdown of this inter-party agreement. Deadlock was easily reached, as in the

Liverpool Housing Committee in 1979 when the Liberals, the largest single party but with no absolute majority, refused to accept the chairmanship in the knowledge that the implementation of their policies could be blocked by the combined Labour and Conservative Councillors. In Leicestershire, the Oadby and Wigston Conservative Borough Council was strongly criticised for holding 97% of appointments to educational bodies, although they held only 77% of the seats on the council. The chairman of General Purposes Committee was prepared to fly in the face of general custom: "People voted for a Conservative Council and that is what they have representing them" [Leicester Mercury, 25/6/80].

Powerful party groups could also flex their political muscles in the dismissal of governors. In the London Borough of Haringey in 1979, three governors of Creighton Comprehensive School, including Professor Harry Ree, were removed by the ruling Labour group after they refused to vote in favour of a school caretakers' strike. Here the party omitted to observe such formalities as telling the governors of their decision, or presenting a formal proposal to the full Council. The Local Government Commissioner pointed out that "only the Council can appoint and remove the governors of their maintained schools whatever informal arrangements may exist between the political parties represented on the Council . . . it cannot be good administration let alone fair to the individuals concerned to appoint new governors before those they are to replace have

been removed from office or even told that they are about to be removed" [Commission for Local Government, 1980]. The Commissioner found the Council guilty of maladministration. The action of the Labour Party members here reveals a cynical attitude to the practice of political nomination, removing three of their own appointments, two being prominent educationalists, the third chairman of the local Community Relations Council, on the simple failure of an amendment to a proposal referring to a local caretakers' strike. Clearly the party's commitment to purposeful and informed governing bodies stopped short of the minimum of political discomfort.

Kogan et al [1973, p.179] recounts how all the governors of Dudley Grammar School resisting its reorganisation into a comprehensive school were summarily removed by the Council.

Such activities inevitably brought the practice of political appointments into question, and into disrepute, amongst governors themselves, amongst the excluded public, and amongst the professionals. These last were inclined to view the introduction of corporate management techniques as another vehicle for politicising educational administration, removing it from the control of experts and putting it into the hands, not of lay people, but of party ideologists [Brooksbank, Kogan]. The Secretary of the Society of Education Officers said in October, 1980, that the education of the nation was "too important to be controlled by corporate politicians and bureaucrats who neither know nor care what the needs and

responsibilities, the obligations and aspirations of the education service really are" [Times Educational Supplement, 24/10/80].

By 1980, then, local political parties had control over the large majority of appointments to governing bodies, and retained control over many of the activities of governors, either from outside, through the Education Committee and its officers, or from inside through the chairman, who would normally be a party member.

The strangely ambivalent attitude towards the different roles of lay participants - be they councillors or governors - and professionals is exemplified, Regan [1977] suggests, by the implementation of a clause in the 1944 Act. Every education committee was required to "include persons of experience in education and persons acquainted with the educational conditions prevailing in the area for which the committee acts". It is usually assumed that the role of lay participants is to act upon the professional advice given by officers, thus obviating the need for such expertise on the committee itself. However, as Regan notes: "In the overwhelming majority of cases, however, education committees fulfil their statutory obligation by co-opting representatives of teachers, religious denominations, industry, commerce, agriculture and perhaps others with special interests or experience. Indeed DES Circular 8/73 makes it clear that co-option is today considered essential and that new education committee proposals are

unlikely to be approved by the secretary of state unless they contain provision for co-option. By law two-thirds of the committee must be elected members, and the department urges that full use of co-option up to this limit be made; between one quarter and one third should be co-optees." [Regan, 1977, pp. 24-25].

It is certainly a peculiarity of the education system that councillors should feel so reluctant to determine policy without the presence on the committee itself of non-elected experts. It perhaps demonstrates a need to feel that the demands of participatory, rather than representative, democracy are being met [see e.g. Pateman]. It was this element of participation, with the balanced representation of interest groups rather than democratic election as a basis for membership, which was taken up, as will be seen, by the Taylor Committee and later used by the Conservative Government as the foundation for the 1986 Education Act in the composition of Governing Bodies.

(c) Definition of Role

Perhaps the principal weakness of the governor's role was enshrined in the Model Instruments and Articles of Government published in 1945 by the Ministry of Education. The pressures created by the numerous professional and political interest groups resulted in an anodyne and ambiguous document which, as noted above, failed to leave the governing body with any area

of responsibility it could properly call its own.

No more dramatic illustration of this can be given than the case of the William Tyndale Junior School. Here a group of governors, consisting principally of representatives of the new, broader base of the Labour Party in the London Borough of Islington, found themselves increasingly out of sympathy with the policies of the newly appointed headteacher and deputy. Aided by one member of staff, and the considerable influence of Labour Councillors on the Borough Council (which had no responsibility for, or official links with, the Inner London Education Authority), the relationships between staff and governors deteriorated to the point where the former no longer allowed access to the school to the latter. That a headteacher can order his chairman of governors from the school and that, in subsequent hearings, no-one could be quite sure whether or not he had the power to do it, brought strong criticism from the independent lawyer conducting the Inquiry. The subsequent report concluded that, had areas of responsibility and the relationships between elected and appointed representatives and professionals been at all clearly defined, the crisis need never have arisen [Auld, 1976].

During the 1970s, various attempts were made to strengthen the position of governing bodies. The National Association of Governors and Managers emerged as a pressure group to provide information and training for those appointed, as well as to encourage the government to review the situation. Burgess and

Sofer's comprehensive handbook was one result of this. The Advisory Centre for Education campaigned widely for more representative governing bodies and, similarly, offered guidance and advice to governors. These and similar publications attempted to tackle in a systematic way the actual duties of the governing body, and to encourage members to break down the common (it was assumed) reluctance of headteachers and politicians to alter the comfortable, and unaccountable, status quo. The question of responsibility towards the electoral constituency was tackled; the workings of educational administration were recounted, with explanations of the part that could be played by the active lay participant. The areas dealt with, normally in the same order of priority, reflected the preoccupations of governors as Baron and Howell reported them: Buildings, finance, staffing (including appointments), suspensions, the conduct and curriculum of the school, and school visiting. Considerable emphasis was laid on "how to behave properly" as a governor, raising concepts like corporate responsibility, confidentiality, and conduct of meetings. Clearly one of the concerns of such pressure groups as the NAGM and ACE was that the very nature of school government, its formality, its committee structure, operated against the effective involvement of the volunteer. Much as there is a common belief that the calibre of local councillors has deteriorated throughout the century (see Chapter 5), in proportion to the advent of members of the working class into

local government, so there was the unavoidable feeling here that the new governors, in order to legitimise their role, had to learn to play the game by the rules set down and honoured since the system was created.

The involvement of the public in school government, then, is limited by professional and political interests and the failure of central government to legislate for a clear definition of role. Before looking at those steps which were taken in the 1970s to alter the traditional pattern, I intend to refer briefly to the way in which some educationalists have consistently shown eagerness to involve parents in schools, while actual practice has changed remarkably little.

Where full-time professionals, be they teachers or administrators, are concerned, there is a clear need to define legal responsibilities and duties. This has been exacerbated in education, where ownership of property is involved, and it has been noted above how the legal question of ownership and finance of buildings in education, particularly where the state has needed to negotiate with the churches, concentrated the legislators' minds in a whole succession of bills from 1836 to 1944. An example of this took place in the 1920s in Prestolee in Lancashire, where the ostensible motive for the removal of O'Neill as headmaster by his governing body was the use of school buildings after hours by pupils and their parents [G. Holmes]. Nevertheless, the lack of involvement by parents in

their children's education has consistently been deplored by official bodies, both in the early days as noted above, and recently. One cannot but feel, however, that a closer liaison between home and school is only encouraged if it is to be on the teacher's own terms, and as a means of educating the parents towards the aims of the school. If all else fails, teachers can point to the numerous Acts of Parliament and official publications which legitimise their activities, but parents have no similar legal support:

"Most people now recognize how important it is for home and school to work together . . . Parents should take the trouble to learn about the school and what it is trying to do for their children; in return the school must take into account how the child lives at home. This means the school having relations with, and accepting a duty towards, the parents of its pupils . . . Associations of parents and teachers, and parents' committees working in close cooperation with the school, have done much in this direction, especially where the parents are given the chance to enter into some of the school activities. In this way, parents are encouraged to take an interest in all that goes on in the school; its aims are explained, they meet other parents, and come to realize the world of knowledge and opportunity which is opening before their children . . . Although such associations are of great value, the best kind of cooperation between home and school springs from the attitude shown in the day-to-day life of the

school; for if a parent feels he is welcome, his confidence is won, and once his confidence is won he will support the teachers in what they are trying to do." [Ministry of Education, 1947, pp.18-19, my emphases].

While the aim of such proselytising may be laudable, I suggest that it is unlikely that the paternalistic and protective tone of this report would gain much genuine support from parents, who may prefer that the teacher should, on occasion, come to them, as opposed to the implication of predominantly one-way traffic here.

The Newsom Report [DES, 1963] actually speaks of the need for the school to be joined to its community by "a causeway well trodden in both directions", an image which does little to satisfy those parents wanting to be part of a genuine partnership in their children's education.

The Plowden Report, much praised for its recommendations towards constructive parental involvement in schools, retains a certain underlying pragmatism in its attitudes: "Schools can exercise their influence not only directly upon children but also indirectly through their relationship with parents." [DES, 1967, p.36].

The influence, indeed power, that parents can wield if they know the rules was nowhere more clearly demonstrated than at William Tyndale, where the governors who gave most impetus to the action against the head were those who had children at the school. This was also true of those who supported the head

with the greatest commitment. The implication in two accounts of the episode [Ellis at al, and Gretton and Jackson] is that the critics were experienced middle-class activists, and the supporters working-class ingenus incapable of tackling the bureaucratic and political machinery. Gretton and Jackson support this with an account of similar events at a junior school on a modern council estate in south-west London: "As with William Tyndale, a popular headteacher with a progressive image had attracted a lot of middle-class children from outside the immediate catchment area, but a new headteacher had been unable to maintain the image; the middle-class parents had withdrawn their children, and the estate parents were in an uproar. Untutored in the ways of pressure groups (they got a petition and sent it off to County Hall but did not keep a copy of it) and unfamiliar with the way a school is run (they did not even know that there was such an animal as a parent manager - a manager elected by parents), they did not end by bringing the whole edifice down about their ears." [Gretton and Jackson, p.48].

Much emphasis is laid in official reports such as Plowden upon the difficulty of enlisting the attendance and hence the support of working-class families. Rarely, though, are there any explanations to accompany the evidence. Rather, a constant string of platitudes recurs, such as "encouraging involvement", "winning confidence". Teachers themselves do not manage to produce a much better record. A Home/School Workshop took place

in Sheffield, the city which pioneered reform in school government long before the Taylor Report was commissioned. The Report, based on an in-service course attended by thirty-one primary school teachers, considered "the implications of working with colleagues and parents in the development of a home/school programme" [Watson and Johnston, 1979, p.1]. Throughout the report no reference is made to the inclusion of parents in the course, or of the opinions of any parents. In a section entitled "Educating the Parents", the principal question asked is: "What would teachers like the parents to know about education?" [p.19]. "It is extremely important", the authors assert, "that parents know what the teachers want them to know about education" [p.20]. "Parents should be allowed the opportunity to participate in practical learning situations" [p.23, my emphasis]. In a section entitled "What's in it for the teacher?" the answer is "A lot of extra work . . . as time passes parents will clearly recognize the vast amount of hard work which a teacher has to put in to a normal day. Experience has shown that parents will not be long in voicing their appreciation and admiration." While the teacher's reward for all this extra, uncalled-for effort is much deserved praise, the parent is rewarded with "An awareness that they are forming a genuine relationship with their child's teacher" [p.29]. In order to reassure teachers that parents will retain a sufficiently respectful attitude, we are told that "Parents will usually rely on the professional expertise of the teachers

. . . It is when talking with teachers that most parents will make decisions about what might be the best course of action to take when dealing with the interests or problems of their own child" [p.35]. Eventually the report deals with the crucial element which parents can offer, that is, the one area where they feel totally at ease: "Experience has shown that parents may enjoy the challenge of organizing fund-raising activities. The teachers should clearly make efforts to show interest in what is going on, and quite probably the school will be used to hold some of these events: in which case, staff may wish to come along on the evening and take part in some small way. The teachers' role in any of the fund-raising activities should be basically supportive, as this is one area where the parents can make a very real contribution and quite often are far better equipped to cope. It may well be that parents can play a significant part in deciding with teachers how the money raised can best be spent." [p.38].

In quoting extensively from this document, I do not intend to assert that all teachers are as severely protective of their professional domain as is implied here. It is, however, significant that such attitudes could still be published seriously at the end of the 1970s, in an authority highly regarded for its steps towards meaningful lay involvement, and despite the William Tyndale affair, the Taylor Report, the "Great Debate", and the impending 1980 Education Act.

As Regan [1977] reports: "When it comes to running schools, parents have generally been kept firmly at arm's length." It is hardly surprising that a survey of pre-school groups carried out in 1980 should conclude that more than half the parents already involved wanted to take a greater part in their children's education and two-thirds of those not involved would like to have been. "Parents show considerably greater interest in their children's pre-school experience than the staff in charge of children's groups appear to take into account . . . Open access and shared experience . . . do not necessarily on their own bring about better understanding and greater knowledge . . . parents may need far more explanation and discussion than they are given at present." [Smith, 1980].

Across the whole age-range of statutory education, and in areas where parental participation has for long been officially recognised as only beneficial to all the interested parties, exhortation has achieved little, it seems. While no statutory duty existed to involve parents, formally or informally, teachers continued to protect their professional status by adopting attitudes of superiority and condescension which other professions, with a far less frequent need to rely on public cooperation, could hardly better.

In the face of this, the 1970s saw a number of attempts to formalise parental and public participation in school government. In the next section I intend to look at the most significant of these attempts.

CHAPTER 4

The Decade of Participation

Progress towards a wider participation of interest groups such as parents, teachers and the local community in schools' governing bodies must be seen within the wider national context of opening up the process of government at a local level. This chapter will briefly look at the ways in which demands for greater involvement by the public in local government, particularly in its role as the local education authority, were a characteristic of the 1970s.

Much of the concern about local government in the 1960s has been recorded in the Redcliffe-Maud Report: "The relationship between local authorities and the public is not satisfactory. The Committee on the Management of Local Government found that there is both ignorance of and indifference to local government on the part of the public" [Royal Commission on Local Government, 195]. In the sphere of education, however, in the traditional dichotomy between efficient, therefore large, authorities and democratic, therefore small, authorities, the Maud Committee followed the advice of the Department of Education and Science. The DES had made an assessment of every l.e.a. outside Greater London, and concluded that "the best authorities were among the largest, the worst among the smallest, and that between the best and the

worst efficiency was broadly related to size". [ibid, £131]. Bearing in mind the relationship between local authorities and the public, it is perhaps surprising that the Report did not look further for an explanation of the attitude revealed in the survey on the question of accessibility. It reports that "something between 35% and 45% of those questioned did rate the accessibility of their town hall or council offices highly", that few visited their local offices, and that only 13% had ever contacted their councillor, yet the Report's inference is that there are therefore few demands for changes in the system [ibid, £237]. The Redcliffe-Maud Report must also bear a large amount of responsibility for the introduction of corporate management in local government, an innovation much criticised by councillors, as will be seen later. Thus the Report bears out the findings of such as Lee, that the committee structure diluted the democratic representativeness of local government because "all necessary channels of communication were designed primarily for the benefit of the professional expert and not for the part-time politician" [Lee, 1963, p.139].

If the Redcliffe-Maud Report and its eventual outcome in the local government reorganisation of 1974 did much to concentrate the minds of those in favour of radical changes to the process of local government, the demands took many forms. Hatch [1973], for example, suggests that there were at least three arguments for participation. First, for participation as an end in itself, as evinced by a nostalgic yearning for the

commune movement, and for self-realisation. Second, participation for knowledge, communication and fuller information. Third, participation for power, either by a radical attack on the political status quo, or by the wider inclusion of pressure groups in conventional decision-making. In this same pamphlet, Salmon recounts the experiences of a community development project in Coventry and concludes that the standard forms of participation "are likely to degenerate into tokenism . . . The people who normally control services usually mean something very different by participation from what we do. It means a drastic adjustment on their part, if consumers are going to have a real say in the provision and deployment of services." [Hatch and Moylan, ed., p.34].

Kogan, similarly, suggests that participation could mean that "schools should be pervious to their review by their clientele, or that parents should have a place in school government, or simply that parents should be active in their children's education" [Kogan, 1975, p.65]. He sees the demands for representation as a response to the anonymity of public service organisations and their unresponsiveness to clients' needs. Again, however, he suggests that a pragmatic outcome of parental participation, in that children's performances in school will improve as a result of stronger home acceptance of educational values, is implied by reports such as Plowden, Redcliffe-Maud, Skeffington, and Seebohm, and reinforced by pressure groups such as CASE, ACE, and the NAGM. His claim that

"major interest groups do not easily move on the larger social issues until consensus is evident, but how they then insist that consensual mechanisms are observed", is borne out by both the comprehensive movement and the representative governing body movement [Kogan, 1975, p.224].

One argument that clearly has considerable force is that the meritocratic society, which theoretically puts more emphasis on the value of academic achievement than on social status, thus taking up the environmentalists' arguments which gained prominence in the 1950s, has had two important results in the participation movement:

First, the argument states that the educational level of those achieving maturity at the end of the 1960s was higher than any previous generation, and this in itself increased the interest of the population in local government (" . . . of all the social characteristics of electors the level of education is the prime variable in determining their degree of interest in local government and their willingness to take part" [Royal Commission on Local Government, £240]).

Second, the argument continues, these products of an improved education and more egalitarian society, attributing their success to visible academic achievement, and perhaps being less conscious of the implicit humanistic values which underlay the widening of educational opportunity, began to feel that more emphasis was being placed on the latter in their children's schools than on the former. This would explain the

feelings that a number of Sheffield headteachers expressed, that parental participation would exercise a conservative restraint on the development of schools, and might be confirmed by the experiences at William Tyndale School, and at Countesthorpe College in Leicestershire [see Bernbaum].

Comprehensivisation made it appear that achievement was open to all, and that success was a right. The apparent greater similarity between comprehensive schools and their secondary modern predecessors rather than the prestigious grammar schools, evidenced in particular, perhaps, by their concern with a core curriculum, their strong pastoral systems and, not least, their buildings, led to disillusionment amongst many of their clients.

The participation movement in general, perhaps recognising that its essential weakness was its very exclusion from the process of government, concentrated its attack on statutory inclusion as representative minority groups, rather than aiming for structural change. The will for change of those in power was rarely articulated, if it existed, and without such a will it was always unlikely that minority groups would have a profound effect on decision-making once they had won inclusion.

Other European countries had already gone a great deal further in recognising workers' participation in industry. One form or another was obligatory by the early seventies in Norway, France, Germany, and the Netherlands, and in 1972 the draft Fifth Directive of the EEC Commission called for the

establishment of codetermination in all its constituent countries, intended to guarantee the right of workers to formal representation on the managing board of their company. Had the Liberal Party taken the opportunity of the Lib-Lab pact in 1976 to press home its policy of worker representation in industrial management, the concept of participation in English governance might have received an important boost. Instead, the initiative remained with individual bodies and local authorities.

In education, the process of comprehensive reorganisation can serve as an illustration of the way innovation occurs. Kogan [1975] has suggested that, in the sphere of comprehensive reorganisation, it was local authorities who were most responsive to pressure and who generated policy changes, which later became national, social, and political. Thus in authorities such as Middlesex, London, Oxfordshire, and Leicestershire, there was early movement towards a completely comprehensive system of secondary education with little government encouragement. It is unclear whether this occurred primarily because of the philosophical commitment of the Chief Education Officer, the pragmatic aims of the Education Committee in providing schools sufficiently large to incorporate viable curriculum choices, particularly at sixth-form level or, as seems most likely, an opportunistic combination of the two.

The participation movement aimed first at relatively small concerns. Having won small but significant victories, it could

transfer its attention to the larger national questions with the evidence of past successes to demonstrate, paradoxically perhaps, that participation did not bring about the collapse of the centralised democratic structure, but in practice had very little impact on the operation of bodies incorporating client opinion. In the educational field, this takes the form of legitimising pressure groups such as parents and teachers into the decision-making process. The process seems to happen in a series of steps. First, pressure groups form when there is a wide perception of a social need. Parents and teachers, more strongly in some areas than in others, organise themselves to launch a concerted attack for inclusion in the decision-making process. A few local authorities, either those most sympathetic to, or most strongly beleaguered by, these demands respond by conceding token inclusion. The pressure groups, by now operating at a national level of organisation, use these examples to demonstrate the new structure's political expediency, rather than its potential for change (thus such groups as the Advisory Centre for Education were encouraging their members to play essentially conservative, unobtrusive roles on governing bodies). At this point, the government responds by ordering an inquiry.

In the instance of school government, the 1960s and 70s saw a burgeoning of groups with interest in informing the public about educational matters and providing a means by which, particularly, parents could be heard. The Advisory

Centre for Education, the Campaign for the Advancement of State Education and the National Association of Parent-Teacher Associations formed the Home and School Council with the aim of giving parent groups a formal role in educational policy-making, while the Labour Party and even the National Union of Teachers adopted parent representation on governing bodies as official policy. In this case, the inquiry, that is, the Taylor Committee, after some three years of deliberation, issued a report which was far more radical than even the most radical of its members would originally have predicted [Sallis, 1977]. This did not, however, result in any immediate changes. Rather, it would seem as if the inquiry had acted as a sponge to conveniently soak up the most vociferous demands, while satisfying pressure groups that significant action was being taken and significant victories were being won. In the long period of inquiry and post-report discussion, the momentum of the movement for change to some extent decelerated. Again at this stage some local authorities will recognise the legitimacy of the demands, and institute some changes along the lines of, but not to the extent of, the report, which achieves the status of an official handbook on the subject.

When, eventually, the report's recommendations are included in legislation, it is often in such diluted form that the original demands are scarcely recognisable.

A study of the progress of participation in governing bodies throughout the 1970s serves to illustrate these points.

The first signs of a radical change in school government, and an attempt to remove the dominant influence of local politicians on governing bodies, occurred in Sheffield at the beginning of the decade. Bacon has written extensively of this, but it may be sufficient here to quote from the Labour Party manifesto for the 1969 municipal elections "Put Labour Back": "Labour wants to promote the widest participation in the running of schools by parents, teachers, trade unionists, people from all walks of life" [Bacon]. The resultant structure served as a model for the National Association of Governors and Managers in lobbying other authorities to take similar steps, and in its representation on the Taylor Committee. However, the Sheffield innovation failed to make any impact upon the involvement of the majority of parents. The low turnout of four per cent or less at elections of parent representatives has been referred to earlier. In addition, Bacon discovered that ". . . a wide gulf existed between what I recognized in retrospect was 'officially claimed' for the new system and the everyday perceptions of the school system held by most parents or the ordinary 'man in the street'. I found in the course of my fieldwork that most people I spoke to did not know who sat on their own local board, and had only the vaguest of ideas as to what these bodies were supposed to do" [Bacon, p.121]. Bacon also reports on the methods whereby the headteacher, chairman and clerk effectively control discussions in governors' meetings, the "engineering of client consent", and the

headteachers' view, five years on, that the new governing bodies insulated them from local controversy.

As with many other spheres of local government activity, the official claims bear very little relation to reality. This can only be because the official claims refer to administrative structures, and the actual practice rarely reflects this. This, of course, is most likely to be the case where the will for change is not present in those in power, but merely a political response to public opinion. Thus, the primary need for potential participants - knowledge - was never met by the authorities, and the vacuum was left to be filled by such bodies as the ACE and NAGM. Instead, a training scheme was devised for all school governors covering eight aspects: The structure of the educational system, the powers of school governors, finance and budgeting, modern educational philosophy, the school and the local community, educational management, politics and education, and educational policy in Sheffield. This induction was designed to improve the quality of governors already appointed, but could not serve to arouse the interest of the general public in participating.

We have seen in Chapter Three how Baron and Howell [1974] revealed that in 1969, of 123 local authorities in England, 43 (35%) had governing bodies for each school, and that 20 (16%) made formal provision for parental representation. By 1975, however, an NAGM survey, quoted in the Taylor Report, showed that 70 of 82 authorities responding (82%) made provision for

parents, and 62 (75%) had places for teachers. Pupils and non-teaching staff on governing bodies, hardly reported at all in 1969, were now provided by "a number of authorities".

The ACE survey [Sallis, 1977] shows a considerable degree of progress. Here, of the 108 authorities in England and Wales, 56 (52%) had individual governing bodies for all schools, primary and secondary, and 32 (30%) had all or mostly individual bodies for secondary schools, while grouping primary schools to some degree. Representation, too, had broadened considerably. Only 18 (16%) had no formal representation of parents on their governing bodies, and 23 (21%) no teacher representation, although some of the remainder allowed teacher observers. Non-teaching staff governors were allowed in 11 authorities, and non-teaching staff observers in a further 11. Pupil governors were allowed in 13 authorities (12%), and pupil observers in 14 (13%). Sallis' conclusions were encouraging to supporters of lay representation, although in reading them it should be remembered that the survey is based on information given by the local authorities themselves. As has been suggested, such a viewpoint may be unreliable: "Following this increase in direct participation at school level, governors have gradually advanced from the formal and in most cases not very significant activity reported in the late sixties, to a much more direct involvement in the daily life and work of the school. Their concern with finance remains slight, though it is growing a little. They play a crucial part in the selection of

headteachers and some part in the appointment of other staff. Above all, they are increasingly involved in discussion of general issues affecting all schools in their area and of the education provided at their individual schools." [Sallis, 1977, p.17].

The central event for aspiring governors in the 1970s was the commission and report of the Taylor Committee. The Report identified five reasons for the greater interest in school government shown over recent years:

First, local government reorganisation in 1974 had increased the size of local education authorities, bringing about a demand for greater involvement in decision-making at school level;

Second, reorganisation brought together authorities interested in using governing bodies fully, with those which were not;

Third, the advent of corporate management, recommended by Redcliffe-Maud, fostered awareness of the governing body as a means of ensuring consideration for education in local government;

Fourth, comprehensive reorganisation stimulated public interest in education;

Fifth, voluntary organisations such as ACE, CASE, NAGM and Parent-Teacher Associations brought pressure for reconsideration.

[DES, 1977, 2.14 - 2.17].

The Report made recommendations which would fundamentally alter the relationship between the schools and their governing bodies if enacted, although whether the composition of those bodies would change was more questionable. First, it recommended that the governing body would represent, in four equal parts, the local education authority, the teaching and non-teaching staff of the school, the parents of the children at the school with provision for pupils where suitable, and, by co-option, individuals from the local community. The new governing body would be responsible for establishing the aims of the school, would share in the formulation of the curriculum, participate in budgeting, take an equal share with the authority in appointing the headteacher, and the primary responsibility for appointing other staff. The new term of office was to be four years, with meetings at least twice a term. Any member, except a paid member of staff, could be elected as chair, and no-one was to serve on more than one governing body of schools of the same age-range. As will be seen from the research in Leicestershire, this last would perhaps have had the greatest impact on the composition of governing bodies. On relationships with the community, the committee recommended that parents' associations should have a right of access to more information than at present, including communication with parents on school policies, regular reports and consultations about children, and access to teachers.

The response from the Department of Education and Science came in November 1978, following the issuing of a consultation letter, in the form of the publication of an Education Bill. During the debate, the Secretary of State reflected the official view that, once the composition of school governing bodies was brought up to date, those bodies ever likely to be useful or influential would have the opportunity to become so, while those that did not work would be unlikely to start doing so merely when granted greater statutory powers: "The Bill, therefore, does not contain any provision relating to the specific powers of governing bodies, partly because I believe that the time is not yet right for such legislation and partly because I believe that getting the right people on to governing bodies in sufficient numbers will be enough to do the necessary task on its own." [From the Second Reading Debate, 5/12/78, Official Report Column 1230, quoted in DES, 1978].

The Bill was intended to bring governing bodies up to the standards achieved in some of the more progressive authorities such as Sheffield, rather than to push them into new areas of decision-making. Thus it was proposed that the term "governor" should apply to all boards including those of primary schools; that grouping of schools would be discouraged; that limits would be placed upon the number of governorships held by one person; and that minimum numbers of parent and teacher governors would be calculated on the size of school.

Thus the commitment of the Labour Government to a wholesale review of the role of governing bodies in schools might be seen to be somewhat less than wholehearted. In 1979, the new Conservative Government, in an Act dealing with a whole range of matters such as provision of school meals and milk, nursery education and the assisted places scheme, made the following provisions for school governing bodies:

Primary school managers from now on would be called governors (thus easing life considerably for writers of books and theses on school government and management);

all county and voluntary schools would have representatives of parents on the governing body - county, voluntary controlled and special schools would have two elected parent governors, voluntary aided schools to have one;

all schools would have one elected teacher governor, and schools over 300 on roll to have two, with every headteacher to be a full governor.

Thus the final year of the decade saw a significant piece of legislation extending the range of lay participation on governing bodies. The following decade was to see more developments than at any time since the beginning of the century.

CHAPTER 5

Participation in Local Government

Since the creation of Local Education Authorities in 1902, the most influential role in educational decision-making given to non-professionals has been participation in local government. As has been shown, councillors elected for their declared stance on a number of local and national issues, amongst which education has not been prominent, have had nominal control over the most significant decisions taken on the structure and content of educational provision. Most national policies have been pioneered in local authorities - secondary schooling, comprehensive schooling, curriculum reform, and community education are some examples - and these have first been actively approved, if not actually initiated, by Education Committees, their sub-committees and full Councils. It is necessary, therefore, to look at the composition of these bodies. This chapter comprises a study of the historical composition of Leicestershire County Council, in order to place in context the following chapters dealing with the nature and outcome of a specific innovation designed to widen lay participation in educational decision-making.

Research into the practice of local government is both difficult and rare. There are a number of reasons why this

should be so. First, it has been shown by a number of writers that public interest in local government is low, electoral turnout being one register of this indifference [see Birch, Bealey et al, McLean, Redcliffe-Maud]. Thus public interest has not acted as a spur to research. Second, it is suggested that there is, ironically, a dominant tradition in local politics of resistance to public participation [Hill, James], and this may lead to an aversion to research. Third, the variety of practice in local government seems particularly wide [Bulpitt]. Fourth, because the official relationships between officers and councillors, and between party groups and local parties, are rarely reflected in practice, it would not seem to be in the interests of those in power to allow practice to be revealed [Lee, Green]. Finally, and related to this, is the very process of decision-making among party groups, where policies emanate from a small caucus (sometimes called, in telling parlance, "the ruling group"), the members of which cannot always be identified, even by members of the party group.

(I) The Councillors

There is a general thesis underlying demands for local government reform that councillor calibre has deteriorated throughout the present century. However, Clements has cited evidence that this has been a concern since the birth of the present structure in the 1830s. Among authoritative writers complaining about the low standard of local politicians have

been the 1835 Royal Commission on Municipal Corporations, J.S. Mill, H.G. Wells, and the Maud Committee. Lee attempts to explain this, with reference to County politics, by differentiating between the type of councillor elected during the nineteenth century and those who emerged as a result of the professional, bureaucratic demands on local government of the 1902 Education Act and the 1929 Local Government Act. Thus he claims that the former consisted largely of "social leaders" whose standing was dependent not upon the holding of office but upon family, tradition and wealth. They were leading members of county society, and formed what was in effect a county party on the council. Their role in local authority work was then merely another facet of their voluntary contribution to the betterment of society. Thus he suggests the existence of a group of people in rural areas whose right to govern, in their own eyes, is strengthened by their duty to govern, this being the most effective way in which they can serve the community. However, the demands laid upon local councils in the early part of this century increased the amount of committee work, and led to the emergence of "public persons", whose social status depended upon their role in the council. These are likely to be businessmen, industrialists, and managers of large concerns, more accustomed to the style of bureaucratic decision-making required of local councils than were the land-owners of the county party. Lee's study is of a rural county council, but Clements suggests that it is possible to remark the difference

between those who choose to serve the community through council work, and those who participate in the more traditional forms of voluntary service, in an urban setting.

Clements supports the Maud Committee's findings, in asserting "a relationship between high socio-economic status and repugnance for local party politics" [p.60]. Thus his "local notables", whose names were contributed by the population of Bath, discharged their duties to the city by voluntary work, kindled by active interest in the field they work in, by their duty to individuals and to the community, rather than through the local council. He does not suggest that these notables are not interested in party politics; on the contrary, 76% of them paid subscriptions as party members [p.124]. Rather, he suggests that their usual method of getting things done is by committee work based on a firm consensus on style and achievement, while political activity is seen as conflict-based and frustrating, local councils as clumsy and impersonal. Since over 60% of the local notables are employers or managers in large establishments, and over 39% are professionals, it is possible to identify them with the type of public person becoming involved in local council work in Cheshire during the first half of the century.

Clements' thesis is based on the synonymy of social standing as perceived by the community with the potential for high calibre as a councillor, and this of course is open to question. Nevertheless it does seem that the intrusion of party

politics is to a large extent responsible for changes in the composition of the local council. Thus Birch asserts that the leadership of the community of Glossop shifted from a small group of wealthy industrialists who held "the leading positions in the churches, social clubs, political parties, and Borough Council" in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, to a "new middle class of professional and managerial people" [Birch, p.5]. When Birch asked six hundred people in Glossop who they believed to be the most influential people in the town, over 70% named local politicians.

One of the powerful myths of local government is that there was once a golden age when the consensus view held sway [see, for example, Dearlove]. According to the myth, the electorate selected candidates for the council by their standing within the community and their reputation for public service. During the twentieth century, and particularly since the advent of the Labour Party on the local scene in the 1930s, it is asserted, local parties have steadily grown in influence. Local government reorganisation in 1974 accelerated the process. Contemporary literature dismisses the myth with persuasive evidence. In a local reference, for example, Patterson points out that in Leicester in the 1840s, children were not to recognize their friends if their parents belonged to an opposing party [p.332]. Municipal elections in Glossop "have been conducted on a party basis ever since the Borough was incorporated" in 1866 [Birch, p.113]. Party politics

encroached upon the first county council elections in Cheshire in 1889 [Lee, p.80]. According to Lee, the advent of the Labour Party did not introduce party politics to the county council, but it did show up the party agreements that had existed. The absence of contests was determined by a Conservative-Liberal pact as late as 1936, but the Labour Party "had to force contests to make itself heard . . . It was not responsible for introducing a 'party' element into the county government of Cheshire for the first time, although it has frequently been blamed for causing strife; but it was instrumental in placing party politics on a new footing" [Lee, p.163].

Such pacts, taking the form of formal amalgamations or electoral agreements, were commonplace as a means of defeating socialist candidates at the municipal level. Frequently, the amalgamated groups presented themselves as being non-political, thus giving credence to the myth that it was the Labour Party that brought party politics into local government. Thus the Sheffield Citizens' Association, with Liberal and Conservative as leader and deputy leader, had as its object "to fight municipal elections on non-party lines with the aim of finding the best men for the city" [Sheffield Annual Year Book and Record, quoted in Cook, p.56]. The Crewe Progressive Union, an anti-Socialist alliance formed in 1920, had as its objective "the good government of the town on sound business lines of progress and development, with due regard for economy". To achieve this end, the Progressive Union was to "sink party

politics in municipal affairs, and to support men of moderate views, and proved business capacity" [Cook, p.57].

It will be seen later how such idealised aims echo through commentaries on local government in Leicestershire up to and including the 1980s.

(II) The Role of Political Parties

The evidence of social leaders and their dislike of party politics, and the mere existence among the public of a mythical golden age when party politics played no part in local government, which requires such demolition jobs by present-day writers, suggests very strongly a distaste among the public for overt party activity at local level. Bulpitt suggests three reasons why this should be so:

Party politics obstructs the process whereby decisions are based on "common agreement";

It interferes with the democratic processes of local government;

It is superfluous since local decisions are "technical" rather than ideological.

These arguments merely reiterate some of the common concerns that have been expressed about the structure of a democratic society at a national level. Neither Hobbes nor Burke felt that representatives in a democratic society were obliged to act as mouthpieces for their electors, and Rousseau

argued that a representative democracy could not be populist. Thus the logical outcome of representative democracy is a party system, as Schumpeter claims: "The democratic method is that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote" [Schumpeter, p.269]. Democracy, then, is not government by the people, but by one set of politicians deriving their right by gaining more votes than any other set. Schumpeter takes this argument one stage further by arguing not only that democracy is not participative, but that it should not be, since a populist democracy may not be liberal, tolerant or fair. It is, then, unclear how far the representative democratic structure of local government, dominated as it is by the party system, meets the demands made for it to be representative and fair. Nevertheless the party system has evolved as the most efficient method of local government. The fact that, throughout the country, individual party membership was almost certainly no higher than three million in 1975 does not affect the assertion that the lack of a party label is now a serious bar to an aspirant local councillor [Hennock, p.13].

However, it is probable that party politics at local level is not a mere reflection of national party politics. Bulpitt's study of county boroughs supported Birch's contention that "local parties are highly individual, conditioned more by their environment than by directives from central office and largely

independent in managing their own business" [Birch, p.44]. While this may be largely true even today, administrators tend to see the hardening of party boundaries, with all the paraphernalia of whips and and caucus decision-making, as being an indication of centralised party control: " . . . since the mid 1960s . . . local government in England and Wales has become more and more political in its activities . . . the headquarters of the Conservative, Labour and Liberal parties have all significantly increased their activities in influencing the policies of local authorities both individually and collectively through the associations of local authorities" [Brooksbank, p.16].

(III) The Leicestershire County Council

It has been seen above that there is no typical model of local government, and it is difficult to fit the Leicestershire experience into an existing pattern.

In 1974, as a result of local government reorganisation, the county was merged with the City of Leicester and the County of Rutland to form a new authority with a population of some 844,000. As will be seen, this merger (or, as it was seen by some members of the smaller authorities, take-over) created a number of problems and conflicts which cannot be distinguished from the larger context of change. The table below shows the changing pattern of Leicestershire County Council composition between 1890 and 1980:

Participation in Local Government/5

TABLE 5:1: %age representation in county council by occupation:

	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980
1.Rank	30.5	27.8	25.0	18.0	13.9	26.4	10.5	5.8	4.2	1.1
2.Farmers and land agents	26.3	34.7	29.2	32.0	36.1	12.6	14.0	11.6	13.5	5.4
3.Professions	1.4	6.9	5.5	5.5	6.9	5.7	7.0	11.6	13.5	15.0
4.Manufacturers/ publishers. .	22.3	18.1	23.6	26.4	24.9	14.9	16.3	12.8	9.4	3.2
5.Managers/ Co Directors	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	9.2	11.6	19.8	21.9	21.5
6.Merchants/ dealers/bldrs/ sales reps.	8.4	2.8	8.4	9.7	11.1	19.5	17.5	17.5	16.6	12.9
7."Blue collar, clerical etc.	1.4	-	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.1	3.5	3.5	1.0	3.2
8.Skilled man.	-	-	-	-	-	1.1	1.2	1.2	3.1	10.7
9.Un- & semi- skilled manual	2.8	-	-	-	2.8	3.4	5.8	2.3	2.1	1.1
10.Ministers of religion	5.5	6.9	-	-	-	2.3	2.3	1.2	-	1.1
11.Army offs.	-	1.4	4.2	5.5	1.4	1.1	1.2	-	-	1.1
12.Retired/no description	-	-	1.4	-	-	-	4.7	4.6	6.2	15.0
13.Housewives	-	-	-	-	-	2.3	4.6	8.1	8.3	8.6
N =	72	72	72	72	72	87	86	86	96	93

*Figures from the Leicestershire County Handbooks, 1890 - 1980.

A brief account of the historical development of Leicestershire County Council may help to create the background against which significant changes took place during the 1970s. It is possible to establish that the composition of the county council has changed considerably in terms of the members' occupation. The table above shows the occupational description of members of the county council, classified into thirteen categories. Those describing themselves by rank (suggesting a private income) include peers of the realm, esquires and gentlemen, and indicate no specific occupation or source of income. Farmers include all those describing themselves as having agricultural occupations, with the implication of land-ownership or large tenancy. The professions include doctors, solicitors, accountants, engineers, and teachers. Manufacturers include the large numbers describing themselves as such, the dominant products being hosiery, knitwear, boots and shoes and related goods, but also represented are brickmakers, confectioners, millers, joiners, and publishers. The fifth category includes all those who describe themselves as managerial employees in large companies and/or of a high status within the company. The modern and ubiquitous term "company director" falls within this category, and its emergence is discussed below. "Merchants" covers a wide range of traders, dealers, shopkeepers, and builders. "Clerical" includes lower grade managerial and non-manual workers, officials of public bodies, policemen, and community workers. Skilled manual

workers, and semi- and un-skilled manual workers, follow the Registrar-General's classification of occupations, III Manual, IV and V. Category 12 comprises all those who give no indication of their major lifetime occupation, whether still active or retired. Category 13 comprises all women who give no specific indication of independent income, describing themselves as housewife or married woman.

A method of classification such as used here raises a number of problems. Self-description in the limited terms required by the County Council handbooks (the source of information here) is clearly not particularly accurate. The term "farmer" may denote anything from a large independent land-owner to a small tenant farmer. An "engineer" may be a semi-skilled manual worker or a professional engineer on the Registrar-General's scale. It is also possible that there will be a certain amount of status inflation in self-description, whether deliberate or unconscious, which may to some extent account for the very low proportion of lower status workers. The term "company director", which has been increasingly in use since 1950, can suffer from both these problems. As in the term "manufacturer", which probably indicated the same sort of position, but was more popular before the Second War, the description tells us nothing of the size of the enterprise, whether the role is purely executive, or whether the councillor is the owner of a one-person firm. Company Directors do amount to a high proportion of council membership (15.6% in 1970, 14%

in 1980), so clearly the difficulties of definition here cannot easily be dismissed. Their rise, however, does match almost exactly the decline of manufacturers.

Perhaps the most significant changes are:

(i) The decline in members describing themselves by rank. This would accord with Lee's theory that a "County party" governed county council work in Cheshire until the 1930s, when the increasing bureaucratic demands of, for example, the 1902 Education Act and the 1929 Local Government Act, led to its demise, and the consequent increased involvement of professionals and businessmen. It would seem that such a change did not take place in Leicestershire until after the war, although the partial arrest of the trend in 1940 may have been due to the war itself. Thus the proportion of members describing themselves by rank (generally speaking, gentlemen or esquires) fell from nearly a third of the total in 1890 to one peer of the realm in 1980.

(ii) There was a similar decline in the proportion of farmers, from over a third in 1900 to five per cent in 1980. This may be taken in part as an indicator of the development of rural Leicestershire into a county dependent upon industry (a dramatic decline being particularly noticeable after the merger of County with City Council). However, it may also indicate a broadening of the social basis of county council membership.

(iii) The most significant rise in representation is that of members in "professional" occupations. Solicitors and retired

schoolteachers are particularly prominent here (retired schoolteachers, as employment by the county council debars standing for election). These do not show a steady growth, but almost double in number during the 1950s. Perhaps more significant than this growth is that such professionals are more likely to be prominent members of the county council, in terms of holding office as chairman or vice-chairman of a committee or sub-committee. Thus, while 15 per cent of county councillors are professionals, 21 per cent of chairmen and vice-chairmen are "professionals".

(iv) The growth of the designation "company director" matches the decline in "manufacturer". However, company directors, like professionals, are more likely to be prominent members of county council. Fourteen per cent of councillors in 1980 described themselves as company director, but 18% of chairmanships and vice-chairmanships were held by them. Almost a third (26.3%) of all such posts were held by the top managerial/company director category. Thus professionals and top managerial between them dominate the county council, holding almost half the prominent offices while making up only just over one-third of the total membership.

(v) The advent of a significant representation of skilled manual groups in county council membership coincides with local government reorganisation and the incorporation of city members.

Political composition

It has been claimed above that party politics did not enter into county council work, as the myth asserts, relatively recently, but that it has been a major force in elections and decision-making since the present system was created in the nineteenth century. How Leicestershire fits into this pattern is unclear. It is, for example, the claim of a number of councillors that party politics were not an issue until local government reorganisation, although it is difficult to find evidence to support or deny this. It may be relevant to point to the long rule of Sir Robert Martin as chairman (1924-1960) as support.

The situation in Leicestershire at the May 1981 county council elections reflected that over the country as a whole following the landslides in district, county and general elections in the late 1970s. Thus in 1977 Conservatives took control in 38 out of 39 English counties in what was termed by them "Operation Clean Sweep". Of the 93 Leicestershire seats, 75 were taken by Conservatives, 17 by Labour, and one by an Independent (ex-Liberal). Although there was some realignment during the Council's period of office (one prominent Conservative resigning his party's whip and standing as an Independent in the May elections, and one Labour member identifying himself as a Social Democrat), it is clear that success in County Council elections was dependent upon identification with a party label and the ability to call upon

party resources in electioneering.

This one-party domination of local government, strengthened by Conservative majorities in most of the District Councils in the county, had considerable influence on the social as well as the political composition of the council, as a comparison of the occupations of council members according to party membership demonstrates. Table 5:2 below shows the membership of the two parties by occupational group according to the Registrar-General's classification, with an additional category for housewives/married women:

TABLE 5:2

COUNTY COUNCILLORS IN OCCUPATION GROUPS BY PARTY:

R-G Group	Cons. Members		Labour Members		All Members	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
I	11	14.7	2	11.8	13	14.1
II	43	57.3	3	17.6	46	50.0
III N	1	1.3	2	11.8	3	3.3
III M	1	1.3	7	41.2	8	8.7
IV	-	-	-	-	-	-
V	-	-	-	-	-	-
Housewives	8	10.7	-	-	8	8.7
No description	11	14.7	3	17.6	14	15.2
Total	75	100.0	17	100.0	92	100.0

County Councils operate through a committee system whereby, theoretically at least, sub-committees discuss policies in detail, reporting and making recommendations to larger committees who in turn make recommendation to the whole Council. As in most local councils, a long-standing agreement ensures that the political composition of county council membership is reflected in membership of all committees and sub-committees. Thus the roughly 4.5:1 Conservative:Labour membership is repeated in Policy and Resources Committee and Education Committee. In sub-committees the proportion is greater (nearer 7.5:1) but this is partly because the small number of Labour Councillors were unable to spread their commitments of time and energy over the whole range open to them. In the two major committees which affect educational policy-making, that is, Policy and Resources, and Education, the occupational bias of County Council membership towards the higher status groups is not only reflected but exaggerated.

Table 5:3 shows the occupational status of members of the two parties represented on the Policy and Resources Committee:

TABLE 5:3

P & R MEMBERS IN OCCUPATION GROUPS BY PARTY

	Cons Members		Labour Members		All Members	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
I	6	28.5	2	40.0	8	30.8
II	12	57.1	1	20.0	13	50.0
III N	-	-	1	20.0	1	3.8
III M	-	-	1	20.0	1	3.8
IV	-	-	-	-	-	-
V	-	-	-	-	-	-
Housewives	1	4.8	-	-	1	3.8
No Description	2	9.6	-	-	2	7.6
Total	21	100.0	5	100.0	26	99.8

Thus, whereas 64% of county councillors are among R.G. groups I and II, 80% of Policy and Resources committee come from those occupational groups. This tendency to draw members of important decision-making committees from the higher occupational groups is also observable, though to a lesser extent, on Education Committee.

The following table shows the occupational status of Education Committee members:

TABLE 5:4

EDUCATION COMMITTEE IN OCCUPATION GROUPS BY PARTY

	Cons Members		Labour Members		All Members	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
I	4	12.9	1	14.3	5	13.2
II	20	64.5	2	28.6	22	57.9
III N	1	3.2	1	14.3	2	5.3
III M	-	-	1	14.3	1	2.6
IV	-	-	-	-	-	-
V	-	-	-	-	-	-
Housewives	4	12.9	-	-	4	10.5
No Description	2	6.5	2	28.6	4	10.5
Total	31	100.0	7	100.0	38	100.0

Thus the committee system exaggerates the tendency whereby county council membership is drawn very largely from the higher status occupational groups, particularly so in a time of Conservative Party rule.

County Councils are also responsible for appointing members of a wide range of outside bodies and consultative committees, such as school governing bodies, area health authorities and the magistracy. These too are subject to the agreement whereby the political parties are represented according to their membership of county council. The effect this has upon the governing bodies of the colleges which are a

subject of this study will be seen later.

It can be seen, then, that the political domination of county council can have far-reaching effects on policy-making which go beyond voting behaviour in the council chamber. One more, perhaps paradoxical, outcome may be discerned. This is that a ruling party which rarely needs to operate a strong whip to see its decisions approved because of its natural majority, may lay itself open to internal conflict. There are two reasons why this may be so. First, a small majority which is constantly threatened by occasional absence of its members and is therefore frequently inclined to use a strong whip system will almost inevitably develop an internal cohesiveness. Second, the larger a party membership is, the broader will be the coalition of views within it, and the greater the sense of security. Thus internal dissension is far more likely to arise.

Two further developments, which can be observed on the national political stage as well as the local, contributed to the internal dissension which the Leicestershire County Council Conservative party suffered at the end of the 1970s. The first of these was the introduction of corporate management techniques which coincided with local government reorganisation. The second was the emergence, which has been shown above, of a new breed of local politician. Both of these developments were hastened by the reorganisation which brought City members onto the County Council, but they were independent developments.

(a) Corporate Management

Programme Planning and Budgeting Systems (PPBS) in local government originated in the United States during the 1950s as a reaction against the fragmentation of policy-making in large authorities which was seen as both piecemeal (as policies were formulated by a number of groups or cliques operating separately and with no overall coordination) and inefficient (as the advantages of being a large authority in employment, building and provision of services were dissipated by the lack of consultation between groups operating different services). Its central credo, therefore, was a pyramidal structure of decision-making where policy would be decided (after consultation) by a small number of people at the apex, while implementation would occur and details would be determined by those lower down. In England and Wales, local government reorganisation was seen as an ideal arena in which a movement towards a PPBS style of administration might occur. Corporate management, the term now in use in this country to describe the implementation of PPBS, was recommended to local authorities in the Bains Report [HMSO, 1972]. The structure suggested was that a Policy and Resources Committee would be responsible for the determination of policy and the distribution of finances to all other committees of the council (although its recommendations would, of course, be subject to county council approval). Such a development would clearly remove much of the autonomy which other committees had

previously enjoyed [Stewart, 1974; Jennings, 1977]. This pyramidal structure in members' involvement needed, of course, to be replicated in the authority's professional administrative staff, leading to the appointment of a Chief Executive responsible for coordinating the efforts of all Chief Officers. Thus Dearlove has suggested that while the committees directly providing services such as education and the social services became subject to a greater degree of political and financial control from members of policy and resources, so "the attempt to introduce corporate planning into local government has probably served to strengthen the hand of those officers who are less intimately involved in the direct provision of services to the public" [Dearlove, 1979, p.251].

In Leicestershire, then, Policy and Resources was the most powerful committee and, as has been shown above, membership of this was confined to the highest occupational groups. It was also seen, by many officers and councillors, as the domain of a group of Conservative councillors which was dubbed "The Gang of Four" who, allegedly, not only dictated the general policy of the ruling group, but who occasionally arrived as trouble-shooters in other committees to solve incipient problems, give encouragement to wavering councillors, and who were the only repositories of the official party line.

Clearly, corporate management, as a style of local administration borrowed from business management, was likely to encourage the promotion of businessmen, professionals and top

managers experienced in the style of policy-formation, negotiation and man-management necessary to its successful implementation.

(b) Local Government Reorganisation

Mander [1975] has suggested that a similar process to that described above in Leicestershire occurred in the City of Leicester in the years immediately following the second world war. The Town Clerk's control over the affairs of the Education Committee was strengthened by his attendance at meetings. The Treasurer's department interested itself directly in educational expenditure, and a number of the employment functions of the Education Committee were transferred to the City Council as a whole. At one point in 1967 indeed, the Committee's delegated powers to act as the Local Education Authority were withdrawn in case the Labour minority, acting in concert with coopted members, might approve a reorganisation of secondary education along lines incompatible with the views of the Conservative ruling party. The Education Department was subject to a number of investigations of its operation instituted by the Town Clerk's Management Services, reinforced by a firm of outside Management Consultants, after which, Mander claims, "the Education Department ceased to be an effective coordinating organisation" [Mander, p.174]. Such a structure, it is claimed, gave power to non-specialists in education among elected members (that is, leading councillors

not necessarily members of Education Committee) and administrators (functions being dissipated among officers responsible for the provision of support to many of the services provided by the Council, not committed to the Education service, and answerable not to the Chief Education Officer but to the Town Clerk).

The relationship between Leicestershire County Council and its Education Committee was very different, as will be seen below. The Committee not only had great autonomy, but had further strengthened its position by having a national, indeed international, reputation for its progressive developments in primary education, secondary reorganisation and community education. Locally, however, its reputation was not so assured. Countesthorpe College, established in 1970, had been a subject of mounting parental anxiety over its innovatory nature [Bernbaum, 1973; Watts, 1977]. In April, 1973, one week before the first elections for the newly-reorganised authority, the leader of the Conservative ruling group on the County Council, amidst considerable attendant publicity from the local newspaper, declared his intention to order a public inquiry into the running of the College. Implicit here was a criticism of the administration of education, not only by the professional administrators but also by the Education Committee itself.

The merger of two such authorities, with such different styles of management and such different traditions, would

inevitably cause problems. One-third of the members of the new authority represented City wards, and they could expect to be influential in their new roles. Not all of them were Conservatives, of course, but later evidence will show that the attitudes of Labour members were very similar to those of City Conservatives in their expectation of considerable control over educational policy in a corporate management setting. For example, the Labour party gave full support to the leader of the Conservatives in the Countesthorpe controversy. What emerged in the new authority was far more complex than an enlarged Conservative - Labour alignment. The old County professional and managerial groups still retained many of the characteristics of the county party described by Lee (1963). Those of social status accorded by ownership of land or rank were not only a significant proportion of the membership, but retained some position of power, such as chairmanship of the Council or of Education Committee. Memories of Sir Robert Martin's term of office as chairman of Education Committee (1924-1960) were still fresh, while Colonel Pen Lloyd was chairman of the Council from 1961 until the demise of the old authority. These individuals and their style of government will be discussed in more detail below, but they had little interest in either party politics or administrative problems [Sherwood, 1975]. Their consensus view of local government operation depended upon a perception of broadly shared aims in the provision of services, whose value was plain for all to see.

The new Conservative group, however, was composed largely of small businessmen whose experiences and tastes were very different. Economy and efficiency were the virtues most highly thought of, as it was in the pursuit of these that they had achieved their own status. They also had an appreciation of education as a service to be provided not for the welfare of others, but as a means of achieving status which they themselves had used, and now wished to be used by their own children. To them, the "effectiveness" of the education service was more important than its international reputation. Membership of local government was now a pragmatic business, no longer a social service.

There is some evidence that the Labour Party too, as elsewhere [see Gretton and Jackson], was changing, and that the traditional, almost evangelical support based upon the working class, was shifting towards an intellectual middle-class leadership. These successful products of the selective system of education seemed to have more in common with the new Conservatives in their view of the function of education, although they made their commitment to positive discrimination towards the disadvantaged quite explicit. Since reorganisation they had, of course, remained in opposition, and it is difficult to say what their priorities in power would have been. They did, however, align with the new Conservatives over some issues (see below), and in two areas at least they clearly had more in common with them than did the county Conservatives.

They had little affection for the community education policy of the county, and few kind words for the educational administration. Furthermore, whereas Leicester City Council had been a marginal possession by either party when in power, it was now clear, with the vast majority of rural and small market-town seats in the Conservative strongholds of Leicestershire and Rutland, that the Labour Party was unlikely to see council control again.

Both corporate management and local government reorganisation, then, led to the emergence of, and domination by, a new breed of councillor on Leicestershire County Council. A further element lent encouragement to them. The economic recession of the 1970s brought to a halt the seemingly endless expansion of education in the post-war years. In such times, the holders of purse-strings have the final say in any disputes with visionaries and idealists. The new Conservatives, having been presented with a style of management officially approved by the government, and in circumstances which apparently assured their indefinite membership and rule of the new County Council, found themselves with both the will and the means to take control of the party. Resistance by the county Conservatives had been strong and, in some instances, successful (see below). But at the May 1981 election, it was clear that the County Council, in all but name, consisted of three political parties, not two.

CHAPTER 6

Politics and Education in Leicestershire 1902-1971

On May 7th., 1981, the Conservatives had a majority on Leicestershire County Council of 57 seats over the Labour group. There were no Liberals or Independents, apart from one prominent ex-Conservative who had resigned the whip a few months before, and one Labour member who had declared his support for the newly-formed Social Democratic Party. At the first meeting of the new County Council on May 20th, the Conservatives had 44 members, Labour 43 and the Liberals 5, with one Independent. While there is a strong case to be made that this demonstrated disenchantment with the apparent failure of the policies of the national Conservative government, a teacher union representative, national newspapers and magazines pointed to the cut-backs in education spending that all those Conservative councils which had lost control had in common. How had this come about? Was it an indication that educational policy-making, so long a subject outside traditional inter-party debate, was now a matter which could win or lose elections? What follows is an attempt to set this large anti-Conservative move at local government elections in a local and historical context.

Leicestershire Education 1902-1947

"If education in England and Wales is a service centrally controlled but locally governed - and this is what conventional wisdom seems to say - Chief Education Officers are powerful men. The quality of the service is in their hands. The largest single part of local public expenditure passes through their offices. Many thousands of teachers are their responsibility." [Kogan et al]. If this is the case, and the literature suggests that only recently has this view become questionable [e.g. Dearlove], the first Director of Education in Leicestershire wielded even more power than most. William Brockington (1871-1959) was appointed in April, 1903 and retired in 1947. During this time he established an educational administration capable of responding to the complex and far-reaching effects of the 1944 Education Act. Yet he had "a total lack of professional help in his office, so in every aspect of policy his hand had to wave every wand" [Mason in Dent, 1976]. His major achievement was to establish secondary schooling throughout the county, first of all, with some irony as we shall see later, in the village of Enderby. But this massive reorganisation, calculated to arouse the antagonism of parents, headteachers, voluntary school managers, and village populations, was achieved within the context of financial constraints which, though reaching their height in 1922, could never be completely discounted. With the support and partnership of Sir Robert Martin throughout an almost equally long reign as Chairman of

the Education Committee, almost all of which time was spent also as Chairman of County Council, Brockington was almost certainly as influential in having his recommendations approved by County Council as any of the early directors of education. One of the tactics employed was that of using the economic arguments of county councillors in order to support his innovations. In constructing one junior school and one senior school from the two all-age schools in many villages (one maintained and one voluntary), he used the argument of economising on staffing to introduce secondary education for all. In establishing a national reputation for the Loughborough Technical Institute, he pointed to the grants obtained from the government and the relatively cheap method of establishing higher technological education when compared to Nottingham's substantial contributions to its University College. His administrative skill in running an efficient office further strengthened his hand in committee.

He thus held two very strong cards when it came to influencing decision-making. First, he had established a national reputation for himself, for Leicestershire education, and hence for the Education Committee itself, which gave him much personal authority in committee. Second, "he really had built up a highly efficient administrative machine and that his committee was following enlightened policies with the minimum of unnecessary expense. Indeed, it may be that he cut administrative costs almost too fine." [Seaborne, p.55].

Thus, Seaborne argues that "in a real sense he laid the foundation of what we now know as the 'Leicestershire Plan' of education". Brockington had also, perhaps coincidentally, previously been principal of the Victoria Institute at Worcester "which consisted of a full-time secondary day school and a part-time evening school with classes in commercial and technical subjects for older students" [Seaborne, p.47]. He had therefore had experience of higher education provided in an integrated institution fifty years before the Leicestershire Education Committee committed itself to a policy of integrated community education. In his earlier years in the county he set up centres for teaching cookery and woodwork, and he was a keen supporter of the teaching of gardening, "which he saw as one way of trying to stop the drift from the land" [Seaborne, p.49]. Thus his experiences link him, not only with a method of implementing educational policy which was to bear fruit with his successors, but also with the development of community education and the concerns of Henry Morris in Cambridgeshire, whose establishment of Village Colleges was designed "to build up a rural civilization that will have chronic vigour" [Morris, quoted in Ree, 1973, p.145]. However, it might be dangerous to draw further parallels, for it has been argued that Leicestershire schools "lack totally all the educational vision which Henry Morris poured into the village colleges of Cambridgeshire" [Sherwood, p.6].

William Brockington was knighted for his services to

education in 1946, and retired the following year. He was succeeded by Stewart Mason, who held office until 1971.

The Post-War Years, 1947-1971

It has been shown how county councillors played a relatively minor role in policy-making, and it has been established above how the role of chief education officer was, at worst, highly influential and, at best, dominant in the making of educational policy. The long service and administrative skills that Brockington displayed made him probably one of the most powerful of the country's chief officers. While many newly-appointed directors might have been overawed by such a predecessor, Mason was able to take on Brockington's mantle and develop the role in a way that was to establish an international reputation for excellence and innovation not only for himself but for the education system of the county.

Mason had previously come into contact with Henry Morris as a member of His Majesty's Inspectorate, and he was soon to commit himself to a development of Morris' Village College ideas in Leicestershire. His first task, however, was to professionalise Brockington's clerical staff in administration. He achieved this not by a wholesale restructuring of the department, which no doubt would have raised the hackles of both staff and councillors, but first by appointing a professional deputy director, and by gradually promoting and

eventually replacing after retirement the best of the "old guard": "I suppose as a new broom I could have asked for a hierarchy with a couple of assistant directors, etc., but I thought it was vital to keep up the morale and trust of those who had borne the burden and heat of the day, and so, apart from this one post, which was essential to cope with all the extra post-war work, I relied on Brockington's office team. There were about four senior ones, and eventually if I recollect aright I got them assistant director status - they were all well advanced in years and gradually I was able to replace them with professional men. Best of all, when my first deputy moved on, I persuaded the committee to promote the next most intelligent, cultured and wisest of that group in his place as deputy and thus he was able to spend his last five years or so in that exalted position" [Mason in Dent, 1976].

Thus Mason found a balance between establishing himself as a personality in his own right, and using the relationships that Brockington had built up over a period of 44 years. Meanwhile Sir Robert Martin, Lord Lieutenant of the County, and from a family associated with the premier family in Leicestershire, was just over halfway through his 36 year period of office as chairman of Education Committee. Mason found it relatively easy to step into the partnership which had existed between Martin and Brockington [see Sherwood, p.7] and no doubt Martin's overt sponsorship of Mason granted him a significant status, although a newcomer. While Martin earned

the respect and affection of both councillors and officers, his military style of Council control gave both to himself and to those protected by him an authority which was almost beyond question [ibid]. Elsewhere, Martin was described as "a very remarkable and distinguished man possessing (so it is reported) both wit and charm and a rapier-like mind backed by an encyclopaedic memory . . . He was a tremendous enthusiast for education and exercised a unique influence on the Leicestershire County Council." [Holmes, 1973, p.36].

It has already been established that it would be dangerous to generalise about the relationship between chief education officers and councillors. However, certain elements in Leicestershire can lead us to believe that, while Mason's period of office was not exactly trouble-free, the overall atmosphere in education at least was one of consensus about the broad aims of the service:

First, party politics "played no part in the deliberations of Leicestershire Education Committee" [ibid, p.3].

Second, both Mason and the Councillors shared a similar view about the relationship between officers and elected members. Thus Mason believed that it was the Director's job to carry out the decisions of the committee but also "to think out sensible policies and to present them for the committee to chew on" [ibid, p.13]. In an address in 1957 he drew a parallel between his role and that of the farm bailiff, where "it would be a strange world if he did not exercise some influence on the

farm policy and the farm practice". Colonel Pen Lloyd (Chairman of County Council 1961-74), while drawing his analogy from a rather different world, made essentially the same point: "I like a board of directors made up of entirely first class people from outside with your chief executive you might call your managing director . . . You don't go and tell your chief executive what to do. You sack him if he's no good" [ibid, pp.12 & 15]. Thus Mason found Education Committee a pleasant experience ("I thought it was nice to go, fun to go" [ibid, p.13]). Although County Council was a less pleasant experience, especially towards the end of his time, the crucial part of Mason's policy-making was done in sub-committees, for which Education Committee was largely a rubber-stamping agency, and for which, in turn, County Council acted in the same way [ibid, p.15].

Third, Mason was probably as effective as Brockington had been in wheedling money out of the DES, and no single ability was likely to be more appreciated by the Council members.

Fourth, Mason, like Brockington before him, was capable of great tact even though he did not always choose to display it. His ability to get on with the County Treasury was crucial in finding amounts of money for his own schemes [Sherwood, p.24]. He established easy, informal relationships with teacher union representatives which considerably assisted in secondary reorganisation, and his handling of councillors was especially skilful: "We went where Mason led us" [ibid, p.42].

Fifth, his plans for secondary reorganisation were popular with prominent councillors like Martin because they would put Leicestershire "in the forefront" as a pioneer [ibid, p.44]. Not only did he display a "charismatic personality" but he made the council famous [interview, D.Davis]. It is certain, too, that he recognised how to present innovation to a conservative, in both senses, county council. Sherwood suggests that his framework for comprehensive education was more a recognition that eventually the law would insist on a non-selective system, rather than an overt commitment to the ideology. Gaylon [in Pluckrose and Wilby] claims that Mason was committed to the comprehensive ideal, despite the fact that he never actually used the word nor publicly advocated comprehensivisation. But Gaylon was the principal of a reorganised Leicestershire community college and, later, a Conservative county councillor. Similarly, a former chairman of the Education Committee claims that Mason "had won the whole-hearted support of the County Council for his unswerving commitment to the idea that secondary schools should provide for the whole range of abilities and gifts" [Harris in Pluckrose & Wilby]. But he knew how to tailor his cloth for, Harris adds, "I don't think he ever used the word comprehensive" [ibid].

As suggested above, the structure of local government administration served to strengthen the hand of the chief education officer. If the Director was able to maintain equable relations with his committee, it was unlikely that other forces

would emerge to challenge his authority. As Hill suggests: "Central Government accepts pressure groups as part of democratic life. Local councils, by contrast, are more reluctant to encourage what they see as an infringement on their right to govern" [Hill, p.142]. James [1980] found not only that local authorities rarely attempted to encourage public participation in, for example, the reorganisation of secondary education, but that the influence of senior councillors and chief officers was enhanced by the absence of a disciplined party system [James, p.121]. Such a party system did not exist in Leicestershire during the time of either Brockington or Mason. Furthermore, what patterns exist in local government suggest that one difference between Conservative and Labour control is that "local Labour parties tend to be the more disciplined and policy-oriented of the two, and to attach greater importance to limiting the influence of officers on policy decisions" [ibid, p.122]. Only after reorganisation was the Labour party to become a significant force in County Council.

Many factors combined, then, to give the Director of Education in Leicestershire a large measure of control over policy-making in education in the nineteen-fifties.

The major achievement of Mason's career - secondary reorganisation - must be viewed in this light. Commentators and participants such as Gaylon and Harris do not suggest that there was any meaningful opposition to Mason's plans. Holmes,

for example, is positively eulogistic:

"Throughout the county, among officials, teachers, heads and advisers there is virtually unanimous agreement that without Stewart Mason the reorganisation of secondary education and the introduction of so many school reforms would not have succeeded. His determination and charisma are keys to any understanding of the way in which political forces in Leicestershire have been mobilised. The successful management of innovation in the county is due, more than to any other single factor, to Stewart Mason." [Holmes, 1973, p.100].

It would be misleading, however, to suggest that Mason was totally without opposition. At one level, at least, his interpretation of the role of Chief Officer in remaining aloof from the political relationships on County Council meant that he could not, and did not wish to, develop informal contacts: "I eschewed all buddy inclined activities such as Freemasonry, Rotary or whatever . . . and I never lobbied . . . as we didn't play golf, tennis or bridge, nor rode horses, we never attempted to enter even the fringe of County society" [quoted in Sherwood, p.30]. He believed in inspiring from above, and his commitment to culture in education, demonstrated by his patronage of music, art and drama (his CBE was awarded for services to art, not education), tended to distance him from the county political lobby. Neither was he very patient with amateurs. The handbook of guidance for governors and managers issued in 1955 made his position on the role of lay



participants quite clear:

"The Headmaster is the captain of the ship and must be accorded the authority which such a responsibility entails. No shore committee, meeting once every few months, could successfully participate in the day to day management of a liner at sea, and similarly no Governing or Managing Body should attempt to interfere with the Headmaster in professional matters such as methods of teaching and details concerning the curriculum" [Handbook of Guidance for Governors and Managers, Education Committee of the County of Leicester, 1955].

Such a view seems to contradict his formulation of a constitution for college councils and the story recounted by Western concerning the painting in the Adult Lounge at Ashby. Here Mason insisted that the warden should accept the ruling of college council that the painting be moved: "If the committee wanted to have the picture removed, then removed it ought to be . . . It was the answer which I ought to have expected as I knew how keen the Director was to ensure the reality of democratic government at the college" [Western, p.109].

It is possible that Mason was committed more to delegation than to democracy. Just as he had become accustomed to a system whereby he was given the maximum autonomy, with support when needed, from councillors such as Martin and Lloyd, he expected to be able to grant the maximum professional freedom to Leicestershire headteachers [Holmes]. The important job was "to get the right chap picked" [Sherwood, p.26] or, as Lloyd put

it, "You pick your chaps and you back them and you don't damned well go interfering" [ibid, p.25]. He believed in inspiring his heads from above, sometimes goading them to elicit responses, but avoiding the patronising and direct approach of Morris, whose sudden descents on schools he had observed and disliked in Cambridgeshire. Certainly the administrative structure he created at County Hall was hierarchical, and many officers and headteachers, it has been claimed, "lived in fear and trembling of Mason" [interview TR]. What qualities Mason looked for in a potential headteacher probably differed from the priorities of chief officers in other authorities. Both councillors and heads have testified to the idiosyncratic questions that Mason asked at interview [interviews, AC, RS, TR], to the extent that they would become a talking point among councillors at subsequent meetings. It has been claimed from within the county that there was no clear pattern in the appointments in that "a Leicestershire head" would not be identifiably different from heads in other authorities. However, Mason would certainly be impressed by candidates "with appreciation of and involvement in the arts, and who was liberal in a general sense" [interview TR].

It is likely that Mason would have subscribed to the widely-held view that the calibre of county councillors was not as high as it might be, and his impatience with at least one of Martin's successors as Chairman of Education Committee has been recorded by Sherwood [p.13].

Other councillors, in interview, recorded reservations about his manner of working. It was suggested that, in order to have money available for comprehensive reorganisation, he ran down nursery, primary, further and adult education, thus bringing the committee under pressure from teachers and the business sector of the electorate [interview DD].

For some, Mason's commitment to community education was seen simply as "empire-building", whereby educational administration could take over fields of social, cultural and physical recreation. In order to do this, it was said, he manipulated the finances (which were still, at this time, under the general control of the education department), shifting money from one heading to another without reference, or with only notional reference, to committee.

One particularly effective method of introducing a new scheme was to designate a limited experiment to take place in areas of the county where the heads were known to be favourable. Thus reorganisation was introduced under the title "Leicestershire Experiment" in 1957 in Hinckley and in Oadby and Wigston, with heads who were known supporters. The success of the "experiment" was therefore guaranteed, could be sold to committee and extended throughout the county. That a few heads and governors were still able to maintain resistance has been amply documented by Sherwood. Again it has been claimed that those teachers who resisted were given fairly clear understanding that they should look elsewhere for promotion,

and that Mason's claim that he had 100 per cent teacher support for the experiment was a lie [interview AC]. However, Mason continued to present a picture of reorganisation that conflicted with this view. In 1970 he wrote: "The Education Committee had been unanimous in approving the scheme and not a single person voted against it when it came before the County Council. The teaching profession in the county was almost solidly behind it and all the schools in the two areas concerned were willing participants. The local Press gave the utmost cooperation and published a series of articles fully explaining the scheme to the public. Although a small number of middle-class parents with clever children looked at the scheme with initial misgivings, the great majority of the inhabitants unashamedly welcomed it . . . After nearly three years of trial, the Education Committee undertook a review and on such evidence as was available decided there was sufficient balance of advantage to justify spreading the system as and when opportunity offered over the rest of the county . . . what started as an experiment in 1957 and became a plan in 1960 has taken twelve years from its inception to spread over the whole county" [Mason, 1970, p.x].

Councillors who regarded themselves as spokesmen for the community, however, did not necessarily share this view. They saw a tremendous amount of money going into the education service (some 80 per cent of all local government spending) and could not always see exactly how it was being spent [interview

AC]. They also felt, in some areas at least, that the reorganisation of secondary education was still a controversial issue in 1970, and one at least made education the principal platform for his election campaign and became a prominent member of Education Committee on the strength of this [interview JF].

The Local Press

The Leicester Mercury has represented a conservative voice in most matters, perhaps especially in education, in Leicestershire over many years. In the last year of Brockington's term of office, for example, the Mercury was warning against some of the attendant dangers of the implementation of the 1944 Act. In its second leader of January 1st., 1947, for example, it noted that "some of the schemes for social betterment, associated with the schools, excellent as these are, may be achieved at the expense of the actual teaching . . . These are points that will have to be watched very carefully if the primary mission of the teacher is not to suffer". Its leader writers did not see education as a means of achieving social equality, but as a method of training in which disproportionate attention given to "peripheral matters" might damage the chances of the most able. It retained, throughout the period, a belief that the "primary mission of the teacher" was instruction and the maintenance and improvement of basic standards. On the day following the above quote, the Mercury

devoted its entire leader to education: "Equality of opportunity, wherever it can be established, is eminently desirable. Of itself, it does not embrace all the virtues, and it would be damaging indeed if it involved any lowering of the general standards in education because of the restrictions of encouragement to the most able and the most gifted. This is not a matter of class distinction" [Leicester Mercury, 2.1.1947].

The Mercury's status as the only regular evening paper in the county gave (and gives) it great influence, and its stance on local issues, its selection of material for publication, and its choice of letters to appear in the regular Page Four correspondence section may, as will be seen later, influence educational practice from Education Committee decision-making to the individual school. In 1957, prior to the publication of the details of Mason's plan for secondary reorganisation, the matters of concern were the expense of education (on January 29th, the County Finance Committee was recommending a 6d. in the cut in education expenditure) and the methods of selection for grammar school education. Sir Robert Martin was granted a front-page headline for his criticism of the Finance Committee's proposal, which was later to be rejected, while one member of Education Committee claimed that it was not spending ratepayers' money as its members would their own: " . . . the Education Committee was in the habit of doing things on a lavish scale . . . Mr. MacLean gave an example of the decoration of the library at Melton Grammar School by 'some

ideological crank' who had put four different shades of wallpaper on the wall" [L.M., 27.2.1957]. Eleven-plus selection, a hardy annual at this time of year as children approached the examination, was particularly a concern in the City and this gave the opposition a chance to mobilise. Thus Robin Pedley, then at the University College Department of Education, addressed the Leicestershire Conservative Association on the "intolerable handicap" on children who failed the eleven-plus, and proposed as a solution the organisation of "local comprehensive schools for everyone until the age of 15 years. At that age, selection of those to have further education will be self-evident and they will go to grammar technical schools" [L.M., 23.2.1957].

The use of the local press in satisfying the vocal sectors of the community of the viability of secondary reorganisation was therefore vital. Thus the first announcement of the plan was given banner headlines, and prominent among these was that the plan would be "guaranteeing many more grammar school places" [L.M., 6.4.1957].

As claimed elsewhere, the word "comprehensive" was never used by Mason, and rarely used at all in connection with what from now on was referred to as the "Mason Plan". It is unclear exactly who the source of information about the Plan was, as the paper was not to be presented to Committee until its meeting on 10th. April. On 8th. April an extensive article, based mainly on quotes of Mason himself, concentrated on the

undesirable effects of eleven-plus selection: "Father would not speak to girl who failed the 11-plus". On 9th. April, another half-page was devoted to the plan, again quoting Mason extensively: "I submit it in the conviction that it will in no case restrict the educational opportunities and that it will enhance the esteem and dignity of the grammar schools and secondary modern schools alike." On 10th. April, the Committee unanimously recommended the scheme for acceptance by County Council on 8th. May. The Mercury, nominating this as "Mason's finest hour", quoted Martin who, referring to Brockington's "invention" of the secondary modern school, claimed that this "was the second time in forty years that Leicestershire had pioneered a new education system" [L.M., 10.4.1957].

During the four weeks between the publication of the details of the Mason plan and its presentation to County Council, the Mercury carried a number of articles and letters on the subject. Robin Pedley publicised his support for it immediately, while the Head of Hinckley Grammar School, one of those to be affected by the plan in September, told the Mercury that "there was wholehearted support from the schools in this area" [L.M., 11.4.1957]. By the time that May came around, however, some opposition voices were being heard. Early in the month a letter was published from a teacher (though signed with the pseudonym "Watchman") stating that the claim that "Leicestershire teachers are wholeheartedly behind the plan . . . is untrue and irrelevant. The fact is that, apart from the

head teachers, we were neither consulted nor even told about the proposals. We ordinary assistant teachers, therefore, have to support the plan or get out, possibly jeopardising our careers" [L.M., 2.5.1957].

When the County Council finally discussed the plan, there was some criticism about the amount of publicity it had received before the 53 Councillors who were not on Education Committee could take part. Councillor Harvey, for example, claimed that it had been rushed through, ensuring that "the horse was already out of the stable" [L.M., 8.5.1957]. While the County N.U.T. passed a resolution supporting the plan, and confirmed that all affected teachers, managers and governors had had a chance to express their views [L.M., 16.5.1957], the A.M.A. expressed "serious misgivings" and regretted that the Association had not been consulted before publication [L.M., 25.5.1957]. It appears that Mason had attempted to by-pass the Unions as bodies with whom to negotiate, and had instead relied on meetings with heads and teachers as members of schools - knowing that heads would be supportive, and relying on the teachers to demonstrate their loyalty to the school and the head rather than to "the profession".

On Page 4, between 9th. April and 23rd. May, 21 letters were published referring to the plan. Of these, 14 were broadly opposed to it and 7 were for it (in each case two letters coming from one correspondent). On the opposition side, the first letter, from a worried parent, questioned whether any

authority could legally abolish the eleven-plus [L.M., 10.4.57], thus introducing a theme to be later picked up by William Alexander, chairman of the Association of Education Committees [Sherwood, p.22]. On the whole, however, the major concern of letters in opposition was that clever children would be deprived of a grammar school education. Letters were given such headings as "Geese cannot be Swans" and "Bright Children who will Suffer". Some attacked the claims made that parents, by and large, were opposed to eleven-plus selection ("Parents Not Against 11-Plus Examination") and suggested that those children who had just passed the examination in the areas of the county to be reorganised were disappointed that they would not, after all, be going to grammar schools. However, much of the criticism was necessarily muted by Mason's refusal to use the word "comprehensive". Whiteside has shown that "the results of public opinion polls in the 1950s convinced Labour Party politicians that the way to gain acceptance for comprehensive schools probably lay in stressing, not the egalitarian virtues of the schools, but rather the opportunities they offered to all children of getting a "grammar school education" [Whiteside, 1978. p.14]. Clearly the Director of Education for Leicestershire had learnt this lesson well as he had, by his personal supervision of the publication of the plan, ensured that both Education Committee and County Council were effectively obliged to endorse it, that teachers who were to operate it had no chance to discuss it in an environment where

criticism was likely to emerge and become organised, and that the guns of the vocal sector of the community would be spiked by making them an offer that could hardly be refused on rational grounds, that of "grammar schools for all".

Education Post-Reorganisation

By 1970 there were signs that the, at least superficial, consensus on educational policy-making in Leicestershire was beginning to break down. There seem to be two major contributory factors to this. First, the statistical evidence presented above on the change in nature, if not calibre, of the councillors is borne out by personal evidence. It has already been shown how Mason and his deputy, Holt, found Sir Robert Martin's successors less easy to work with. One of them is quoted as having said: "Mr. Mason is a wicked man, but Mr. Holt is a very wicked man" [Interview AC]. Towards the end of the sixties, three ex-teachers whose opportunities for advancement were apparently stifled by secondary reorganisation, and who were therefore particularly embittered [Interview RS], were elected to County Council with the express aim of "finding out what was going on in education" [Interview AC]. Mason himself said that he never experienced vendettas "until near the end of my time when --- arrived on the scene" [Sherwood, p.14].

Second, public concern about education was finding a number of voices at both national and local level, as shown above. The emergence of pressure groups has been charted by

Kogan [1975], and Stacey, in her second study of Banbury, found an increase in the number of specialist pressure groups linked to particular local authority services such as education [Stacey et al, 1975]. In Leicestershire, the "middle-class parents with clever children" whose misgivings, Mason had claimed in 1970, were only initial, became increasingly concerned about the apparent correlation between the Leicestershire Plan and progressive education, at the three latest upper schools at Desford, Syston and, notably, Countesthorpe [Bernbaum, Watts, Fletcher et al].

The new councillors claimed to be concerned about two features of educational administration in the county. First, they did not necessarily concur with those elements of Leicestershire education to which the Director seemed to be giving priority and which seemed to be accruing all the publicity surrounding the county, i.e. the three-tier comprehensive system, the development of community education, and the emphasis on cultural activities such as music, art and drama. Second, they were increasingly worried about the methods that the Director used to support what they saw as his "pet projects". Councillor AC was particularly bitter in his criticisms of the way Mason "engineered" community education in his own village constituency. This village had collected, by its own efforts, a large sum to build a village hall/community centre. When Mason heard about this, he suggested to a public meeting that this sum be contributed to the education

department, who were in the process of planning a new High School, in order that a community wing be added to the school. Councillor AC claimed that the public meeting rejected this offer, but Mason called a second meeting, to which he invited only those "select few who could be relied upon to agree", and the scheme was accepted. The effect of this was that the villagers' contribution was lost among the large education department expenditure, and came under the direct control of professional teachers whose knowledge and expertise [see Hutchinson, p.7] made them less accountable to college council and management committee than Councillor AC would have liked, and certainly less under the control of a lay committee than a village hall would have been [Interview AC]. The fact that community education and cultural activities were seen by such councillors as frills which diverted time and money from what should have been the top priority - improving standards in statutory education - gave them social and political support for their campaign.

Councillor AC claimed that this concern was by no means confined to Conservative Councillors (all three of the ex-teachers referred to above were members of the ruling Conservative group), but was equally strong among Liberals, Independents and Socialists. One early action, taken in 1968, to challenge Mason's actions, was that this Councillor, with the support, he claimed, of a cross-section of the council, instituted a working-party to look into community education

expenditure. At the first meeting, however, Mason produced prestigious witnesses, including an HMI, to defend his schemes, thus effectively stifling opposition and out-manoeuvring the councillors: "The Director had tremendous influence before (local government) reorganisation. The officers were in with the county hierarchy, and the Education Committee was vetted by them" [interview AC].

Just as generalisations cannot be made between authorities about the way councillors organise their policy-making, so "the style of administration and its results also owe much . . . to the style of the individual chief administrator and his staff" [Kogan et al, 1973, p.23]. Mason's influence in Leicestershire was clearly substantial. He had been able, thanks to Brockington, to adopt an authoritative stance around which he had built his administration. But by the end of his term of office he was beginning to meet problems which were both local and national. His policy of delegating power to heads and advisers [see Sherwood, p.25] was not merely an administrative ploy but an educational strategy in that it made certain assumptions about the nature of learning when translated to the school context. As Simon noted, "the concept of autonomy as an aim of education - the promotion of individual responsibility for learning and for behaviour", derives "from modern educational thinking and experience, both in primary and secondary - perhaps especially comprehensive - schools" [Simon in Watts, ed., p.21]. Thus while there was no explicit

education department policy for a move towards "progressive" methods, it was an inevitable outcome of Mason's style: "Educational administration can be a creative task, indeed that is the main fascination of it. But for the most part this works at second remove by the encouragement of other people, in particular the heads and advisory staff, to be creative. The administration can do much to foster a climate of confidence that any deviation from the norm will not be frowned upon; that it is all right to 'have a go'. This can best be achieved by pushing the maximum amount of responsibility on to the heads and hoping that they in turn will pass it down the line so that the work in schools becomes a cooperative venture" [Mason, ed., p.xiv]. The creation of Countesthorpe, then, can be seen as a logical outcome of Mason's administrative style, and it was Countesthorpe which, mainly after his departure, was to point up the concerns which councillors felt about the direction education was taking in the county.

The crisis was heightened by a general, national trend towards expectations of greater accountability of officers towards elected councillors, as Kogan et al have shown: "When they first took up office, CEOs were in charge of highly autonomous departments within a loose confederate system. Towards the end of the 1960s the onrush of management thinking caused their authority to be challenged by the creation of chief executive roles, and by the beginning of corporate planning" [Kogan et al, pp.61-62].

CHAPTER 7

Politics and Education in Leicestershire, 1971-1981

Andrew Fairbairn had been Deputy Director of Education since 1961, subsequent to a career which embraced teaching and administration in five authorities. It might be argued that the particular interests he espoused had been largely peripheral to mainstream statutory education. He was regarded by Leicestershire heads as the prime defender of community education in County Hall [Interviews], and was co-author of "Youth and Community Work in the 70s" [DES 1969]. Those councillors who had increasingly put pressure on Mason at first felt that Fairbairn's appointment was a significant step towards establishing Committee control over policy-making:

" . . . he wasn't seen as a Mason yes-man, but as one who would do the Committee's bidding" [Interview AC]. The implication here is that Mason's legacy to his successor was not as rich as that which he himself had inherited from Brockington. The changes in membership of County Council were beginning to have impact, and many of those councillors who in the late 1970s were to dominate council policy-making, were attaining committee chairmanships and other positions of influence. Imminent local government reorganisation, and the publication of the Bains Report, were raising the issue of the

relationships between councillors and officers, and the accountability of the administration. Fairbairn's appointment also coincided with a period when the previous optimism about education was about to be challenged which, along with the impending economic recession and the steadily declining birth-rate, was to limit the resources available, raise public concern about the spending of those resources, and restrict the authority and autonomy of chief education officers [see e.g. Bernbaum ed., 1979].

Countesthorpe College

The first clear sign that this was happening in Leicestershire was the controversy over Countesthorpe College. This, coinciding with local government reorganisation and its attendant problems, raised a number of questions about the role of secondary education in the 1970s. It may be seen, for example, as an attempt by the county councillors to assert their authority over the daily management of education. It was also, almost certainly, closely linked to the campaign for control of the new county council, as the Conservative leader announced the holding of a public enquiry into the running of the college just eight days before the election. The Labour group's qualified approval of the inquiry demonstrates that councillors of all political shades recognised that education was likely to be an important issue in the electorate's voting behaviour, and that the inquiry and its attendant debates were

likely to form the focus of a debate about the nature and purpose of education in the new Leicestershire. It is unclear exactly how far-seeing the councillors might have been at this point, but it is also likely that the Countesthorpe enquiry was to be an important propaganda move in the coming reorganisation of secondary education in the City, in response to Circular 10/65. Watts suggests that the issues were the structure of City secondary education, and the national "battle" over "who should determine what went on inside schools" [Watts, ed., p.144]. The principal movers in the controversy were parents of a small number of students at the college and the local community who, by 1972, were expressing discontent with the lack of tact and experience of the staff and their apparent inability "to convince parents in simple terms what their aims and objectives were" [Taylor in Watts, ed., p.112]. It seems likely that the major problem was that the college, sited in a village to the south of the city largely populated by middle-class commuters, bore little resemblance, at least superficially, to what the parents believed or expected a school should be.

Watts suggests that the parents had split into two broad camps of "for" and "against" the school, the official parents' association arguing that the college had "become the subject of local party politics to the detriment of our children's education" [LM, 3.4.73], and the parents' action committee welcoming the enquiry. The division extended to the governing

body [Taylor in Watts, ed., p.112]. In one sense at least, the college had had unleashed upon it all the public concerns about the Leicestershire plan that Mason had previously deflected. Thus the first principal, Tim McMullen, "had somewhat recklessly gone out of his way to announce that Countesthorpe was to be really comprehensive and to attract children whom other schools might have suggested needed special schooling" [Makins in Watts, ed., p.36]. Thus the style of public relations is crucial to the impact that innovation has upon the community, as Duane had found at Risinghill [Berg], and as Ellis at William Tyndale was to later discover [Gretton and Jackson]. The adoption of the action committee's campaign by the Mercury, as well as by councillors, while dealing a blow to the educational developments in Leicestershire sponsored by the administration, nevertheless did not have any significant impact on Countesthorpe College itself, according to Makins. It is possible that its national reputation protected it to some extent. Makins traces some of the hostility "to the personality and poor health of Tim McMullen who disliked confrontation and risked appearing tense and arrogant when dealing with opposition. There was no doubt that while he was extremely successful in getting across the aims of the school to the national and international education world, he failed dismally with his local constituency" [Makins in Watts, ed., p.36]. McMullen's resignation in the fourth term of the college's existence possibly did much to disarm the public criticism, and

the appointment of John Watts, who reaffirmed McMullen's principles while presenting a much more experienced, confident and reassuring persona, assured the survival of the college.

The course that the debate took was somewhat anti-climactic following its dramatic beginnings. Following the elections it was decided to mount a full inspection of the college, which took place in November, 1973. Like all HMI reports at that time, this was confidential, but a summary was presented to parents by the Chairman of the Education Committee and the Director of Education in June 1974. Watts addressed this meeting, at the end of which "there was an overwhelming expression of support by the parents for the directions in which the college was moving" [Watts, ed., p.146]. The Education Committee then set up a special sub-committee under the chairmanship of Councillor John Rodgers (later to be chairman of Education Committee, and seen as a figure of conciliation rather than conflict). This reported to Education Committee one year later which, also receiving a request from the Countesthorpe staff-student standing committee for an expression of their support, gave a vote of confidence in, support for and encouragement of the principal, staff and governors [Leics. Education Committee, 2 July, 1975]. After the initial explosion of publicity, with interested parties polarising around extremist positions and public statements, the authority had found a method by which most, if not all, the parties could emerge with the minimum loss of face. The

withdrawal of key figures from the arena, such as Geoffrey Gibson, then leader of the Conservative group, and Tim McMullen, facilitated reconciliation, and each "side" could be seen as having made significant retreats [see Leicester Mercury, 20 June, 1974]. The deployment of strategies such as a confidential inspection and a special sub-committee performed three functions. It delayed any final decision-making until emotions had cooled, the focus of discontent had long since gone (together with a number of parents, whose children would have only attended the college for two years), and publicity had become tired and repetitive. Second, it handed over responsibility to two groups of people, inspectors and councillors, who could be seen as having either special expertise or public accountability, or both, thus effectively muzzling criticism. Third, it avoided the prolonged and public confrontation of groups and individuals with opposing aims for education which would necessitate "impartial referees" committing themselves finally to one side or another, as happened in the William Tyndale affair.

While no particular groups could be said to have "won" the Countesthorpe confrontation, neither could any side be said to have "lost".

This could not, however, be said about the simultaneous debate on comprehensive reorganisation within the city of Leicester.

The reorganisation of secondary education in Leicester

It has been suggested above that local government reorganisation in Leicestershire was made doubly difficult by the simultaneous development of corporate management structures recommended by the Bains Committee and endorsed by Redcliffe-Maud. The fact that the Conservative "apolitical" County with long traditions of officer autonomy was to merge with the City, where Councillors had retained much more direct control over policy-making and implementation, and where the political parties were more equally represented, further complicated the scenario. Given also that the City was now obliged to develop a plan for comprehensive reorganisation of its secondary schooling in response to DES Circular 4/74, it was perhaps inevitable that, this being the first major task of the new County Education Committee, it would be the backdrop against which councillors of various political hues would wish to flex their political muscle.

The new Education Department was made up, somewhat uneasily, of officers of all three of the old authorities, Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland, but the two senior posts, of Director and Deputy Director, were given respectively to the County Director and the City Director. This immediately gave the City Councillors, both Conservative and Labour, the suspicion that the City education system was to be reorganised along County lines, with the attendant disappearance of famous old foundation grammar schools with strong academic traditions.

That such long-established schools should be forced into the then current image of County Upper Schools, the Countesthorpe mould, was anathema to them. The report issued by the officers to Education Committee in June 1974 suggested seven alternatives, but concentrated on two. Alternative Six was basically a two-tier secondary structure, with secondary modern schools becoming 11-16 comprehensives, and the grammar schools becoming sixth-form colleges. Alternative Seven was an adaptation of the county plan, with 11-14 High Schools, 14-18 Upper Schools and a few all-through 11-18 schools. On 23rd. September, the Education Committee adopted Schools Sub-Committee's recommendation that Alternative Seven be approved, and set up an ad hoc sub-committee to oversee its implementation. Inevitably, this apparent take-over of city schools by the county unleashed a storm of criticism (see The Leicester Mercury), and, in November, County Council overruled Education Committee and instructed it to consult with the council and teachers' associations on both alternatives. The composition of the sub-committee was to be fifteen county councillors (8 Conservative, 6 Labour, 1 Liberal), seven teacher representatives (six of these from the city), and one representative from each of the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church. It duly reported in March 1975, and revealed a complete split amongst its members. The report proper [Leics. County Council, 1975], in its summing up of the two alternatives, came down heavily in favour of Alternative Six,

giving a clear endorsement of its advantages, and suggested that Alternative Seven would be both confusing and inefficient. However, a note of dissent was signed by no fewer than ten of the twenty-four members of the sub-committee. Six of these ten were among the eight Conservative county members, the remainder being the Liberal, the two Church representatives, and the only county teacher. Nothing could be clearer than the county-city division here, the dissenters adding to their endorsement of Alternative Seven by expressing their dismay at the sub-committee's rejection of the Director's financial estimates. Among the dissenting Conservatives were a future chairman of County Council, a future chairman of Schools Sub-Committee, and a future vice chairman of Further Education Sub-Committee. All of them could claim to be leading members of the county Conservative party, and were to be influential in future disputes.

In November, 1975, the County Council approved the implementation of a modified version of Alternative Six to operate from the beginning of the following school year. To all intents and purposes, the City had 'won', and Leicestershire was to have two separate models of secondary education, the Mason plan throughout the county, and Alternative Six in the city area.

County Council Policy-making in the early seventies

In the light of the events outlined here, what conclusions can be drawn about how educational policy-making at County Hall had changed in the first half of the 1970s?

First, the influence of senior officers on the large issues had decreased.

Second, the amount of money available to officers to sponsor their own schemes had been reduced.

Third, a powerful group of councillors was taking more control over policy-making at a general level, and financial and educational policy specifically.

Fourth, the press was having a significant impact on public opinion.

Fifth, education was achieving a reputation as a lavish spender, the very opposite of the image it had projected during Brockington and Mason's terms of office.

Cuts in Community Education, 1979

In 1979, educational provision in Leicestershire again became a subject of controversy and county-wide debate. While the background against which this occurred was a further round of cuts in government spending enforced by the new Conservative government and having particular impact on local government services such as education, the focus of the debate in the county was, unusually, the provision within the non-statutory sector - that of community education. As has been shown,

previous public debates on education in the county had been confined to the nature of statutory provision - the aftermath of the 1944 Act, secondary reorganisation, Countesthorpe College, and city reorganisation.

The significant division within the Conservative ruling group on Leicestershire County Council made itself felt immediately after the elections in 1977 which had given the group a majority of 58 over the Labour group. However, in order to achieve a domination of this order, it had been necessary to recruit to their ranks a number of "public figures" who were not necessarily wholly committed to the aims espoused by either the leadership of the party within the county or by the parliamentary party in opposition under its newly elected leader, Margaret Thatcher. This process, of "Conservatising" the old county party, had already been taking place for a number of years. While in the fifties it was still common, at both County and District elections, to see straight fights between Independent and Labour candidates, party politicisation of council elections was happening in Leicestershire as early as 1947: "Party politics are coming to the fore in Hinckley Urban Council elections. Two Councillors . . . who have previously run as Independents, have now come out under Conservative colours as a challenge to Labour, the first political party to secure seats on the Council. This caused something of a sensation because both had repeatedly said that there was no room for party politics in local government"

[Leicester Mercury, 21.3.1947]. Ten years later, on the City Council, the Labour whip was withdrawn from the chairman of the Housing Committee for voting against an increase in council house rents, and the editorial reaction of the Mercury was to oppose this as yet another indication of party strength operating against the interests of the people: "A councillor used to be able to represent his ward; now it is his party. Unless the folly of this is appreciated, councillors will be regarded no longer with respect but as cyphers" [Leicester Mercury, 31.1.1957].

By 1974, the last two prominent "mavericks" on County Council, Nathan Harris and Dennis Holt, had given up their designation as, respectively, Independent and Liberal, to join the ruling group. One of the leading councillors after 1977 had held important offices in District Council for some fourteen years, as an Independent. He claimed to have originally been wooed by the Liberals as prospective County Council candidate, but joined the Conservatives "as I saw greater opportunities for influence - if I was going to give up my time, I wanted to make it worthwhile" [Interview, JF]. In 1977, the leaders of the ruling group, Councillors Hanger, Gibson and Bowder, it is claimed, had already designated for the chairmanship and vice-chairmanship of Education Committee two councillors who, they believed, would be sympathetic to and supportive of the major policy line to be followed within the term of office, that is, a significant reduction in expenditure. However, a sufficiently

large number of "County" Conservatives were prepared to resist this (particularly Councillors Rodgers, Bowram and Fisher). Thus Councillor Smart, instead of being, as he had expected, chairman of Education Committee, was given the vice chairmanship under the leadership of Councillor Rodgers. Similarly, the chairmanships and vice-chairmanships of Education sub-committees were given to "County" Conservatives (for example, Schools to Cllrs. Swatland and Fisher, Further Education to Cllrs. Durrance and E.F. White). Cllr. Osborne who, it was claimed, had been the leader's choice for vice-chairman, was given no office, but established himself over the next four years as a vocal supporter of the council leadership in committee until he lost a "safe" seat in the 1981 election.

Although this could be taken as a signal victory for the County Conservatives, it did not give them real power as, as has been shown above, determination of expenditure remained firmly in the hands of the Policy and Resources sub-committee working through its Committee. This was chaired and vice-chaired respectively by Cllrs. Hanger (Leader of the Council) and Bowder, and included in its membership of fourteen, Cllrs. Angrave (Council Chairman), Farnham (past Council Chairman), Gibson (past Leader), Dr. Hill, and Nathan Harris (past Chairmen of Education Committee), Mrs. Pollard and Tom Lucas (Chairman and Vice-chairman of the Manpower sub-committee - a vital one regarding expenditure), Smart (Vice-chairman of Education), and the Duke of Rutland. All of these were

experienced councillors, knew their way around Council business and, with the exception of Nathan Harris, could be expected to implement official party policy and influence others within the party to support it.

Previous to this, however, conflict between officers and councillors had arisen over the provision of community education. It has been seen how, in the late 1960s, a group of councillors had attempted to have light thrown upon the whole area of the financing of community education. In 1974, Councillor AC, one of the leaders of this group, was elected chairman of the Further Education sub-committee, in whose remit community education lay. In 1975 the sub-committee, at his instigation, asked the Director "to prepare a paper analysing and breaking down the financing of community education. This has never yet been produced" [Interview AC, 1981]. At the same time, two other attacks were being made upon the Director's concept of community education provision. First, the subsidy of evening class teachers' salaries which held down the fee levels of adult education was reduced from about 70% to 30%. In response to this, and to threats to greater cuts, a few full-time professionals mobilised the colleges and centres through the newly-formed Association for Community Education. Many local meetings of college users were held, Education Committee was lobbied, and the movement culminated in a large public meeting held at De Montfort Hall in Leicester. No further cuts of this magnitude were made, and the Association claimed that

it had, temporarily, achieved its objective.

The second area where the Director's policy was under threat received less publicity. This was the setting up of three new colleges where, it was envisaged, all the staff would have the option of accepting a contract under which a proportion of their time (10% on average across the whole staff) would be given to the non-statutory activities of the college. This concept was specifically the outcome of a weekend conference held in 1973 of staff of the Bosworth College, Desford, with officers of the authority [see Leics. County Council, 1972, and Rogers in Rubinstein, ed.]. In the planning for Hind Leys College, Shepshed, the Director convened a working party consisting of education officers, the county architect, and heads of secondary schools who might be thought to be sympathetic to his vision. The staffing proposals for this, the first of the three to be opened in 1976, were based on the joint community teacher role, and passed through the relevant sub-committees, but were hastily withdrawn before reaching Education Committee. This was as a result of immediate reaction by the unions, whose attention had not been drawn to the report until the morning of the day on which it was to be presented. After a further period of negotiation, which lasted for two full years, the proposals passed by Education Committee had changed in a number of fundamental ways [Tann et al,]. The restrictions imposed by the Unions also applied to the two colleges opened in 1977 at Groby and Earl Shilton, and dealt a

serious blow to the Director's vision of a unified institution.

The first attack on community education had shown how the members of the County Council, or at least a significant number of the most influential among them, were prepared, in defence of local and national party policy, to overrule the attempts of the Director to implement his own policies. The second showed that the Director, in the formulation of policy, was finding that other pressure groups, in this case the Unions, were prepared to force their own views upon him, despite his attempt to outmanoeuvre them through the working-party which could notionally represent relevant interests.

In 1979, the Conservative ruling group on County Council had their policies ratified by the simultaneous election of a Conservative government and substantial, if largely unexpected, victories at District Council level, with only North-West Leicestershire and Leicester City Council remaining in Labour hands in the county. The gradual and sustained reduction in education expenditure in real terms within the county was demoralising officers and teachers but had not, as yet, made a significant impact on the public. The reduction in subsidy for adult education had led to some falling-off in attendance at classes and use of facilities in institutions of community education, but the policy of delegating the setting of fee levels to individual college and centre management meant that a uniform pattern did not emerge. Where substantial increases had to be made from one year to the next, as a result of holding

back from earlier action, the fall in class attendance could be as much as fifty per cent, and the number of groups affiliating to a college in one case (at Shepshed) fell by over forty per cent in one year. But because the pattern was uneven, no county-wide movement against the cuts had yet been mobilised.

In the autumn of 1979, the County Council approved savings in education which would be achieved by cutting the subsidy of evening class teachers' salaries to ten per cent. In response to this, colleges and centres were forced to review their evening class programmes and make decisions on priorities. For example, should some classes be subsidised at the cost of others on the basis that they provided for disadvantaged sectors of the community, or that they were socially or educationally desirable, despite the fact that they were uneconomic? Should some affiliated groups bear the brunt of the rising prices on the basis that members were relatively well-off and attendance would nevertheless be sustained? Should support of certain outreach programmes, such as Homestart and Adult Literacy, be continued at the expense of class attenders, affiliated groups or by other means of raising money? These decisions did not rest upon the professional staff of County Hall, or upon the teachers, but upon the lay college management. No clear guidelines existed within the articles of government upon which such decisions could be made, and inevitably college councils would rest heavily upon their professional staff, but the fact remains that the Education

Committee was now delegating to College Councils the responsibility, no longer to expand the activities of educational institutions, but to contract them.

College principals impressed upon the councils that it was their responsibility to make such decisions, a strategy which was later to bear fruit. Thus the principal of Ivanhoe College, Ashby, suggested "that members of the community college council should investigate the implications of the proposed cuts in educational spending" [Leicester Mercury, 26.10.1979]. Education Committee, faced with the need to make cuts of six million pounds (i.e. about six per cent), strove to avoid affecting the pupil-teacher ratio and concentrated on those areas which were, they could claim, the non-essentials. Thus ancillary staff, classroom assistants, caretaking staff, heating and telephone bills bore the brunt of this round. However, the extent of the savings concentrated in these areas did ensure that everyone involved in or touched by education would be faced with an observable outcome - a particular ancillary made redundant, a specific swimming-pool colder or closed - whereas increasing the pupil-teacher ratio might perhaps have passed comparatively unnoticed. Press publicity, as in the past, reinforced the view that education should concentrate on its statutory duties. Three letters published in the Mercury criticised, in turn, a local NUT spokesman for protesting against cuts in school meal provision and "lollipop wardens"; the provision of "peripheral education" such as the

County School of Music and grants to the East Midlands Arts Council; and the "blaze of light and adult activity" of a community college, and questioned "how beneficial this is to the 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. child attendance" [Leicester Mercury, 7.2.1980]. On 5 March the Mercury summarised the "deluge of letters" it had received over the cuts with the title "Teachers urged: Don't moan - just get on with your job" [Leicester Mercury, 5.3.1980].

By this time it was becoming clear that the earlier strategy of the education department, of diverting funds into favoured areas with little attendant publicity, was failing owing to the limited resources available. The fact that Education Committee had been overspending on its estimates for some years, and had in the previous year overspent by some 2.3 million, was now receiving wide publicity.

The policy which allowed groups to polarise, however, was the announcement by Education Committee of the need to save a further 100,000 during the 1980-81 financial year, and its intention to effect this by the imposition of a levy of the sum, to be distributed amongst colleges and centres throughout the county. Two causes of complaint about the levy could be identified. First, it was seen as being imposed by Policy and Resources Committee rather than Education Committee, as it was the former which was insisting that savings be made. Second, the amount bore no apparent relation to fees or income, but was an arbitrary figure which was readily identifiable, rather than

being, for example, a reduction in subsidy. The policy of delegating to headteachers the autonomy referred to above now resulted in a degree of outspokenness which probably would not have occurred in many other authorities. At one college meeting, teaching staff and users joined together to criticise the Education Committee for " 'passing the buck' for their own financial shortcomings". The principal referred to "the dismantling of the community education service in this area"; the community tutor said "Leicestershire once enjoyed a reputation that attracted the praise of educationalists world-wide, and the whole concept is now under attack". Particular emphasis was laid on how members of Education Committee, without direct experience of the work that colleges were doing, were ignorant of the effects their policies would have. Again, Mason's policy of delegating responsibility to local users was rebounding on councillors [Hinckley Times, 11.4.1980].

Colleges and Centres had for some years been geographically grouped in order that, through consultation, a certain degree of consistency in fee levels in any one area could be maintained. The imposition of the levy was organised through these groupings, which allowed the colleges a forum where management committees could exchange views and issue statements with more force than if they were to come from one centre alone. The West Leicestershire group issued a statement to the press in June which drew attention to the likely effects of the levy, including closures of some centres, increases in

fees for others, and increasing fund-raising activities. Again, the statement was issued over the heading of the centres' management committees rather than of the full-time professionals.

Meanwhile, other steps which had been taken to reduce education expenditure as a whole were receiving publicity. The Director had prepared a report on the effects of the cuts on statutory education which the Labour membership of Education Committee, believing that the Conservatives were attempting to cover up by retaining for discussion only in closed sub-committee, forced to a debate in Education Committee on 2nd. July, and subsequently in County Council on 29th. July. The report, designed to summarise the position before the formulation of the 1981/82 rate estimates in November, pointed to reductions in teachers and ancillary staff, real reduction in capitation allowances, and a deterioration of the pupil-teacher ratio. At the same time, early retirement was being offered to teachers in order to effect the reduction in staff noted above. A number of heads accepting this were taking the opportunity to make statements, publicly or privately through Education Committee, about their disillusionment. One of the letters of resignation received was appended by the Director to his report: "Although I still willingly work even more hours daily and at weekends endeavouring to compensate, I feel that there is very little hope of maintaining our high standard. Perhaps, therefore, I am not the best person to take the school

and children to a lower (different) standard, having known those that we have experienced. My refusal to accept lower standards causes frustration that is gradually becoming apparent." [Report of the Director of Education to the Schools Committee, Leicestershire County Council, 29.7.1980]. This clear commitment of the Director was, however, resisted, not by the chairman who, as seen above, would be expected to be broadly supportive of the direction of more funds into education, but by the vice-chairman of Education Committee, Cllr. Smart: "Many people when they are reaching the last five or seven years of their career might be disillusioned by change, and I can understand how they feel. It must be very difficult. However, we are talking about a few people who might be disenchanted" [Leicester Mercury, 1.7.1980]. The word "contraction" used by the Director in his report is avoided in favour of the less emotive "change".

Internal dissension among county councillors of the ruling group was now observable, although it was not yet affecting the major financial decisions of Policy and Resources Committee. While the Leicester Mercury Civic Correspondent credited this to the approaching elections of May 1981, it is likely that some councillors were concerned about the falling level of educational provision: "Rank and file county Tories, who until now have been willing to display the expected loyalty, both to their group and Government, by supporting many of the massive spending cuts deemed necessary, are beginning to jib at the

prospect of more to come. They are calculating the likely effect of the cut backs on their election chances. They are seeing economy proposals in terms of votes lost rather than pounds saved" [Leicester Mercury, 2.7.1980].

At college level, the emphasis on protest emanating from lay participants rather than professionals continued, with the Director inviting all college and centre chairmen to meet in May to discuss the effects of the cuts. The Association of Chairmen of Colleges and Centres which emerged from this meeting became a powerful pressure group, in that it brought together articulate lay people, whose commitment to community education was representative of usage rather than employment, and who were more often than not prominent members of their communities in terms of their social status and their links with networks of voluntary associations. Thus the chairmen's chairwoman had been connected with her local college since 1967, had been chairman of college council for five years, was a High School governor, an ex-member of the Rural District Council, and a card-carrying Conservative. This background allowed her, and the Association, to adopt a stance which was merely concerned with priorities (based on a comparison of cuts in community education being around thirty per cent, as against cuts in other services of one and a half to two per cent), and attempted to remain above the Conservative-Labour debate over whether the cuts were necessary in the first place.. Thus she claimed to have "fallen over backwards to keep party politics

out of it" [Interview, IA]. The apparent sponsorship of this Association by the Director, in that he brought the members together, leaving them to decide for themselves whether or not they created a formal group, was further demonstrated by the contribution of one of his officers as secretary to the Association. This arrangement led to the curious situation whereby letters organising protests against County Hall cuts in educational expenditure were received by many organisations on County Hall headed notepaper.

What was arguably the low point of the Education Committee's standing amongst the teaching profession came at the beginning of September, when cuts of 4.75 million were approved, to be spread over three years. These included the loss of 300 teaching jobs, cuts in special education and community education, charges for music tuition, and the closure of school buildings out of school hours during the coming spring term. It is unclear just how this list was compiled. In the end, it took the usual form of a paper put together by the Education Department and presented to committee by the Director. However, whereas such papers would previously have been prepared by the Director with perhaps little consultation of councillors, it is likely here that leading members of Education Committee had by now identified with some accuracy the areas they wished to cut and the amounts which could be saved by each area. Two specific areas were to affect community education. In anticipation of Committee approval, the

principals of the three Phase 3 Colleges were told before the end of August that the 90:10 staffing experiment, due to be appraised at the end of the 1980/81 school year, was to be ended in December. However, this was either intended to be a purely cosmetic move, or the expenditure on Phase 3 Colleges had been misunderstood. The increase in staffing expenditure fell into two categories. The first of these was the honorarium paid to all community teachers in respect of "unsocial hours" worked - an agreement which had been forced upon the authority by the professional associations in their negotiations previous to the opening of the college at Shepshed (see above). This amounted to about 6,000 per college per annum. By far the greater sum, however, was that allowing for an extra ten per cent of staff to take up the ten per cent of time spent overall by teachers on their community commitment. This amounted to some 27,000 per college per annum.

An immediate cancellation of the experiment would save the honorarium expenses, but could not reduce the latter figure until staff left voluntarily without being replaced, unless the committee was to move towards sanctioning teacher redundancy, against which it was at present setting its face. Thus an experiment which had cost some 250,000 over four years was to be dispensed with to save 12,000. The required appointment of a youth tutor to replace the community teachers' commitments would, of course, reduce the saving even further.

When one of the three principals revealed that, although

community teacher contracts for the coming year had not been signed, written agreements on the commitment had been made with his staff, thus committing the authority to continue paying the honorarium until the end of the academic year, the potential saving fell further. Eventually agreement was reached whereby half the community teachers at the other two colleges would relinquish their contracts immediately, allowing the remainder to continue until the following Easter. This agreement was negotiated between officers and the principals, and approved by Further Education sub-committee.

The more contentious savings, however, as far as the public was likely to be concerned, were those to be made by closing school buildings in out-of-school hours during the "heating season". This proposal was "leaked" in a number of versions, partly due to the closed sub-committee structure of County Council which did not allow reporting of meetings, thus allowing leaks and rumours to abound until the proposals reached Education Committee. Such leaks could be used to both the disadvantage and advantage of the ruling group. The appearance of a number of contradictory reports in the press about which institutions were to be closed allowed the Conservative group to test public opinion without committing itself publicly to a position. Where the response was dramatically unfavourable, the proposal could be denied and an alternative, less drastic, could be substituted.

There was also some confusion over nomenclature, as community education in Leicestershire could take place in a variety of institutions:

(a) The Community College, based on a secondary school and run by one principal with some full-time community staff and part-time adult teachers;

(b) The Community Centre, based in a primary school with a head/warden, and part-time adult teachers;

(c) The Evening Centre, based in a primary school but with a separate warden and no council of management;

(d) The Adult Education Centre, which operated in the City through autonomous institutions.

A further complication was that many colleges used "out-stations" based in community centres and non-community schools in their catchment areas.

Thus the closure of educational buildings during the spring term could be interpreted to mean any or all of these institutions. While the Mercury claimed that "the County Education service have decided to reduce the service by cutting out some 22 tutorial posts and closing evening centres in small villages in January", it was necessary for colleges to point out that they would still be enrolling students for classes in that week [Leicester Mercury, 15.9.1980].

Education as an election issue in 1981

Education, both statutory and voluntary, was clearly a major issue in the minds of the public in Leicestershire in the period leading up to the County Council elections of May 1981. It is more difficult to determine to what extent it was an issue in the actual pattern of voting behaviour.

As had been widely predicted in the national press, the elections saw a substantial change in the composition of local councils. In 54 authorities, including metropolitan county councils which are not education authorities, Labour gained control of 14, the Conservative party lost overall control of a further 9, and the Liberals gained one. While such results were as much a reflection of the disenchantment with national Conservative policies as of local issues, two claims made at the time suggest that particular circumstances produced a variable swing from Conservative to Labour. First was the fact that the Labour Party did not quite achieve the position it had held in 1973 in authorities in the south and east of the country, where there was less suffering from the unemployment created by government policies. In the north and west, however, Labour improved upon its 1973 results. Second, it was claimed by a leading NUT representative that those authorities which had made major cuts in educational provision had suffered significant changes, that is, Avon, Staffordshire, Cheshire, Leicestershire and Northamptonshire [The Guardian, 9.5.1981].

In Leicestershire, the Conservative Party lost control for the first time in its history, with Labour gaining 26 seats to reach a total of 43, Conservatives losing 31 for a total of 44. The Liberals returned to the council with 5, holding the balance of power, and one prominent ex-Conservative, the first chairman of the new Education Committee in 1974, who had quarrelled with the leadership a few months before the election, was returned as an Independent. The Conservatives lost a number of prominent councillors in the process. One member of the "Gang of Four" lost his City seat. The vice-chairman of the Education Committee, who had been tipped for the chairmanship, lost his seat to a Liberal, as did a councillor who had similarly been tipped for the vice-chairmanship. The latter had, in fact, moved out of his marginal City seat in expectation of defeat, to stand in a "safe" suburban ward, but was nevertheless defeated. The chairman of the Further Education sub-committee was also unseated by a Liberal, and with the retirement of the previous chairmen of Education Committee and Schools sub-committee, prominent members of Education Committee were removed from the Council. Indeed, the leader of the Conservative Group, who had also moved from a marginal City to a safe Conservative seat, only held on by 193 votes.

As it was, only the distribution of seats allowed the Conservatives a majority of one over Labour, for Labour gained 42.4% of the votes cast, the Conservatives 40.3% and the

Liberals 12.3%. Thus it took on average 3,300 votes to elect each Conservative councillor, 3,551 for each Labour councillor, and 8,839 for each winning Liberal. The turn-out was fairly high for a County election, varying between 40% for the City wards and 50% for those in Hinckley and Bosworth, averaging out at 42.5% overall.

The Leicester Mercury predicted that the subsequent confusion and day-to-day decision making would not be in the interests of efficient local government, and suggested that "politics will rule". Certainly, the days immediately following the election were filled by meetings at which the groups devised their strategies. On the Friday, the Conservatives announced that they would go ahead with nominations for the chairmanship of the new council and its committees, since they remained the largest group. The relationship between party leaders and councillors in the Conservative Group was clearly not to change as "the decision to put forward nominations was made by the Tory group executive" [Leicester Mercury, 9.5.1981]. The leader of the Labour Group made it clear that he was ready to talk with the Liberals with a view to establishing a pact or alliance which would give them an overall majority, while the Liberals waited for approaches and proposals from both parties.

The emergence of an "anti-political" attitude was likely to be a dominant theme of these discussions. As the election results had become known, early on the Friday morning, Liberals

had spoken of the need to appoint able and experienced councillors to prominent positions regardless of party. On Saturday, the lone Independent, who had attended the Liberal Group meeting in the morning, was quoted as saying that he would remain firmly independent: "I believe this is the time to break the party political grip of County Hall and I will do whatever to be best (sic) for people of the county" [ibid]. In the evening, Radio Leicester reported that the five Liberals were unwilling to form a pact or alliance with either major party, and would make decisions on each issue as it arose. They also announced that they planned to nominate the Independent councillor for chairmanship of the County Council, whereupon the Labour Leader accused the Liberal Group of "playing party politics".

This brief history of educational politics in Leicestershire demonstrates the extent to which educational policy-making at the level of the local education authority became a public political issue during the 1970s and 1980s. However, formal expressions of public concern were necessarily confined to specific crises, such as that at Countesthorpe. On broader issues, the public found there was no way to express an authoritative opinion, and the way was left clear for councillors to dominate the debate. The formal structures of lay participation in the governance of community education, however, allowed the public a far more effective channel for

the expression of opinions when that part of the service came under threat. The quality and quantity of educational provision, albeit non-statutory, had become a genuine political issue, had brought users together with the sole purpose of articulating views and bringing pressure to bear on those holding the purse-strings, had placed users in the individual colleges in the position of making decisions about educational priorities, and had probably played a significant part in removing from power the councillors responsible for unpopular policies.

Who these users were, the part they played in individual college management, and the potential they showed for extending their influence into the area of statutory education, will be seen in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 8

The Practice of Community Education in Leicestershire

This chapter is a brief review of the history of community education in Leicestershire, in order to place the research reported in the ensuing chapters in context.

It might be argued that the first step in the recognition of the importance of the integration of statutory school provision with post-school education in Leicestershire was made as early as 1902. In that year, William Brockington (later Sir William) was appointed as first Director of Education for the County Council, directly from his post as Principal of the Victoria Institute and headmaster of the day school at Worcester, a school providing both full-time secondary education and part-time evening classes, largely in practical subjects for older students. Brockington's experience here was later reflected by the establishment throughout the county of a number of centres for subjects such as woodwork, cookery and gardening, many of which were in or near schools. Such centres seem to show a concern for continuing education, as they served not only children during school time, but also adolescents and adults. They also demonstrate a commitment to practical vocational education in developing skills which Brockington believed were essential accomplishments in daily living. A further strand of Brockington's interests which may be traced

to later developments in the county was his protection of small rural schools during the slump of the 1930s. While it is possible that this was rooted in a sincere belief in the intrinsic value of the small "neighbourhood" school, there was a pragmatic foundation to it, since Brockington had required the agreement of School Managing Bodies to the "beheading" of elementary schools in order to construct the primary-secondary pattern in the nineteen-twenties. To follow this through by allowing the closure of the schools would have certainly created a political furore to which the later controversy over closing village schools would hardly compare. Brockington retired in 1947 at the age of 76, and his successor was Stewart Mason, a member of Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Schools who had worked before the war with Henry Morris in Cambridgeshire.

It was Morris' commitment to continuing education which now dictated one of the directions in which educational provision in Leicestershire was to move. Morris saw the problem from a rural perspective and believed that the Cambridgeshire Village College could provide rural England with "the education it needs and the social and recreational life it deserves There must be a grouping and coordination of all the educational and social agencies which now exist in isolation in the countryside: an amalgamation which, while preserving the individuality and function of each, will assemble them into a whole and make possible their expression for the first time in a new institution, single but many-sided, for the countryside"

[Morris, quoted in Ree]. Sawston Village College was the first to open, in 1930, and was described four years later as "a considerable achievement both imaginatively and practically, and it promised important results as a model for the development of a distinctively rural English culture, on a community basis" [Martin in Ree]. R.A. Butler later claimed that any reform of English education would have to be along the lines of the Cambridgeshire village colleges, and that the framing of his 1944 Education Act was affected by his visit to Sawston in 1930. Morris' writings are quoted extensively by educationalists in Leicestershire, e.g. Harvey in 1971: "It is this concept of a new educational institution which is emerging in Leicestershire."

Brockington's long tenure of the chief education post in Leicestershire, and the trust built up between him and the Chairman of the County Council over some twenty-three years of cooperation, perhaps helped to give a firm foundation to Mason's term of office. It may be that the somewhat idiosyncratic styles of such early education officers as Morris and Brockington were encouraged to flourish in structures untrammelled by the complex bureaucratic machinery familiar today, or that their positions allowed them to build for themselves a structure which would serve them rather than having to slot themselves into an already well-oiled machine with clear expectations of the role and function of a Chief Education Officer. Leicestershire Education Committee certainly

demonstrated its own expectations by labelling the job "Director of Education" whereas, for example, the City Borough of Leicester appointed a "Secretary" to the new Education Committee to fulfil, notionally, a similar function. The autonomous nature of the role as interpreted, then, may be seen to have been created by the initial perception of the 1902 Education Committee, the long tenure of Brockington, and the friendly relationship developed between him and Colonel Robert Martin as Chairman of the County Council. It was this to which Stewart Mason found himself heir in 1947.

The "Leicestershire Scheme for Further Education and County Colleges" was produced in response to Sections 41-43 of the 1944 Act requiring local education authorities to provide for further education, full- and part-time, vocational and non-vocational, in county colleges. For the purposes of the document, the Education Committee differentiated between County Colleges, as defined above, and County Colleges which included a secondary school building. The nomenclature of these latter was not approved by the Ministry of Education when the scheme was accepted in 1951, and the term "Community College" was officially adopted in 1953. The concept was further developed by Stewart Mason in a paper presented to the Education Committee in 1949. The principle behind such an institution was that joint usage of school premises by school and community would make economic sense, and would encourage school leavers to continue their education, both vocational and non-

vocational. Hence the following principles of usage may be established:

- (i) The library, hall, gymnasium, craft rooms and playing-fields to be jointly used by school and community;
- (ii) Adult and youth wings or rooms to be separately provided within the institution for the use of the community;
- (iii) The Head/Warden to have overall responsibility for the institution with the help of adult and youth tutors;
- (iv) Part-time evening-class teachers to be responsible to the Head/Warden and a Users Committee;
- (v) The institution to become the meeting-place for the community, and joint building schemes with contributions from the authority and the community to be initiated.

Thus rural life would become reinvigorated, quickening "the mind and spirit of all who were drawn in" [Fairbairn, 1979, p.44]. Involvement would be achieved by handing over a large measure of the responsibility for running the institution to the users. The policy was "to encourage true democracy in these adult institutions by leaving the daily management to the people themselves . . . Ultimate responsibility for the proper care and use of the buildings will always remain with the Committee, but it is to be hoped that, like a wise friend, it will stand unobtrusively in the background and grant the utmost delegation to the people on the spot" [ibid, p.47].

These colleges would be established "wherever the size of the local population warrants" [Mason, 1949], and would be based on colleges of further education, some secondary schools, and some primary schools. Leicestershire, however, is not so rural a county as Cambridgeshire, and it was planned to open the first college based on a secondary modern school at Shepshed, a large industrial village in north-west Leicestershire, with a population of six and a quarter thousand in 1951. S.C. Western, former Warden of Bottisham Village College, Cambridgeshire, was appointed to Shepshed Secondary Modern, as Mason saw Shepshed as "the ideal place for the setting-up of the first Leicestershire Community College" [Mallory, p.38]. Western started a Parent Teachers Association, and developed the Evening Institute and the use of the old buildings as a meeting-place, art gallery and concert hall in preparation for the move to the new college on a site to the east of the village. However, owing to accommodation problems, in 1954 it was decided to use the opportunity of a new secondary modern school at Ashby-de-la-Zouch, a small town nearby, for the college, and Western was transferred.

At Ashby Ivanhoe, one governing body was responsible for school, youth centre and community college. College members consisted of attenders at evening classes (the membership fee fixed by the college being added to the evening class fee fixed centrally by the county), members of affiliated clubs and societies (the college determining appropriate levels of

affiliation fee), members of the youth club, and individual members. College Council was then elected by these members (one for every fifty evening class members, two from each affiliated group, two youth members, six representatives of full- and part-time staff), and ordinarily met once a year, electing a Management Committee responsible for the day-to-day running of the college. The principal and the head of adult education were ex-officio members of this committee, which was responsible for the management of all income, forty per cent of part-time teachers' salaries being returnable to the county. Both the Youth Centre Management Committee elected by its members, with the Youth Tutor an ex-officio member, and the College Management Committee, were directly responsible to the Governing Body and were represented on it by coopted members.

The adult wing was added to Ivanhoe in 1958 and the youth wing in 1964, with financial support from central government recommended by the 1960 Albemarle Report on Youth Services. Finance from the DES for adult facilities was restricted to a very small allowance in a major building programme for a small storage space for an Evening Institute in schools. An adult wing, therefore, had to be financed almost entirely from the County's minor works programme; that this support was forthcoming demonstrates the Education Committee's commitment to the ideal.

The principles behind Ivanhoe and its successors were summarised by Baynes [Mason, ed., 1970], leaning heavily on the

Newsom Report [DES, 1963]:

- (i) Learning should be student-centred and outward-looking in order that it should be more meaningful;
- (ii) That school buildings should be available for the community for both educational and economic reasons: "(The school) needs to be joined to the mainland of life by a causeway well-trodden in both directions" [DES, 1963];
- (iii) Learning should be a collaborative effort, both adult and student working together towards one end;
- (iv) The school is part of a "caring community";
- (v) The curriculum should be extended to include creative use of leisure and personal development;
- (vi) A closer integration of all college activities, with all staff eventually having a commitment to the college;
- (vii) A public dialogue to be set up to raise and consider all relevant issues.

The movement towards community education coincided with a gradual abolition of selective secondary education, Leicestershire eventually becoming the first English county to have a completely comprehensive system by 1969. The three-tier structure (of Primary, 11-14 High, and 14-18 Upper schools) resulted in High Schools being based mainly on the old Secondary Modern Schools, and Upper Schools on the ex-Grammar Schools. Of the seven community colleges opened before 1965, six were based on High Schools. Three of the next five, however, were based on Upper Schools, and by 1969 the plans for

new Upper Schools at Desford (the Bosworth College), Countesthorpe and Syston Wreake Valley established adult and youth wings as an integral part of the buildings, these being the first purpose-built colleges in the county.

Community Colleges and Centres (the latter being based mainly on rural primary schools) adopted schemes of management with modified instruments and articles of government, similar to those at Ashby outlined above.

In 1969 the Education Committee approved a scheme whereby an annual allocation of money for adult, youth and community education was awarded to the college. The college was required to pay back forty per cent of the actual cost of part-time evening class teachers' salaries to the county, the latter thus providing a subsidy of sixty per cent of evening class fees up to a maximum covered by the allocation. Allocations were similarly made to cover materials, apparatus and equipment, printing, postage and travelling. Virement was allowed within this total sum, but any extra expenditure had to be covered by the college itself, and any transfer from the allocation for part-time teachers' salaries was subject to the forty per cent "tax". This budget financing, applied originally to the colleges at Shepshed and Birstall and extended later to cover all colleges, centres and evening institutes in the county, claimed certain advantages over the earlier centralised system:

- (i) The community would become more involved in college management;

- (ii) The class programme is only limited by enrollers' willingness to pay for it;
- (iii) The fee structure gains greater flexibility, popular classes able to support those of more limited interest;
- (iv) The college itself makes decisions on establishment and closure of classes;
- (v) The class programme is more flexible both in length and content;
- (vi) College activities can finance class programmes;
- (vii) Greater liaison is established between youth work and adult education.

In 1975 the planning of three new Upper Schools, at Shepshed, Earl Shilton and Groby, allowed the Education Committee to agree to a limited experiment whereby the whole budget would be allocated to the college, allowing financial virement between the further education and school elements of the block budget system, on condition that the colleges adhered to the county's school staffing establishment and Burnham pay scales, non-teaching staffing and rates of pay, and "all other appropriate financial regulations of the Authority" [Fairbairn, 1979].

In staffing terms, a limited experiment had already been initiated in September 1974 whereby a small number of heads of department in a few colleges had been given "across-the-board" responsibility for school and community curriculum provision with time off from their school commitment.

In the three new colleges it was planned to offer all staff the opportunity to take up such appointments, the nature of the community commitment being determined in consultation with the Principal and Vice-Principals. An additional staffing allocation of 1:10 would be allowed on the understanding that an average of ten per cent of teachers' time would be given to the community, and a small honorarium would be paid. In earlier models, the professional full-time staff consisted of a Principal, Deputy Principal, and adult and youth tutors. The Principal was paid as head of the appropriate group of school, plus remuneration for community work based on classes, affiliated clubs and societies, and premises. The adult and youth tutors were paid on Burnham Technical, Head of Department Grade 1 and Lecturer Grade 1 scales. However, in the new model, youth and adult tutors would not be appointed (or, at Earl Shilton and Shepshed, where High School Colleges already existed, they would in time be replaced by the ten per cent commitment of ten staff). A third Vice-Principal would assume responsibility for the community provision. Although "all staff appointed must be entirely committed to the 'across-the-board' philosophy" [Fairbairn, 1979], it was envisaged that the school:community commitment might range across the staff from 50:50 through 90:10 to 100:0. However, discussions with local Union representatives at first limited the scope and allowed only for 90:10 appointments, greater flexibility being introduced gradually [Whiteside, Tann & Gann, 1981].

For the first time, buildings were also to be totally integrated with no separate facilities for adults and youth. While the original ideal of a public library being incorporated could not be met as only land on the periphery of the three villages was available for extensive building, the buildings were designed with the whole community in mind, facilities for the physically disabled being provided, two of the three colleges incorporating a clinic, and extra floor space allowed for the community.

It was estimated that at the time of the setting-up of these colleges their cost in terms of salary bills would be theoretically "between six per cent and eighteen per cent more overall than if community education were excluded" [Fairbairn, 1979].

Government reductions in planned real educational expenditure in 1979/80 placed further restrictions on the colleges. County no longer subsidised evening class fees, colleges and centres being required to return not only the full cost of part-time teachers' salaries but a further notional amount to cover costs of heating, lighting and caretaking. Colleges of Further Education operating evening classes, however, were not subject to the same degree of financial return. Colleges and Centres in each locality had in the past reached agreement on class fees to avoid competition. In 1981, however, the Education Committee demanded a sum of 100,000 to be returned from community education [see chapter 7]. This

figure was based on a simplistic, and false, interpretation of community education costs. The sum charged to Further Education Committee by Schools Committee for the community use of schools was an average of 10,000 per college. But this amount was calculated by a complex set of percentages of overall college costs of, for example, furniture, caretaking, electricity and rates. The Committee decision did not take into account that most of these percentages were notional, and some, for example rates, would not be saved at all by bringing community usage to an end. Thus the equation that appeared in the local press, that the "closure" of ten community colleges would save 100,000, was always a nonsense. In the face of this demand, some colleges chose to hold fees at the existing level and reduce hours and length of courses, thus reducing teachers' salaries, while others increased fees proportionately.

Conclusion

The support for community education in Leicestershire, however it may be defined, can be traced back to the County's "Scheme for Further Education and County Colleges" presented to the Ministry of Education in 1949. The operational details were added by Stewart Mason, and the actual process began with the opening of Ashby Ivanhoe Community College in 1954. Financial assistance from the County consisted of a commitment of a large part of the minor works programme, and substantial subsidies for adult education, youth work and community building

programmes. The programme reached its zenith in the middle 1970s with the establishment of budget financing and the building of three new colleges staffed by community teachers. However, 1979 saw a downward trend in central government education spending which was effected in Leicestershire by a withdrawal of support for community education.

This was the political background at the time that the research reported in Chapters 9 and 10 took place.

CHAPTER 9

Participation in the Three New Community Colleges

The devolution of responsibility to the local community has been a central theme in community education. In the original Memorandum on Community Education Mason [1949] argued that positive attitudes of enthusiasm, pride and affection towards community education would only be achieved when the day-to-day government of community education institutions was in the hands of the people who use them. Recognising the risks involved in this view he argued: "if real success is to be achieved it must be the Committee's policy to encourage true democracy in these adult institutions by leaving the daily management to the people themselves and by throttling down officialdom to a minimum" [ibid].

However, as use of the concept of participation has become more common, divergences can be seen in the central concerns of those who use it in a community education setting.

As the concept of participation became more frequently used to legitimise a range of changes and proposed reforms, writers following different strands of political and social thinking interpreted the concept "participation" to serve their own, sometimes contradictory, needs. The view of participation as fundamentally involving the partnership of equals was challenged by those who were not convinced of the assumptions of the consensus of interests with which they believed this

mode operated. The challengers put forward an alternative view arguing for structures which recognise the conflict of interests which they see as inherent in the community.

The increasing concern with new forms of participatory democracy reflected in writings on community education was expressed in their concern for the nature of the relationship between the providers and the clients. On the one hand, there is the traditional view that the purpose of participatory structures is to allow for the expression of the needs of the local community. This view does not necessarily assume that such a participatory body should have actual power of decision-making, but does usually assume that the decision-makers will take account of, and respond to, locally articulated needs. This may encourage a paternalistic approach to participants where "superior", therefore "more experienced" bodies or individuals who have delegated some decisions, may ultimately decide that they "know better" and only partly respond to the participants' suggestions.

On the other hand, there is the view that the purpose of participatory structures is to replicate the democratic structures of the country as a whole at all levels. This, it is claimed, is not only a "Good Thing" in itself, but is an educational process and helps to contribute towards self-fulfilment in giving citizens the opportunity to use their democratic rights to influence decisions which directly affect them [Whiteside et al].

This is a particularly strong theme in the development of urban community education, as propounded by, for example, Midwinter [1975], Newman [1979], Hatch and Moylan, and others. However, such proponents find themselves in a dilemma when the consequences of democratic management arise, one of which may be the control of the institution by groups whose views are not acceptable to the professional instigators.

In Coventry, for example, "what was clear from the previous liberal attempts of the Community Development Project to devolve power was that one was passing power not to the participating masses, but to those who were clearly adroit at using, for instance, committee work and constitutionalism . . . We have found that democratic structures help to alienate the very people to whom liberals and radical authorities have attempted to transfer power." [Coventry Education Committee, 1972]. Such differences in views, insofar as they have informed national and local thinking about participation, have influenced participants' perceptions of the roles they play and the effectiveness of existing arrangements.

A more detailed study of these issues, in the broader political context, will be made in the final chapter.

STRUCTURES FOR PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Most authorities with a community education policy encourage the participation of users in the management of community education, and in some this will have an effect upon

the statutory school provision by introducing on to the governing body some members of the college council or its equivalent, and also representatives of university departments of adult education. Similarly, most of these authorities create structures whereby users of the institutions are given, to a varying extent, some say in such matters as the provision of classes, facilities for affiliated groups, 'outreach' activities and social events.

For some authorities, this might be seen as only one part of a movement towards more representative governing bodies. However, no trend could be observed aligning authorities with a community education policy and authorities developing governing bodies, in terms of composition, training or the abolition of grouping. In studying the practices of authorities with community-designated schools, it is important to differentiate between those with a written policy being actively pursued, and those which merely rename schools without making any definable impact on a community philosophy. A further distinction should be made between those authorities, mainly urban ones, which are concentrating on the development of a small number of schools, such as Bradford, Rochdale, Wigan and Lothian, and those designating community status to large numbers of, mainly, secondary schools, such as Cambridgeshire and Devon. The constraints upon these policies are largely financial, though partly political (in Devon, for example, the gradual growth of community colleges was given impetus by fears that

reorganisation would alter county policy, and the number of designated schools doubled in 1974).

Furthermore, many authorities develop in a piecemeal way, so that, as in Leicestershire to some extent, one school may be organised in a different way to others. The examples quoted here do not necessarily represent an authority policy for all schools, nor are they necessarily the most "advanced" schools in an authority.

Most of the authorities with community education policies, represented by community-designated schools, significant financial input, senior officers with specialist responsibility, and community staffing (either specialist staff attached to the school, or arrangements for joint appointment), had increased the size of their governing bodies, or were in the process of doing so. The Leicestershire pattern, of including a University Adult Education specialist, representatives of College Council, and allowance for further cooptions, was repeated frequently with some slight variations. Devon County Council had a working party in existence which proposed a similar structure, and only Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council had made no changes in the Instruments and Articles of Government of its community schools, despite pressure from senior officers. At least one school there felt that an enlarged governing body, without any separate community council, would be appropriate. Lothian must be regarded as a special case, as Scottish schools were not required to have

governing bodies. Instead, from 1974, School Councils existed. Wester Hailes Education Centre, outside Edinburgh, for example, had thirty-nine voting members of its Council comprising ten parents (five from feeder primary schools); thirteen staff (five from primary schools, one from nursery school, and two non-teaching); five users (two full-time students and three adult users); nine community representatives (two regional councillors, seven directly elected by Wester Hailes residents) and two liaison councillors (one from a religious organisation, one from a neighbouring school council). This Council set up sub-committees to deal with specific areas of activity which cut across all Centre usages, such as finance. In Cumbria, community schools had representatives of adult education on their governing bodies, working with Further Education Users Committees, although Milnthorpe School had moved a step further by having an enlarged governing body which divided into three sub-committees, for Finance, School, and Community.

Most of the relevant authorities, however, had created separate committees to deal specifically with community activities in a school and, owing to the Instruments and Articles of Government, these were effectively sub-committees of the governing body, and responsible to them. These bodies had a variety of names - Community Council, Community College Association, for example - and were composed of members elected by various constituent bodies, e.g. affiliated groups, evening classes, youth clubs. These in turn elected a smaller number

for day-to-day management, after the Leicestershire pattern. Whether these bodies had a constitutional existence, or were merely advisory, is not always clear. As has been noted above, the Devon model was under review and, until recommendations were made, the coordinating committees had no statutory existence. In Wigan, members of classes and activities were not represented in any way, although theoretically they could make representations directly to the governors.

At the end of the nineteen-seventies, Rochdale seemed to be going furthest in altering the pattern of community management in English schools. In the first group of community schools, the Community Council, consisting of about sixty elected people and including three governors, had, unusually, a constitutional role in statutory daytime activities: "the right to be consulted on the general running of the school", including the right to be advised about the suspension of any pupils from the school. "In practice, however, the Community Council has never wanted to deal with matters connected directly with the administration of the day school and it would plainly be inappropriate for it to do so in its present form. So while there is a potential for a conflict of interest, in practice this has not happened and is unlikely to happen." (internal memo from Head of Community Education to new headteacher in a Rochdale Community School, 1978). Nevertheless, it was planned that the newest community school should combine governing body and community council in a Board

of Management, despite resistance by teacher unions and delays in D.E.S. approval.

Where equivalents to Leicestershire College Councils existed, the two-way pattern of representation was typical, with College Council nominating some governors, and the governing body nominating some members of Council.

Few authorities in England, though a number in Scotland, created dual management structures such as at Sutton Centre in Nottinghamshire, and in Grampian, and met the inevitable problems of conflict between a service/educational ideology and a selective leisure provision ideology. In general, the movement was, as in Leicestershire, to unify rather than to divide control under a predominantly educational ideology.

PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY EDUCATION IN LEICESTERSHIRE

In Leicestershire, the arguments for unified management lay not only in the advantages accruing to the community provision, but also those likely to accrue to the school [e.g. Fairbairn 1979, Western 1974]. The following questions, therefore, must be addressed:

[a] Are governing bodies in community colleges different in composition and style from governing bodies in schools?

[b] Does the formation of a college council and, in particular, its management committee, incorporate a different type of person into educational decision-making?

[c] Does the contribution made to educational management by college council differ from that made by the governing body?

The present chapter will address itself to the second of these questions, and the following chapter to the third question. An attempt to answer the first question will also be made on the circumstantial evidence cited throughout.

In attempting to answer these questions, an intensive study was made during 1980 and 1981 of the management of three new community colleges which opened in 1976 and 1977, with significant innovations in their methods of staffing, financing and governance. This involved interviews with eighteen governors and two clerks, and forty-four members of college councils. including fifteen members of the three management committees. Meetings of governing bodies, college councils and management committees were observed, and questionnaires were circulated to all lay and elected members of governing bodies and management committees.

The results and conclusions of this research are reported in this and the following chapter. Further research was conducted in 1988-89, in order to establish whether the trends identified earlier had been consolidated, particularly, of course, in the light of the substantial legislation carried through by the Conservative Government of the 1980s [see chapter 13].

In interpreting the data, caution has to be observed in a number of areas. First, the structure of participation differs from college to college. Shepshed, for example, shares its

governing body with the High School, and has a long-established, elaborate committee system to deal with the various functions of the college. Groby College is in the process of setting up sub-committees to look at areas of particular concern. Earl Shilton had established a social events sub-committee, and working parties to look at, for example, finance.

Second, there are significant differences in the demographic profiles of the three communities.

The Three Communities

Hind Leys College is situated in Shepshed which, after Loughborough, is one of the main settlements in north Leicestershire. During this century there has been a general increase in its population, and in the last two decades the town has become a focal point for substantial residential and light industrial growth. The 1971 Census indicated that there were just over three thousand dwelling units in Shepshed itself, and Department of Environment house completion returns and new rating assessments showed that a further six hundred dwelling units were added between 1971 and 1976, an increase of twenty per cent. The 1976 Residents Questionnaire Survey carried out for the District Plan estimated that only forty-six per cent of the employed population worked in the town. There were marked differences in the dependence of men and women on Shepshed for employment. While some sixty per cent of female

workers found employment in the town in 1976, only thirty-four per cent of male workers did so. Figures from the 1971 Census and from surveys in the 1976 District Plan indicated that the percentages of the population in the 0-29 age group and the 65 and over age group were slightly lower than the County average, whilst the percentage in the 30-63 age group was slightly higher. In terms of socio-economic groupings, Shepshed broadly followed the County pattern for economically active males. There was, however, an under-representation of professional workers and of semi-skilled and unskilled workers, and an over-representation of skilled manual workers. The surveys conducted for the District Plan found that the new in-migrants were mostly young couples or young families, and were of a higher social class than long-term residents.

Until local government reorganisation the town had an Urban District Council. Since that time, strenuous efforts have been made by some of the town's residents for the right to a Parish Council, to re-establish the area's separate identity. The present district council met some of the residents' demands by building a library/information centre and health centre, and gave support for a weekly market. Apart from a large number of public houses, places of entertainment and organised leisure are almost entirely lacking.

There has been a long tradition in the town of community education, originally based on the High School. The new Upper School Community College was built on the same campus, which

also houses a primary school and a youth club. Some years earlier the community raised funds for half the cost of a swimming pool, which was built as a joint venture between the community and the local education authority. Besides Shepshed, a handful of small villages in the surrounding countryside was also included in the catchment area and, during the first years of the college, a section of Castle Donington was added to the college catchment area. Castle Donington, however, is twelve miles away, and there is no direct means of transport between the two towns. Moreover, the town has recently gained its own system of community education based on the local high school.

The second college, Earl Shilton, is situated between Earl Shilton and Barwell. These two adjacent villages have been by tradition economically based on the footwear and hosiery industries. Although there have been increases in population (six and a half per cent between 1971 and 1975), largely due to in-migration, this has been considerably lower than in Shepshed (fourteen per cent in the same period). The surveys for the District Plan found in-migrants tended to be from nearby, only twelve per cent coming from more than fifty miles away. As in Shepshed, in 1975 under half the economically active part of the population lived and worked in the villages. Again, in-migrants tended to be younger and of a slightly higher social class than the County average, with a higher proportion in the sixty and over age group and a lower than average proportion in the under nineteen age group. In terms of social class there

was an over-representation of all manual categories and a general under-representation of all non-manual categories compared with the County average.

Whilst local amenities such as a cinema and roller-skating rink had recently closed by 1980, a new leisure centre at Hinckley was used by residents. The communities had a number of working mens' clubs, social institutes and other such institutions, and a thriving network of voluntary associations. Local myth also identifies Barwell as the village with the highest number of pubs per head of population in the country - the verification of which claim, the writer felt, lay beyond the brief of this research. Community education based on the High School had been long established in these communities and, again, as in Shepshed, was transferred to the Upper School when the new college opened. In this instance the sites were separate although only five hundred yards apart. The community college programme opened on a third site, a large house held in trust "for the community" since 1945 and later adopted by the Education Authority. This separate site contained specialist youth club facilities. The college also served a number of small outlying villages as well as the larger settlement at Stoney Stanton. Here, as at Shepshed, problems of distance and transport precluded significant usage of the college in its wider aspects by these outlying communities.

The third college, Groby, differed from the other two in having a catchment area which was multi-focal, being spread

over four main villages, Groby, Ratby, Markfield and Kirby Muxloe. The population, because of its location in countryside adjacent to both Charnwood Forest and the city of Leicester, experienced rapid growth. For example, Groby, identified by the County Plan as a developing area, doubled its population between 1960 and 1980. The social surveys conducted in the mid-1970s for the purpose of the District Plan showed that while nearly one third of the households in Groby had lived there for more than fifteen years, well over one half had moved there within the last nine years. Similarly, while over half the households in Ratby had lived there for more than fifteen years, nearly one third had moved within the last four years. In Markfield, some thirty-seven per cent of households had arrived within the last four years.

The rapid development of these villages transformed them into commuter settlements. In Groby, ninety per cent of the working population travelled out of the village to work; in Markfield eighty-four per cent, and Ratby seventy-nine per cent. The population of the villages was skewed towards the younger age groups, although Ratby had a higher proportion of old people than the County average. Compared with the other colleges the social class composition of the catchment area was high. For example, of those in Groby who were economically active, about a quarter were engaged in professional and managerial occupations and only twelve per cent in semi-skilled and unskilled manual work. Although the villages share many of

the common features of commuter villages, some important differences exist. Well over half of Groby's new residents were positively attracted by the area, while the reasons for moving to Ratby were more of convenience. Whereas only one quarter of those economically active in Groby were engaged in manufacturing, in Ratby it was close to forty-five per cent. In Groby almost four-fifths of the households had exclusive use of one or more cars compared with three-fifths in Ratby.

Other features of these commuter villages may have significance for the work of the colleges. In the Groby Social Survey, over seventeen per cent of respondents indicated their intention to move within the next year. The community college was faced not only with a growing new population, different in some ways from the traditional one, but also with a population which may be transitory. Furthermore, as residents were dependent on other villages and Leicester for such facilities as weekly shopping and medical services, and because the proportion of car ownership was well above the national average, it is likely that this mobile population also had wide horizons for its social and cultural recreation. This college was also distinctive in that, although there were vigorous voluntary associations in the catchment area, often linked to local churches or to existing primary schools, there was no previous coherent provision for community education. In some of the villages provision was based on the local primary school but in others it was non-existent and some residents had

previously made use of facilities in the city and in other centres further afield. Thus this third college was implanted into a much more uneven and disparate pattern of community education.

Community College Councils

It could be argued that the significant body of college management is the college council. While events in 1980 brought higher attendances at council meetings (over one hundred at Groby's Annual General Meeting, for example), the trend is, generally, for less than one-third of the members of college councils to attend regularly. Council, like the governing bodies, meets termly, and has a general oversight of non-statutory college activities, as do the governors of the entire establishment. However, the low turnout at council and, in many cases, the failure of affiliated groups to nominate representatives, would have made a survey of these bodies unproductive. It was therefore decided to investigate members of management committees. It should be noted that the management committee at Shepshed was different from the other two colleges in that it was both smaller, and had a higher percentage of college professionals. This was due to the policy of establishing a number of sub-committees on to which other, especially lay, people were elected, who were not necessarily members of management committee.

The Participants

Principals and Vice-Principals who are ex-officio members of management committee were not included in the survey, but other full-time professionals are included.

Figures for both the governing bodies and the management committees include cross-representation allowed for by the constitutions (three governors to college council, three college council nominations to governors). Thus their responses are duplicated. The decision to double-count the responses was taken because both governors and managers were not always sure about the reason for, or source of, their appointment. However, the results do not appear thereby to be significantly altered. The overall response rate to the questionnaire was 71%, with governors and managers responding at about the same rate. The response rate varied between 75% (Groby) and 66% (Earl Shilton). Analysis of the response rate shows few significant differences between respondents and non-respondents. The only group which was under-represented was of those appointed by County and Borough Councils (51%). All further figures are for respondents only, except where otherwise stated.

(a) Residence

Members of management committees were more likely to be resident within the defined school catchment area of the

college than were governors, even when University representatives are excluded from the sample of governors. They were, therefore, at least more likely to be a part of the neighbourhood served by the college, particularly where this is largely a definable residential unit such as Shepshed, or Earl Shilton and Barwell.

Table 9:1 shows the percentage of members of each body resident in the school catchment area:

TABLE 9:1
GOVERNORS AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS RESIDENT
IN THEIR RESPECTIVE CATCHMENT AREAS

	Governors [N = 44]	Management Committee [N = 37]	Governors and Management Committee [N = 81]
	%	%	%
Earl Shilton	78.6	100.0	88.9
Groby	68.7	92.3	79.3
Shepshed	57.0	63.6	60.0
Total	68.2	86.4	76.5

Thus Earl Shilton was most likely to recruit local people on to both bodies, and Shepshed least likely.

(b) Age

Almost half the governors (45%) were in their forties, although the thirties (20%) and fifties (22%) were also strongly represented. Both by average age and by number under fifty years, Groby governors were markedly younger than Earl Shilton's or Shepshed's, while Shepshed had a much higher proportion of over-fifties. A similar pattern emerges in the Management Committees, where on average Shepshed's were the oldest and Groby's the youngest.

Table 9:2 shows the percentage of members under 50 in each body:

TABLE 9:2

GOVERNORS AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS UNDER FIFTY

YEARS OF AGE

	Governors	Management Committee
	%	%
Earl Shilton	71.4	69.2
Groby	75.0	100.0
Shepshed	57.0	63.6
Total	68.2	78.4

These figures are representative of the patterns of college users, as far as they are determinable, and are also representative of the demographic patterns of the three communities.

(c) Length of Residence

Respondents were asked to record how long they had lived in their present "neighbourhood" - an ambiguous term, but it was felt that the respondent's perception of his or her neighbourhood was more important than a specific geographical location or distance, in terms of the residents' subjective identification with the area. The length of residence of governors and management committee members reflects the recent demographic patterns of the three communities. Thus, Groby governors and managers were less well established than either of the two other colleges.

Table 9:3 shows the percentage of members of each body who had been resident in their "neighbourhood" for twelve years or more:

TABLE 9:3

GOVERNORS AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS RESIDENT
IN THEIR NEIGHBOURHOOD FOR TWELVE YEARS OR MORE

	Governors	Management Committee
	%	%
Earl Shilton	71	46
Groby	50	38
Shepshed	79	64
Total	66	49

Table 9:4 shows the percentage of members of each body who were born in their neighbourhood:

TABLE 9:4
GOVERNORS AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS BORN IN
THEIR NEIGHBOURHOODS

	Governors	Management Committee
	%	%
Earl Shilton	43	23
Groby	6	7
Shepshed	29	27
Total	25	19

Respondents were also asked similar questions about their length of residence in the county. It may be that long-term county residents feel a stronger link with their county and are more willing to serve the community in some aspect such as school government; that a knowledge of the structures of public and political representation and the social networks is necessary; or simply that they are more likely to be known by those electing or nominating members.

Table 9:5 shows the percentage of members of each body who had lived in the county for twelve years or more:

TABLE 9:5

GOVERNORS AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS RESIDENT

IN COUNTY FOR TWELVE YEARS OR MORE

	Governors	Management Committee
	%	%
Earl Shilton	93	77
Groby	80	62
Shepshed	86	73
Total	84	70

Table 9:6 shows the percentage of members born in the county:

TABLE 9:6

GOVERNORS AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS BORN IN COUNTY

	Governors	Management Committee
	%	%
Earl Shilton	57	38
Groby	25	23
Shepshed	50	27
Total	43	30

From the above two tables it can be seen that the majority of governors and management committee members were established residents of the county, markedly so in Earl Shilton and Shepshed. Also, governors were longer established than management committee members. These figures demonstrate the very different characteristics of Earl Shilton and Shepshed as communities, as opposed to Groby. The tables also show that management committees were far more likely to be composed of the in-migrants (or "Eastwinders", as they are known north of Leicester) of all three areas. When length of residence of governors is compared to the source of appointment to the governing body, it is interesting to note that college council nominations were also very likely to be long-established residents of the neighbourhood (87%), although slightly under half of the members of management committees were long-established. Thus even when elected by in-migrants, long-term residence was seen as a distinct advantage for potential governors.

(d) Gender

Despite the female predominance in college usage, it was found that three-quarters of all governors were male although, as with age, Groby's governing body was significantly different from Earl Shilton's and Shepshed's. Table 9:7 shows the percentage of all members of each body, including non-respondents, who were male:

TABLE 9:7MALE GOVERNORS AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

	Governors (N = 62)	Management Comm. (N = 51)
	%	%
Earl Shilton	81	55
Groby	60	61
Shepshed	81	69
Total	74	61

Membership of management committee showed a marked shift towards representation of females. This is likely to be an outcome of the higher usage of community college provision by females. Thus on management committees, women were more likely than men to represent evening classes, and had above average representation from affiliated organisations and teachers. But women were considerably less likely to represent college council on the governing bodies. Women on governing bodies were more likely to represent parents. Once again, college councils tended to nominate governors who were more like governors than members of management committees.

(e) Occupational Status

Respondents were asked to identify their "major lifetime occupation", irrespective of their status at the time of questioning. These were then categorised in social classes derived from the Registrar-General's classification of occupations. Two further categories were created, of housewives and full-time students. In order to take into account the number of teachers and university appointments who were on governing bodies by virtue of their occupation, an adjusted total for lay governors only was also calculated, but this shows little change. Table 9:8 shows the percentage of governors of each college in each occupational group.

TABLE 9:8OCCUPATIONAL GROUPING OF GOVERNORS

	I	II	IIIN	IIIM	Housewives	
Earl Shilton	% 14.3	57.1	14.3	14.3	---	= 100
Groby	% 43.7	43.7	--	--	12.6	= 100
Shepshed	% 42.9	42.9	7.1	7.1	---	= 100
Total	% 34.1	47.7	6.8	6.8	4.6	= 100
Adjusted						
Lay Total	% 29.6	51.9	7.4	7.4	3.7	= 100

The shortage of manual workers is conspicuous (6.8% of all governors). The overwhelming majority of governors were recruited from classes I and II (Earl Shilton 71.4%; Groby 87.5%; Shepshed 85.7%).

Participation in the Three New Community Colleges/9

The occupational pattern of management committees, however, was markedly different. Table 9:9 shows the percentage of members of management committees in each occupational group.

TABLE 9:9

OCCUPATIONAL GROUPINGS OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

		I	II	IIIN	IIIM	IV	Hsewvs	Stud.	
Earl Shilton	%	-	53.8	7.7	23.1	7.7	7.7	--	= 100
Groby	%	15.3	38.5	---	15.3	---	23.2	7.7	= 100
Shepshed	%	9.1	81.8	---	---	---	9.1	---	= 100
Total	%	8.1	56.8	2.7	13.5	2.7	13.5	2.7	= 100
Lay members									
only	%	8.2	41.7	4.2	20.8	4.2	16.7	4.2	= 100

The figures for lay members signify members appointed as representatives of evening classes, affiliated organisations, individual college members, youth groups and the Parent-Teacher Associations, who together made up 65% of total membership of management committees. Thus Table 9:9 shows a movement towards the lower status occupations, and the emergence of manual workers as a significant element (25%) in college management. This trend was not evident in Shepshed, however. This may well be related to the different management structure already noted. The smaller management committee had a higher proportion of college professionals, Class II, and was less representative of the distribution of occupations in the community.

(f) Other Governing Posts Held

Nearly half the governors (21, i.e. 47.7%) were or had been governors elsewhere, i.e. at primary or secondary schools or at colleges of further education. Fifteen held or had held one other post, and one at the time held five other governorships. Of the thirty-six posts held elsewhere, fifteen were in schools of the same age-range as the community colleges - a practice condemned by the Taylor Report. These multi-post governors were most likely to be County Council nominations, but a significant number (19%) were Principals' nominations. Of the five governors holding three or more posts, three were County Council nominations, one a university nomination, and one a Principal's nomination.

(g) Involvement in Public Bodies

Governors also showed a high level of involvement in public posts, such as county, borough or parish councillors, justices of the peace, and membership of statutory bodies, e.g. the area health authority. Fourteen of the governors (31.8%) held other elected or nominated public posts. Five governors were or had been parish councillors, four borough or district councillors, and three county councillors (n.b. non-respondents include a number of these latter).

Thus the forty-four governors held twenty-two public posts between them. Of the thirty-eight members of management committees who were not also governors, none held such a post.

Governing bodies, then, were far more likely to have members who had a number of other official interests.

(h) Active Membership of Other Organisations

Respondents were asked to name other organisations of which they were active members. No definition of "active" was given, as it was felt that respondents' perceptions of "activeness" were more important than any objective criteria which could be devised. Respondents were also asked if they had held office.

Twenty-nine governors (66%) claimed active membership of other organisations, three-quarters of these having held office. The organisations most often mentioned were those classified as educational and social welfare groups formed mainly for the benefit of others (groups such as Rotary have been classified as "Social" for, while the service aspect is a major reason for its existence, many members may see the social function as the main purpose of joining). Table 9:10 shows the types of groups listed by governors, and their frequency.

TABLE 9:10

GOVERNORS' "ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP" OF OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Type of Group	Number of Mentions
Educational and social welfare	11
Religious (active church membership)	7
Cultural	6
Social	6

Participation in the Three New Community Colleges/9

Thus the most popular groups were those where service to others is a prime function. Individual organisations mentioned more than once by name were the Churches (seven mentions), Rotary/Inner Wheel (six), Conservative Association, Cricket Clubs, Lions, Village Hall Committees and Trades Unions (two each).

Nineteen members of management committees (50%) claimed active membership of other organisations, two-thirds of these having held office. Again, educational and social welfare groups figured prominently, but less so than among governors, as Table 9:11 shows:

TABLE 9:11

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS' "ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP"
OF OTHER ORGANISATIONS

<u>Type of Group</u>	<u>Number of Mentions</u>
Educational and social welfare	5
Social	5
Physical recreation	4
<u>Leaders of youth groups</u>	<u>4</u>

Groups mentioned more than once were the Scouts (four), the Churches (three), the Labour Party, Mothers' Union and Mother-and-Toddler Groups (two each).

(i) Contacts with the College

Respondents were asked about three possible areas of contact with the college. First, they were asked whether they had children who were attending, or had attended, the college as a school. Twenty-two per cent of management committee replied in the affirmative, whereas forty-one per cent of governors did. Removing parent and teacher representatives from the figure for governors gives an adjusted total of thirty-two per cent with parental experience of the college, which is still considerably higher than the management committee.

Second, respondents were asked whether they had ever attended evening classes at the college. Twenty-seven per cent of the governors had, against fifty-nine per cent of the management committee. Removing those nominated to management committee as evening class representatives only reduces this figure to fifty-two per cent. Thus, members of management committees were more likely than not to have had contact with the formal class programme, and nearly twice as likely as governors to have done so.

Finally, respondents were asked whether they attended other college events (e.g. dances, fetes, exhibitions, shows, etc.) and to specify these. This gave a rather rough and ready indication of the type of casual events attended. Seventy-three per cent of governors mentioned specific events attended, against eighty-four per cent of management committee. Members of the governing bodies mentioned sixty-three specific types of

event (an average of 1.4 events each); members of management committee mentioned seventy-two (1.9 each). Table 9:12 shows the types of event mentioned and their frequency:

TABLE 9:12
GOVERNORS AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS CONTACTS
WITH COLLEGE

	Mentioned by governors	Mentioned by management committee
Exhibitions	16	13
Productions/shows/concerts	14	14
Dances	12	15
Fairs/fetes	11	16
Film shows	5	4
Dinners	2	4
Voluntary Work	2	4
Jumble Sales	1	-
Fashion shows	-	2

While the sample is small, the difference in emphasis may be significant.

SUMMARY OF SURVEY

The results of the survey provide us with a tentative answer to the second of the two questions posed at the beginning of this chapter: Did the formation of a college council, and in particular its management committee, incorporate a different type of person into educational decision-making? The following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Members of management committees were more likely to reside in the school catchment area of the college than were governors.
2. Management Committee members had a lower average age and were more likely to be under 50.
3. Governors were more likely to be long-term residents of both the neighbourhood and the county. They were also more likely to be natives of the neighbourhood and of the county.
4. Governing bodies were considerably more weighted towards male membership than were management committees.
5. Governing bodies were almost exclusively composed of members of the higher, non-manual occupation groups. These groups also dominated management committees, but a significant proportion of lay representatives were manual workers.
6. A large number of governors were governors of other schools or colleges, and held other official positions in public life. Members of management committees were less likely to hold such positions.
7. Two-thirds of the governors claimed active membership of

other voluntary organisations, three-quarters of these holding some kind of office. Half of the management committee claimed such memberships, with two-thirds of these holding office. Organisations which serve the needs of the community were most common here, particularly for governors. The network for most governors was likely to be through the Church, Rotary, Conservative Association; for the management committee, the scouts, the Church and the Labour Party.

8. Few of the management committee or the governors had children who attended, or had attended, the college as a school.

9. More than half the management committee had attended evening-classes at their colleges, even when the evening class representatives are discounted. Only about a quarter of the governors had done so.

10. A large majority of both governors and management committee attended college events. Exhibitions, productions, shows and concerts, dances, fairs and fetes feature most prominently for both groups.

CHAPTER 10

The Role of Participants

In this chapter, an attempt will be made to consider the third of the questions asked at the opening of chapter 9: Does the contribution made to educational management by college council differ from that made by governing bodies? In determining the function of college councils, their management committees and governing bodies, and the attitudes and concerns of members, I did not attempt to adopt the approach used for the analysis of the composition of these bodies. Sixty-two interviews were carried out, mostly during the academic year 1979-80, mostly in the interviewee's home. The interviews were loosely structured to raise topics which might be most relevant, but they frequently ranged widely and allowed discussion of any relevant and, sometimes, irrelevant topics. A considerable number of these interviews lasted for two hours or more, but most were of about one hour. I also attended meetings of all three types: College Councils at each of the three colleges, three management committees at Earl Shilton and Groby, and two governing body meetings at Groby and Shepshed.

College Council

College Council generally did not succeed in getting more than a third of its membership to its customary thrice-yearly

meetings. Many of the comments made about it by its members were, therefore, negative, and concentrated on the occasional failure to give adequate notice, the "irrelevant" subject matter raised on the agenda, and the purely instrumental use made of college facilities by affiliated groups. On many occasions the secretary or chairman of such a group was unable to say offhand whether representatives ever went to College Council, whether they themselves were the representatives, and, on two occasions, whether the group was entitled to send representatives.

These attitudes highlight the problems of encouraging a representative democratic structure of college management when the majority of users are content to pay their money and use the facilities. The majority of active members accepted this situation, if somewhat regretfully, and found it difficult to know whether to go on encouraging - in some cases cajoling - members to attend in the hope that eventually a spark would catch light, or whether to settle for the usual small but constant band who enjoy committee work or find satisfaction in practical organisation.

In the course of the research, evidence did emerge of college council meetings where there were real indications of popular concern. Such concern tended to arise only when items appeared on the agenda which had been initiated by the professionals or from County Hall, e.g. the proposal to include a creche area in phase two of Groby's building programme or,

most dramatically, proposals of closure or severe financial cutback. Certainly, if community educators can take any comfort at all from events of the years of recession, it will be in the popular response to rumours of closure, resulting in a growth in public understanding of the structure of participation in community colleges and the services provided by them. Alternatively it would seem that large-scale projects for the benefit of specific groups within the community have a potential for raising public interest and involvement. There is also little doubt that the publicity accorded to community education throughout the crisis raised public awareness, and that continued use of local press and radio can do much to keep community colleges in the public eye, and bring in more clients for a wider variety of activities.

While college council is occasionally referred to in the following report, major emphasis is laid upon management committees and governing bodies, as the lay committees which had most influence on the day-to-day management of the colleges.

Analysis of the interviews shows four topics arising frequently: the representativeness of the bodies, politics as an issue in meetings, the influence of the bodies, and relationships with staff, particularly the principal.

Representativeness

Governors were in general concerned that they should be representative of the social make-up of the neighbourhood. A few were content with the structure as it is: "The governing body is fairly representative . . . a fairly good mix"; "They are pretty representative of the area". However, there was considerable feeling that the public would not be able to identify with most governors, and that governors were not directly accountable:

"Of people living here with kids at the College, no-one could name more than two governors. Governors should be directly accountable but locals don't identify with the type of governors here. They became governors for power and prestige, but they should be one of us."

"The typical governor is seventy-five per cent conscious of his status as a governor, twenty per cent anxious to ensure that his school gets a fair whack of all that's going, and five per cent aware of the realities of being a ratepayer."

"Governors don't represent the community; they're businessmen with that extra bit of push."

This type of comment ignores the difference between two meanings of the word "representative"; i.e. to be like the majority of people (in terms of age, sex, social class); and to be able to represent their views. But this does not override the strong feeling that governors were simply not known:

"I've only twice been approached by the public; governors can't be identified by them."

"I'm very rarely approached by the public, although I've twice been lobbied about the cuts."

"The public don't know who they are. They should be introduced at parents' evenings."

"Approaches by the public are very rare. Many parents feel that their children might be victimised."

These comments were by two chairmen, one vice-chairman and a county councillor. One governor, a college council representative, felt that it would be inappropriate to publicise her position:

"I never advertised I was a governor, because of the stigma. People would say, 'Why ask her, not me?' What right have I?"

From two colleges came the feeling that parent governors were only interested in their own children and did not otherwise contribute to discussions. Staff representatives, however, were widely praised:

"Staff governors are interesting and useful."

"One of the better innovations."

College councils and, to a lesser extent, management committees, in contrast, were seen as including a wider variety of people and therefore being more representative:

"College council is pretty successful - more working-class than governors."

"College council gives a much broader representation than governors. From class representatives you get somebody from all walks of life."

"The middle classes inevitably dominate, but a good chairman will make allowances for working-class members."

"Management committee is made up of ordinary rank and file people."

Dissension from this viewpoint tended to concentrate on the style and structure of participation and the ways in which they discouraged people who "just want to get things done":

"The committee-based structure of the college tends to preclude all except those who enjoy committee work per se, i.e. the middle classes. The system encourages pomposity and takes time to deal with trivia. This cuts out a large proportion of the population."

However, support tended to come from the lay membership, disparagement from the teacher members. There was some evidence of attempts to achieve a representative committee through sponsorship:

"The vice-principal wanted more balance on the committee so I volunteered."

Interviews with both governors and members of college council, then, reflected the analysis of membership; that the latter made it possible to involve a different type of person in educational decision-making.

Politics as an issue

The system of political appointments of governing bodies was widely deprecated, even by those who owed their membership to the system. The trend observed throughout the seventies of wholesale changes in governing bodies after an election brought about a new ruling party in council was particularly deplored although, perhaps predictably, each "side" blamed the other for its inception. One governor blamed the political appointments for the unrepresentativeness of the body:

"Governors are political appointments. Some mechanism should allow other points of view. The college is in a working-class area but there's no working-class representation. Management committee's (sic) and the principal's nominations are essentially the same kind of people - small businessmen and academics. Even parent representatives are middle-class, so when a project had to be cut it was the Adventure Playground."

Politics was recognised as an issue in meetings:

"Sometimes you get real animosity between the political sides."

"Very definite political comments happen at every meeting - by lay operators of parish-pump politics."

"Politics comes up - but shouldn't."

"One of the tragedies is that party politics comes into governing bodies so much."

"Politics doesn't arise in governors' meetings. If it does, the chairman stamps on it."

Observation of meetings showed the delicate line trodden by chairmen in avoiding political issues, particularly where the chairman was a prominent county councillor himself. Thus the questioning of decisions taken by the Education Committee, especially over finance, could be construed as political even though it may have been intended to be supportive of the college. County Councillors spoke frankly of the difficulty of maintaining loyalty to a party line which was committed to economies in education, and simultaneously to a community college seeing itself as a major target for those economies.

During the period of interview politics was rarely seen as an issue at college council meetings, and only occasionally at management committee. Again, however, recent events had raised the political consciousness of members:

"I've had to struggle to keep politics out of management committee discussions - calling (a Conservative Borough Councillor) to order twice when he was trying to make a pro-Thatcher speech, and restraining (two members) from responding."

As I have shown above, meetings of college council had been livelier and, inevitably, the struggle against financial cutbacks had taken on a political hue. Generally speaking, though, college councils retained political neutrality while trying to alter particular policies.

The issue of sectarian groups, be they political or religious, affiliating to the college was raised by three members of one college council but was not seen as a widespread problem.

College councils, then, unlike governing bodies, were seen as politically neutral bodies which existed to provide a service for the whole community. The consensus model seems to be more appropriate than the adversarial one.

Influence

With a very few exceptions, governors did not regard themselves as influential. Even among those who claimed that governing body had an important role to play - and these were chairmen and/or county councillors - there were reservations:

"Professionals must justify their actions to people of varying perceptions and intelligence; the governing bodies represent public opinion. 'Rubber-stamping' is true, but not so much now."

In some cases, this lack of influence was put down to lack of training or expertise:

"Governors must not interfere with the curriculum, but they should be able to understand it."

"I don't mean that the governing body should influence the academic side of the college - it's not trained to do so."

"The curriculum is never discussed. I sense the professionals saying 'We are the professionals, we know

what we are talking about'. The curriculum should be explained to us. We should have a fair idea of what they're trying to do. We're mere rubber stamps."

Opinions were divided as to who wielded the power - the head, county council education committee, or county officers:

"In no way has the head abrogated his authority. He is still in complete charge. No good comes of taking authority from the head. The governor's job is to ask questions, be unpleasant - but only in meetings."

"The governing body role is absolutely dependent upon the role the professional chooses for them. They're valuable for the head to hide behind."

"The principal tells us, and it's a matter of agreeing to what the clerk and the principal say."

"The Board of Governors is more or less tied up by County."

"It's a forum for asking questions and receiving answers from the clerk. All answers are a fait accompli: 'This is the Director's decision.' Most of what is said in governors' meetings isn't worth saying."

In most cases it seemed that the ambiguity of the role, the lack of knowledge and expertise, and the control of day-to-day management by the principal combined together to cause the frustration detectable in many of these comments:

"The governor's powers are very limited - except to cause trouble."

"I sometimes think it's a little bit of a farce."

"I can't think of an instance where the governors' influence on decision-making was explicit."

The topics raised for discussion by the governors reflects earlier research [Baron and Howell]:

"Buildings, teaching staff and sporting activities - in that order."

Many comments on college councils reflected the poor attendance:

"Working-class clubs and societies just want to get on with the job, and meetings and systems just get in the way."

"College council is a formality - we just use the college for training."

"We don't elect college council representatives. It's difficult to get people to do things. The minutes don't refer to matters which concern us."

Others felt that the function of the college was unclear:

"The Sports Council doesn't seem to concern itself with the personal problems of clubs but more with the general college image."

"The College doesn't have a clear objective, and doesn't communicate it."

However, these were distinctly minority views, and concentrated among representatives of affiliated groups (who were, perhaps, the most vociferous in opposing closures). College councils and

management committees were seen as having power through financial control:

"College council makes decisions, and it's easier to make financial decisions under the budget system."

"The management committee has some real power in making decisions on floating cash whereas the governors are more or less tied up by County."

"The Block Budget is fine as one cannot separate facilities and equipment. I'd like to see the time when, differentiating between school and college, people forget which is which."

Both college councils and the various sub-committees were seen as places where views could be freely expressed, and there were indications that members were becoming imbued with the community college philosophy in a way that was less clear among governors:

"Everyone gets a fair deal."

"I attend sports sub-committee, to face other sports, forming blocs and clearing up misunderstandings; working together for the college rather than anti it."

Members also identified with the college in a positive way:

"As a part of the college we feel we should support whatever goes on in the college."

This had led to a greater accountability among members:

"I feel directly accountable to the public. People approach when I'm out shopping, to bring up points about

the college room changes, for example. I mediate between the public and the professionals because the professionals may be off-putting to ordinary people."

There was some evidence that, as with governors, members of management committees felt that there was still too much professional control:

"The management committee only decide on the disposal of small amounts of money. The principal runs the place, then the chairman of governors, then the County."

One member even suggested that the shift from High School to Upper School base of the college had resulted in greater professional control:

"Since the opening of the upper school, the Council has not been as involved in compiling the programme. More decisions are made on the professional side. The Council used to sit round and discuss what evening classes to run.

This no longer happens to the same extent."

It may be worthwhile to speculate whether the fact that principals and community teachers privately negotiated the latter's contribution to the community commitment, and that college councils and management committees did not have a clear role to play at this stage, resulted in a lessening in lay involvement in the determination of evening class programmes.

Nevertheless the topics raised by management committees were of a more "educational" nature than those which seemed to dominate the discussions of governing bodies. These were seen

as: "Planning and keeping open evening classes, then watching the finances, then social activities."

Both college councils and management committees have a further potential in providing experience of active participation in decision and policy-making. As shown above, this function was seen as particularly valuable in an urban setting where residents may feel that society has little to offer in terms of control over their own lives and the institutions intended to serve them, and it is perhaps not coincidental that it was raised as an issue at Earl Shilton and Shepshed, but not at Groby:

"College councils seemed very large, but I was willing to sit and listen and learn."

"I found college council very confusing at first but I was elected to a sub-committee and only then began to realise the wide range of facilities provided and the management structure."

"I didn't speak at management committee for twelve months, then I had a stand-up row with the chairman. As a housewife I'd lost all my confidence and this brought me out."

Relationships with staff

It is in the relationship between lay members and full-time professional staff that the concept of user-management stands or falls. Written constitutions, however detailed,

cannot legislate for this. Nevertheless it could be argued that the failure of governing bodies to find a satisfactory and meaningful role in school administration is largely due to the historical unwillingness of central government and local authorities to assign specific duties to them beyond an overall responsibility for buildings, finance and the appointment of staff. In Leicestershire, unified control by one principal ensured that the institution would retain an educational mode of operation, but implied "a subtle change in the professional role as compared with that of the principal of an evening institute . . . He must advise and guide his management committee and council, and must see that their policy decisions are sensibly conceived. He must encourage full participation in the running of the affairs of the college by the students and contrive to use their energies to the benefit of the college and the community, to which they belong." [Fairbairn, 1979, p.32].

The view of George Mallory (former head of Hind Leys, Shepshed) of the relationship was typically pragmatic: "The professionals must have the final say. Committees can be decision-making structures below this level" [in interview, 1980]. S.C. Western, however, described a more subtle relationship between warden and management committee in which, in the initial stages at least, sponsorship of certain key members, in particular "the right sort of chairman", was seen as essential in developing "a real democracy". [Western, 1974,

p.48]. A past Shepshed governor recounted a similar story: "I was a friend of George Mallory in the Rotary, and he invited me to become the first chairman of college council in 1958" [in interview, 1980].

Any representative model of school management would regard this style of operation as unacceptable, as placing too much power in the hands of the professional. Certainly it is not a structure which endears itself to those who may be suspicious of teachers, such as Gibson, who suggests why "the division between institutional insiders and the outsiders remains . . . (1) teachers are professionally used to being know-alls and telling others what to do; (2) other people discover this, and stay clear." [Gibson, 1979, p.125]. Others more benevolently disposed recognise the need for "strong professional support and ancillary services" to achieve a balance in participation and to coordinate routine tasks [Hutchinson, in Fairbairn, 1979, p.66].

Thus some comments, from governors in particular, point to the uncomfortable position in which principals find themselves. Mention was made of defensiveness against outspoken criticism, "boxing clever", the head being "afraid to speak out because of political representation".

Sharp, at Wyndham School, Egremont, stressed the importance of communication: "People do not always want democracy But they do want information. If democracy implies giving value to the individual, few things perhaps make

him feel so devalued as to find himself left in ignorance of matters which affect him" [Sharp, 1973, p.94]. At this level, governors frequently commented favourably on the length and detail of principals' reports, and those with experience of governorship elsewhere suggested that college principals were considerably more open in this respect than other heads. In appointing staff, too, governors felt that their opinions were valued and taken into account:

"The system was democratic - in fact, the principal gave away almost too much."

Thus, in Maclure's terms, the style would meet the requirements of participation: "In practice, the headmaster or principal usually occupies a key role in maintaining and renewing the communication process and will probably let it be known, subtly, that he likes it that way" [Maclure in CERI, p.16].

Two opposing elements seem to threaten the delicate balance of democratic participation under unified control. The first is deference, where lay members feel unqualified to discuss, or even question the professionals on, matters which concern them. It has been seen above how governors were unwilling to raise topics such as the curriculum, although they felt it their duty to do so. In the face of such deference, and fuelled by the experience of "knowing all", teachers may unwittingly interpret this as lack of interest. This attitude was also discernible on management committees:

"I'm in favour of adult literacy fees, but I wouldn't propose them, for fear of putting a spanner in the works for the principal and vice-principal."

It is, however, difficult to estimate the extent of the feeling, as it is an area to which few interviewees could admit without some loss of face, and, in its extreme form, may go unrecognised [see chapter 14]. Its danger is that it will be misinterpreted by those with the final say as compliance or positive support.

The second element threatening the status quo is that of demands for more power. Raymond Williams has pointed out the shift in style of administration: "The pressure has been to define democracy as 'the right to vote', 'the right to free speech', and so on, in a pattern of feeling which is really that of the 'liberty of the subject within an established authority'. The pressure now, in a wide area of our social life, should be towards a participatory democracy, in which the ways and means of involving people much more closely in the process of self-government can be learned and extended" [Williams, 1965, pp.342-3]. The difficulties which colleges face is in the transition from one democratic mode to another, and the development of participatory democracy within a framework of "established authority". Such problems were pointed up by comments such as "Aren't we stooges for the professionals?"; "the principal's veto seems to negate the power of college council". This problem may be insoluble until

the changes in style of compulsory education implied by community education have had a chance to work through the system, and the user-managers are the product of the system in which they participate.

Commitment

It has been shown above how participation can lead to both a sense of self-fulfilment and a commitment to the institution. These two themes have been present in many of the positive comments reported. The "possessiveness" and consequent sense of privilege, in a positive sense, was particularly strong:

"Governors see themselves as ardent advocates of the college, protecting it against the Education Department."

"I looked on [my appointment] as an honour, quite frankly."

and a feeling repeated often:

"The college is mine - in the nicest possible way - so I'll fight for it even to the disadvantage of other schools."

Conclusion

One of the most significant innovations in the Stage 3 colleges was the block financing arrangements. The control by the governing body of the entire spending allocation implied that their involvement in the management of the college was greater than in other schools and colleges. This topic was

raised in interviews, and it was clear that some governors did indeed feel correspondingly more committed to the college, and that their role here, at least, was a clearly defined and responsible one. There were, however, a number of voices dissenting from this view, who felt either that the degree of financial delegation was not as great as it was made out to be, or that the financial arrangements were so complex that they could only be understood by the principal, the clerk and the Treasurer's Department.

Some conclusions of the research reported here are:

(a) The policy of local control in order to make the college responsive to local needs must be seen in the context of governing bodies who, all in all, did not see themselves as being a significant body of control, even with the increased financial responsibility. The delegation envisaged by Stewart Mason, in his 1949 Memorandum, to "the people who use it", may not have been brought any closer by the stage three model, and may not have been possible under the then existing Articles and Instruments of Government approved by the County.

(b) The formation of management committees did bring into educational decision-making, albeit of the non-statutory sector, an increasingly wide range of people imbued with the community college philosophy and anxious to play an influential role in its implementation. It was essential for the full-time staff of the college to have a clear vision of the desired relationship between themselves and the lay participants, and

for them to communicate this to the various bodies.

(c) There is a suggestion that control over the deployment of staff in the community sector was, by implication, less flexible in stage three colleges where a proportion at least of community staff and their time was "given". Thus lay representation may have had less control, and the professional staff more.

SUMMARY

Returning to the three questions posed at the beginning of the previous chapter, the answer to the first, concerning whether governing bodies of community colleges are different in composition and style from governing bodies of schools, is difficult to determine. The absence of research on the national composition of governing bodies precludes any detailed comparison. In terms of style, it is impossible to establish whether any discernible differences between school governors and college governors were due to the community emphasis or to other factors, such as the neighbourhood of the college, its newness, or its image as a non-traditional educational institution. However, the concerns of college governors were much the same as those claimed by governors elsewhere, i.e. principally buildings, finance and staffing [Baron and Howell, 1974]. An interesting point of difference was claimed by one of the clerks who was in a position to make comparisons between a number of governing bodies. He asserted that stage three

college governors were more politically aware, and more ready to challenge the education authority over its decisions, than school governors. This may reflect the particular circumstances in the county at that time, and the greater responsibilities assumed by community colleges.

Second, the results of this survey demonstrate that the formation of management committees introduced into the structure a group of people who would not otherwise have had access to educational decision-making. While this was at the time confined to participation in the non-statutory sector, the Leicestershire system of user-management created the basis whereby democratic lay involvement may be representative of the community college clients.

Third, college councils and, in particular, management committees, operated with a higher degree of commitment on the part of their members. They were less formal, and therefore more accessible to those unaccustomed to committee work, than governing bodies. There is also a suggestion that the topics raised in college councils were more directly concerned with educational matters, rather than the perhaps peripheral issues which occupied a large proportion of governors' meetings. Events during the period of this research showed that the distance between college council and county council in the hierarchical structure enabled them to be more outspoken in defence of community education than were governors.

CHAPTER 11

Educational Legislation in the 1980s

We have seen how the history of educational policy-making to the late 1970s may be viewed as a victory for a style of centralised paternalism that allowed significant roles to politicians, both national and, to some extent, local; but left the field of school management largely clear for full-time professional educationalists. Thus, the broad outline of educational provision was drawn up by central government, using a variety of techniques including legislation, financial control, and more or less friendly persuasion. Meanwhile, the day-to-day and, largely, year-to-year direction of schools was not, as might be inferred from a reading of the various acts from 1902 on, in the hands of lay representatives of the community, but was operated by a more or less benevolently dictatorial partnership of senior officers and teachers.

In the case-study of Leicestershire County Council and its development of community education, we have seen how lay people at both county and college level felt marginalised by their lack of "professional" knowledge, the absence of daily contact with the service, and the failure to have ascribed to them a clear role. We have also seen the beginnings of attempts by councillors to establish for themselves a more influential role

through the tightening of financial and policy management by the introduction of corporate management techniques, and through the strengthening of party political policy-making at local level. Contemporaneous with these developments came the concept of participation, constructed largely during the late 1960s as a response to large-scale unrest, particularly in the student population. The adoption of the participation movement by professionals could be seen either as a genuine attempt to make the education (and other) services more responsive, and therefore relevant, to public need, or as a cynical way of recruiting lay pressure groups to the protection of a service under threat from political control and financial cutbacks.

In the period now under review, we see the two major national political parties making education a central topic in both debate and legislation. While commentators argue that the late 1970s saw the end of the national consensus on education, we can nevertheless see that the broad strands of the parties' thinking followed similar lines, and were directed to reclaiming the high ground of educational governance.

The 1974-1979 Labour Government

The first marker put down by a government to signal the new central importance of education in national politics is usually regarded as the Ruskin College speech of Prime Minister James Callaghan, on the 18th. October, 1976. To those engaged in education, it is likely that this speech marked only an

official recognition that the honeymoon was over, and that the unchallenged expansion of educational spending and provision was about to end. Certainly in retrospect it can be seen that the decline in the birthrate about to hit schools was to be matched by a serious questioning of the role, achievements and efficiency of the system. To this extent, the speech can be seen as a national reflection of the concerns being expressed at a local level by the councillors of education authorities. In the course of the speech, Callaghan called for a public debate on education, in which employers, trade unions and parents were to take an equal part with the professionals. The extensive exercise in consultation culminated in the Green Paper "Education in Schools" which was presented to Parliament by Secretary of State Shirley Williams in July 1977 [DES, 1977(a)].

While describing a conventional tripartite partnership of central government, local authorities and schools, the paper called for "a greater awareness of the community at large; the needs of the nation as a whole; the working of a modern industrial society; and the role of the individual participating in a democracy" [ibid, p.37]. The role of parents was confined to their relationships with individual teachers and, in passing, in anticipating the report of the Taylor Committee later in the year. However, the paper does define for the first time a clear role for central government in curriculum planning (seeking "to establish a broad agreement

with their partners in the education service on a framework for the curriculum, and, particularly, on whether . . . there should be a 'core' or 'protected' part" [ibid, p.12]); in national monitoring of school performance, through assessment provided by the Assessment of Performance Unit; and in establishing a framework in which the schools could be made accountable to their communities. The DES Circular 15/77, published in November, laid down the type of information which the Secretary of State required schools to make available to parents.

The emphasis in the Labour Government's 'demarginalisation' of education in 1976-77 is less on participation than on accountability, and has more in common with the development of consumerism as a force in national affairs. It can therefore be seen as aligning itself with, rather than against, the teaching profession, in that it attempts to justify educational expenditure in terms of efficiency of outcome, and to establish an agreed foundation for monitoring performance, in much the same way as the health and legal professions are subject to controls. When compared with the views of those protecting the professionals, this alignment becomes even more clear. Thus the National Union of Teachers saw in existing legislation "a carefully balanced system of checks and balances involving the Secretary of State, the local education authorities, the managing and governing bodies of the schools, parents, headteachers and teachers.

Through this flexible system schools are accountable to the elected representatives of the community and to parents" [Kogan et al, 1984].

The Report of the Taylor Committee [DES, 1977(b)], then, while surprising even one of its members with its "radical" recommendations (see above, chapter 4), can nevertheless be seen as furthering the consumer movement rather than radicalising the element of lay participation in school government. The four-way equal partnership of parents, teachers, local authority and community was to have responsibility for all the activities of the school, specifically curriculum, finance, appointments and pupil suspensions. The cynical spectator, however, might point to the recently declared intention of the government to establish a framework for a national curriculum, and to the increasing restrictions on local government spending caused by recession, as limitations upon these responsibilities so severe as to make them largely meaningless. Such cynicism would have been largely justified by developments during the next decade.

The Conservative Government: Preparing the Ground

Within a year of its taking office, the new government signalled its intention to radically alter the nature of the partnership in education which had been created by the 1944 Act. This should perhaps not be surprising in a government led for the first time by an ex Minister or Secretary of State for

Education; a Prime Minister, indeed, whose only experience in office had been her term in the Department lasting the entire period of the Conservative government of 1970-74.

The 1980 Act did not itself extend the role of governors, but it did lay the foundations for future moves towards a more meaningful role. The Act provided for the election by secret ballot of two parent governors and of one or two teacher governors, depending on the size of the school, and it hailed the end of the practice of grouping numbers of schools under one governing body. It also required that the agenda and minutes of governors' meetings should be made available, and that parents be allowed to express preferences in their choice of school. While it could be argued that the legislation did little more than formally ratify what many education authorities were already doing in terms of the composition of governing bodies, it is interesting to see how the element of consumer choice plays an important part in the Act.

The following year saw the publication of two documents envisaging a greater central government influence over the content of the school curriculum [DES 1981(a) & (b)], and the definition of the governors' role in working "towards the common end of securing a planned and coherent curriculum" [DES, 1981(b)].

A further significant step towards providing information which would enable parents to make informed choices of schools was taken in 1982, with the decision to publish HMI reports. As

has been seen, public knowledge of these reports in the past was confined to the selective leaks of their contents when this suited one or more of the parties in a publicised dispute. The Secretary of State for Education, Sir Keith Joseph, issued a press release in January, 1983, stating: "By making all reports by Her Majesty's Inspectors widely available in future, everyone will be able to study what is happening in our schools and colleges" [quoted in Toogood, p.9]. Once again, it can be seen that the emphasis is upon centralising control, but simultaneously disseminating information upon which the public could make informed judgements about schools.

It was in the Green Paper "Parental Influence at School" [DES, 1984] that the government declared its intention to begin a radical restructuring of school governing bodies. The paper recommended the ending of political domination and out-Taylored Taylor by suggesting a majority representation of parents. While this might be seen as a response to the demands for popular participation which had become increasingly articulated over recent years, it has also to be viewed in the context of the government's circumscription of local government powers, which has been a principal theme during its period of office [see, for example, Pring]. The clearest statement of this centralised, but consumer-responsive approach to educational governance can be seen in the government's major education statement of 1985, the White Paper "Better Schools" [DES, 1985].

Major legislation 1985-1988

In expressing a demand for higher standards in education, primarily "in order to increase young people's chances of finding employment or creating it for themselves and others" [p.3], "Better Schools" addressed a major public concern over the failure of the government to solve the unemployment problem, while attacking those parts of the system for which local authorities had historically taken responsibility. The paper openly endorsed the consumerist approach in its statement of the Government's role: "The duty of the Government is to ensure as far as it can that, through the efforts of all who are involved with our schools, the education of the pupils serves their own and the country's needs and provides a fair return to those who pay for it" [ibid, p.4]. After attacking the "weakness . . . in curricular planning and its implementation" in both primary and secondary education, the paper identifies its targets for legislative action as the curriculum; the examination and assessment system; teacher standards; and "to reform school government and to harness more fully the contribution which can be made to good school education by parents, employers and others outside the education service" [ibid, p.8].

Even before the full implementation of the 1980 Act, the White Paper stated its intention "further to increase parental influence at school" [ibid, p.59] (although the familiar tone of paternalism can be detected in describing the role of

parents in PTAs and fund-raising). However, it admitted that reaction to the proposal in the Green Paper to give majority representation to parents on governing bodies had been unfavourable, and it produced a formula of four constituencies, along the lines of the Taylor recommendations, while reducing the teacher element and increasing the coopted "community" element. The government also declared its intention to clarify in legislation the role of governing bodies so that it could not, "as happens at present, be overridden by the LEA" [ibid, p.64]. The White Paper foreshadows legislation which sees the LEA as the provider of schools which will be under the actual direction of governing bodies "in consultation with the headteacher", whose role also was to have "a firm legal foundation" [ibid, p.67]. Thus one of the major thrusts of the impending legislation was to be directed towards the major weakness which this study has identified as disabling the governing bodies, the lack of a clearly defined role.

In order to strengthen further the position of governors, the government undertook to ensure that the major responsibility for staff appointment should shift from the LEA to the governors, and that the LEA would be required to provide adequate free training for all governors. To secure a higher level of accountability than previously obtained, the law would require that governors issue an annual written report to be presented to a meeting of parents.

Finally, the White Paper formalises a process which many educationalists had seen as a threat to their primacy in policy-making. While the large proportion of educational funding had remained in the hands of the LEAs or the Department of Education and Science, recent initiatives in vocational training and education had been funded by the Department of Trade and Industry through its agency, the Manpower Services Commission. Thus many schools, in order to obtain what was seen as generous resource provision, found themselves required to match up to standards set by a non-educational department of government. The Education Support Grants, while still under DES control and paid to LEAs, nevertheless represented a tightening of central control in that the latter were required to bid for amounts to fund activities advancing the objectives set out in "Better Schools".

The publication of "Better Schools", then, represented a major attack on the local authorities' position as the focus of educational provision and policy determination. The 1986 Act confirmed the proposals on composition and grouping of governing bodies, and laid out the respective duties of the governors, the LEAs and headteachers with regard to the curriculum, discipline and the appointment and dismissal of staff. It also required the LEA to inform the governors of the details of expenditure upon their school. This last foreshadowed yet another, this time even more far-reaching,

piece of legislation to be brought in, once again, before the earlier Act had been fully implemented.

The Education Reform Act, 1988

Had any doubt remained, the central role of education reform in the government's plans was confirmed in the Conservative manifesto for the June 1987 election. From a marginal role in the party political debate, education had moved in the space of just over ten years to being one of two critical areas defined by the Prime Minister as being likely election winners in 1991: "Just as we gained political support in the last election from people who had acquired their own homes and shares, so we shall secure still further our political base in 1991-92 - by giving people a real say in education and housing" [from *The Independent*, 17/7/87, quoted in Simon, 1988]. The proposals comprised six major elements:

- a national curriculum, giving central government control over ninety per cent or more of the teaching content;
- national standardisation of assessment and testing, with regular testing of all children at seven, eleven and fourteen;
- open enrolment to schools within limits set independently of local authorities;
- delegation of the entire school budget to individual governing bodies;
- the introduction of a new type of grant-maintained school giving "the opportunity for parents and the local community to

run their own schools with funding direct from Central Government" [DES, 1987];

- the provision, in certain areas, of selective City Technology Colleges, emphasising technology and science, and funded independently of the local authority.

The impending legislation created a reaction unlike anything produced by any previous proposals for educational reform. It is certain that this was all the more virulent for the haste with which the process of consultation, drafting and passage was conducted. Aitken and Ree's, and Haviland's, collections of responses to the consultation papers include contributions from every major organisation in the fields of education and local government, including many criticisms from government supporters [Aitken & Ree (comp); Haviland (ed)].

Within the provisions of the Act, we can see another substantial step towards centralised control over the content of education. Estimates of the number of new powers taken by the Secretary of State go well over two hundred. The Act does not, however, appear to advance the cause of lay participation, although the emphasis on consumer choice was a major part of the rhetoric in the Bill's presentation.

What can be said is that by the end of 1988, with the Act through the legislative process largely unscathed (indeed, the destruction of the one directly elected educational body, the Inner London Education Authority, was added as something of an afterthought), and with the new Governing Bodies in place

according to the 1986 Act, education could no longer be considered as a marginal political issue. The actual impact of this on governing bodies, parents and other lay participants will be considered in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 12

Developments in Participation

The outcome of the 1980s legislation

By 1989, the new composition of governing bodies and their duties and responsibilities were clearly spelt out. In summary, they were as follows:

Composition

Depending on the size of the school:

- 2 - 5 Parent Governors, elected by the parent population;
- 2 - 5 Local Authority nominated Governors;
- 1 - 2 Teachers, elected by the teaching staff;
- 3 - 6 co-opted Governors;
- 1 Headteacher, if (s)he chooses.

Duties

To produce an annual report for parents;

To conduct an annual parents' meeting;

To ensure that the curriculum produced by the LEA (suitably adapted, if they wish, but in line with the National Curriculum) is implemented by the Head;

To produce a statement of policy on sex education;

To share responsibility with the LEA and the Head for ensuring the teaching of Religious Education, and the arrangements for a daily act of collective worship;

To appoint a person responsible for pupils with Special Educational Needs;

To receive a budget for the school, decide how it is spent, and keep accurate accounts;

To appoint staff, after consultation with the LEA; to require the LEA to dismiss staff (but to accept any legal consequences); and to have disciplinary rules and arrangements for staff grievances;

To decide on the number and allocation of staff allowances;

To offer the Head, if they wish, a statement of general principles on pupil discipline; to reinstate, if they wish, a pupil excluded by the Head; and to keep attendance registers;

To control the use of school premises outside the school day, and to have a policy for community use of school buildings.

[DES, 1988].

The immediate professional and political responses to the publication of the two major bills of the 1980s have been seen above, in Chapter 11. The actual outcomes have been under a close scrutiny probably without precedent in the world of education. This chapter will investigate the outcomes of the legislation in terms of the changing public profile of governing bodies; the effective changes in their composition; and how they have responded to the new definitions of their

duties. Finally, it will consider the impact of the legislation on the LEAs.

The Public Profile

First, it is necessary to point to the explosion of material on educational matters in the general and specialist press. While events in schools have always attracted public interest and, often, outrage [see, for example, Watts(ed), Gretton & Jackson, Fletcher et al], the politics of education have attracted less attention. Both the Labour and Conservative Government's attempts to make education a central political issue succeeded, and both tabloid and quality press responded, with most coverage given to the most controversial elements of the legislation, such as the "opting-out" clauses, and the creation of City Technology Colleges. While being important statements of political philosophy, these elements have, in fact, affected far fewer people (see below) than those sections devoted to the composition of governing bodies, the introduction of local financial management, and the National Curriculum.

The specialist press, such as the Times Educational Supplement, and the specialist sections of the quality press, such as Education Guardian, discovered a new audience. Having previously addressed themselves almost exclusively to professional educationalists, they now began to devote increasing proportions of space to matters of interest to

parents and governors. The Times Educational Supplement found its Governors' Guide [1989] in such demand that it bound the supplements separately and made them available as a package to all governors. The National Association of Governors and Managers, which had been training governors since 1973, and had published a handbook in 1978 [Burgess & Sofer], began to produce its own magazine in 1986. Both regular publications incorporated a letters page for answering questions, which tended to encourage governors towards a full, though diplomatic, use of their new powers. The Socialist Educational Association produced a handbook for its own party governors [1985]. Over the following four years, books, magazines, guides and handbooks continued to pour out, in quantities rivalling the amount of paper emerging from the DES itself, whose documents explaining the act and assisting the recruitment of governors were of an appearance and quality not normally associated with government publications.

At the same time, the requirement in the 1986 Act that local authorities provide "(free of charge) such training as the authority consider necessary for the effective discharge" of the functions of school governors [HMSO, 1986] led to a flurry of activity by them, the voluntary associations concerned with education, and other training agencies. Some training, in fact, predated the legislation, the Open University having produced a course "Governing Schools" in response to the interest created by the Taylor Report. In

addition to the NAGM training materials, AGIT (Action for Governors Information and Training) employed its first full-time worker in 1988; "management consultants are stepping in to provide advice. And there is a burgeoning industry in training videos" [Caudrey].

The DES commissioned the National Foundation for Educational Research in the autumn of 1987 to carry out a national survey of LEA training provision [Roberts et al]. By 1988, 82% of LEAs were providing training for some governors, and 57% were offering training to all governors. Some authorities gave training for specific roles, such as chairmen and headteachers. However, the budget accorded by the average authority was less than 12,000. Given that such an authority could expect to have some two thousand governors, such expenditure might be thought minimal. The topics covered by the authorities throw an interesting light on the new priorities of governing bodies. Compared with the Baron and Howell research of fifteen years earlier, which showed an emphasis on finance and buildings, the most popular topics, in descending order, were: The curriculum, appointment of staff, conduct of meetings, and the structure and operation of the LEA. By contrast, the Cambridgeshire pilot training scheme, one of ten to be funded by the DES, placed its priorities differently: " . . . the basics of financial management, where to go for expert advice, the purpose of a school visit and how to relate to school staff" [Caudrey]. It is possible that this reflects

the fact that Cambridgeshire, simultaneously, was running its own pilot scheme in local financial management. Clearly, the content of the training provided by LEAS will reflect their own particular preoccupations.

The authorisation by the government of 4.9m of education support grant money to be spent on local authority governor training led to a substantial increase in provision in 1989, despite the requirement that thirty per cent of the amount be contributed by the LEA. The preliminary results of an NAGM survey show that most authorities were appointing full-time officers to take charge of the training arrangements, many at a senior level, and some more than one. The budgets assigned varied between ten and thirty pounds per governorship per year, but such a variation could be expected, given the range reported by Roberts et al.

The proliferation of both material and training for governors represents a substantial change in the attitudes of central government, local authorities, press and training agencies towards the governing of schools. A traditional school governor could be forgiven for feeling bemused.

Changes in Composition: The New Governors

Opposition to the 1986 Act was marshalled during its progress through the House of Lords. A committee of Opposition and Cross-Bench peers united with educational consumer groups

such as the National Association of Governors and Managers, and with the National Consumer Group, principally to object to the rejection of the "equal partnership" proposal of the Taylor Report. It has been seen above (Chapter 9) how the concept of "representation" in participatory structures assumes an adversarial view of the democratic process. The concern shown about the balance of groups on governing bodies demonstrates the strength of feeling about the earlier domination of political nominees, and the potential for domination by parents. While there was a welcome for "the proposal that political appointments should no longer dominate the governing body", there was regret "that the concept of an equal partnership between all those involved in a school has not been accepted; that the number of teacher governors is not increased for larger schools; that non-teaching staff are to be excluded from the governing body; that the bill excludes pupils from any share in school government . . . that elected parent governors will be able to complete their four year term of office, if their child leaves the school" [NAGM]. Since the government had already conceded its original suggestion that parents should form a majority of governors, however, it was unlikely to give way any further.

A concern hinted at above and stated more baldly elsewhere was less commonly articulated, perhaps because of the difficulty of legislation. The Act as it stood was unlikely to make an impact on the social composition of governing bodies,

except where working class parent governors were particularly forceful. The co-opted element was always likely to consist largely of those who "have proved themselves as worthy" [Brinton], particularly when it was made known that this group was expected to have connections with the local business community.

(a) LEA Appointees

All the published research on the new governing bodies has addressed itself to, in descending order of importance, parent governors, co-opted governors, and teacher governors. It is interesting that a system of political nomination which lasted for more than eighty years could not seem to find one supporter once alternatives had been proposed. Nevertheless, a succession of incidents over the decade shows that the political parties were still holding on to what power they had. In Cumbria, in 1985, the two political parties on the Education Committee refused to participate in a headship appointment panel with a teacher governor nominated by the Governing Body of the school concerned. In this case, the governors stood their ground, pointing to 1981 Regulations preventing discrimination against certain types of governor, and to a ruling made previously by the Under Secretary of State [Gann]. In Barnet, including the Prime Minister's constituency of Finchley, the Conservative-controlled council approved all nominations to governing bodies made by their own group, and rejected all those made by the

Labour and Democrat parties. Kent Conservatives followed their example, and, in retaliation, the Labour-controlled authorities of Salford, Wolverhampton, Manchester, Wakefield and Doncaster rejected all but Labour nominations.

The possibility of schools "opting out" raised the political stakes in some authorities. The Labour-controlled LEA in Tameside recommended nomination of only Labour governors in order to prevent two schools threatened by closure from voting to opt out. Joan Sallis, president of the Campaign for the Advancement of State Education, warned that political groups in some authorities had drawn up lists of "the party faithful" to be put forward for co-option at the first meetings of the new governing bodies [Times Educational Supplements, 17.6.88 & 9.9.88]. By late 1989, a number of incidents were coming to light where local authorities which changed hands were replacing their nominees for being the wrong political colour, for example, Labour-controlled Humberside, Conservative-controlled Northumberland, and Liberal Democrat Isle of Wight. It is clear that the reduction in scope for political domination of governing bodies has not reduced the determination of local parties to control them.

(b) Parent Governors

"The new elections took place against an unprecedented background of national publicity about all aspects of the local management of schools, including the new role of governors, as

well as specific advertising for governors" [Jefferies & Streatfield, p.9]. Much of the publicity issued by the DES and LEAs in 1988 was directed at recruiting the estimated 100,000 parent governors needed throughout the country [The Guardian, 6.9.1988]. Certainly, there were fears in many authorities that the ambitious plans for parental involvement in governing bodies introduced by the 1986 Act would be met with apathy, and that there would be major problems in recruitment. This can be traced back to the poor response to the annual parents' meetings which had been introduced in 1987 (see below). Ninety-four per cent of local authorities embarked on more or less high profile publicity campaigns, involving use of press releases, meetings, adverts, and radio and television, during the summer of 1988, in order to have the new bodies in place by September [Jefferies & Streatfield]. In fact, the authorities' worst fears were not realized. The total number of vacancies revealed by the NFER post-election survey [ibid] was very small and, of these, only 16% were among parent places. The evidence shows that 88% of all authorities found recruitment of all types of governor as easy or easier than they had anticipated. What variation did exist showed that Metropolitan authorities recruited more easily than counties - probably reflecting the comparative accessibility of the school - and that secondary schools found it easier to recruit than primary schools. Given the much stronger links between primary schools and parents, this may be surprising. It is probably an outcome of the larger

number of primary school seats to be filled, and of the age of the parents - the period of the twenties being a time when adults are least likely to be involved in community affairs.

Jefferies and Streatfield posit a link between the amount of publicity in individual authorities and the ease they found in recruitment. Certainly, the publicity attached to the 1988 Act, coinciding as it did with implementation of the 1986 Act, seems to have given it considerable assistance. It is likely that the majority of lay observers did not differentiate between the two, and saw instead a single piece of educational reform in which they could play a part.

LEAs used a variety of procedures of election, although the majority delegated responsibility to the head of the school while offering detailed guidance. Unfortunately, no research has yet shown the extent of the contest, and it is likely that, while there was a high degree of success in recruitment, the incidence of hotly contested elections was low [Golby & Brigley]. Nevertheless, much care was shown in establishing fair procedures. While most authorities used a pupil-post system to get information and ballot papers to and from the electorate, the ILEA provided manned ballot boxes, with voting forms handed out on the day, except where arrangements had been made for postal voting. Hertfordshire introduced the single transferable vote, although concerns were expressed that a complicated procedure might frighten off voters [Parker]. At one voluntary-aided school in Roehampton, allegations of vote-

rigging brought in the Electoral Reform Society to run a second election.

The system chosen may have had a significant impact on parent turn-out. The average turn-out in schools using pupil post was 41%, whereas those using ballot boxes in the school achieved only 21%. Schools like those in the ILEA which used a combination of the two methods scored most highly, with 43% [TES, 21.10.88]. Overall, this small survey showed a wide variation between schools and authorities in turn-out. While some schools attracted more than seventy per cent of eligible parents, others achieved less than ten per cent. In contrast with recruitment, primary schools attracted more voters (43%) than secondary schools (35%). The average turn-out overall was 39%, comparable with that at local government elections.

The employment of the full panoply of the electoral process was almost certainly brought about by the high profile of the elections (caused at least in part by the publicity surrounding the 1988 Act), the introduction of more formalised voting procedures in other areas of life (particularly the restrictions on Trades Union action which had received much publicity since the 1984 NUM action), and the fears expressed that the political groups would attempt to re-establish, through the parental ballot box, the hegemony lost by the reduction in LEA nominations.

The unexpected success of the recruitment drive for parent governors does, of course, raise questions about the

"representativeness" of the new recruits. Jefferies & Streatfield point to comments made by a number of LEAs about "the need to recruit more people from ethnic minorities and from less privileged sectors of the community to ensure more balanced representation on certain governing bodies" [p.12]. Parker notes that the NUT encouraged teachers to stand for parents' elections in their children's schools, and suggests that lay parents would feel that this would not necessarily lead to a strengthening of the parental lobby. The small survey conducted by the TES in October 1988 suggested that as many as one in eight parent-governors is a teacher [TES, 21.10.88]. Streatfield and Jefferies [1989] show that only 3.1 % of governors are manual workers, only 3.2 % have ethnic origins outside the United Kingdom, and "an overwhelming majority" are professionals. Confirming earlier impressions, this survey found that one in six of all governors work in the education profession. Certainly, the author has attended training meetings for governors where a very high proportion of "lay governors" were teachers or ex-teachers.

Finally, there was continued concern from the education consumer group lobby that parental representation on governing bodies was insufficient in itself to guarantee that parents' voices would be heard. The general secretary of the National Confederation of Parent-Teacher Associations expressed disappointment that neither the 1986 nor the 1988 Act had given parents the right to form home-school associations. Addressing

the Secretary of State at a conference, he said: "In the wake of all the measures you have introduced, and the responsibilities you have given to parents, it seems strange that you have not insisted that the forum should exist in every school which will allow all the issues to be discussed by parents and staff in a calm, rational and informative way" [TES, 2.12.88]. This was not a call for a pluralist democracy, but for an extension of the government's consumerist approach, to avoid the conflict which NCPTA sees likely to emerge between parents and teachers as a result of the "unleashing of market forces . . . by open enrolment, opting out, and testing" [ibid].

Little evidence has emerged yet as to who the new parent governors are. Research conducted in a rural authority amongst parents elected in accordance with the 1980 Act, however, tends to confirm the findings reported in chapter 9, that school governors are recruited or elected from a comparatively small section of the community [Golby & Brigley]. Well over half those surveyed were educated privately or at grammar schools, and this experience clearly colours their view of the priorities that schools should have in an authority committed to comprehensive education. However, the research did show an even distribution of men and women, a wide range of input of time and effort, and that "initial feelings of being out of their depth and smothered in jargon and paperwork usually wear off as experience develops" [ibid].

Despite this, it is clear that the range of new responsibilities emerging from the 1988 Act, and landing on the new governing bodies in their first six months of operation, is a cause of dismay, confusion, and feelings of inadequacy comparable with those felt by community college governors in Leicestershire ten years earlier [see, e.g. Streatfield & Jefferies].

Although the background of the governors surveyed suggests that most would be familiar with the constraints placed upon them by the political system, there was evidence of annoyance and frustration with party political tactics employed by the LEA nominees, and with a sense of "closing ranks" against them by politicians and headteachers. By contrast, their most satisfying relationships tended to be with the elected teachers where, perhaps, both groups could point to their daily close contact with the children to legitimise their views. Indeed, Golby and Lane point to a danger that the predominantly white, middle-class, professional parent governors elected in Exeter and Hounslow (many already working in education), who cannot be said to be a cross-section of their communities, will identify more and more closely with professional teachers, perpetuating the control of education by a narrow section of society [ibid, p.84].

Of major concern to parent governors was the degree of accountability they could exercise towards the parent body who elected them. While "they feel responsible to an identifiable

constituency when consulting and negotiating on school decisions" [ibid, p.13], they experience feelings of frustration about the difficulties in presenting a "parental view". It seems that this is a major factor in their feelings of powerlessness, and that, without a strong expression of parent opinion through either the annual parents meeting, the ballot box, or an active home-school association, parent governors will continue to feel that their views have little authority.

(c) Teacher Governors

This group is, strictly speaking, not within the terms of this study. Research into the reasons that teachers have for putting themselves up for election would be valuable, as there are indications reported above of efforts being made nationally and locally to protect the professional role in school government against the influx of lay people. It would also be interesting to know to what extent teachers see themselves in alliance with headteachers in presenting the profession's view, or, as suggested by Golby and Brigley, whether they may form alliances with parent governors against the traditional power base of heads and politicians.

(d) Co-opted Governors

The increasingly common synonymy between "co-opted" and "business" (in one example "industrial") governors suggests that it may be useful to refer to the actual wording of the 1986 Act. Clause 6 states that it is "the duty of the governors . . . in co-opting any person to be a member of the governing body . . . to have regard - (i) to the extent to which they and the other governors are members of the local business community; and (ii) to any representations made to the governing body as to the desirability of increasing the connection between the governing body and that community" [HMSO, 1986].

The procedure for co-option caused more confusion than any other single item in the reconstitution of governing bodies in the autumn of 1988. Although DES Circular 7/87 recommended that schools hold elections for the parents and teachers in the autumn of 1988, LEAs were reminded in the summer that all governing bodies should be fully constituted (i.e. with co-opted governors in place) by 21st. October. This left very little time for the embryo body to meet, receive recommendations, issue invitations and confirm co-options. It also created confusion because the status of such a meeting was unclear. The legal requirement that the first meeting of the governing body in each school year should elect the influential chairman and vice chairman raised the question as to whether a meeting without co-opted members was the "first meeting".

Advice from the DES suggested that this meeting was not technically a meeting of the body, and that a temporarily elected chairman could serve until the first full meeting. The significance of this dispute has to be seen in terms of the proportionate representation of constituent bodies. With co-opted members forming the largest single group, the LEA nominations would constitute nearly half the governors before co-option, but only between one quarter and one third after co-option. Representatives of party political groups would therefore lose much of their influence over choice of chairmanship once the co-option process was complete.

That this was no mere academic issue was illustrated in Labour-controlled Newham, where the issue of school closure arose. Staff governors walked out of two meetings of one school governing body, making it inquorate and preventing co-option, in the fear that the LEA-nominated governors would force through co-options of governors sympathetic to the authority's re-organisation plans. The authority appealed to the Secretary of State to use his powers under Section 99 of the 1944 Act to approve the school's co-opted governors and make a properly constituted governing body [TES, 6.1.89].

To recruit co-opted governors, a number of LEAs placed advertisements in the local press. Other methods used were circularising local firms with a range of glossy leaflets, contacting the local branch of the Confederation of British Industry, Chambers of Commerce, and other employers' networks.

These methods would tend to exclude the small businessman, but in many cases heads were encouraged to make these contacts themselves. A number of authorities collected names centrally and distributed lists to schools. Jefferies and Streatfield show that that nearly one-third of vacancies on governing bodies by the end of the year were of co-opted places, but it should be remembered that the total number of vacancies was very small, and that some authorities encouraged governing bodies not to rush into filling up all vacancies immediately, so that careful thought could be given to establishing a balance. While proper statistics are not yet available, it would seem that the vast majority of schools have been successful in including representatives of the business community on their governing bodies, through the parent elections, LEA nominations or co-options [ibid, p.8].

Predictably, primary schools tended to recruit people from small local businesses, while secondary schools were attracted, and attractive, to larger businesses, particularly those with whom links existed through work experience schemes. Some of the very largest industries, such as IBM, themselves laid on seminars for interested employees, and were surprised by the "massive response" [TES, 21.10.88], while the co-ordinating organisation "Industry Matters" produced a pack for potential governors from the business community. The TUC also began to express an interest, and indicated that it would exert pressure to ensure that all classes of employees were allowed sufficient

time off work to fulfil the role of school governor. However, early indications showed that schools were inclined towards traditional white male middle-class business governors, with bank managers and clergymen leading the field [ibid].

Responses to the New Duties

"WANTED: Man or woman to control large professional workforce and multi-million pound budget. Long, unsocial hours. Heavy responsibility with high risk of personal unpopularity. Remuneration: None, except feeling of virtue."

Thus runs a spoof advert for school governors devised by Ann Page of The Independent [quoted in Roberts].

Most early reservations about the apparent shift of power to lay participation in school government have pointed to the enormous complexity of the tasks. As noted above, new parent governors felt overwhelmed by the amount of paper that required reading, the responsibilities of financial management and staff employment, and the often sheer impenetrability of the education system with its structures, customs and jargon. Representatives of the teaching profession soon expressed their own misgivings: "If I could believe that a school governing body would be a genuine reflection of overall parental thinking, I would not be so perturbed by the transition of power over school policy into the hands of lay oligarchs, but that benign outcome is highly improbable. I am, of course, comforted by the knowledge that the majority of parents prefer

to repose their confidence in the judgement of teachers. I also believe that in many schools, even without the unifying benefit of Mr. Baker's specifications on testing and curriculum, the influence of teachers will inform and moderate governors' decisions. What scares me stiff is the knowledge that in some schools, governors' policy will be determined by a self-opinionated and wrong-headed group" [Smithies].

One of the major concerns expressed during the passage of the 1986 Act was over the continuing lack of clarity of areas of responsibility [NAGM]. The implementation of this Act and its successor required the governing bodies to become familiar with every detail of school practice, from the writing of a policy on charging for school activities in line with a highly complex ruling likely to be clarified only by long-term case law, to the finer details of the National Curriculum. In matters such as the formulation of a sex education policy for the school, it was always likely that the eventual balance of responsibilities would be decided by the nature of the relationship between headteacher and governing body, and by the expertise available amongst the governors. Smithies' fear that the purpose of the Act "is to replace the knowledge and experience of the professionals with the judgements of lay people who choose to be interested in school education" [ibid] would therefore certainly not be borne out by the historical nature of governing bodies. Nevertheless, it is clear that potential does exist for the type of conflict that we have seen

at Countesthorpe and William Tyndale to be more easily resolved in the governors' favour, and the sheer range of responsibilities may offer more opportunities for such conflict.

Understandably, the sudden transfusion of large numbers of, mainly, white middle-class people into a style of operation very different from the world of business caused a certain amount of culture shock. The aims of educationalists and those of business can be very different, as became clear in the course of the introduction of corporate management into local councils. The early training sessions for governors, concentrating as we have seen on practical issues like local financial management and appointment of staff, did not seem to give much opportunity for induction into the broader aims of the service, and it is probable that this will give opportunities for much misunderstanding in the future. Indeed it could be argued that the gathering together of large numbers of new governors in their own time, in draughty school halls with wooden chairs, to regale them with the incomplete details of average school staff budgeting, provides fertile ground for conflict. Such experiences will be far removed from those accustomed to the comparatively lavish provision of training in industry. An early manifestation of such conflict was the resignation of a "business governor" in South Glamorgan in disgust at the state of the school buildings, after only fifteen days in office. Unable to speak out publicly without

bringing on himself the censure of his colleagues, he demonstrated his understandable failure to adapt to the world of education with his remark: "Certainly none of my staff would work in conditions like this" [TES, 13.1.89]. With hindsight, LEAs may find that leaving the educational induction to headteachers was unwise.

A further shock in store lies in the complex situation of legal responsibility. While it is too early at the time of writing for new governing bodies to have come up against employment problems, legal challenges to governing body decisions can be expensive, even for the victorious side. Thus the governors of Small Heath Comprehensive School in Birmingham faced legal costs of 25,000 following their successful defence of an action brought by parents against their "opting out" ballot arrangements. The solicitor for the governors suggested that "unless the Government was prepared to indemnify governors against court actions it was difficult to see why anyone should be prepared to take the financial risk of sitting on a school governing body" [TES, 2.6.89].

Delegation of the practical financial management of the school to its governing body is a major plank in the reform and, not surprisingly, one that seems to cause the highest degree of anxiety amongst new governors. It has been seen above how authorities with experience of pilot schemes of financial delegation place training in this area at the top of their priority lists. The Cooper & Lybrand Report on financial

delegation [Thomson et al] suggests that concern about this new responsibility of governing bodies will not be misplaced: "Some doubts, which we share, have been expressed about the willingness of governors to take on these new responsibilities . . . the development of governors is likely to be a slower process than for heads and staff and implementation plans will need to recognise this, not only in the provision of training and support for governors but also in phasing-in responsibilities" [ibid, p.34]. Interviews with those involved in the Cambridgeshire pilot scheme suggest that the critical element in financial control will continue to be the headteacher [The Guardian, 18.10.88], and it will be some years before it can be said whether lay participants have successfully penetrated the secret garden of the school budget. The recruitment of bank managers to governing bodies mentioned above indicates that at least some headteachers are willing, if not anxious, to share the responsibilities.

A very significant indicator of the level of lay interest in the operation of schools was established by the requirement in the 1986 Act that governing bodies provide an annual report to parents and hold an annual parents' meeting. Three surveys of reports and meetings were available for analysis [Bristow; Earley; Mahoney], and these have been used to construct an overview of experiences in the 1987 and 1988 rounds of meetings.

(a) Reports

The 1986 Act requires that the following information must be included in the Annual Parents' Report: Discharge of the governing body's functions; details of the parents' meeting; details of governors; financial statement; examinations; links with the community; syllabuses and other educational provision. While it is intended that the Report should be produced by the Governors themselves, practice varied widely, with some authorities recommending that the Head take responsibility. In Derbyshire, 80% of report-writing was led by governors [Mahoney]; nationally, Bristow reports, 74% of reports were produced by the Head, the Chair or a combination of the two. Mahoney deprecates the poor quality and readability of all but a few reports, while Earley estimates that only ten per cent would interest parents. The majority of reports seem to have been between three and seven pages in length. Bristow reflects that, despite the poor quality generally, the writing of the report did require that governors review the actions and decisions taken during their year of office. While Mahoney reports that three-quarters of governors surveyed expressed content with their reports, there is no indication of parents' reactions.

(b) Meetings

Parental response to the Annual Meetings is easier to gauge. The meeting is centred around the report and "any other matters connected with the governors' work at the school" [DES,

1988]. All parents must be invited and, if the meeting is quorate (with the number of parents present equalling twenty per cent of the school roll), formal resolutions may be made. All the local authorities surveyed reported an overwhelmingly poor response to the meetings:

In 415 Leicestershire schools, one-third of meetings attracted less than 5% of parents; only 19% attracted a quorum; no secondary schools were quorate. These findings were confirmed by a survey of 392 Derbyshire schools (and are, perhaps, particularly disappointing in two authorities heavily committed to community education) [Mahoney];

In four LEAs surveyed by Bristow, 6% of meetings in a Merseyside authority were quorate; 29% in a West country authority were quorate; a South Coast county averaged 5-10% attendance; and in a Welsh authority 16% were quorate, with average attendance at 4% in primary schools and 8% in secondary schools.

Earley reports: a Metropolitan LEA where one-third of schools attracted less than ten parents and no meetings were quorate; a sample of London schools showing an average 7% attendance, with 18% of meetings quorate; a Division of the ILEA where primary schools had an average 9.5% attendance, secondary schools 4%, with an overall average of 7.5%.

National figures suggest an average attendance of 5%, with between 1% and 29% of meetings quorate [Bristow; Earley].

Although Bristow concludes that "the Government's intention to involve parents more directly in the process of accountability has largely back-fired", it should be remembered that these surveys represent only the first steps in a process which is attempting to change the patterns of parental involvement established over more than one hundred years of state education. Many of the governing bodies were clearly concerned about the poor attendances, and were considering ways in which the meetings could be made more attractive. Reviews of the content, style of presentation and ethos of both reports and meetings were being made, and NAGM was making available model reports and advice on the conduct of meetings. Mahoney concludes that parents were using the opportunity to find out about governing bodies, and were asking questions on a wide range of educational topics.

While the figures alone reveal a bleak picture, there are some indications that future years will see improvements, if only because governors will not want to see their years of office summed up in an embarrassingly empty school hall.

Impact of the legislation on the LEAs

One of the provisions of the 1988 Act attracting most popular publicity was the "opting-out" clause. The most common reason for schools to elect to become "grant-maintained", receiving funding direct from the DES instead of the LEA, was always likely to be that of a threat to their existence. This

loophole, appearing simultaneously with directions from the DES to local councils to cut spending by disposing of surplus school places, gave schools an opportunity to evade the reorganisation plans and throw county school provision into considerable disorder.

The steps involved in becoming grant-maintained comprise a vote by the governing body, followed by a secret ballot of parents, with at least fifty per cent voting. A favourable ballot leads to a submission of plans to the Secretary of State for his approval. By June 1989, sixty schools had taken formal steps in the process towards becoming grant-maintained:

- 19 had voted, submitted plans to the DES, and been approved;
- 7 had voted, submitted plans, and awaited a decision;
- 16 had voted, but had not yet submitted plans;
- 3 had voted, submitted plans, but were turned down;
- 15 had voted against submitting plans.

Of the twenty-six schools which had submitted plans, fourteen had done so to avoid the loss of their individual identities through closure or amalgamation, five in order to preserve their status as selective schools, and seven to achieve greater independence from the authority.

Although it is very early days, it does seem that the provisions are unlikely to be widely used. However, they may exert serious constraints on local authorities in planning overall county provision.

Other effects on the local authorities have been in their approach to educational provision. Many authorities saw that their role would be less in providing education, than in acting in an advisory and supportive capacity to schools ("a change towards greater customer service" [TES, 12.5.89]). This has led to reorganisation of the service in some counties, especially the larger rural authorities, towards decentralisation. The Chief Education Officer of Norfolk saw a loss of power in his role: "Past power may well be supplanted by broad influence should we wish to use it" [ibid]. The changes heralded by the introduction of corporate management seventeen years earlier received a new impetus; new officers needed to be "strong on financial matters . . . good on public relations" [Fletcher, 1989]. While there seemed likely to be a reduction in overall staffing of the administration service, many chief officers took the opportunity of early retirement. Fifteen handed in their resignations in the first six months of 1989, marking an unprecedented turnover in the senior educational posts. As the general secretary of the Society of Education Officers remarked: "Many people became chief officers to get things done and found themselves spending most of their time limiting the amount of damage inflicted on the service" [TES, 17.6.88].

Summary

What, then, are the new roles of school governors? While many are, as before, purely supervisory (such as ensuring the Head conforms to government policy), others do involve actual implementation, such as formulating sex education policy, appointing and employing staff, managing the finances, and controlling the use of school premises. Training is available, but limited by finances and time, not least the freely-given time of the governors themselves. The ruling that governors cannot claim for travel or loss of earnings, combined with the need for more frequent meetings to discharge the greater responsibilities, is not likely to encourage the participation of a wider cross-section of society.

From resembling most closely the honorary trustees of a charitable body, governors are now more like the unpaid directors of a full-time and complex voluntary organisation, but in a service financed by the government and provided by statute. In Scotland, the education minister proposed "a substantial devolution of powers from the education authorities to new School Boards There were nearly 8,000 responses, and virtually all declined his offer of a major increase in parental control" [McPherson & Raab]. There are early signs in England that school governors have been given more power than they ever wanted.

The outcomes reported in this chapter raise a number of questions about the extent and quality of lay participation in

educational decision-making as it has evolved in the 1980s. Is the participatory model devised by the government appropriate to a consumer-oriented service? Are efficiency and effectiveness best achieved by consumer participation, increased public accountability or professional domination? How far do the gestures towards lay participation provide a cover for a dramatic degree of centralisation in educational policy-making?

Joan Sallis defines the real need in school management as being "the precious light of ordinariness" [Sallis, 1988]. Whether this has been achieved, or a great deal more, will be discussed in the final chapter.

Chapter 13

Progress in Participation: The Colleges Revisited

In 1981, as we have seen, the governing bodies of the three Leicestershire Community Colleges seemed to show no significant differences from conventional school governing bodies. Their composition did not reflect the communities served by the colleges, their concerns were administrative and low-level functional rather than educational, and governors did not see themselves as having an influential role in college decision-making. However, college councils, and particularly their management committees, were a vehicle for a more significant style and level of community participation. They showed a tendency to be more representative, felt more influential, and participated in genuinely educational decision-making, albeit within the non-statutory service.

For a number of reasons we could expect, eight years on, to see some significant advances in both the representativeness and influence of the governing bodies:

- 1) It was suggested that the route established for college council members to be elected onto the governing body would bring in people of a "college council type" rather than a "governor type" (with the rider that college councils did tend to nominate their more "governor-like" members);

2) The growing experience and confidence of bodies first formed in the late 1970s could be expected to be demonstrated by increasing involvement and influence;

3) The legislation of the 1980s, with a reduction in the number of political appointments, and an increase in representation from parents and coopted members of the community, could be expected to have made an impact by 1989.

Further research was therefore undertaken in the colleges in 1989 to answer the following questions:

[a] Had the composition of governing bodies and college council management committees altered significantly over the past eight years?

[b] Did governors feel that they played a more influential role than previously?

[c] Had there been an observable shift towards greater lay participation in educational decision-making since the establishment of the colleges?

The three colleges of Shepshed, Earl Shilton and Groby were therefore approached regarding a re-survey of their governing bodies and management committees.

Both in the three colleges, and at the highest level of educational administration in Leicestershire, key posts had changed hands. Although the consent and mediation of the new Director of Education was secured, the response of two of the three colleges to the request for cooperation was disappointing. Hind Leys College, Shepshed, did not respond to

either written or telephoned requests for assistance, and the response from Earl Shilton was very low. Obviously, the loss of the personal contacts that the author had had with personnel in 1981 played a significant part in this failure to secure cooperation. It may also be that there is an element in the colleges whereby feeling part of a unique experiment has dissipated over time. At Groby College, however, there was considerable interest, a very healthy response, and even a request to enlist the author in more wide-ranging research. Here, the appointment of a new principal seems to have revitalised the college's early sense of mission, and there is commitment to reviewing the whole process of lay participation in order to make it a more significant element in college decision-making (see below).

The low response level makes it difficult to draw significant conclusions from the questionnaires returned. Nevertheless, results will be reported to see if any general trends can be discerned, though it is emphasised that these should be treated with great caution. Returns were low from LEA nominated governors, as in 1981, but there were good responses from parents and coopted members.

COMPOSITION OF GOVERNING BODIES AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES

The questionnaire format used displayed only minor changes from the 1981 version. Table numbering follows the pattern established in chapter 9 so that results may be compared with corresponding tables (where no 1989 equivalent can be shown due to low response, Table Numbers will continue to follow the earlier pattern). Where significance may be attached to changes since 1981, earlier results are shown in square brackets.

(a) Residence

Members of management committees were no longer significantly more likely to live within the defined school catchment area of the college than governors. Indeed, results from Groby show a complete reversal, where governors other than LEA nominations are now recruited almost exclusively from the area. Meanwhile, a reduction in the proportion of catchment area residents on management committee suggests that the college has substantially increased the geographical range of its non-statutory usage. Table 13:1 shows the percentage of respondents on each body resident within the school catchment area:

TABLE 13:1

GOVERNORS AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS RESIDENT

IN THEIR RESPECTIVE CATCHMENT AREAS

	Governors [N = 16]	Management Committee [N = 17]	Governors and Management Committee [N = 33]
	%	%	%
Earl Shilton	66.6	66.6	66.6
Groby	90.0[68.7]	57.1	70.8
Total	81.2	58.8[86.4]	69.7

(b) Age

There was a significant drop in the age of governors in both colleges. Table 13:2 shows the percentage of members under 50 in each body:

TABLE 13:2

GOVERNORS AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS UNDER FIFTY

YEARS OF AGE

	Governors	Management Committee
	%	%
Earl Shilton	83.3	66.6
Groby	90.0	71.4
Total	87.5[68.2]	70.6

(c) Length of Residence

Governors of 1989 were less likely to be long-term residents of the neighbourhood than 1981 governors, whereas the reverse was markedly true of management committee members. The community of Groby continued to show a rapid growth in population in the intervening period, and it would seem that the composition of the governing body reflected this to a greater extent than membership of the management committee. Table 13:3 shows the proportion of members of each group who had been resident in their neighbourhood for twelve years or more:

TABLE 13:3

GOVERNORS AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS RESIDENT
IN THEIR NEIGHBOURHOOD FOR TWELVE YEARS OR MORE

	Governors	Management Committee
	%	%
Earl Shilton	50.0	66.6
Groby	50.0	71.4
Total	50.0[66.6]	70.6[49.0]

(d) Gender

Very little change seems to have occurred in the gender composition of the governing bodies, but female membership of Groby management committee has increased markedly. Table 13:7 shows the percentage of respondents who were male:

TABLE 13:7

MALE GOVERNORS AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

	Governors	Management Committee
	%	%
Earl Shilton	83.3	66.6
Groby	60.0	42.9[61.0]
Total	68.7[74.0]	47.1[61.0]

(e) Occupational Status

Compared to 1981 findings, the occupational status of governors shows a marked shift away from the highest of the Registrar-General's classifications. As can be seen from Table 13:8, governors of the two colleges are almost exclusively recruited from class II, and there has been no discernible recruitment from the lower non-manual and manual occupational groups. Management committees remain more broadly based in occupational terms, as Table 13:9 shows:

TABLE 13:8

OCCUPATIONAL GROUPING OF GOVERNORS

		I	II	IIIN	IIIM	IV
Earl Shilton	%	---	100.0	----	----	----
Groby	%	10.0	80.0	10.0	----	----
Total	%	6.25	87.5	6.25	----	----
[1981 figures		34.1	47.7	6.8	6.8]	

TABLE 13:9

OCCUPATIONAL GROUPING OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

		I	II	IIIN	IIIM	IV
Earl Shilton	%	---	100.0	----	----	----
Groby	%	---	78.6	21.4	----	----
Total	%	---	82.4	17.6	----	----
[1981 figures	%	8.1	56.8	2.7	13.5	2.7

(f) Membership of Public Bodies

The low response, especially from governors nominated by the LEA, removes any significance from responses to questions in this area. However, a new question relating to length of service on the two bodies demonstrates a high turnover brought about by the establishment of new governing bodies in 1988. Apart from a cluster of new appointments to both bodies, there is a very even spread of length of service, as shown in Table 13:10 (no 1981 equivalent as these were then newly established bodies):

TABLE 13:10

LENGTH OF SERVICE OF GOVERNORS AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

	Governors(%)	Management Committee(%)
1 year	50.0	23.5
2 years	-----	17.6
3 "	12.5	17.6
4 "	6.25	-----
5 "	6.25	17.6
6 "	6.25	5.9
7 "	-----	-----
8 "	6.25	5.9
9 "	-----	5.9
10 "	6.25	5.9
10+ "	6.25	-----
Total(%)	100.00	99.9

Conclusions

Despite the low level of response to the questionnaire, there is some evidence that the composition of governing bodies and management committees have come to resemble each other, with governing bodies becoming more like management committees used to be, and management committees losing some of the qualities that made them significantly more representative of the communities they served. Governors are now more likely to reside in the colleges' catchment areas, to be younger, to represent both the long-term and the in-migrant parts of the

population, and to represent a spread in length of service.

Meanwhile, members of management committees became less likely to reside in the catchment area and less likely to represent in-migrants. There was, however, a significant increase in female membership of management committees.

It would appear that, through a combination of the Leicestershire policy of inducting local people into educational governance through community college councils, and the operation of the national legislation of the 1980s, the colleges' governing bodies had become more representative of the communities they served between 1981 and 1989.

THE ROLE OF GOVERNORS

In 1981, research into the performance of governing bodies and management committees was conducted by interview and observation. This allowed an open-ended approach, qualitative rather than quantitative, with a minimum of assumptions being made. In 1989, it was decided that those issues raised earlier would be researched by questionnaire with governing bodies only. This allowed the addressing of the major question underlying the latter part of this work: Are there indications that the combination of local and national reforms operating on the Leicestershire colleges has brought about changes in the major forum for lay participation in educational decision-making, that is, the governing bodies?

Fifteen governors only completed all the section of the questionnaire dealing with their perception of the role, ten of these from Groby College and five from Earl Shilton. The total comprised seven parent governors, five coopted governors, two teachers, and one LEA nomination. Again, then, it would be dangerous to draw any wide-ranging conclusions from the responses. However, the results which are reported here do show some patterns which are significantly different from those found in 1981.

Identification by the public

Whereas, in 1981, few governors reported that they were approached by the public, the majority of governors (87%) now report some approaches. This indicates not only that the governors are identifiable by their constituencies, but also that they are considered by some people at least to have influence.

Representation of interests

Most governors saw themselves as speaking for the interests of a particular constituency - teachers for staff, parents for parents, council appointees for councillors, for example. Coopted governors picked one or another interest group to represent, according to their lights. This identification of governors with constituencies, recommended by Taylor and adopted in the 1986 Act, emphasises the adversarial aspect of representative democracy. It can be contrasted with the comments reported in 1981, when governors seemed to identify

with, and wished to defend, the college as a whole. As was seen in chapter 12, representation does provide a credible platform for elected governors, making it more difficult for their views to be dismissed by professionals and politicians. However, this element of the 1980s legislation may have succeeded at the expense of a commitment to the whole institution.

Areas of contribution

One of the most striking features of school governance before 1980 was the way in which lay participants saw the curriculum and the day-to-day conduct of the school as being the business of the professionals. As we have seen, governors tended to restrict themselves to dealing with buildings, finance, and assisting in staff appointments. This was a major distinction between governors and members of management committees in the colleges in 1981, the latter becoming involved in debates on educational issues, albeit in the non-statutory sector of provision. In the later survey, governors were asked to name the areas of college work to which they contribute at present, and those to which they would like to contribute in the future. The options given, and the results, were as follows:

TABLE 13:11

AREAS OF COLLEGE MANAGEMENT:

	Contributing to now	Would like to contribute	Total
Finance	10	3	13
Curriculum	9	4	13
Students	6	6	12
Staff Appointments	5	3	8
Community Activities	4	3	7
Buildings/Maintenance	4	-	4
Adult Education	1	1	2
Equal Opportunities	1	1	2
Liaison with High Schools	-	1	1
Administration	-	1	1

As can be seen, there is a very strong desire, particularly amongst parent and coopted governors, to be involved in areas which have hitherto been regarded as the domain of the professionals. Since the somewhat hesitant statements proffered about the complexity of integrated college finances in 1981, which foreshadowed locally the national introduction of Local Management of Schools, governors feel already that they are involved in financial decisions, and in curriculum and student matters. The responses here show a significant development in the role of college governors.

The influence of governors

It was shown in chapter 10 that governors did not see themselves as influential actors in the decision-making process of the colleges. Much emphasis was laid on the perception that governing bodies were dominated by the principal and officers of the authority, with little scope left for lay participants. Present governors were therefore asked to rate the contribution and influence of each category of governor and the principal. The results are shown in the respondents' categories, with the scores weighted to allow for an even distribution of response:

TABLE 13:12

CONTRIBUTION OF GOVERNORS AS SEEN BY CATEGORY

<u>Contribution as scored by</u>	<u>Parents</u>	<u>Coopted</u>	<u>Teachers</u>	<u>LEA</u>	<u>Total</u>
Parents	22	24	28	27	101
Coopted	15	22	10	7	54
Teachers	19	14	21	20	74
LEA	19	11	21	33	84
Principal	24	29	21	13	87
	99	100	101	100	

TABLE 13:13

INFLUENCE OF GOVERNORS AS SEEN BY CATEGORY

<u>Influence as scored by</u>	<u>Parents Coopted</u>		<u>Teachers</u>	<u>LEA</u>	<u>Total</u>
Parents	20	20	13	27	80
Coopted	12	18	13	7	50
Teachers	19	14	20	13	66
LEA	18	14	20	33	85
Principal	31	33	33	20	107
	100	99	99	100	

Parents are seen overall as the group which contributes most to meetings, with the principal second and the LEA nominations third. However, the principal is still seen as the single most influential contributor, with LEA nominations second and parents third. The comparatively low score of teachers is noteworthy. It is possible that the high position of parents in both tables is due to sheer weight of numbers, but this would not explain the low scoring of coopted governors. An interesting feature is the relationship between the self-image of a category and the image of that category held by others:

TABLE 13:14

PERCEPTION AND SELF PERCEPTION OF CONTRIBUTION

<u>Contribution as scored by:</u>	<u>others</u>	<u>self</u>	<u>others:self</u>
Parents	26	22	- 4
Coopted	11	22	+ 11
Teachers	18	21	+ 3
LEA	17	33	+ 16

TABLE 13:15

PERCEPTION AND SELF PERCEPTION OF INFLUENCE

<u>Influence as scored by:</u>	<u>others</u>	<u>self</u>	<u>others:self</u>
Parents	20	20	----
Coopted	11	18	+ 7
Teachers	15	20	+ 5
LEA	17	33	+ 16

There seems to be a pattern emerging whereby the parents hold a realistic view of their contribution and influence, while other categories may be overrating themselves on both scales. Certainly, these results seem to show positive views of the role of governor, in contrast to the comments reported from eight years earlier.

These findings are confirmed in answers to questions on the amount of influence that governors felt they had, and wanted to have, over governing body decisions:

INFLUENCE FELT AND WANTED BY GOVERNORS OVER DECISIONS

	Influence felt (N = 16)	Influence wanted (N = 16)
Much	5	9
Some	8	7
Little	3	-
None	-	-

Six of the governors wanted more influence than they feel they have at present.

Not only did the governors feel that they influenced decisions of the governing body, but they also felt that the governing body exercised influence over the activities of the college. Governors were asked how much influence they felt the governing body had over college policy in general, and over financial policy in particular:

<u>INFLUENCE OF GOVERNING BODY OVER</u>	<u>COLLEGE POLICY</u>	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>
Much	5	2
Some	8	10
Little	3	4
None	-	-
Total	16	16

It will be recalled that many governors in 1981 felt that they had little understanding of the financial processes of college government. The findings here show an increase in influence felt, which suggests that the plans for Local Management of Schools will have an impact on governing body

involvement after a period of time.

Finally, governors were asked if they perceived a "college philosophy". Fourteen of the sample of sixteen responded that they did.

Reconstruction of lay participation in one college

Some of the findings reported here are confirmed by interviews with a senior staff member. It has been said above that the arrival of a new principal at Groby encouraged the college to review the structures and processes of lay participation. The role of the management committee came under scrutiny and, following the pattern adopted by a fourth "phase three" college in Leicester, sub-committees were set up to deal with specific issues. Unlike the permanent sub-committees of an increasing number of school governing bodies, Groby management committee meets each year in order to first define the issues likely to require attention in the coming year, so that there are annually new jobs to be performed. This in itself helps to give significance to the role of lay members. Apart from standing committees on finance, staffing (overseeing the deployment of the phase 3 element of full-time staff commitment) and sports, there have been committees on the creche, outreach work and overall college policy.

One of the problems of lay committees in community work seems to be that they lose the excitement and momentum that are inherent in the early years of a project. As new members are

elected, they are assimilated into outmoded practices, and are unable to share the pioneering spirit of the original group. If they are not given specific developmental tasks to perform, they can often feel that they are merely there to replace their predecessors, whose performance they cannot live up to now that the creative days are past. A vacuum is therefore formed, which is filled by full-time workers, and the sense of committee direction (in both senses) is lost.

The management committee at Groby aimed to overcome these problems by:

(a) addressing that area of responsibility of phase 3 colleges which in 1980 had actually experienced a reduction in lay participation, i.e. the deployment of community teachers;

(b) creating jobs where needed in the college's present stage of development, rather than by custom and practice;

(c) addressing single areas of work which could show important and observable improvements, thus allowing participants to point to real achievements; while encouraging other groups to have a hand in developing broad and detailed policies for future college work;

(d) creating groups with an interest in defending specific areas of college work.

While this last strategy can result in committees adopting an adversarial attitude, with members competing for resources with other interest groups, this seems to have been moderated by the continuing emphasis on a "whole college" philosophy,

which has been successfully communicated to participants.

Some of the key figures on the college governing body (including the chairman) have emerged through college council and management committee, while governing body representatives are prominent management committee figures. Thus a critical lay participant in defence of the college budget was a governor who, though not originally seen by senior staff as a proponent of the college philosophy, took on this role as chairman of the management committee's finance sub-committee. It could therefore be argued that the college is on the road to successfully sponsoring a sense of college ownership in its lay participants.

Senior staff argue that the management committee remains the main arena for lay involvement in educational decision-making in the college. Governing body agendas are still unwieldy, local politics is still an issue, and membership is still a key status role in local social networks. However, in a college where there appears to be a high degree of cohesiveness between governing body, management committee and senior staff, there are now indications that the governors are being introduced to the mysteries of school practice. The combination of 1980s legislation and Leicestershire community education policy does seem to be bringing about a meaningful role for governors.

Conclusion

Overall, it seems that the governors of the two colleges do feel that their roles have become more influential in the eight years between the surveys. The findings reported here suggest that lay participants contribute significantly to meetings, have a higher self-image, and exercise more influence over governing bodies, than they did eight years previously. It may be possible to predict that a survey of school governing bodies around the year 2000 would show that school decision-making was significantly responsive to lay influence.

CHAPTER 14

An Analysis of Power in the Community

The work so far has comprised a number of strands:

A historical study of lay participation in school management at an intermediate level;

a study of participation in local government, with particular reference to the educational responsibilities of local authorities;

a case-study of educational provision in Leicestershire, with particular reference to the roles of professionals, councillors and school governors;

a study of lay participation in school/college management in a community education setting;

a review of legislative changes in the composition and responsibilities of school governing bodies over the last fifteen years.

The completion of this work coincides with the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the Government Education Office in 1839, which was concerned with the distribution of grants to school-providing bodies and which, in return, demanded that school managers account for the expenditure of these grants. So a connection was originally established between the accountability of representatives of

the local community and the financial support they would receive for the provision of education.

In drawing the strands together, and in attempting to answer the broad question: What is the extent and impact of lay participation in educational decision-making, I will focus upon the following issues:

A) Power in the community. What models have been developed to explain how power is distributed and wielded in communities, working on the assumption that governing schools is one expression of such power? How do these models relate to the works used and the theses developed throughout this study?

B) Developments in participation. What trends can be observed in the recent history of English and Welsh society which suggest new relationships between central government, local government and the public, in the context of services provided?

C) How does recent educational legislation fit into these trends?

D) What is the actual status of lay participation in school management, and in broader educational policy-making, at the time of writing, and what prognostications can be made?

A) Power in the Community

I intend in this section to lean upon David Ricci's "Community Power and Democratic Theory" [Ricci, 1971] as a work addressing the various approaches to the analysis of community

power. It has, however, two disadvantages. First, it is founded upon the American experience, where the understanding of what is acceptably democratic in society covers a smaller political range than in Britain. Thus, the political right and, particularly, left extremes tend to be excluded from discussion. Second, Ricci sets community power firmly within the liberal tradition: "By and large, Liberalism has created, sustained and revered democracy, while Conservatism and certain forms of Socialism have done exactly the reverse" [ibid, p 11]. It is worth setting down here the major problem which faces liberal democrats in the educational sphere, which I sum up as follows:

Liberal democracy, founded on the Benthamite tradition, accords to man rationality and individual significance, and therefore implies that a universal franchise is both effective and morally indispensable in society. The provision of state education can, and does, fit into this concept of society. However, the actual delivery of such education, first, is imposed, and is therefore an infringement of liberty. This difficulty can be surmounted by recognising that man requires a certain level of maturity to exercise the choices he is required to make in a democracy. This fulfils Herbert Spencer's requirement that liberalism should allow - or, indeed, encourage, - a "regime of contract", where status is achieved rather than accorded by birth. More problematic, though, is the nature and content of the education that is provided, and by

whom these are to be determined. In an ideal state, all members of the state would have achieved sufficient knowledge and understanding of the educational process by the age of maturity, and would be able to make choices for their children. This is not the case. Should educational policy-making, then, be delegated to experts - professionals who, under what lay control is thought appropriate, determine both national policy and individual school management?

The usual democratic compromise is to accord management to professionals, and broader policy-making to elected lay representatives. The whole difficulty of school governance may be seen in terms of the failure of such representatives - national and local - to decide where school governance lies in the space between policy-making and management.

Schumpeter allows something of an escape route for those facing this dilemma. By replacing the traditional view of democracy - "making the people itself decide issues through the election of individuals who are to assemble in order to carry out its will" [Schumpeter, p. 250] - with his process theory - "that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decision-making in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote" [ibid, p. 269], Schumpeter creates a rationale for a mass delegation of authority to regularly accountable individuals.

This is not, however, entirely satisfactory. It begs the question of how the public can be assured that it is not being

duped, allowing marketing tricks to take the place of genuine manifestos for support, and it fails to address the needs of the public in an increasingly bureaucratic society. As areas of "professional expertise" grow, it must become more and more difficult for lay voters to judge representatives with decisive power over issues as wide-ranging as housing, health, the economy, foreign relations, and education. We are left with a system whereby broad choices are made which, if the continuing decline in voting numbers is anything to judge by, fail to please most of the people most of the time.

Simultaneously, the dramatic increase in consumer and other pressure groups over the last two decades points to a dangerous level of dissatisfaction over a wide range of service provision.

We are left with a vision close to those of Mannheim and Marcuse, where most people have difficulty in grasping an overall understanding of their place in the community and, consequently, through feelings of powerlessness or anomie, either become increasingly dependent on their own small area of expertise to achieve self-esteem, or become increasingly alienated and dissociated from their communities.

Neither of these alternatives can encourage any optimism for the liberal view of the individual's role in the community.

How then, can the individual who is not trained to spend his life in the educational world contribute meaningfully to

it, as opposed to merely playing a role which acts as a sop to both national and local democratic aspirations?

Ricci's summary of the various sociological studies of the achievement of power in communities may be useful here. Early studies suggested that groups were the only important structures of power within communities; and committed democrats such as John Dewey and Walter Lippmann ascribed reluctantly to this view. Meanwhile, however, sociologists in both the States (e.g. Lasswell and the Lynds) and this country (Birch, Lee and Stacey) were identifying communities where power rested in the hands of a small number of individuals who, through wealth and/or family, gained power and used it largely for their own benefit. Both these theories challenged the liberal ideology that all individuals are, or should be, more important than groups or a few elite. Challenging these views, Truman developed a thesis (labelled "the group theory of democracy") whereby the health of American democracy could be demonstrated by the fact that its political system permits the formation and activity of new groups, maintaining equilibrium in a changing society and ensuring the responsiveness of the governmental system to the expression of individual needs.

Following this, Hunter suggested that politics must be analysed with reference to influential elites. In this model, the continued existence of a system is assured by all its citizens, while necessary changes are effected, with the

consent of others, by the elite. C. Wright Mills further developed this thesis by suggesting that membership of this elite is sponsored by existing members, by whom interests and social class are shared.

Both the group and elite theories might encourage the question of how truly democratic the American system is. Dahl, however, both rejected and synthesized these theories in what has been labelled the "pluralist theory of democracy". Dahl and his associates, in a study of New Haven, posited that such resources as are necessary to those wielding power are non-cumulative, and that therefore these positions are open to any individuals through wealth, prestige, rhetorical skills, ethnic solidarity, intelligence, energy and charisma. Thus Dahl justifies American and, incidentally, any other liberal democracy by stressing its accessibility and vulnerability to public influence.

As Ricci points out, unease must still remain. Regardless of these theses, participation in public affairs remains low. Where expression of views is made public, it is of dissatisfaction and frustration: "Low rates of participation are a mark of great social cost. Despite formal freedom to exercise many democratic rights and privileges, most citizens feel powerless, avoid involvement in their communities, become alienated from their neighbours, and in general fail to fulfill their potential as creative and psychologically secure social beings." [Ricci, p.187].

Must we therefore conclude that, despite the obvious inequalities in society, and the clearly uneven distribution of power, people are satisfied with their lot because they demonstrably fail to enter arenas of conflict that are (according to Dahl) open to all, where some level of victory would so clearly act to their advantage? The more recent work of sociologists and political theorists suggests that other avenues exist for the exploration of power in the community. The studies surveyed above, pluralist in their approach though they may be, adopt a simplistic view in implying that the only studies of power are those which explore explicit struggles for power between actors in various political arenas, i.e. employing a one-dimensional view of power which "involves a focus on behaviour in the making of decisions on issues over which there is an observable conflict of (subjective) interests" [Lukes, 1974, p.15]. One dimension that is missing from this view is that the bases of power may be sufficiently strong to ensure that a "mobilisation of bias" occurs which excludes certain powerless groups from the arena altogether. One manifestation of such a mobilisation might be demonstrated in the setting of agendas so as to exclude issues over which conflicts of interest might arise. While a study employing such a second dimension has obvious advantages in extending the field of study, it can also be labelled behavioural in its approach, in that such exclusion from an agenda is still a strategy that can be studied by the careful observer. Lukes

[1974,p.20] suggests the existence of a three-dimensional view involving "a thoroughgoing critique of the behavioural focus of the first two views as too individualistic". Gaventa's [1980] study of a rural mining community in the United States exemplifies such an approach, studying power "at the point where its intention, if it has one, is completely invested in its real and effective practices" [Foucault, 1976].

In Gaventa's study, the near total quiescence of a community in the face of extreme deprivation and suffering, which was clearly traceable to the actions of a comparatively small but powerful elite, is analysed in terms of its historical roots. It would be possible to apply to this situation a straightforward cost/benefit account, which demonstrated that the failure of the oppressed to take action over a period of years could be explained by the outweighing of the potential benefits or advantages of such action by the potential costs or losses, as seen from the participants' viewpoint. However, Gaventa suggests that the quiescence of the community was so deeply ingrained by the absolute control of physical and cultural resources by the elite, that such a cost/benefit analysis would never have arisen. Thus the community could be said to conform to the Gramscian notion of "moral and political passivity" due to internalisation by the powerless of the values and norms of the powerful, leading to a Freirean "culture of silence": "The dependent society is by definition a silent society. Its voice is not an authentic

voice, but merely an echo of the voice of the metropolis - in every way, the metropolis speaks, the dependent society listens" [Freire, p.59].

Powerlessness, therefore, cannot be dismissed as a mere function of apathy, but rather it is itself a function of the effective exercise of power. Dahl himself can be seen to be revising his early views in his most recent work [Dahl, 1989], where he argues for a substantial development of workers' control of industry, and for a reduction in the role of professional but unaccountable experts in government. As Schattschneider [1960, p.105] wrote: "It is profoundly characteristic that responsibility for widespread non-participation is attributed wholly to the ignorance, indifference and shiftlessness of the people." While the dominant groups within society, at the macrocosmic or microcosmic level, can rely on such an attribution, the present order will remain unthreatened. Again, as Freire writes, "when the dominated classes reproduce the dominators' style of life, it is because the dominators live 'within' the dominated. The dominated can eject the dominators only by getting distance from them and objectifying them. . . . To the extent, however, that interiorization of the dominators' values is not only an individual phenomenon, but a social and cultural one, ejection must be achieved by a type of cultural action" [Freire, 1970, p.35].

Given such a model within a single community structure, it would seem unlikely that a liberal approach (aligned by Lukes with a one-dimensional view of power) to national reform will bring about anything but minor changes. Liberal reform in educational governance, founded as it is upon the national history we have seen, will merely provide more avenues for the traditional participants. A reformist approach to educational governance, taking into account the second dimension of power, might, perhaps, begin to address the issue of powerless sections of the population, by providing some positive discrimination to disenfranchised groups. However, such discrimination would have to be extremely strong to overcome the historical, social and cultural barriers that have been shown to exist between people and schools. As Foucault suggests, "State power is the end point of analysis; it is built up from innumerable individual exercises of power which are consolidated and co-ordinated by the institutions, practices and knowledge-claims of the 'disciplines'" [Philp in Skinner, (ed) 1985, p.76]. A radical three-dimensional approach, therefore, where the very roots of non-participation are attacked within the community, is likely to be the only method by which all sections of the community are brought into the process of educational governance. The legislation reviewed in chapter 11 does not encourage participation or power-sharing. Neither does it activate the community. By retaining the structures and merely tinkering with composition, it gives

opportunities only to broaden the participation quantitatively, not qualitatively.

We must assume, therefore, that educational provision will remain alienated from the public while its nature is determined by councillors elected by a minority of the population to provide a range of services from street lighting to refuse disposal, by professionals qualified in teaching and educational management but not in service provision in the tradition of liberal democracy, and by a token group of lay people recruited from disparate - in some cases indeterminate - constituencies, with little time to commit to an ever-increasing complexity of demands, and with less ability to relate to either the constituencies they are presumed to represent or to the institution they are deemed to manage.

How does the historical role of school governors and other lay education policy-makers during the period surveyed fit into the models presented above?

It has been shown that early school governors (i.e. until the establishment of School Boards after 1870) were likely to be the self-elected "great and good" members of the community, predominantly the squire and the priest. Directly-elected School Boards gave an opportunity for involvement to a much wider group of people. However, the social patterns of the late nineteenth century tended to limit involvement, although in urban areas both working-class and radical elements appeared.

The creation of the local authorities, and the commitment of the provision of education into their care, removed the element of direct accountability. The lay councillors tended to be drawn from the same limited strata of society, and to appoint school governors and managers of a similar type. The failure, wilful or not, of government to prescribe a clear role for governing bodies led to governorships being regarded as sinecures, according extra social status to those already possessing some, and having little impact on the direction of schools.

In the late 1960s, consensus politics, at both national and local levels, came under threat. The post-war generation, better educated, more confident, and with greater expectations of playing a role in the government of social institutions, began to question the status quo. Information and leisure-time burgeoned. The channels of local democracy began to open up and, simultaneously, demands arose for the schooling system to be accountable.

Various channels were used to open up the school system. The trend towards comprehensivisation brought articulate parents out of the cloistered grammar school system, the development of pastoral structures within large comprehensives provided a personal element in parent-school links, and ideas of community education - however formalised - suggested that schools could no longer remain isolated.

Few outlets existed, however, for lay people wishing to penetrate the education system. Beyond the few radical authorities directly opening up school governance on their own initiative, the existence of community schools afforded the only opportunity for lay involvement. While, initially, this was merely a development of the trend in adult education to make provision more responsive to need, it brought a host of people from outside the normal networks of community power into decision-making in schools. Those authorities with a belief in the unitary nature of education thus laid down a route for a whole new range of people into educational decision-making.

These largely local initiatives were not developing in isolation. National pressure groups in education were emerging, to demand more say, higher standards, greater equality of opportunity. These, also, were emerging within a broader context of changing relationships between national government, local government, and the public. These changes were manifested in the growth of pressure groups concerned with a wide range of service provision, from positions across the political spectrum from the conservative to the radical.

B) Developments in Participation

I have traced above (chapter 4) how the various pressure groups in education developed throughout the 1970s, and how government response was orchestrated.

In this section, I intend to place this within the context

of other pressure groups within society, and other developments in the nature of local government provision. In doing so, I suggest that there are broadly two traditions operating which have at times become confused. These two traditions have emerged from very different perspectives on society, and the attempts of local - and particularly national - government to meet the needs of both have led inevitably to a legislative context which satisfies neither. Additionally, the attempts to make such legislation uniform across the country, and to remove the possibility of local initiatives (which were responsible for all earlier progress in the field) produce a structure resistant to popular demand.

The two traditions are conservative and radical.

The conservative tradition is concerned primarily with outcomes. It assumes, in a market-led society, that education and other services are provided by the state in return for the payment of rates and taxes. It is therefore concerned to achieve quality and value for money, and believes that one prerequisite for these is the existence of competition for public choice. It may therefore be labelled a consumerist approach, as it regards the public as consumers of a service delivered by another party. The conservative tradition ignores the relationship between the providing party and the public in a liberal democracy (i.e., that the providers, in fact, are the public themselves, in the form of an elected or appointed

sector of them), except in terms of the vendor-customer relationship. It tends to use such terms as accountability and representativeness - the latter because it sees the public not as a homogenous group with potentially uniform needs and demands, but as a widely diverse and competitive set of constituencies representing different interest groups, each of which has to be satisfied in the interests of social stability and the maintenance of the ruling group in power. It holds, therefore, a pragmatic, if not cynical view of democracy comparable to Schumpeter's "process theory" quoted above. It is particularly clearly expressed by those politicians across a spectrum embracing Anthony Crosland and Toby Jessel, who could not accept the demands of some people for "total" participation.

In defining a market-led approach to the provision of education, it is necessary to set the economic and demographic context of such provision in the relevant years. Between 1961 and 1991, the total population of Britain will have risen by nearly nine per cent. In the same period, however, the under-15 population will have fallen by four and a half per cent. Indeed, in the years between 1976 and 1986, the total school population fell by 1.8 million [HMSO, Social Trends, 1988]. This dramatic decline has coincided with an equally dramatic rise in educational standards achieved. In 1985, 74% of 25-29 year-olds held educational qualifications of at least CSE standard, compared to only 42% of 52-59 year-olds. Between 1962

and 1974, the proportion of school-leavers with two GCE A-Level passes doubled. Meanwhile, there has been a continuing fall in working hours over the whole population, a substantial increase in the number of retired people (the over-60 age group will have grown by almost one-third between 1961 and 1991), and an increase (the size of which is much disputed) in the number of unemployed.

The British population, therefore, is better educated, better informed, and has more time to pursue its interests than thirty years ago.

One measure of this increase in educational level can be seen in the public response to government and other services. While consumer complaints about all services rose, in the years 1981/2 to 1985/6, by 35%, those concerned with public utilities rose by 48%. This suggests a greater level of public awareness of the link between provider and service. Another measure of public unpreparedness to accept without question what it is offered is the dramatic expansion in the network of advice and counselling services established mainly during the 1970s, such as the Citizens Advice Bureaux, Samaritans and Marriage Guidance Councils. The total number of clients recorded by such agencies rose from 1,625,000 in 1971, through 5,133,000 in 1981, to 8,245,000 in 1986, a growth of five times over 15 years. Consequently, of course, the number of people involved in giving advice and maintaining the administration on an almost entirely voluntary basis will have grown by a similar

proportion.

The enormous growth in public awareness suggested by these figures coincided with, first, the steady increase in national expenditure on education (from 5.1% of Gross Domestic Product in 1970/1 to 5.5% in 1980/1), followed by a decline under the Conservative Government, to 4.8% of GDP in 1985/6. The fall in investment was visible in the conditions of school buildings, and in the quality and amount of resources available to teachers, and the fact that this would no longer be accepted quietly by the public was exemplified by the publication of "The State of Schools in England and Wales" by the National Confederation of Parent Teacher Associations [1985].

One Government response to the growing volume of the public voice was to establish, in 1975, the National Consumer Council. The Conservative Government began, in 1981, to use this and other agencies to survey service provision by local government. Government policy towards local authorities has throughout the 1980s brought about a substantial weakening of local government powers in housing and other service provision as well as in education. Opponents of this policy would claim that the approaches adopted by such surveys as Coopers & Lybrand in 1981, Local Government Training Board consultation papers (notably in 1985), and the National Consumer Council in 1986 gave fair indication of the Government's intentions. Coopers & Lybrand [1981] was commissioned by the Department of the Environment to survey service provision in local

government, and produced a report suggesting a much more overt use of the marketing approach, involving target-setting, consumer surveys and the like. The 1985 Local Government Training Board paper, sent to the Chief Executives of all local authorities in England and Wales, stated quite explicitly, as one of its founding principles, that "those for whom services are provided are customers demanding high quality service" [Clarke & Stewart].

The National Consumer Council study of 1986 stated first principles: That the "true purpose" of local authorities "is to provide specific benefits to specific people and a real study of value for money would seek to establish the rates of exchange between benefits and costs . . . Our ultimate aim is to encourage local authorities to become more 'consumer responsive'" [NCC, 1986].

While suggesting in passing that "consumers can become more active partners in the design and provision of community services", the study does not recommend a radical restructuring of such services to encourage such a partnership. On the contrary, NCC suggests, again, that local authorities seek to make "a more rigorous examination of what people want - even if political decisions adopt different priorities - and a greater determination to promote services to the public" [ibid, p.viii].

Underlying this approach is the belief that the quality of service in the public sector can best be maintained and

improved by marketing tools rather than by the participation of service users in the government of the provider. The "checks and balances" of quality are consumer-, rather than participant-, oriented. The local authority is viewed not as of the public, but in the same way as a supermarket wishing to promote its goods. The provider-customer view, while certainly aimed at improving standards, does not threaten the relationship between provider and customer, even though the role and function of elected local government cannot be viewed in the same way as the board of directors of a supermarket chain. In the latter, however market-oriented, the customer is not allowed into the boardroom, not expected to play a part in, or to question, the ways in which decisions are reached; most significantly, he does not play a role in the determination of what goods are to be offered.

This approach can now be seen in government publications on the education service. In the Coopers & Lybrand report commissioned by the Department of Education and Science [1988], the problem of school accountability is seen in terms of "good management practice". It is directed principally at efficient performance - the setting of objectives, allocation of resources, monitoring of performance, accountability of individual schools. A similar approach is adopted in the government's treatment of the curriculum. As its paper "National Curriculum: From Policy to Practice" [DES, 1989] makes clear, the effectiveness of curriculum delivery is to be

judged by the setting of objectives and the (public) monitoring of school performance. Again, there is no place for the public in the determination of content, but merely as discerning and potentially critical recipients of goods and services.

In the conservative or consumer model, the customer is seen as:

Free from responsibility for the quality of the service himself, except insofar as he may complain when it falls below the standard expected;

Acting out of self-interest, rather than as a member of a potentially forceful society;

Reactive to services rather than proactive;

Having a one-dimensional relationship with the provider;

Likely to be a member of one or other conflicting constituencies or interest groups;

Likely to address only the "functional rationality" of man, in Mannheim's terms [Mannheim, pp.51-58], and not the "substantial rationality", i.e. as unlikely to alter man's relationship with the world, or society, around him.

The radical model, however, posits a different, and more complex, kind of provider-client relationship. However, the fact that it has largely grown out of voluntary effort rather than by government sponsorship, and that it has developed to such an extent that local government, at least, is increasingly working in partnership with it, suggests that its roots are

more firmly planted in the public will.

The model relies on a language quite different from that of consumerism, and this serves to emphasise the differences between them. Statements of conviction, indeed of faith sometimes approaching mysticism, sit ill alongside the dialogue of the market-place. This incongruence should not be allowed to devalue them, but it should encourage a rigorous investigation of outcomes for the public judged against the rhetorically expressed claims.

In defining the radical tradition operating in local government provision, I intend to use one of the most renowned practical schemes in community development, the Tennessee Valley Authority project of 1933 to 1945. In his account, Lilienthal [1945] writes of a project that was designed not merely to provide the 4 million inhabitants of the valley with the technology of modern living and security against natural disaster, but, in Mannheim's sense, to change people's relationship with the world around them. His central thesis is "that resource development must be governed by the unity of nature herself . . . and that the people must participate actively in that development" [Lilienthal, p. 17].

In many ways, Lilienthal's account presents an ideal model of community development in a radical context. It suggests that appropriate roles were found for all participants, with professional expertise put to the service of the achievement of a vision formulated by political leaders who had successfully

infected and conscripted the people. Clearly, this should all be taken with a pinch of salt. Lilienthal, as one of the project's directors, does not write from a detached standpoint. Nevertheless, it is difficult not to be impressed by a project which effected such sweeping changes in people's lives by enlisting their cooperation, and assisting in their own attempts at self-development.

Perhaps the most appropriate comment, quoted by Lilienthal, is that by the editor of a local Alabama daily paper, in 1945:

" . . . the most significant advance has been made in the thinking of a people. They are no longer afraid. They have caught the vision of their own powers." [ibid, p. 44].

In contradiction of what pragmatists might claim, such idealism and rhetoric does not preclude a harder-nosed approach to cost-benefit analysis, which Lilienthal carefully attempts to give.

It may, of course, be argued that a radical model, both in the sense in which the word 'radical' is used in this argument, and in the sense used by Lukes [1974] (i.e. taking a three-dimensional view of power) cannot succeed if it is initiated anywhere other than at the level of the social hierarchy which is targeted. In other words, radicalism can only be said to operate in a 'bottom-up', rather than in a 'top-down', mode. In fact, the work of community organisers such as Gaventa in the United States, Freire's "sowers of words" and other

"gatekeepers", may illustrate that this is not necessarily the case. The important elements in determining whether a community-centred project is radical or not, are the interests that are served and the impact that is made by the action on the existing power structure. Clearly, effective changes can only be made with the active consent of the target population. The mobilisation of this population can only be effected if the agenda is set by them. In an ideal model, perhaps, action itself would be initiated by the population. But we know from the work of Freire and others that this cannot always happen, indeed the odds are stacked hugely against its happening, because of the very characteristic of powerlessness as a disabler.

I intend to largely beg the question of how safeguards can be provided to ensure that target populations do grasp and hold the ownership of community action, as it is strictly beyond the scope of this argument. However, it would seem that ownership of action is most likely to emerge through the targeting of comparatively small-scale change at first, allowing the actors to gain confidence with success. By this means, the learning process within the community is at low cost, and progress can be made towards large-scale change programmed by the actors. Organisers, facilitators and gatekeepers will not do better than echo Freire's wish: "that my thinking may coincide historically with the unrest of all those who, whether they live in those cultures which are wholly silenced or in the

silent sectors of cultures which prescribe their voice, are struggling to have a voice of their own" [Freire, 1970, p.18].

What the TVA project does therefore provide to less ambitious successors is a context of decentralised administration in a democratic federation of centralised authority. Overcentralisation, Lilienthal suggests, leads to uniformity, dependency, lack of enterprise, security, and lack of responsiveness. Decentralisation, therefore, is synonymous with a potential, at least, for a dynamic democracy. And it is the dynamism of the democracy that provides individuals with the will to participate. Such a dynamic relationship between the individual and the state was equated with decentralisation by de Tocqueville as early as in the 1840s:

"Centralisation succeeds more easily, indeed, in subjecting the external actions of men to a certain uniformity . . . and perpetuates a drowsy precision in the conduct of affairs, which is hailed by the heads of the administration as a sign of perfect order . . . in short, it excels more in prevention than action. Its force deserts it when society is to be disturbed or accelerated in its course; and if once the cooperation of private citizens is necessary to the furtherance of its measures, the secret of its impotence is disclosed. Even while it invokes their assistance, it is on the condition that they shall act exactly in the manner it appoints . . . These, however, are not conditions on which the alliance of the human will is to be obtained; its carriage must be free, and its

actions responsible, or such is the constitution of man, the citizen had rather remain a passive spectator than a dependent actor in schemes with which he is unacquainted." [de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, quoted in Lilienthal, p.139].

I have quoted de Tocqueville extensively as this passage remains a most cogent statement of the equation between centralisation and conservatism on the one hand, and decentralisation and radicalism on the other.

Placed in the context of Britain in the 1980s, these equations can be seen in many examples of practice. As Hambleton writes, "the evidence suggests that decentralisation should now be considered as a significant local government trend" [in Willmott (ed), p.8], and Willmott himself suggests that "what has been happening in recent decades in this country, and indeed in most other western societies as well, can be seen as a reaction against the scale and remoteness of institutions both public and private" [ibid, p.1].

The accounts of local government decentralisation in such works as Willmott and Broady et al, however, do not always distinguish clearly between the mere local placement of services, and the more radical enlistment of the community in service definition and direction - a distinction which might be encapsulated in the coining of two ugly but distinctive words: "neighbourhoodisation" and "communitisation". Development of the former may be traced back to the policy of area management

evolved in Stockport in 1971, in which the Department of the Environment began to show interest in the late 1970s. The latter gained momentum from the late 1960s, and its impact can be seen in works such as Redcliffe-Maud's surveys of local government. Development, however, has been slow and piecemeal, perhaps because restrictions on public expenditure have reduced the funds available for innovation, and have provided reluctant professionals and councillors with plenty of justification for delay.

Hambleton draws what might seem at first sight a similar distinction between the two approaches to decentralisation as that introduced above, labelling them "consumerist" and "collectivist", as opposed to "conservative/consumerist" and "radical/participatory". He suggests that the consumerist approach is essentially weak because it fails to empower the consumer and embrace wider objectives such as the strengthening of local democracy. Thus far there are few differences between "radicalism" and "collectivism". However, Hambleton goes on to suggest that he favours "collectivism" over "consumerism", provided only that it uses some of the consumerist tools of the marketing world, and because consumerism fails to allow for the expression of the collective will among such groups as council tenants or school parents.

In contrast, a radical approach, I suggest, cannot employ the tools of a consumer service which is founded upon a totally contrary perspective. Marketing tools can only be employed

within a vendor-customer relationship. If the relationship between the public and local government is radically changed, we will see the public themselves as simultaneously providers and users, as may be seen in some radical voluntary organisations [see, e.g., Landry et al, O'Malley]; pragmatic customer-care and consumer surveys have no place in such a model where the professionals and elected representatives are enlisted by the public. A more appropriate model is of a continuing dialogue.

Further, a radical approach does not aim to strengthen local democracy or empower the consumer; rather it seeks to redefine the relationship between local government and the public, showing that local government is one - and only one - element of community democracy, not its primary target; and that the public are not so much consumers of local authority services, but the fundamental element which makes up a liberal community democracy.

In practical terms, Broady et al point to the basic difficulty in aligning a consumerist and a radical approach, by citing the amalgamation of the Youth and Community service in Newcastle-upon-Tyne with Community Recreation: "This enforced collaboration has been based upon the rather superficial view that these two sections make similar kinds of provision for different social needs. But it has ignored their much more fundamental differences of approach. Thus, while the Recreation Department's prime role is to provide amenities for the general

public, but under its control, the Youth and Community Service has always sought to encourage the users to manage community and youth centres for themselves, as part of its broadly educational philosophy" [Broady et al, p.122].

A radical model, then, adopts a significantly different approach to power within the community. It does not try to abolish power - an attempt which brought about the downfall of many radical and anarchist organisations in the 1970s [see Landry et al] - but provides the channels through which people can approach power and develop the resources to use it.

Thus the radical approach contains the conflicts and paradoxes of educational provision in a liberal democracy pointed to at the opening of this chapter. Therefore it is, perhaps, appropriate to try to sum it up in the simplest terms:

"In sum, if an organisation enables people to articulate and meet their needs free from domination, and if it does so without contravening other people's needs and rights, then it should be seen as a positive gain . . . Democracy is a dynamic, and it doesn't consist of a static set of tricks . . . Users choose to have their children in certain hospitals because those hospitals are more open-minded about new birthing methods, or they send their children to particular schools because they are happier with the education provided there. All these choices which will be made within the public sector . . . might be described as simply the luxury of the well-informed middle-class. But surely the aim must be to expand the

availability of this "luxury" so that the widest possible range of users - instead of being progressively alienated from the services provided by the public sector - take an active part in saying rather loudly what they want. Only then will public services become more responsive to people's felt needs" [Landry et al, pp.80,85,91].

In the radical model, then, the member of the community is seen as:

Responsible for the direction, content and quality of services used by him and his family;

Committed in the long term to the community, and having a complex set of relationships within it;

Acting in the interests of others as well as of himself;

Proactive, i.e., initiating change, rather than merely reactive;

Likely to develop a substantial rationality, or an understanding of his relationship with the world, through a measure of control and a capacity for individual growth.

C) How does recent educational legislation fit into these trends?

It has already been shown how the present government's commitment to "pushing back the frontiers of the state" is articulated in the action and language of the consumer movement. It is, therefore, concerned with increasing the efficiency and accountability of government services, not with

radicalising them. That this is so is clearly illustrated in the Education Reform Act which, while widely represented as giving power and choice to the consumer, actually transferred an unprecedented number of powers to the Secretary of State. The impact of the Act has been to weaken the power of the pivotal element in the tripartite partnership - the local authorities - leaving educational administration in the hands of the individual schools, while authority has been centralised in the State. Schools are, therefore, likely to be less efficient in their command of resources, more individualised and responsive to their neighbourhoods, within a much stronger framework imposed by legislation.

Expressed in ideal terms, the aims of decentralising school management and decision-making from the local authorities to governing bodies are to:

- (i) Enlist the expertise of the community in order to make the service more efficient and responsive;
- (ii) Further the cause of democratic participation in a state committed to active citizenship;
- (iii) Educate the community;
- (iv) "Push back the frontiers of the state" in public affairs;
- (v) Give "ordinary" people the final say in affairs which affect them, over professionals who may not be able to see further than their own "workshop", thus placing the school within the context of the wider society.

Viewed cynically, however, the aims might be expressed as follows:

(i) To incorporate dissenters within the decision-making structure, thus stifling dissent;

(ii) To enlist the support and commitment of those who complain about the quality of state-provided services;

(iii) To gain status for a scheme, and an institution, by enlisting the involvement of the elite of a community;

(iv) To deflect discontent with centralised resource provision by apparently giving responsibility for service provision to other, local, and less powerful or articulate groups.

It is therefore possible to place recent legislation within a political tradition; interpretation of the government's intentions in following this tradition will depend upon the political standpoint adopted.

D) What is the actual status of lay participation in school management, and in broader educational policy-making at the time of writing, and what prognostications can be made?

School governors now have ultimate responsibility for the appointment and deployment of staff, for relations with parents, and for the provision of a curriculum in line with the National Curriculum.

In financial terms, while local authorities retain responsibility for capital expenditure (land and buildings),

advice and inspection of schools, home-to-school transport, and the costs of projects supported by the government, governing bodies now have control over an aggregated budget for costs of staff, premises (heating, lighting, cleaning, decorating), books and equipment.

Those issues which, at the time of writing, are exercising the minds of those concerned with education are, however, the responsibility of central government either directly or indirectly. Numerous surveys of national teacher shortages point to a deteriorating situation which will only be solved by the more generous allocation of funding. The standard of school buildings continues to cause concern, one survey suggesting that a total of 2 billion will need to be spent before 1992 to meet the minimum requirements of the Education (School Premises) Act [Labour Party, 1989].

While significant changes have been made in the role of lay participants in educational decision-making, and the possibility of "the precious light of ordinariness" shining into schools has been enhanced, there is little cause for optimism among those committed to radical changes in educational governance. Changes in composition but not in structure, coupled with the centralisation of crucial decision-making in the state, do nothing to alter the hierarchy of command or the distribution of power, or the ownership of a community service. Indeed, the view of power as a finite

element, capable of being handed from one group to another like slices of cake, is a restricting one. Power might rather be seen as a potential within people which may or may not be exploited by the educational and governmental system. It has, therefore, to be fed, as a living and infinite entity, with opportunity, success, observable achievements. The experiences reported throughout this chapter, indeed, throughout this work, suggest that a redistribution of power in schools requires new structures, new interventions, at all levels within schools, in order to transform and give voice to the culture of silence.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

(a) Books

- AIKEN, M. & MOTT, P. (eds) [1970] The Structure of Community Power, New York, Random House.
- AMBROSE, P. [1974] The Quiet Revolution - Social Change in a Sussex Village, 1871-1971, Sussex University Press, Chatto and Windus.
- BACON, W. [1978] Public Accountability and the Schooling System: A Sociology of School Board Democracy, Harper and Row.
- BALL, S. [1981] Beachside Comprehensive, Cambridge University Press.
- BARON, G. & HOWELL, D. [1974] The Government and Management of Schools, Athlone Press.
- BEALEY, F., BLONDEL, J. MCCANN, W. [1965] Constituency Politics, Faber.
- BENN, T. [1988] Office without Power: Diaries 1968-72, Hutchinson.
- BERG, L. [1968] Risinghill, Death of a Comprehensive School, Penguin.
- BERNBAUM, G. [1973] Countesthorpe College, United Kingdom: in Centre for Educational Research and Innovation, Case-Studies of Educational Innovation: Vol 3. At the School Level. Paris OECD.
- BIRCH, A.H. [1959] Small-Town Politics: A Study of Political Life in Glossop, Oxford University Press.
- BROADY, M. & HEDLEY, R. [1989] Working Partnerships: Community Development in Local Authorities, Bedford Square Press.
- BROOKSBANK, K.[ed] [1980] Educational Administration, Councils and Educational Press.
- BULPITT, J.G. [1967] Party Politics in English Local Government, Longmans.

-
- BURGESS, T. & SOFER, A. [1978] The School Governors' and Managers' Handbook and Training Guide, Kogan Page.
- BUTLER, D. & SLOMAN, A. [1979] British Political Facts 1900-1979, Macmillan.
- CASTLE, B. [1980] The Castle Diaries 1974-1976, Weidenfeld and Nicholson.
- CENTRE FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH & INNOVATION [1973] Case-Studies of Educational Innovation: Vol.3. At the School Level, Paris, OECD.
- CLEMENTS, R. [1969] Local Notables and the City Council Macmillan.
- COOK, C. [1975] The Age of Alignment: Electoral Politics in Britain, 1922-1929, MacMillan.
- CROSSMAN, R. [1979] The Crossman Diaries: Selections from the diaries of a cabinet minister 1964-1970, Hamilton Cape.
- DAHL, R. [1989] Democracy and its Critics, Yale University Press.
- DAVIES, H. [1976] The Creighton Report, Hamish Hamilton.
- DEARLOVE, J. [1979] The Re-organization of British Local Government: Old Orthodoxies and a Political Perspective, Cambridge University Press.
- DENT, H.C. [1971] The Educational System of England and Wales, London University Press
- EARLEY, P. [1988] Governors' Reports and Annual Parents' Meetings: The 1986 Education Act and beyond, Slough, N.F.E.R.
- ELLIS, T. et al [1976] William Tyndale; The Teacher's Story, Writers and Readers Publishing Cooperative.
- FAIRBAIRN, A. [1979] The Leicestershire Community Colleges and Centres, University of Nottingham Dept. of Adult Education
- FINDLAY, J.J. [1923] The Children of England, Methuen.
-

-
- FLETCHER, C. et al [1985] Schools on Trial, Milton Keynes, Open University Press.
- FLUDE, R. & PARROTT, A. [1979] Education and the Challenge of Change, Milton Keynes, Open University Press.
- FOUCAULT, M. [1976] Disciplinary Power and Subjection, in Lukes, S (ed)[1986], Power, Oxford, Blackwell.
- FREIRE, P. [1970] Cultural Action for Freedom, Penguin.
- GAVENTA, J. [1980] Power and Powerlessness: Quiescence and Rebellion in an Appalachian Valley, University of Illinois.
- GIBSON, T. [1979] People Power, Penguin.
- GOLBY, M. & BRIGLEY, S. [1989] Parents as School Governors, Tiverton, Fairway Publications.
- GOLBY, M. & LANE, B. [1989] The New Parent Governors, Tiverton Fairway Publications.
- GORDON, P. [1974] The Victorian School Manager, Woburn Press.
- GRACE, G. [1972] Role Conflict and the Teacher, Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- GRACE, G. [1978] Teachers, Ideology and Control, Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- GREEN, D. [1981] Power and Party in an English City: An Account of Single-Party Rule, Allen and Unwin.
- GRETTON, J. & JACKSON, M. [1977] William Tyndale: Collapse of a School or a System?, Allen and Unwin.
- GRIFFITH, J.A.G. [1966] Central Departments and Local Authorities, Allen and Unwin.
- HATCH S. & MOYLAN, S. [1973] The Role of the Community School in Raynor, J. & Harden, J. (eds.), Cities, Communities and the Young Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- HAVILAND, J. (ed) [1988] Take Care, Mr. Baker, Fourth Estate
-

-
- HAWORTH, J. & VEAL, A.(eds) [1976] Leisure and the Community, Papers from a conference held by the Leisure Studies Association, University of Birmingham.
- HENNOCK, E.P. [1973] Fit and Proper Persons, Edward Arnold.
- HILL, D. [1974] Democratic Theory and Local Government, Allen & Unwin.
- HOLMES, B. [1973] Leicestershire, United Kingdom, in Case-Studies of Educational Innovation II: At the Regional Level, OECD.
- HOLMES, G. [1952] The Idiot Teacher, Faber.
- HOYLE, E. [1969] The Role of the Teacher, Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- HURT, J. [1971] Education in Evolution, Hart-Davis.
- HURT, J. [1979] Elementary Schooling and the Working Classes 1860-1918, Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- JACKSON, B. and MARSDEN D. Education and the Working Class, Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- JAMES, P. [1980] The Reorganization of Secondary Education, Slough, N.F.E.R.
- JEFFERIES, G & STREATFIELD, D. [1989] The Reconstitution of School Governing Bodies, Slough, N.F.E.R.
- JENNINGS, R.E. [1977] Education and Politics: Policy-Making in Local Education Authorities, Batsford.
- JONES, A. [1979] Community Participation and Democratic Control, in Haworth, J. (ed) Community Involvement and Leisure, Lepus Books.
- JONES, D. [1988] Stewart Mason; The Art of Education Lawrence & Wishart.
- KOGAN, M. et al [1973] County Hall, Penguin.
- KOGAN, M. [1975] Educational Policy-Making: A Study of Interest Groups and Parliament, Allen and Unwin.
-

-
- KOGAN, M.[ed] [1984] School Governing Bodies, Heinemann.
- LACEY, C. [1970] Hightown Grammar, Manchester University Press.
- LANDRY, C. et al [1985] What a Way to Run a Railroad: An Analysis of Radical Failure, Comedia.
- LEE, J. [1963] Social Leaders and Public Persons: A Study of County Government in Cheshire since 1888, Oxford University Press.
- LEIGH, D. [1980] The Frontiers of Secrecy: Closed Government in Britain, Junction Books.
- LILIENTHAL, D. [1944] TVA: Tennessee Valley Authority, Penguin.
- LUKES, S. [1974] Power: A Radical View, MacMillan.
- LUKES, S.(ed) [1986] Power, Oxford, Blackwell.
- LYND, R.S. & H.M. [1929] Middletown: A Study in American Culture, New York, Harcourt, Brace.
- LYND, R.S. & H.M. [1937] Middletown in Transition: A Study in Cultural Conflicts, New York, Harcourt, Brace.
- LYNCH, J & PIMLOTT, J[1976] Parents and Teachers: Schools Council Research Studies, MacMillan.
- MCLEAN, I. [1976] Elections, Longmans.
- MALE, G. [1974] The Struggle for Power: Who controls the Schools in England and the United States, Beverley Hills, Sage.
- MANNHEIM, K. [1940] Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction, Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- MARCUSE, H. [1964] One Dimensional Man, Boston, Beacon
- MASON, S.C.(ed.) [1970] In Our Experience, Longmans
- MIDWINTER, E. [1975] Education and the Community, Allen and Unwin.
-

-
- MOULTON, H. [1919] The Power and Duties of Education Authorities: with the text of the Education (England) Acts 1870-1918, W. Hodge.
- NEWMAN, M. [1979] The Poor Cousin: A Study of Adult Education, Allen and Unwin.
- O'MALLEY, J. [1977] The Politics of Community Action, Nottingham, Spokesman Books.
- PATEMAN, C. [1970] Participation and Democratic Theory Cambridge University Press.
- PATTERSON, A. [1954] Radical Leicester 1780-1850, Leicester University Press.
- PHILP, M. [1985] Michel Foucault, in Skinner (ed).
- PLANT, R. [1974] Community and Ideology, Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- PLUCKROSE, H. & WILBY, P. [1979] The Condition of English Schooling, Penguin.
- REDCLIFFE-MAUD & WOOD, B [1974] English Local Government Reformed, Oxford University Press.
- REDLICH, J. [1903] Local Government in England, MacMillan.
- REE, H. [1973] Educator Extraordinary: The Life and Achievement of Henry Morris, 1889-1961, Longmans.
- REGAN, D.E. [1977] Local Government and Education, Allen & Unwin.
- RICCI, D. [1971] Community Power and Democratic Theory: The Logic of Political Analysis, New York, Random House.
- RICHARDS, P.G. [1973] The Reformed Local Government System, Allen & Unwin.
- RICHARDSON, E. [1973] The Teacher, The School and the Task of Management, Heinemann.
- ROBERTS, B, BAKER, L & GRIFFITHS, J. [1988] School Governor Training and Information, Slough, N.F.E.R.
- RUBINSTEIN, D.(ed.) [1970] Education for Democracy, Penguin.
-

-
- SALLIS, J. [1977] School Managers and Governors: Taylor and After, Ward Lock.
- SALLIS, J. [1988] Schools, Parents and Governors, Routledge.
- SCHATTSCHEIDER, E. [1960] The Semi-Sovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America, New York, Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- SCHUMPETER, J. [1942] Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy New York, Harper & Row.
- SHARP, J. [1973] Open School, Dent.
- SIMON, B. [1965] Education and the Labour Movement, 1870-1920, Lawrence and Wishart.
- SIMON, B.(ed.) [1968] Education in Leicestershire, 1540-1940, Leicester University Press.
- SIMON, B. [1988] Bending the Rules: The Baker 'Reform' of Education, Lawrence & Wishart.
- SKINNER, Q.(ed) [1985] The Return of Grand Theory in the Human Sciences, Cambridge University Press.
- SMITH, T. [1980] Parents and Preschool, Grant McIntyre.
- STACEY, M. [1960] Tradition and Change: A Study of Banbury, Oxford University Press.
- STACEY, M. et al [1975] Power, Persistence and Change: A Second Study of Banbury, Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- STEWART, J. [1974] The Politics of Local Government Reorganization in JONES, K. (ed.): The Yearbook of Social Policy in Britain, 1973, Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- STREATFIELD, D & JEFFERIES, G. [1989] Reconstitution of School Governing Bodies. Survey 2: Schools, Slough, N.F.E.R.
- SUTHERLAND, G. [1973] Policy-Making in Elementary Education, 1870-1895, Oxford University Press.
-

-
- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| TOOGOOD, P. [1984] | <u>The Head's Tale</u> , Telford, Dialogue Publications. |
| WATTS, J.(ed) [1977] | <u>The Countesthorpe Experience</u> , Allen and Unwin. |
| WESTERN, S. [1974] | <u>Community College</u> , Leicestershire Education Department. |
| WHITESIDE, T. [1978] | <u>The Sociology of Educational Innovation</u> , Methuen. |
| WILLIAMS, R. [1965] | <u>The Long Revolution</u> , Penguin. |
| WILLMOTT, P.(ed) [1987] | <u>Local Government Decentralisation and Community</u> , Policy Studies Institute. |
| WOODS, P. [1979] | <u>The Divided School</u> , Routledge and Kegan Paul. |
-
- (b) Government and Local Government Publications
- | | |
|---|--|
| AULD, R. [1976] | <u>William Tyndale Junior and Infants Schools Public Inquiry: A Report to the Inner London Education Authority</u> , I.L.E.A. |
| CENTRAL STATISTICAL OFFICE [1988] | <u>Social Trends 18</u> , H.M.S.O. |
| CLARKE, M. & STEWART, J. [1985] | <u>Local Government and the public service orientation: or does a public service provide for the public?</u> , Local Government Training Board |
| COMMISSION FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN ENGLAND [1980] | <u>Investigation 314/5/79: Complaint against the London Borough of Haringey</u> , (Baroness Serota), |
| COOPERS & LYBRAND [1981] | <u>Service Provision and Pricing in Local Government</u> , H.M.S.O. |
| COOPERS & LYBRAND [1988] | <u>Local Management of Schools: A Report to the DES</u> , H.M.S.O. |
| EDUCATION, MINISTRY OF [1945] | <u>Model Instruments and Articles of Government</u> , H.M.S.O. |
| EDUCATION, MINISTRY OF [1947] | <u>School and Life</u> , A Report of the Central Advisory Council for Education, H.M.S.O. |
-

-
- | | |
|--|--|
| EDUCATION AND SCIENCE,
DEPT. OF [1963] | <u>Half our Future</u> , A Report of the
Central Advisory Council for
Education (The Newsom Report),
H.M.S.O. |
| EDUCATION AND SCIENCE,
DEPT. OF [1967] | <u>Children and their Primary Schools</u> ,
A Report of the C.A.C.E. (The
Plowden Report), H.M.S.O. |
| EDUCATION AND SCIENCE,
DEPT. OF [1969] | <u>Youth and Community Work in the 70s</u>
(The Milsom-Fairbairn Report),
H.M.S.O. |
| EDUCATION AND SCIENCE,
DEPT. OF [1977(a)] | <u>Education in Schools:</u>
<u>A Consultative Document</u> , H.M.S.O. |
| EDUCATION AND SCIENCE,
DEPT. OF [1977(b)] | <u>A New Partnership for our Schools</u> ,
(The Taylor Report), H.M.S.O. |
| EDUCATION AND SCIENCE,
DEPT. OF [1977(c)] | <u>Circular 15/77, Information for</u>
<u>Parents</u> , H.M.S.O. |
| EDUCATION AND SCIENCE,
DEPT. OF [1978] | <u>The Composition of School Governing</u>
<u>Bodies</u> , White Paper, H.M.S.O. |
| EDUCATION AND SCIENCE,
DEPT. OF [1981(a)] | <u>The School Curriculum</u> , H.M.S.O. |
| EDUCATION AND SCIENCE,
DEPT. OF [1981(b)] | <u>Circular 6/81, The School</u>
<u>Curriculum</u> , H.M.S.O. |
| EDUCATION AND SCIENCE,
DEPT. OF [1984] | <u>Parental Influence at School</u> ,
H.M.S.O. |
| EDUCATION AND SCIENCE,
DEPT. OF [1985] | <u>Better Schools</u> , H.M.S.O. |
| EDUCATION AND SCIENCE,
DEPT. OF [1987] | <u>Education Reform: The Government's</u>
<u>Proposals for Schools</u> , H.M.S.O. |
| EDUCATION AND SCIENCE,
DEPT. OF [1988] | <u>School Governors: A Guide to the</u>
<u>Law</u> , H.M.S.O. |
| EDUCATION AND SCIENCE,
DEPT. OF [1989] | <u>National Curriculum: From Policy to</u>
<u>Practice</u> , H.M.S.O. |
| ENVIRONMENT, DEPT. OF
[1972] | <u>The New Local Authorities:</u>
<u>Management and Structure</u> , (The
Bains Report), H.M.S.O. |
-

-
- H.M.S.O. [1864] Report of Her Majesty's Commissioners appointed to inquire into the Revenues and Management of certain Colleges and Schools, and the studies pursued and instruction given therein. (The Clarendon Report), H.M.S.O.
- H.M.S.O. [1895] Report of the Royal Commission on Secondary Education, (The Bryce Report), H.M.S.O.
- H.M.S.O. [1902] Education Act 1902, H.M.S.O
- H.M.S.O. [1944] Education Act 1944, H.M.S.O
- H.M.S.O. [1980] Education Act 1980, H.M.S.O
- H.M.S.O. [1986] Education (No.2) Act 1986, H.M.S.O
- H.M.S.O. [1988] Education Reform Act 1988, H.M.S.O
- HOUSING & LOCAL GOVERNMENT, MINISTRY OF [1967] Committee on the Management of Local Government, (Maud Report), H.M.S.O.
- NATIONAL CONSUMER COUNCIL [1986] Measuring Up: Consumer Assessment of Local Authority Services, NCC.
- ROYAL COMMISSION ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT [1966-69] The Redcliffe-Maud Report, H.M.S.O.

(c) Pamphlets and Periodical Articles

- AITKEN, R. & REE, H.(comp) [1988] Dear Mr. Baker . . . !, Coventry, Community Education Development Centre
- BRINTON, S. [1988] Co-Opting Governors: Of Proven Worthiness, TES, 2.12.88.
- BRISTOW, S. [1988] Reporting to Parents: The Implementation of the 1986 Education (No.2) Act, in Education Today, Vol 38, No.1.
- BROCKINGTON, W. [1925] A Short Review of Education in Leicestershire since the War, Leicestershire Education Committee.
- CAUDREY, A. [1988] Analysis: Can Governors Run Schools?, in New Society, 18.3.88.

-
- COVENTRY EDUCATION COMMITTEE [1972] Youth and Community Services, Report of a Working Party, Coventry
- COX, K. [1974] Student Participation in Adult Education, in Adult Education, 47 No.1, May 1974, pp. 31-34.
- DENT, H. [1976] Legend of Urbanity and Tact: Recollections of "Brock", in Education, 9.1.76, p.35.
- DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL [1970] Community Colleges in Devon: Second Working Party Report, Devon County Council.
- FLETCHER, M. [1989] The New Officer, TES, 12.5.89.
- GANN, N. [1985] Power Struggle, TES, 8.11.85.
- HARRISON, P. [1988] The Panic to Complete, TES, 21.10.88.
- HARVEY, B. [1971] The Community College in Leicestershire: An interim report, in Studies in Adult Education, vol 3, no. 2, October, 1971.
- HUTCHINSON, E. [1974] Participation in the Leicestershire Community Colleges, in Studies in Adult Education, Oct., 1974.
- LABOUR PARTY [1989] The State of Schools Report, London
- LEICESTER, EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE COUNTY OF [1955] Handbook of Guidance for Governors and Managers, Leicestershire County Council.
- LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL [1972] Towards One College, Leicestershire County Council.
- MCPHERSON, A. & RAAB, C. [1988] Centralization and After, TES, 27.5.88.
- MAHONEY, T. [1988] Governors, Accountability and Parents, Nottingham, Workers' Educational Association.
- MALLORY, G. [n.d.] The First 100 Years: The Founding of the old Sheepshed British School and its Subsequent History, 1875-1975, privately printed.
-

-
- MASON, S.C. [1949] Leicestershire Scheme for Further Education and Plan for County Colleges, Leicestershire Education Committee.
- MITSON, R. [1974] The Abraham Moss Centre, Manchester unpublished monograph.
- NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNORS AND MANAGERS[1986] NAGM News, 1986, No.1.
- NATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS [1985] The State of Schools in England & Wales, Gravesend, Kent, NCPTA.
- PARKER, S. [1988] Power to Which People?, TES, 30.9.88.
- PRING, R. [1984] The New Governing Bodies, in Forum, Vol.27, No.1, Autumn, 1984.
- PRYKE, J. [1989] Slow off the Mark, T.E.S., 12.5.89.
- ROCHDALE EDN. DEPT. [1979] Rochdale Community Schools: A Study after Six Years, Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council.
- SEABORNE, M. [1968] Sir William Brockington, Director of Education for Leicestershire 1903-1947, Leics. Archaeological and Historical Soc., vol. xliii.
- SMITHIES, F. [1988] Governor Power, TES, 9.9.88.
- SOCIALIST EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION [1985] Handbook for Labour Governors, London.
- TANN C.S., GANN N.M. & WHITESIDE M.T. [1980] New Modes of Participation in Community Education: Their Effects on Accountability and Autonomy, International Sociological Association, Paris.
- TIMES EDUCATIONAL SUPPLEMENT [1989] The Governors' Guide.
- WATSON, L. & JOHNSTON, D. [1979] Home, School and Community: Report of a Workshop, Sheffield City Polytechnic, Department of Educational Management.
- WHITESIDE, M.T., TANN, C.S. & GANN, N.M. [1981] The Three New Community Colleges, University of Leicester.
-

(d) Theses

MANDER, J. [1975]

Freedom and Constraint in a Local Education Authority: Leicester,
Ph.D Thesis, University of Leicester.

MARKS, C.P. [1979]

Innovation in a Leicestershire Community College, special study submitted for Dip.Ad.Ed., University of Nottingham.

SHERWOOD, P.N. [1975]

S.C. Mason, A Study of a C.E.O. implementing the 'hard option' of the 1944 Education Act.
Dissertation in part requirement for the M.A.(History of Education), University of Leicester School of Education.