

PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION AND THE DEPRESSION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

by

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ABSTRACT

With the onset of the depression in 1929 the Province of British Columbia found itself almost immediately in economic difficulties. As a province dependent to a very great extent on exports of raw and semi-processed products it faced by the winter of 1930 mounting unemployment, with which it was ill-prepared to cope, and declining revenues. The efforts of the Conservative government in power to meet the situation by attempting to implement the policy of a balanced budget were unsuccessful and by 1932 the province was facing a severe financial crisis. In the ensuing failure of morale the Conservatives allowed representatives of the business community, chiefly concentrated in Vancouver, to inspect the activities of all government departments and make recommendations which would help to improve the condition of the provincial treasury. The resultant Kidd Report, as it became known, threw education into high relief and in the subsequent election it became an important issue.

The controversy over education brought out a number of issues which had been the cause of debate and dissension since the turn of the century. The question of the best means of financing the schools was the most pressing and obvious one. Every economic recession in the past had highlighted this problem as schools under such circumstances usually suffered from inadequate local revenues and reduced government grants. In addition the problem was generally exacerbated by an increasing school population. But other questions disturbed education:

what subjects should be taught in schools, what emphasis should be given to traditional academic subjects and what to the more practically oriented ones, what structure of schools was the best, what was the function of public education, and most fundamentally, what was the philosophy of education which should be adopted in the changed and changing world of the twentieth century?

Until very recently it has generally been stated by historians and educators writing about education that the changes which were proposed and implemented during the decade of the thirties were the product of a genuinely humanitarian impulse, a desire to make education more democratic and egalitarian, and dedicated to the cultivation of the worth of each individual child. However, the developments in the field of education which occurred under the Liberal administration cast serious doubts on this interpretation.

The Liberal victory in the fall of 1933 brought to power in British Columbia a party which under the leadership of T. Dufferin Pattullo was, at least in stated social and economic policy, considerably to the left of the federal Liberal party, but nevertheless strongly committed to the preservation of the capitalist system. Pattullo appointed as Minister of Education G.M. Weir, head of the Department of Education at the University of British Columbia and co-author of the Putman-Weir Survey, an exhaustive survey of education in the province written in 1925. He was widely known as a progressive educator, one who was in favour of the innovations of the "new education". Such innovations were not new to British Columbia but the reasons for

their adoption during the first two decades of the century suggest primarily a desire for the production of a socially and vocationally efficient citizenry, a theme which is also basic to the Putman-Weir Survey.

Similarly through the years from 1933 to 1940 the same motivation seems apparent in the words and actions of those educators most responsible for educational change. Both the King Report on School Finance in British Columbia written in 1935 and the extensive curriculum revisions of elementary, junior and senior secondary schools undertaken in 1935, 1936 and 1937 give ample evidence of this. In addition there appears during these years an overriding concern with the preservation of the state. Fearful that the democratic state as they understood it had been placed in jeopardy by an unbridled individualism, educators in British Columbia sought to make the schools primarily the vehicle for what they termed the socializing of the student. In effect this amounted to conditioning him to retain those values which were deemed vital for the state's survival, and to reject those which seemed to act as a barrier to necessary social and economic change.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The children who enter the public schools in British Columbia to-day are the heirs to an educational system which in many of its aspects is the result of changes made during the period of the Great Depression. Health education, home economics, industrial education, vocational guidance and varied curricula, all now accepted --albeit not always uncritically-- as part of schooling became firmly established in the school system, province wide during the 1930's. Behind these and other changes lay a new philosophy of education, a radically different pedagogy and a cluster of attitudes which were at variance with many of the traditional methods and goals of schooling. Taken as a whole the new theories and practices were an indicator and a reflection of a society in the process of economic, social and political change.

Since the transformation of educational history in the late 1950's from institutional history to a branch of social history concerned with education in the words of Bernard Bailyn, "in its elaborate, intricate involvements with the rest of society",¹ Canadian educational historians have been engaged in relating education to social change. Particularly since the appearance on the historiographical stage of those, termed radical revisionists by some,² a considerable amount of detailed analytical work has been done on the origins of the Canadian public school system, with the preponderance of attention being given to Ontario. The extensiveness of the research and the quality of the resultant articles and

monographs is such that new and immeasurably higher standards have been set in the writing of the history of education in Canada.

Unfortunately very few of the new historians have chosen to turn their attention to the changes in education which have taken place in the 20th century. A number of eminent American scholars have written about what is loosely termed progressive education focussing most frequently on the period from 1890-1920. These decades, known as the Progressive period in American history, witnessed the introduction of many facets of progressive education and have proven to be fertile and fascinating areas of study for historians. The variety of approaches and methodologies employed, and the different conclusions reached bear adequate testimony to the complexity and importance of the period. A lesser amount of work has been done on the years between the wars although Lawrence Cremin has taken the history of progressivism to the demise of the Progressive Education Association in 1957 in his trend-setting The Transformation of the School.

Although it may be true that the basic structure of public education in both the United States and Canada was set in the 19th century,³ many obvious changes did occur after the turn of the century which warrant a close examination. The results of any study of progressivism in the 20th century should serve to increase understanding of the kind and magnitude of the changes and the reasons for their adoption.

To date what has been written on the history of progressive education in Canada has been scant in quantity and frequently indifferent in quality.

Some Canadian historians eschew the term progressive, partly because of its ambiguity and partly because Canada, unlike the United States, did not experience an era, political, administrative and social, to which the label progressive has become attached. These historians prefer to use the term the "new education" when referring to educational change after the turn of the century. Generally speaking Canadian historians who have adopted this term have been concerned with innovations in curricula and the intellectual and pedagogical changes which occurred. However as Michael Katz has pointed out, change occurred on a variety of levels which sometimes overlapped and sometimes remained quite separate, and any analysis of progressive education must include them all. Following Katz then, this thesis will include in the term progressive education not only the changes referred to above but also "the attempt to alter the political control of education...and...the injection of scientific management into administrative practice".⁴ An analysis of Canadian historical writing dealing with this period reveals that much of it appears in text books concerned with the development of education on the national or provincial level; the rest is found in chapters of books devoted to wider topics, in articles, and unpublished theses.⁵ By and large the writing falls into one of three categories. First, there is that writing which is based uncritically on the rhetoric of the period and views the changes and innovations as the expression of an increasingly democratic and egalitarian society, an expression, it could be said, of the will of the people.⁶ Second there are those works of a generally narrative nature which catalogue change in approving if not laudatory terms.⁷

Lastly there are those writings, most of which have been done in the 1960's and 1970's which follow Bailyn's prescription as well as taking a more critical and analytical look at their material.⁸ However it can be said that very little of the published historical writing done in Canada on the period which saw progressivism make its greatest impact on public schooling, the years between the two world wars, adopts the pessimistic stance of the radical revisionists.⁹ It is ironic that the one work which can only be termed a diatribe against progressivism in Canadian education (although it cannot be called a history of progressive education) was written by a liberal historian. In So Little for the Mind, published in 1951, Hilda Neatby labelled progressive education in Canada at mid-century an exercise in manipulation and indoctrination, ultimately anti-democratic and totalitarian.

Just four years after Neatby's scathing indictment appeared, C.E. Phillips published his lengthy and comprehensive Development of Education in Canada. In the tradition of Whig historiography, Phillips saw the development of progressive education as yet another forward step in the democratization of education. In Phillips' view Canadian education in the mid 50's was a shining success standing as a triumph of reform over reaction, of the enlightened forces of new world egalitarian democracy over aristocratic exclusive old world concepts. In the preface to his work Phillips stated his basic assumptions; first "... that life in Canada to-day is the best kind of life we know,"¹⁰ moving progressively into a golden age; secondly that "... one purpose now of education under public

control is to strengthen the ability of successive generations to decide -- in education as in other offices of life and government -- the means and ends of their lives".¹¹ Based on these assumptions the work was designed as "... an account of past developments as leading to the present and as judged by the values of the present".¹² It should be noted that Phillips was not a professional historian but a professor of education at the Ontario College of Education. He was here voicing sentiments spoken by many other schoolmen at the time. Whatever the more subtle coercive implications of some policies, or the unegalitarian outcomes of some methods may have been, most of those in positions of administrative authority believed that they were strengthening and broadening democracy.

Dealing specifically with the progressive era Phillips saw the adoption of progressive measures in education in part as an expression of the desire of the people to influence the education offered to their children instead of leaving it entirely in the hands of academics and provincial officials. He viewed with approval the shifts in direction and emphasis of the new curricula, in fact most of the pedagogical changes of progressivism. Most innovations were interpreted as a move away from authoritarianism toward individual inner-directedness. He did, however, take exception to the scientific measurement movement, which he described as "... one of the insubstantial corner stones of the new educational methods that developed in the 20th century."¹³ He claimed that Peter Sandiford, himself a student of Edward Thorndike, and the foremost advocate of testing in Canada at that time, was well aware of the "ant-democratic implications of the results of intelligence tests but urged

teachers to attempt to discover and develop talents in all".¹⁴ Phillips himself saw the testing movement as a regressive one in terms of educational development; nevertheless, he accepted the results of quantitative measurement as irrefutable. While he acknowledged a parallel between educational and political development in Canada he made little serious attempt to relate either to the fabric of society.

The most scholarly approaches to the subject of progressivism have been taken by Neil Sutherland, in his recently published Children in English-Canadian Society, Robert M. Stamp in several articles which appear in Profiles of Canadian Educators, and in the unpublished theses of R.S. Patterson, D.C. Jones and T.A. Dunn. All of these historians show a keen awareness of the social and economic conditions of the time periods which they are examining and the relationship of these conditions with innovations and changes in education. While Sutherland has taken all of English Canada as his purview, the others have confined their analyses to the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia, and in the case of Stamp to several educators of provincial importance.

Sutherland's work, which is sub-titled Framing the Twentieth-Century Consensus is concerned with the changing attitudes toward children and the function of the family which began to take shape during the latter years of the nineteenth century and the institutions which gave form and thrust to these changes. Schools, being central to the life of the average Canadian child for about five to six years at that time, became a principal focus for those wishing to see the new attitudes crystallized

and given concrete expression. As the child was coming to be seen not as a "marble being to be 'pounded into shape'"¹⁵ but as a tender plant requiring constant and careful nurturing, moral intellectual and physical, schools were called upon to embody this view. The benefits which were expected would accrue not only to the individual child but to society as a whole. At the same time there were a number of Canadians who believed that education was deficient because it failed to provide the practical training which would assist young people in earning a living, whether in an urban or a rural setting. In Sutherland's opinion these two major strains coalesced around 1900 to call for the addition of 'manual training' to the school curriculum.¹⁶ Although the movement spread rapidly in the early years of the twentieth century, by 1915 those to whom manual training was pre-vocational or vocational in intent had broken away from those who "saw manual activities.... as an integral part of the general education of all youngsters: 'a means for the development of brain, eye and hand, through handicraft' to produce men 'whose every power' was 'fully developed and nobly guided'".¹⁷ Nevertheless Sutherland does not see the two groups, the child-centred reformers and the work-centred reformers as exhibiting any basic dichotomy in their promotion of what came to be known as the "new education". Taking exception to American historian Joel Spring's statement that progressive education was "'a conglomeration of educational changes with no particular bonds except that they represented something new'",¹⁸ Sutherland sees the "overlapping groups of Canadian reformers" as having come up with a "cluster of ideas that they believed would help Canadian children live happy, useful lives in the industrialized cities

and the regenerated countryside".¹⁹ In conclusion while admitting that there was much to criticize in the "new education", he feels that the brunt of the criticism should be borne by those who implemented it and should have seen its weaknesses, rather than its original promoters.

R.M. Stamp in his sketches of James L. Hughes and Adelaide Hoodless outlines the contribution of these two Ontarians, prominently mentioned in Sutherland's work, to the introduction of educational innovation at the turn of the century.²⁰ He too sees these proselytizers for the "new education" as essentially motivated by humanitarianism. Hughes who was inspector of public schools in Toronto from 1874 to 1913 is credited with being a major force in the introduction of kindergartens and manual training in Ontario schools. Decisively influenced by the writings of Friedrich Froebel, Hughes retained throughout his life a faith in the child which he saw "not as a miniature adult incompletely formed, but as an individual in his own right".²¹ Although Stamp places great emphasis on Hughes' role in the successful implementation of educational change in Ontario he does point out that it was the "province's dramatic urban growth that created the climate for the rise and partial acceptance of the new education movement".²² While Hughes was a child-centred reformer Hoodless could be classified as a work-centred reformer, although the work she so extensively promoted was the woman's work of the home. Fearful that the increasing independence of women in the new urban-industrial environment would lead to the ultimate breakdown of the home, already "'fast falling into decay'"²³ she campaigned tirelessly to have domestic

science made an integral part of the curriculum for girls. While her endeavours were ultimately crowned with success it was not, according to Stamp, exactly the success for which she had wished, for the general public came to see domestic science as a purely practical subject, whereas in her mind the ethical considerations were of more importance. Stamp gives a comprehensive picture of a vigorous woman, completely dedicated to her cause, but he fails to explain why so many women and women's organizations flocked to her support. Although neither of these profiles was intended to be an in-depth study and each takes into account the social conditions of the times, they nevertheless tend to leave the rather erroneous impression that marked changes came about simply due to the unflagging efforts of a single individual.

In his doctoral thesis "Agriculture, The Land, and Education. British Columbia 1914-1929" D.C. Jones has provided a study of another reformer, J.W. Gibson, a pioneer in agricultural education. Like Sutherland and Stamp, Jones sees his protagonists, Gibson and the group of district supervisors he directed, as sincerely devoted to the task of revitalizing rural life through the agency of the school. Skillfully Jones weaves together the efforts of these officials of the Provincial Department of Education and the reactions of the rural people they felt it was their mission to help. He argues convincingly that Gibson's myth of the land and the definition of his ultimate purposes as character training and moral uplift did not correspond with the aspirations of the majority of the rural population. Their need was for a greater vocationalism which concerned

itself with the economic, the practical and the production aspects of agriculture which by assisting in raising the standard of living of the rural population would help to stem the tide from the land. Despite the failure of Gibson and his supervisors to accomplish their mission it is Jones' judgement that the experiment was not a complete failure for it opened lines of communication between parents and school boards and an increasingly bureaucratized and professionalized teaching profession and Department of Education. Jones' point of view towards his subject is of particular interest to the educational historian because it provides an example which appears to contradict the conviction of the radical revisionist historians that social control has been a fundamental purpose behind most educational change.

Both in his thesis and an article entitled "The Maleficent Obsession: Social Control and the Schools" Jones argues against this school of historians, in particular Alison Prentice whose recently published The School Promoters dealing with schooling in Ontario up to 1876, is the first major monograph emerging from it in Canada. While praising Prentice's work for the fact that it illuminates some of the basic beliefs of mid-nineteenth century educators which were also shared by early twentieth century schoolmen, he claims that she "appears to distort history in the interest of her social control theory".²⁴ As well he states that she "misrepresents the meaning and complexity of social control".²⁵ The first criticism is one which has been levelled at most radical revisionists²⁶ and it is impossible to judge its validity in this instance without a detailed knowledge of the subject written about. The second brings up a fundamental

question in historical interpretation. The gist of Jones' argument seems to be that social control does not always mean "domination and oppression", it can also be a manifestation of love and was so in the case of Prentice's school promoters because they were often "devout men like Ryerson... fashioned after the Word".²⁷ Although a man's beliefs will play a part in determining his motivation and his actions it is surely necessary to examine them in great detail before making such a broad generalization. Men "fashioned after the Word" have shown themselves throughout history to be capable of interpreting it in many different ways and following many contrasting courses of action. Surely Professor Jones does not have to be reminded that the Dutch Reformed Church and many Afrikaners were "fashioned after the Word" and it is difficult to find, depending of course on where one stands, the "inescapable connection between God's laws (restriction and control) and love".²⁸

T.A. Dunn in his Master's Thesis "Work, Class and Education: Vocationalism in British Columbia's Public Schools, 1900-1929" has, in contrast to the historians mentioned above, Prentice excepted, concluded that although initially vocational training "was thought to benefit all" it "quickly emerged as an agent of social control to deal with society's recalcitrants".²⁹ Dunn's work is essentially a rebuttal of the commonly accepted historical interpretation that vocational education was a response to the need for skilled personnel in a rapidly industrializing society. He shows by means of carefully compiled statistics, that with the rise of modern industrial capitalism in British Columbia the installation of machines actually subdivided the work process and in effect "deskilled it".³⁰

This being so the constant demand by businessmen for the expansion of vocational education as part of the school system must have had another source. Dunn argues persuasively that this development was one aspect of a "thrust for efficiency" which many influential members of the middle class believed would ensure social stability. This thesis makes a valuable contribution to social and educational history by inviting historians to re-examine a generally accepted hypothesis.

In his doctoral thesis "The Establishment of Progressive Education in Alberta" R.S. Patterson has also sought to determine the relationship of education to the society of which it was the product. In fact he states the central problem in his thesis was that of "... determining the nature of the forces operative within Alberta which facilitated the acceptance and the adoption of progressive education."³¹ In addition he considers the kind of progressivism adopted in Alberta and its relationship to American progressivism both in its philosophical foundations and in its practice. Although Patterson avoids a consideration of the worth of progressive education as he defines it, he displays throughout a sympathy with the aims and innovations of progressivism in his native province. Similarly, in a subsequent article on Hubert C. Newland,³² the chief architect of the "new education" in Alberta, he emphasizes Newland's deep commitment to democracy and his conviction that the schools could be made a vital force in the democratization of society. In Newland's view "political and economic democracy were inseparable"³³ and as an acknowledged disciple of George S. Counts he became the foremost advocate in Canada of

that strain of American progressivism which caused such controversy and debate, known as social reconstructionism.

Taken as a whole, Patterson's work³⁴ stands in the liberal tradition of Canadian historiography. He echoes in essence much of what Phillips says in his earlier work, for he sees progressivism as basically an expression of a genuine impulse for genuine reform. In his analysis it was an attempt to meet the challenge of changing economic and social conditions by adjusting education to the needs of the community in the spirit of greater concern for individual development and of equal opportunity for all children. The acceptance of progressive education in Alberta appears then as a natural corollary of those political movements which arose in western Canada (Progressive Party, U.F.A. Social Credit and C.C.F.) with their goals of social reform and a more direct democracy.

Patterson has confined his research mainly to Alberta which he regards as a "... valid case study for reviewing progressive education in Canada".³⁵ Nevertheless he does admit that what has been labelled progressivism in education literally defies definition. Even the most comprehensive is superficial at best and fails to command agreement. In practice not all had the same understanding of the principles of progressivism, nor was the same priority or importance attached to each. He concludes that "... the meaning of progressive education varied according to time and according to spokesman".³⁶ And to that might be added place and the differences which that term implies, for the development of progressive education in British Columbia, although contemporaneous with

that of Alberta, presents differences in emphasis and objective which cannot be explained merely by reference to the different personalities of the various spokesmen. Not only did the chief promoters of the "new education" hold different social philosophies but the political, social and economic milieu offers so many contrasts that these must be taken into consideration before a comprehensive account of educational change in Canada can be given. Similarities, of course, exist; the principal source of ideas was American, despite the statements made in British Columbia that the British Hadow Report had been the model followed for educational change in the province. As well the problems faced during the 1920's and 1930's by these provinces, both largely dependent economically on the exports of primary industry, were in many ways the same. However the response of a province largely composed of independent farmers was not the same as that of a province where a large proportion of the population were employees. It should be noted in this connection that the Progressive Party made very little impact west of the Rocky Mountains. In addition British Columbia was by the 1930's a much more industrialized and urbanized province than Alberta. It faced, at least in the perception of those concerned with or in a position to influence the course of education, problems not unlike those which confronted the United States in its period of great industrial and urban expansion just prior to and after the turn of the century.

To date although it is usually stated that British Columbia ranks with Alberta as a leader in the adoption of the "new education", reference is usually confined to the Putman-Weir Survey of 1925 and the extensive

curricular revisions introduced in the later years of the 1930's. While the Putman-Weir Survey has been acknowledged to be one of the most comprehensive surveys ever undertaken in Canada and the curricular revisions to be the most all-inclusive, neither of these landmarks in the history of education in the province has received much more than cursory attention from educational historians.³⁷

One historian, however, A.H. Child has written a profile of H.B. King, British Columbia's first chief inspector of schools and one of the prime movers of the changes in the educational system which were instituted during this period. King's Report on School Finance in British Columbia, made public in the summer of 1935, set forth underlying reasons for and philosophy of the changes that were subsequently to be made. This document is vital to an understanding of the *raison d'être* for the adoption of the "new education" in British Columbia, for King had been named chief adviser to the committee on curriculum reform. Child in writing of the Report concentrates mainly on the administrative changes recommended by King, in particular those dealing with the consolidation of school districts and the abolition of school boards. Both of these recommendations were met with hostility, the former being implemented only slowly over a considerable span of time, the latter discarded altogether.³⁸ These recommendations are indicative of fundamental attitudes toward society which are significant aspects of the thought of those most powerfully involved in implementing progressive education in British Columbia. Perhaps Child does not deal with them because he believes that progressive education was "to a large extent a one-man crusade".³⁹

It is in this approach to his subject that the basic weakness of the article lies. King appears to be working in a vacuum. Little or no reference is made to the widespread changes taking place in the society around him. The turmoil of the depression hardly seems to exist. Although it is generally agreed that the changes in education which were implemented were not the result of a popular movement for educational reform embracing a whole society, nevertheless various features of it were the expression of certain specific groups in society. These groups were giving voice to opinions which were the product primarily of their experience of the society in which they were living.

Like Patterson, Child is favourable to the progressive movement in education as it was promoted in the province about which he is writing. He doubts neither the rightness of the cause nor the rhetoric which accompanied it. He does, nevertheless, permit a note of skepticism to creep in once or twice. He allows that the teachers may have had a valid point when they came to the conclusion that on the basis of experiments in consolidation and centralization the government was more concerned with economical than quality education. He also notes that although the new curriculum was much publicized as a group effort by specialists in each field of study it was amazing how much of it bore the marks of King's style.

F. Henry Johnson in his History of Public Education in British Columbia published in 1964 adopts substantially the same attitude. Progressivism as it was attempted in British Columbia was in his opinion

truly a reform movement. This work tracing the development of public schooling in British Columbia from its beginnings in 1872 to the present is essentially an institutional history. Little reference is made to the social history of the province; the depression is mentioned largely to explain the financial plight of the provincial government. To Johnson the period from 1924, when the Putman-Weir Survey was begun until 1946 was one of progressive reform. The Putman-Weir Survey he considers a landmark in the history of education in the province. With its prescription for curriculum reform, demand for greater attention to health and physical training, call for changes in the system of pupil promotions, better teacher training, and strong support for the development of junior high schools and the consolidation of school districts it became a blueprint for the future. Some proposals were implemented immediately and a beginning was made on others. Principals in the new junior high schools under a new programme of studies were encouraged to be experimental and innovative with the result that vocational guidance, the Morrison unit plan and student government along with other things appeared on the educational scene. Unfortunately the depression brought financial stringency and the curtailment of expansion and change and it was not until 1933, with the election of a Liberal government and the appointment as Minister of Education of G.M. Weir, co-author of the Putman-Weir report and head of the Department of Education at the University of British Columbia, that fundamental changes in education were vigorously promoted.

Johnson sees Weir and King, both of whom he characterizes as true reformers dedicated to democratic principles, as the chief architects of

the "new education." Quoting Bruce Hutchison, the most noteworthy political journalist in British Columbia during the 1930's, he pictures Weir as an emotional dynamic crusader whose "diction fairly sizzles like a high tension wire" a man "filled with a consuming fire of passionate protest, the zeal of a real reformer".⁴⁰ Temporarily distracted from the restructuring of the educational system by the critical financial problems created by the depression, Weir had to struggle, Johnson writes, with the problem of how he and his department could cut the "ever growing costs of the school system without reducing the quality of education".⁴¹ When the new elementary school curriculum was launched in 1936 Weir pronounced it "the most modern treatise on elementary teaching and education in America, probably in the world"⁴² a judgement not challenged by the author.

Johnson also has high praise for King's recommendations regarding school finance in British Columbia. He defends King from the charges of being undemocratic which were hurled at him from many quarters for his suggestion to abolish all school boards and place the direction of education completely in the hands of the Department of Education. Johnson states approvingly King's defence of himself and then adds a colourful one of his own. "Like Curzon of India King aimed at efficiency, not home rule, but he firmly believed that he was standing for the highest principle of democracy--equality of opportunity for all".⁴³

One further work should be mentioned which deals with progressive education during roughly the same period, J.W. Rule's "Innovation and Experimentation in Ontario's Public and Secondary School System 1919-1940".

In this master's thesis, Rule has related educational change to political change. He claims that the three successive administrations of the period under review, the United Farmers of Ontario, the Conservatives and the Liberals, each implemented educational policies which reflected their own political biases. Thus the U.F.O. with their broad rural base passed legislation aimed at improving rural schools and through them the farming population. Conversely the Conservatives with greater strength in urban areas tended to improve the urban school. While the Liberals more broadly based than either attempted reforms which would benefit all the children of the province, in particular the New Programme of Studies introduced in 1937. Rule simply labels this new curriculum as "applied Deweyisms"⁴⁴ and makes no serious attempt to analyze it, or account for its creation or acceptance other than as a revolt against an out-moded rigid pedagogy. Although the thesis was presented in 1975 it makes no reference to any recent works Canadian or American on educational history, nor are any listed in the bibliography. The whole has a curiously out-of-date air, for as Sutherland states in his introduction to Education and Social Change: Themes from Ontario's Past, "If their work is to be taken seriously historians of education are obliged to give serious attention"⁴⁵ to some of the propositions of the radical revisionist historians, and this Rule fails to do.

In review it appears that most historical work on the "new education" or progressive education views the changes which resulted from these movements as positive forward steps in the development of education in Canada. Some, such as Johnson's fits neatly with the early historiography

of education, a hymn of praise to the admirable condition of education based on the assumption of the inevitability of progress. In the estimation of T.R. Morrison this opinion is not significantly different from that held by most Canadians who "cling uncritically to a belief in public schools as the institutional embodiment of a deep social commitment to the values of equality, justice and knowledge. This conviction has provided a rationalization for our enormous expenditure of time, energy and dollars in the process of public schooling".⁴⁶

Although this generalization has a certain validity, there has been much criticism of Canadian education from many quarters since the 1950's. It has run the gamut from pleas for greater freedom for both teacher and student to urgent requests for an increase in authority and discipline; from recommendations for ever greater choice of subject matter to a demand for a return to basics; from strictures that it is the prime function of the school to teach children how to arrive at a system of values to strictures that public educational institutions should confine themselves to the teaching of a body of knowledge. All of these controversies are reminiscent of those which took place regarding education in the 1920's and 1930's in British Columbia. On the face of it it would appear that there was a polarization of attitudes and that in the ensuing struggle the proponents of a more free, humanistic, democratic and egalitarian education were victorious. However it would be a mistake to draw this parallel. The ethos of the inter-war years was a vastly different one from the post World War II decades. With the distance of time one can more readily determine the issues involved and their significance in the

society of the time.

The years between the wars were turbulent ones which saw Canada change from a primarily rural to an urban and industrial society, with all the social, economic, and political problems such a change engenders. The changes were intensified and complicated by the Great Depression. It is the purpose of this study covering the years 1920-1940, to "assess the relationship among society, demography, politics and educational change"⁴⁷ in British Columbia. In this process it will be possible to show how and why critical decisions were made in education in this province and how they related to the reforming movement known as progressive education.

Notes

Chapter I

- 1 As quoted in J.D. Wilson, R.M. Stamp and L-P. Audet, Canadian Education: a History. Preface, p. vii.
- 2 Not necessarily radical in the generally accepted political sense. For a complete analysis of this point see Neil Sutherland, "Introduction: Towards a History of English Canadian Youngsters" in Paul H. Mattingly and Michael B. Katz, eds. Education and Social Change: Themes from Ontario's Past (New York, 1975), pp. xvii-xxv.
- 3 See introduction to Michael B. Katz, Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools The Illusion of Educational Change in America. Expanded Edition, (New York, 1975).
- 4 Katz, Op. Cit., p. 114.
- 5 Examples: J.D. Wilson, R.M. Stamp, and L-P. Audet eds. Op. Cit. Chapter 17.
 Neil Sutherland, Children in English-Canadian Society: Framing the Twentieth-Century Consensus (Toronto, 1976) Part IV.
 A.H. Child, "H.B. King, Administrative Idealist" in R.S. Patterson, J.W. Chalmers and J.W. Friesen, eds. Profiles of Canadian Educators (D.C. Heath Canada Ltd., 1971).
 J.W. Rule, "Innovation and Experimentation in Ontario's Public and Secondary School System 1919-1940." unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1975.
- 6 For example C.E. Phillips, The Development of Education in Canada, (Toronto, 1957).
- 7 F. Henry Johnson, A History of Public Education in British Columbia. (Vancouver, 1964).
- 8 Neil Sutherland, Op. Cit.

- 9 An exception to this is T.A. Dunn, "Work, Class and Education: Vocationalism in British Columbia's Public Schools 1900-1929", unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1978.
- 10 Phillips, Op. Cit. Preface, p. xii.
- 11 Ibid., xi.
- 12 Ibid., xii.
- 13 Ibid., p. 463. Phillips claims that this was Sandiford's opinion, but gives no citation.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 Sutherland, Op. Cit., p. 18.
- 16 Ibid., p. 179. This term included "hand work, hand and eye training, constructive work, and industrial education". By 1910 practical education had been divided into 5 categories 'manual arts' for younger children, manual training, vocational and technical education, domestic science, and nature study and home gardening. Ibid., p. 184.
- 17 Ibid., p. 179.
- 18 Ibid., p. 223, quoted from Joel Spring, "Education and Progressivism", History of Education Quarterly. Volume X (Spring 1970) p. 53.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Both articles appear in R.S. Patterson, J.W. Chalmers and J.W. Friesen, Op. Cit.
- 21 Ibid., p. 199.

- 22 Ibid., p. 196.
- 23 Ibid., p. 216.
- 24 David C. Jones, "The Maleficent Obsession: Social Control and the Schools", The Journal of Educational Thought, Vol. 12, No.1 (1978) p. 52.
- 25 Ibid., p. 53.
- 26 See Marvin Lazerson, "Revisionism and American Educational History", Harvard Educational Review 43 (May, 1973)
- 27 Jones, Op. Cit., p. 54.
- 28 It is only very recently since world public opinion has turned so decisively against South Africa's racial policies that churches in South Africa have taken a stand against apartheid.
- 29 Dunn, Op. Cit., p. 156.
- 30 Ibid., p. 46.
- 31 R.S. Patterson, "The Establishment of Progressive Education in Alberta", p. 4.
- 32 R.S. Patterson, "Hubert C. Newland Theorist of Progressive Education" Chapter 15, R.S. Patterson, J.W. Chalmers and J.W. Friesen, Op. Cit.
- 33 Ibid., p. 305.
- 34 Robert S. Patterson, "Society and Education During the Wars and their Interlude: 1914-1945", Chapter 17, J.D. Wilson, R.M. Stamp and L-P. Audet, Op. Cit.

- 35 R.S. Patterson, "The Establishment of Progressive Education in Alberta".
- 36 Robert S. Patterson, "The Future of Progressive Education" in Terence Morrison, Anthony Burton, eds. Options: Reforms and Alternatives for Canadian Education, (Toronto, 1973) p. 31.
- 37 F. Henry Johnson's work and the theses of D.C. Jones and T.A. Dunn are exceptions; all make considerable reference to the Putman-Weir Survey.
- 38 In 1944 the government of British Columbia appointed Dr. Maxwell A. Cameron of the Department of Education of the University of British Columbia, as a one man commission of Inquiry into Educational Finance. Cameron, making no reference to the King Report, vetoed the idea of a completely centralized administration and advocated the retention of school boards and large scale consolidation of school districts in rural areas. After pointing out the defects of centralization, rigidity, lack of experimentation and loss of local interest, he concluded that local management of schools should be retained if this could be done "while achieving a substantial degree of equality of opportunity for our children and a equality of burden for our taxpayers", p. 37. Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Educational Finance, (Victoria, 1945).
- 39 A.H. Child, Op. Cit., p. 319.
- 40 F. Henry Johnson, Op. Cit., p. 101.
- 41 Ibid., p. 104.
- 42 Ibid., p. 102.
- 43 Ibid., p. 109.
- 44 J.W. Rule, "Innovation and Experimentation in Ontario's Public and Secondary School System 1919-1940", p. 89.

- 45 Sutherland "Introduction: Towards a History of English Canadian Youngsters", Op. Cit., p. xix.
- 46 Terence Morrison, Anthony Burton eds. Op. Cit., p. 234.
- 47 Michael B. Katz, Class Bureaucracy and Schools Expanded Ed., (New York, 1975), p. 167.

CHAPTER II

BRITISH COLUMBIA SCHOOLS: THE INTRODUCTION OF THE "NEW EDUCATION" BEFORE 1929

The "new education" began to be introduced into the public schools of British Columbia in the early years of the century, particularly in Vancouver. In comparison with some American cities, the adoption of innovations in education was later and slower. However it should be noted that most progressive reforms did not become incorporated into school systems in the United States until the depression years. Similarly British Columbia did not make many aspects of the "new education" part of the provincial educational system until the 1930s. But the direction of many future developments was given in the earlier decades.

It is not surprising that new courses and methods were introduced into schools after the turn of the century, for the province was, at that time, undergoing a period of rapid industrialization. As Dunn has pointed out, between 1880 and the outbreak of World War I there were rapid developments in the extraction and processing of natural resources and with the emergence of industrial capitalism, British Columbia experienced the fastest growth rate in Canada.¹ During this period Vancouver reflected the province's economic expansion and became its most important city. In the last decade of the 19th century the population of Vancouver doubled, in the next it quadrupled. With the arrival of the Canadian Pacific Railway the city entered a period of growth exceeding that of any other city in the country. Immigrants poured into Vancouver by the thousands,

sometimes at the rate of one thousand per month. By 1911 the population figure stood at around 110,000.²

A great many of the newcomers to the city in the first years of its growth from 1886 to 1893 were Canadians from Eastern Canada, British Americans and Orientals. A second wave of immigration during the first decade of the 20th century brought large numbers of Europeans, the vast majority of whom were unable to speak English, a great many from Britain with a working class background, as well as another influx of Orientals. The labour movement quickly gained momentum and the Provincial Federation of Labour had a membership of nineteen union locals in 1891. "In no other part of Canada were working men as radical"³ social tension and unrest tended to become chronic and many began to fear that the labour movement in British Columbia was being inspired by Bolshevik doctrines.⁴ Although all the labour unrest did not occur in Vancouver it was a centre of labour activity and remained so in the decade which followed.

Vancouver, then, had never experienced a period of slow evolution or planned development. It had sprung into being with all the trappings of an industrial city, characterized by a small stratum of wealth and power and a large stratum of working class. The industrial and commercial centre of a province geared to export markets, it was subject to rapid cycles of boom and bust. In 1894 a recession had caused "such starvation and misery" that soup kitchens were set up.⁵ A little over ten years later however, Vancouver was enjoying such prosperity that the city could boast of having 1050 real estate dealers and 325 grocers. In 1913 the bubble

burst again and a year later the cost of unemployment relief in Vancouver reached the figure of \$150,000.⁶

The men who took on the task of directing and providing for the education of the children of Vancouver were faced with a polyglot population, of largely working class background where unemployment and strikes were frequent occurrences. School boards at this time had a considerable degree of autonomy. A trend begun in 1889 of placing greater financial responsibility in the hands of school boards had brought with it an increased authority in curriculum planning. It is interesting to note, in view of the contentiousness of the question of the role of school boards during the 1930's, that this development was welcomed at the time. As one editor put it, in this decentralization of power "... will be found the vast development and the greatest success of our educational system. For the dead uniformity which now characterizes the larger schools throughout the province will now disappear."⁷ By the early years of the century, although the final word on curriculum and standards still lay with the Provincial Department of Education, the recommendations of the Vancouver school board with regard to curriculum changes and the expansion of school services were nearly always accepted, although sometimes with a time lag.

From 1892 to 1918 Vancouver School Board Minutes and Annual Reports provide a good record of changes made in administration, curriculum and school services as well as some insight into the thinking of those most instrumental in bringing about those changes. Little is known about the socio-economic background of the members of the school board except what

is mentioned in a special brochure issued by the board in 1910. From the biographical data given about the trustees holding office during that year, it would appear that they were from the middle echelon of business and the professions.⁸ This impression is reinforced by the findings of Robt. A.J. McDonald in his doctoral thesis "Business Leaders in Early Vancouver, 1886-1914". In the decade before 1913, he points out, "large numbers of self-interested businessmen" went into civic affairs, but few were from the economically powerful elite.⁹ Most of the trustees were Eastern Canadians and immigrants from the United Kingdom who had come to the west before the turn of the century and had carved out a niche of comfort, rather than wealth, and civic prominence.

Towards the end of the 1890's the first stirrings of discontent with the school curriculum became evident. The trustees gave consideration to the introduction of drawing, needlework, sewing and knitting into the curriculum, and the building of a gymnasium.¹⁰ It was suggested that changes be made to add to the popularity of the high school by making some compulsory subjects optional.¹¹ At the same time a proposal of Sir William MacDonald to establish a school of manual training for the city was met by great enthusiasm not only by school board members, but also by the mayor and council, and the Vancouver Board of Trade.¹²

During the first decade of the century the pace of change began to quicken. The curriculum was broadened, extra-curricular activities were sponsored by the schools, and night classes were added. School board members were disturbed by the small percentage of pupils who passed the

high school entrance examinations. Much of their concern appeared to centre on the fact that the majority of those who failed would leave school untrained for any position in the business world.¹³

The rationale for all changes seemed to fall into four categories, vocational preparation, physical fitness, character building and the refinement of the sensibilities. When the trustees were planning a new high school in 1903, their major preoccupations appeared to be the organization of a cadet corp and the development of a commercial course. The cadet corp was seen as being of "... immense advantage to our boys which will build up a strong and more healthy manhood in our city."¹⁴ It was hoped that the commercial course would "... meet in full the requirements of this progressive era of commercial activity"¹⁵ in Vancouver. In 1904 music was added to the curriculum. Its purpose was to develop the intellectual faculties, to assist the correlation of mind and body, to strengthen the body through singing, and above all to improve the character.¹⁶ In 1906 domestic science became a part of the curriculum. This was a development much desired by women's groups, and petitioned for by the Vancouver Local Council of Women as part of their campaign to strengthen the home.

However the pace of change did not appear to be fast enough to please many board members. There was a sense of urgency in the report of the chairman of the school board in 1908. He stated, in part,

"Very few people realize the part which more and more every year is played by schools in the social life of the

people. Owing to an increasing portion of the population of cities living in apartment and tenement houses, and, I am sorry to say the general loosening of the ties of home life, schools are more and more taking the place and doing the duties which parents used to do, and there is no use our trying to shirk the responsibility..."

He concluded by suggesting the desirability of encouraging class emulation.¹⁷ The following year the board expanded the social function of the schools by employing a full time medical officer and a nurse.

Just as it was felt that the school was not fulfilling its social role adequately, so too it was thought that the vocationalizing of the schools was not proceeding satisfactorily. One annual report of the school board bemoaned the fact that no advance had been made in manual training programmes since their inception.¹⁸ A management committee's report of a few years later, said that the underlying principle of the high school should be to make it a "finishing" school with two main branches. One to take the place of "the decayed apprenticeship system, should tend in the direction of Trade and Technical School Work" while another "should run much stronger on commercial lines than it does now and should include courses in Spanish, Chinese and Japanese."¹⁹

Despite setbacks the Vancouver school board continued in the second decade of the century to increase the school's role as a socializing agent and as a vocational training institution.²⁰ The social function which the board saw itself fulfilling was illustrated by the management committee's plans for future school buildings. It was anticipated that

the downtown area of the city would, as had happened in many American cities, become overly congested, with many children living under disadvantageous conditions. Old schools were to be torn down rather than repaired and new ones erected "around three stories, to have as much room for playground as possible, with facilities for systematic physical training and...with auditoriums so that the school may be a social centre for the community".²¹ Around this time school assembly halls began to loom large as the locus of social work in their respective districts. "Through the agency of lectures, meetings and discussions it is hoped that the new citizens of cosmopolitan Vancouver", can be raised to acceptable standards, "... morally, socially and financially, from the youngest to the oldest".²² On the vocational side, by 1912 the municipal inspector of schools reported eleven centres for manual training for public school pupils and two for high school pupils.²³ In 1914 pre-vocational courses were introduced into three high schools. The students divided their time between vocational and academic pursuits, two thirds being given to academic work and one third to vocational work. These courses were described as being "particularly suited to those students whose abilities lie in a practical direction rather than in academic studies".²⁴ The impression that they were for defective children had to be countered by a school official making calls on a number of parents.

Depression and retrenchment affected the board's plans during the war years, but by 1918 the momentum of change began to quicken again. A wider range of technical courses was made available to both boys and girls in high school, there was a commercial high school devoted particularly

to business instruction, and night classes were extended. Classes for the retarded had existed for some time and now a "room of opportunity" was created for those pupils who had difficulty with the regular curriculum. At the urging of the University Women's Club the schools established Little Mothers' Leagues to train children over twelve years of age in the care of babies.²⁵ This can be seen as a response to a report made by the school nurse some years earlier which pointed out that in many homes young school age children were left in charge of infants while the mother went to work. Under such circumstances, the nurse concluded, many babies "die simply from illness which, in the majority of cases is caused by ignorance".²⁶

However there was still a great deal of dissatisfaction on the part of board members with the progress being made. The school system it was said by some was still woefully behind the best thought of the day. Although only seven percent of the students went on to the university, it was said that the high school curriculum was based on university entrance, and the public school system was based on high school entrance. Said one board chairman, "This means that ninety three percent are to a certain extent (not wholly) sacrificed to the seven percent and certainly if a sacrifice be needed it should be the other way around".²⁷ This did not mean that the "cultural side of things should be wholly neglected" she continued, but it did mean "the possibility of cutting out some of the unnecessary grind and replacing that with work that will not only be more practical but for which the average student has far more inclination as well as natural ability".²⁸

Between 1897 and 1918 the school system which evolved in Vancouver under the aegis of the Vancouver school board pointed the direction in which many future changes and developments would proceed, not only in Vancouver but also in the rest of the province.²⁹ What school board members wanted for the Vancouver schools during this period of the city's rapid expansion and industrialization would become, in many instances, what professional educators would desire for all the schools of the province at a later date. On the basis of the records used, the reasons that appear predominant in the board's decisions were a desire, in the first place, to make the schools an integral part of the city's commercial and industrial growth by providing it with a skilled work force; and secondly, to assist in moulding the future citizens to the values necessary for a business oriented society's stability and expansion.

The spirit of optimism which was engendered by the ending of World War I did not last long in Vancouver or in many parts of the province. By 1919 an economic recession had brought unemployment, social unrest and financial problems to government at all levels. Both urban and rural school boards were caught in a bind between insufficient funds and rising enrollments which necessitated increases in both plant and equipment. Even after the depression gave way in 1923 to the greatest wave of prosperity that the province had ever known, financial problems continued to plague most school boards.

A reading of the Vancouver school board minutes covering the years 1920 to 1924 indicates graphically the difficulties faced. Reviewing

the work of past management committees, the chairman in 1922 pointed to "the repeated defeat of money by-laws since 1918 and the consequent difficulty of providing proper accommodation for our school children (and) the ever increasing administrative work for a growing population".³⁰

Various solutions had been attempted to meet the pressure of numbers.

In 1920, 34 part-time classes had been instituted but this had been thought to be "inefficient, expensive and wasteful, especially of children's lives".³¹ As a consequence, class size was increased to fifty pupils.

Faced with another crisis in numbers in 1921, the board had once more to resort to part-time classes as well as overcrowded ones. By the 1922-23 school year class averages were down to 43, although some classes contained 60 pupils. To the trustees this situation was deleterious both to teacher and child, particularly to the slow child who would, in their opinion, be put ahead unprepared or through discouragement fall by the wayside. The social result they pointed out, would be disastrous. "It will mean" wrote the chairman of the management committee

"... more pupils for our industrial schools, detention homes and prisons, misery instead of happiness for the homes, less production in industrial life and more expense to the state in taking care of criminals. For let me say, that every discouraged child is one more centre of moral leprosy". 32

By January of 1923 all of the school children in Vancouver had been accommodated in full-time classes with an average class enrollment of 40 by the expediency of using temporary wooden structures erected on

school grounds. However, despite financial stringency and the need for permanent additional classrooms the board was recommending the appointment of specialized teachers, and a vocational guidance officer as well as the extension of junior high school work and the opening of a technical school for girls. The previous year the board with the approval of the Department of Education had opened a junior high school. This school was not designed to be an integral part of the school system as were those being set up in many cities in the United States. Its function was as a two year vocational training school for those pupils who had passed through the elementary school, and who, it was thought could not benefit from the ordinary high school courses. It was stated that it was hoped that as the public became more acquainted with the "value and status" of the school it would grow by "leaps and bounds" and become the "most important link in our system for those pupils between the ages of 14 and 16".³³ The chairman of the board stated that he was confident the continual expansion of vocational and technical training would divert many who were overcrowding the university at "great economic loss both to the country and themselves".³⁴

As an interesting footnote to the foregoing, when the first vocational officer was appointed to the Vancouver schools in October 1924, the announcement of his appointment was accompanied by his own statement that his first job would be the direction of the lives of the "Misfits" among the 20,000 pupils of the Vancouver schools who would otherwise go astray. This was to be his primary function "while the other boys and

girls seeking vocational direction would come after them".³⁵

Fear of anti-social behaviour, so evident in school board reports was not confined to those responsible for running the schools. The public in general and parents in particular were seriously concerned. The war had brought in its wake a breakdown in traditional values³⁶ which was intensified by rapid urbanization. Vancouver, in particular, was well on its way to achieving a reputation as a centre of vice and crime. As an indication of its anxiety over the weakening of morality, the Parent-Teacher movement, then strong in British Columbia, concentrated a great deal of its attention on moral issues and advocated that moral instruction be given in the schools and that all reading materials be censored. A mass meeting of Parent Teacher Associations in the spring of 1924 in Vancouver passed with only a small number of dissenting votes, a motion in favour of optional Bible reading and teaching in the schools for one school period a week.³⁷ As was borne out by the experience of the Putman-Weir Survey no issue aroused as much public interest, with the exception of finance, as the teaching of religion in the schools.

Bedevilled by inadequate budgets³⁸ which hampered it in implementing the policies which it thought important to society the Vancouver School Board, in conjunction with others in the province, began in 1922 to petition the government to appoint an educational survey. Just as insistent as school boards on a thorough survey of the province's educational system was the British Columbia Teachers' Federation,³⁹ which had passed a resolution at its Easter convention in 1922 requesting the Department of Education to

make "a complete assessment of the system in all its aspects of curriculum, administration and finance".⁴⁰ Unfortunately the B.C.T.F. records of that time do not indicate what the main specific areas of concern were, or whether dissatisfaction was widespread, or noticeably more pronounced in one section of the province than another.

Inspectors' reports, however, covering the years 1921 to 1924 expressed varying degrees of dissatisfaction with school facilities, curricula, teaching and organization in all parts of the province. The crisis of numbers facing the high schools emerged as a top priority problem. The postwar world had created a demand for a more extended period of education. High schools, once the preserve of the few, had become the expectation of the many. The government had partly alleviated the situation in 1921 when the Department of Education extended the elementary school curriculum from 7 to 8 years. But by 1923 the high enrollment showed an increase of 90 percent over the previous 6 years, a situation which could not be met by existing facilities. While the urban school was subject to drastic overcrowding, in many rural areas, high schools were non-existent. The inequity of this situation was constantly pointed out by the inspectors. Although many more children were qualifying for high school entrance, most were unable to continue their studies because of the absence of high school facilities. "One cannot pass from a city school to a rural school" wrote one inspector, "without feeling acutely the little opportunity for advancement afforded the rural child as compared with that presented to the city child."⁴¹ One result of this situation was that rural schools contained as many as 40 percent of

overage pupils. Another was that rural children sent to city high schools tended to obtain jobs and remain in the city on completion of their schooling. Rural schools also suffered because of inexperienced teachers, high teacher turnover and ungraded classrooms. By this time the Agricultural Instruction Act had been discontinued and the dedicated band of district supervisors who had gone to rural areas to revitalize education had begun to disperse.⁴²

The brightest ray of hope for the educational system seemed to lie, according to many inspectors, in the increasing number of schools and teachers using the methods of the "new education". Inspectors pointed with pride to those teachers who, "fortified by a sound university training, imbued with the spirit of scientific research and intolerant of worn-out shibboleths"⁴³ were bringing to their pupils the practical application of their training. The "new education", as referred to in inspectors' reports of this time, seemed to consist chiefly of testing, by means of IQ and standardized achievement tests, the project method, socialized recitation and the teaching of silent reading. There was apparent a revolt against formalism and an over reliance on the text book, and a desire to bring the child's school experience into closer accord with the world he would meet on leaving school. One inspector, when advising a reduction in written work in elementary schools wrote, "It has been estimated that upwards of 75 percent of the world's business is transacted orally and the schools, in preparing children for life's duties, should devote an equal proportion of school time to oral and mental instruction."⁴⁴

It is impossible to determine if the Minister of Education J.D. MacLean, or the upper rank of civil servants in the Department of Education were in favour of a survey of education being made at that time. The premier, John Oliver, does not appear to have shown any interest in education, during his political career. However, his statement that "we are keeping our children in school too long, and we are teaching them too many fads",⁴⁵ would seem to indicate that he, if not his party, wished to see the educational curriculum curtailed and simplified. A lack of interest on the part of politicians could be deduced from the fact that none of the members of the legislature appeared at a special session called to allow them to present their own views on educational matters.⁴⁶

After two years of inaction, Oliver, just a few days before the election of June 1924, announced the appointment of two prominent Canadian educators to head a survey in education in the province. The terms of reference were very broad, the areas of investigation to include teacher qualifications, normal schools, curricula, administration and financing, nineteen categories in all. The government's decision to appoint a survey at this time could be interpreted as a vote getting ploy. The Liberals, in office since 1916, had been closely associated with reform movements. By the mid-twenties, however they were becoming tainted with charges of corruption and were daily being accused of being in the hands of the liquor interests. Labour support had dwindled, the reform minded middle class had become disillusioned and there was a general feeling of disenchantment with the existing party system. As evidence of this the

Provincial Party had just been formed which hoped to garner some of its support from progressively oriented and dissident Liberal supporters.⁴⁷

In addition the government had promised reductions in personal property taxes and land tax rates in rural areas. How school boards, already incapacitated by insufficient revenues, were to meet their objectives under such circumstances was a problem which the Liberals may have wished the survey to answer.

If school boards were seeking an educational survey as a vindication of their attitudes and consequent demands, municipalities were anxious for a survey which would point out waste and inefficiencies in the school system. The day after the survey was announced, the Union of Municipalities stated that its goal was to take over the administration of the schools and eliminate elected school boards.⁴⁸ At the same time, property owners' associations were reported to be preparing exhaustive reports designed primarily to raise the standard of efficiency in the schools.⁴⁹

The two commissioners appointed by the Liberal government to head the survey were J.H. Putman and G.M. Weir, well known for what was referred to by the press as their progressive views. Both men were professional educators, with doctorates in education earned at Ontario universities. Putman was the senior inspector of the Ottawa schools, a leader in the child study movement, and a strong advocate of junior high schools. He was also the author of a historical study, Egerton Ryerson and Education in Upper Canada.⁵⁰ Weir, who was subsequently to become very influential

in the history of education in British Columbia, was the head of the, at that time new and very small, Department of Education at the University of British Columbia. Born at Miami, Manitoba in 1885, Weir had received his B.A. from McGill University in 1911, his M.A. from the University of Saskatchewan in 1914, and his D. Paed.⁵¹ from Queen's University in 1918 after completing his studies there and at the University of Chicago. He had taught school in Saskatchewan, been an inspector of schools in that province and later principal of the normal school in Saskatoon from 1918 until his 1923 appointment as a professor of education at the University of British Columbia. Weir was a convinced westerner with a strong antipathy toward eastern Canada. In educational matters he felt strongly that it was the role of the west to lead the way for the rest of Canada.⁵²

The report, which was issued a year after the commissioners were appointed, was according to C.E. Phillips, "the most thorough examination of any school system in Canada"⁵³ to that time. It was lengthy and comprehensive, considering in detail all aspects of its terms of reference. The survey set out in the opening chapter the philosophy of education of the commissioners emphasizing their great faith in the new science of education to solve a majority of problems. A strong anti-traditionalist stand was adopted, and vituperation was levelled at those who were termed reactionaries or ultra-conservatives, who stood in the way of educational progress. The public was encouraged to trust the experts, as the "mere opinion" of any others was of "little value inasmuch as it proves nothing of a positive nature".⁵⁴

What the experts decreed was free secondary education in the name of equal opportunity for all. The establishment of junior high schools was strongly recommended, to cover the years of early adolescence when pupils could discover their educational and vocational interests and capabilities. Dunn in his thesis, "Work, Class and Education" has dealt with the vocational and technical education aspects of the survey. He has concluded that the "educators firmly believed that individuals best served society through their vocation."⁵⁵ Although this is a defensible position it would be incorrect to interpret the survey as being totally concerned with vocationalism. The primary thrust of the survey is the fostering by means of the educational system of specific values and social attitudes. Like the Vancouver school trustees, the commissioners defended the extended role of the school in the realms of health and moral instruction and for a longer period of time on the grounds that the educative agencies, home, church and community had lost much of their effectiveness. It was the purpose of every course in the curriculum to impart the same attitudes, for Latin, Greek, higher mathematics and home economics, in the words of the survey had "the same cultural value, using that term in its true sense".⁵⁶

The survey made no criticism of the basic values most widely held in the community. Putman and Weir seemed to accept, broadly speaking, the social structure. Not that injustices did not exist; for example the relative poverty of educational facilities in rural areas, which the report singled out for improvement. However, although they conceded that social progress should be one of the aims of public education, they

contended that it was "in any event slow. Its increment during the span of a single generation is scarcely perceptible".⁵⁷ Any implementation of a programme of social betterment the report continued, would have to depend on an industrial, social and occupational survey of the province. In the absence of this, present observation had to be relied upon. Such observation indicated overcrowding and unemployment in industrial areas and underpopulation in rural areas. This meant, the survey concluded "that either the social, economic and industrial conditions in the Province are unhealthy, or badly balanced, or maladjusted, or the schools are not doing their full duty toward the young people who leave with faces set toward the world and its work."⁵⁸ Without argument the report placed the blame on the schools, and the question of social progress resolved itself into a question of vocational guidance and work attitudes.

The curriculum recommendations made in the survey were extensive. It was proposed that the elementary curriculum should remain substantially the same, but simplified, particularly in music, geography and arithmetic. The junior high school curriculum was dealt with in much greater detail. At this point a common curriculum for all disappeared and was replaced by a widely differentiated one containing a core of compulsory courses which declined in number with each succeeding year. Continuing the pattern of the middle school, it was proposed that the high school, or senior secondary school, should provide a highly differentiated curriculum, one no longer exclusively geared to university entrance. The proposed 6-3-3 system which would replace the existing 8-4 system was put forward not only as being an educationally sound one but also one which would

ensure "the elimination of great waste" and the securing of a "much larger educational value for every dollar spent".⁵⁹

✓ In the realm of pedagogy, the survey drew heavily on the psychological theories of child growth and development which had been propounded largely by American psychologists during the previous two decades. It was prescribed that the content of any course be tailored to fulfilling each stage of a child's growth, keeping in mind that, only that could be learned effectively which was closely related to his experience.

The Putman-Weir Survey clearly owed most of its inspiration to American educational thought and this was freely acknowledged by its authors. Practically all of its recommendations could be fitted into that broad spectrum of educational innovation known generally by the name of progressive education. It embodied, as its authors claimed, much of the latest thought on schooling, its methods and purposes. The final impression left, however, is not so much one of radical change, although the advocacy of change abounded, but of conservative continuity, for the ultimate and underlying purpose seems to be not to liberate the intelligence but to lead it to an acceptance of the social norms of contemporary society.

During the remaining years of the Liberal administration the Department of Education began to implement the recommendations of the survey. The one idea enthusiastically adopted was the advisability of junior high schools and by 1926 a departmental committee had drawn up a course of studies for them. The new curriculum stated as its basic principle the provision for individual differences in student ability and

aptitude. By means of the addition of more options it was hoped that pupils would be able to find or discover their interests and capabilities and the number of dropouts would be reduced.⁶⁰ It is impossible to assess how successful these schools, 11 in all by 1930, were in accomplishing their objectives.⁶¹ But it is interesting to note that the principals of some of these schools went on to become some of the chief spokesmen for the new education during the 1930's.

A further structural change in the school system was made in accordance with the Putman-Weir Survey. A committee appointed by the Department of Education, with members drawn from both the high schools and the University of British Columbia, brought in a recommendation in 1929 that the high school course be extended from three to four years. The Department adopted this change and the system of schooling in the province became officially a 6-3-3 one, six years of elementary school, three years of junior high school and three years of senior high school. The adoption of the restructured system was, of course, still a matter of local option, and was very much hindered by the onset of the depression, because of the expense entailed in the construction of new schools and the equipment required. Two other developments of this period which were in line with the survey were the use of intelligence tests and the greater emphasis placed on home economics in the school curriculum. The question of technical education, judged by Putman and Weir to be Vancouver's most pressing educational problem, has been covered in detail in Dunn's thesis.

A reading of the inspectors' reports of the years 1925-1929 gives some indication of the reasons for the implementation of these particular

recommendations of the survey. The most outstanding feature of schooling during these years was the continuous increase in the size of the school population, particularly at the high school level. Although in the rural districts there was still a low attendance at high school, in those areas classed as municipalities, both urban and rural, including, for example, Burnaby and Point Grey, the attendance was the highest in history. While the increased enrolment was welcomed by inspectors as a sign of "an ever-increasing interest and an ever-growing appreciation of secondary education"⁶² the problems attendant upon the expanded enrollment provided much cause for concern. The problem of retardation was a vexatious one for it greatly increased costs as well as leading to a high drop-out rate. The causes of the problem were deemed to be numerous, as were the suggestions made for its solution. However by general consensus careful classification of pupils seems to have been judged the best means of remedying the situation. One inspector noted that in his school area retardation had been reduced sharply by reclassification of pupils "by the principal and teachers keeping in mind the age of the pupils, the length of time spent in a certain grade, and the ability of the pupil as shown by the progress made during the year".⁶³

Such statements could be duplicated from many inspectors' reports during this period. The greatest aid in this reclassification process were intelligence tests and standardized achievement tests. From 1924 onwards reliance on these tests seems to have increased markedly, particularly in urban and rural municipalities. The Putman-Weir Survey had requested inspectors to administer certain tests to specific age groups,

and this appears to have generated great enthusiasm for testing on the part not only of inspectors but also of principals and teachers. In 1926 the New Westminster inspector wrote that in many schools "retardation has been seriously grappled with, the results in some cases being particularly gratifying. This movement has been facilitated greatly by the use of mental and achievement tests".⁶⁴ Another inspector reporting in the same year probably summed up the situation best when he stated that "of all the movements in education, no doubt mental testing and measuring have given an impetus to the study of educational problems greater than they have received during the past 25 years".⁶⁵ In Vancouver the teachers were reported to have displayed so much interest in the use of standardized tests that a series of lectures dealing with psychology and standard tests and measurements was given to city teachers as well as to those from surrounding municipalities.⁶⁶

Nevertheless while regrading, ability-grouping and streaming reduced retardation, and a system of recommendation on the advice of principals eased the passage to high school, the results of high school entrance examinations and the number of pupils who dropped out after failing to complete either grades 7 or 8 gave much cause for concern. It was felt that something had to be done for these pupils, and that "the Junior High School plan as outlined in the recent Survey would certainly overcome the weakness in the present system".⁶⁷ The many references made to junior high schools in the inspectors' reports leave little doubt as to the important, even key, position which it was thought they would hold in the future school system. Not only were they to eliminate, or nearly so,

p. 50 follows

This included a great deal more than sewing and cooking as he pointed out in the following passage.

"It means for one thing, a better understanding on the part of the teachers of those vital social and economic problems that beset every home, but more particularly those homes from which the pupils come. It means, in the second place, that the teacher must be capable of giving positive leadership and expert guidance to both boys and girls, and through them to parents as well, in many things pertaining to health and social welfare... There can be no more important educational objective in this or any other country than the development of high ideals in all things pertaining to the home as our first and greatest social institution." 70

During the four years subsequent to the publication of the Putman-Weir Survey then the educational system in British Columbia began to take on some of the features advocated in the report. The junior high school emerged as the key element in reconstruction of the system. Mention was made in inspectors' reports of the special psychological needs of early adolescence, but the major emphasis was placed on two factors; the great assist it would have in eliminating retardation and dropouts, and the provision of schooling for the vast majority who were not capable of benefiting from the academic curriculum. The open sesame to this new smoothly running system was seen as testing and measurement. It would be difficult to find more than a handful of reports of this period which did not acknowledge with grateful thanks the supply of tests made available by the Department of Education. Providing for individual differences was

retardation and dropouts, at least until the age of 15, but they were to pave the way to the establishment of a new type of composite high school, one organized in four departments, academic, technical, commercial, and home economics. "This type of school" it was stated, "is certainly the most suitable type for a democratic community, and one which would lend itself admirably to the introduction of the Junior High School system".⁶⁸ Differentiated curricula within one school were coming to be seen as the answer to educating all of the children in the community. A further benefit to be derived from junior high schools was also noted in a Vancouver inspector's report of 1928, the possibility of increasing class size. "In junior high schools particularly where a large number of pupils in each grade which makes classification according to ability possible and where we are placing our stronger teachers, larger classes should be taught."⁶⁹

In their advocacy of giving home economics a more prominent place in the curriculum educators were joined by groups in the community, most notably Parent Teacher Associations and Local Councils of Women. All three groups founded their arguments on the assumption of the decline of the family and the ability of the school to provide sufficient instruction to ensure that the homemakers of the future would stem this degenerative social trend. The acting-principal of the Normal School in Victoria summed up their thinking when he called for more special training for teachers "in those things which pertain to worthy home membership", a goal of schooling to achieve wide advocacy after the publication in 1918 of the cardinal principles report of the National Education Association of the United States.

the rationale given for the restructuring of the system. However, the inspectors' reports would seem to indicate that the basic motivation for its advocacy was that children could be more easily retained in the school long enough to ensure the inculcation of the proper social values and the choice of a vocation.

It should be remembered that the total enrolment in the high schools of the province at the end of the twenties was not more than 12 per cent of the total school population. The schoolmen were clearly looking to the United States where secondary school enrolment had been increasing at a faster pace than in Canada and attempting to set up a similar system to be able to cope with the situation. As one inspector put it the new junior high school system was "modelled after well-known Junior High School Programmes" in the United States, and contained "practical features not found in other courses of study".⁷¹ The emphasis was everywhere on the practical. Many of those who welcomed the new education such as it was to this point adopted in British Columbia, appear to have done so because it offered practical solutions to practical problems brought on by increased enrolment.

- 1 For a detailed account of the economic development of British Columbia at this time see T.A. Dunn "Work Class and Education: Vocationalism in British Columbia's Public Schools 1900-1929". Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1978.
- 2 Margaret A. Ormsby, British Columbia: A History, (Vancouver, 1971) p. 354.
- 3 Ibid., p. 331.
- 4 Radical ideas were introduced into British Columbia by immigrants from Britain who had been influenced by socialism and Marxism, and by Americans from the Pacific west coast where the socialist movement was uniting with a western frontier radicalism. See Paul A. Phillips, No Power Greater: A Century of Labour in British Columbia, (Vancouver, 1967).
- 5 Op. Cit., p. 313.
- 6 Martin Robin, The Rush for Spoils, The Company Province 1871-1933. (Toronto, 1972), p. 137.
- 7 Vancouver Weekly News Advertiser, February 6, 1889.
- 8 The Growth and Progress of Vancouver's Schools 1910, Special Brochure issued in conjunction with the annual report of the Vancouver School Board, 1910.
- 9 Robt. A.J. McDonald, "Business Leaders in Early Vancouver 1886-1914", Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1977, p. 284.
- 10 Vancouver School Trustees Minute Books Volume 2, June, 1899.
- 11 Ibid., Volume 1, December, 1897.

- 12 Ibid., Volume 2, November, 1899.
- 13 Ibid., June, 1904.
- 14 Vancouver Board of School Trustees Annual Report, 1903.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 The Growth and Progress of Vancouver's Schools 1910.
- 17 Vancouver Board of School Trustees Annual Report, 1908.
- 18 Ibid., 1907.
- 19 Ibid., 1909.
- 20 Inspectors reports of these years chiefly reflect a concern with instruction in the basic curriculum.
- 21 Ibid., 1911.
- 22 Ibid.
- 23 Vancouver School Trustees Minute Books Volume 3, December, 1912.
- 24 Vancouver Board of School Trustees Annual Report, 1914.
- 25 The Vancouver Board of School Trustees Annual Report of 1911 states that it was planned to set up a short course in home nursing and the care and feeding of infants for the older girls in the public schools but subsequent reports do not indicate if this was done.
- 26 Ibid., 1911.

27 Ibid., 1917.

28 Ibid.

29 That the main impetus for change came from the school trustees rather than from the educational bureaucracy is illustrated by the following two examples. In 1911 the inspector of high schools for the province complained of the strong sentiment outside the teaching profession in favour of technical training and a remodelling of the high school curriculum. "Too many people" he stated, "are of the opinion that a course of study is practically useless unless it supplies the student with a fund of knowledge that will make the earning of money rapidly and at an early age a certainty". Annual Report of the Public Schools of the Province of British Columbia, 1910-11. A27

In 1913 a Vancouver school inspector advocated not a broadening of the curriculum to prevent drop-outs but rather a cessation of the practice of passing all children regardless of competence through the early grades. "Pupils who have been advanced by this means to the upper grades" he contended "... find themselves at a loss to cope with the more difficult studies...and are compelled...to leave school totally unfitted to take their place in the world of business and labour they must enter". Annual Report of The Public Schools of the Province of British Columbia, 1912-1913. A36.

30 Vancouver School Trustees Minute Books, Report of the Management Committee, January 11, 1922.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid., December 11, 1923.

34 Ibid.

35 Vancouver Sun, October 24, 1924.

- 36 It is difficult to determine to what extent this was so. The fact was that many people perceived this to be so and this perception provided an impetus to their actions.
- 37 Ibid., April 14, 1924.
- 38 Between 1918 and 1922 every money by-law presented to the Vancouver ratepayers had been defeated.
- 39 Hereafter referred to as the B.C.T.F.
- 40 F. Henry Johnson, A History of Public Education in British Columbia, p. 102.
- 41 Province of British Columbia Sessional Papers, 1923, F24.
- 42 D.C. Jones, "Agriculture, the Land and Education, 1914-1929," unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1978, pp. 390-395.
- 43 Province of British Columbia Sessional Papers, 1924, T52.
- 44 Ibid., 1922, C29.
- 45 As quoted in Robin, Op. Cit., p. 178.
- 46 Vancouver Sun, November 14, 1924.
- 47 For a detailed account of this movement see Margaret A. Ormsby "The United Farmers of British Columbia, an Abortive Third-Party Movement". British Columbia Historical Quarterly, 16-17, 1952-53, pp. 57-77.
- 48 Ibid., June, 1924.
- 49 Ibid.

- 50 Putman considered that Ryerson's greatest contribution to the development of education in Ontario was the creation of the public sentiment which made his work possible.
- 51 Weir makes it clear in his Doctoral Thesis "Evolution of Separate School Law" later published as The Separate School Question in Canada that he was unsympathetic to actions of provincial legislatures in granting language rights to separate schools. He argued that although this was legally permissible it was unwise for predominantly English speaking provinces to do so. All that was required was that the distinctly denominational character of separate schools would not be prejudiced. Just because the government of Quebec, he concluded, was willing to allow the Protestant minority to do what it wished in the matter of language instruction it did not mean that any other province was under a legal or moral obligation to do likewise for its Roman Catholic minorities.
- 52 Weir did not wish any direction in education to come from Ottawa because this would result in B.C. being held back to the pace of the east.
- 53 C.E. Phillips, The Development of Education in Canada (Toronto, 1957), p. 263.
- 54 Putman-Weir Survey, Preface, p. 8.
- 55 Dunn, Op. Cit., p. 141.
- 56 Putman-Weir Survey, p. 337.
- 57 Ibid., p. 83.
- 58 Ibid.
- 59 Ibid., p. 103.
- 60 F. Henry Johnson, Op. Cit., p. 97.

- 61 It is interesting to note that an M.A. Thesis written at the University of British Columbia in 1933 by J.F.K. English, entitled "The Combined Junior-Senior High School and Its General Adaptability to the Small Centres of British Columbia" promotes this type of organization on the grounds of its economy. A questionnaire sent to all State Superintendents of Education in the United States had revealed that "economy in school equipment and in teaching power" was the reason most frequently given for its advocacy. The second reason most often cited was the greater holding power of the junior-senior high school. Although the opportunity afforded the student to develop his own individual capacities was mentioned as a factor, more emphasis was given to the role of extra-curricular activities. Superintendents themselves seemed to be most impressed with the greater possibilities in socialization which this school structure afforded. It is worthy of note that English later became a member of the secondary school curriculum revision committee and achieved an important place in the educational hierarchy of the province.
- 62 Province of British Columbia Sessional Papers, 1922, C22.
- 63 Ibid., 1924, T60.
- 64 Ibid., 1926, R36.
- 65 Ibid., R29.
- 66 Ibid., R33.
- 67 Ibid.
- 68 Ibid., 1925, M57, M58.
- 69 Ibid., 1928, V33.
- 70 Ibid., 1928, V43.
- 71 Ibid., 1927, M29.

CHAPTER III

EDUCATION UNDER THE CONSERVATIVE ADMINISTRATION, THE KIDD REPORT AND
THE GENERAL ELECTION OF 1933

In August, 1928 the Liberals after more than ten years in office were defeated at the polls and a Conservative administration came to power. One historian has attributed the severe drubbing the Liberals received---only 12 Liberals elected as against 35 Conservatives---to the inadequacies of the new Liberal leader Dr. John D. MacLean. MacLean is faulted for failing to carry on the record of progressive legislation adopted latterly by former premier Oliver, or to lead a vigorous campaign.¹

British Columbia in the year 1928 was enjoying an unprecedented prosperity, with the highest payroll in its history, wages at record levels and very little labour unrest. Since 1918 Vancouver had dominated the economic life of the province and by the middle 20's its growth was remarkable. The chief impetus to this growth was the spectacular increase in secondary and tertiary industry. After 1911, British Columbia had become progressively less dependent on the importation of manufactured goods as it increasingly produced for local markets. More important it became much more involved in trade with other areas. Much of the processing of primary resources for export took place in Vancouver. The manufacturing of forest products ranked first followed by the processing of fish and food products. Along with this went a great increase in transportation and the service industries. One study of the economic growth of British Columbia estimates that between 1911 and 1951 only about five per cent of

the increase in the work force could be attributed directly to the extractive sector of the economy. "The really huge increases in employment accrued" this study concludes "in manufacturing, in the services, and in trade".² The study does not indicate if this rate was constant over the whole period, but it is fairly safe to assume that it is sufficiently accurate to give a reliable profile of economic growth during the 1920's for the purposes of this thesis.³

The picture that emerges of the economy of the province just before the onset of the depression is one based on primary industry with a large part of its labour force engaged in the manufacture for export of the finished or semi-finished products of those industries. When export markets disappeared such an economy resulted in the creation of a large unemployed work force incapable of self support, concentrated in cities and towns.

When the crash did come the effect was felt almost instantaneously in Vancouver. The winter of 1929-30 saw an increase of three hundred per cent in the number of unemployed persons and "the people were beginning to believe that the city was being occupied by a Red Army".⁴ The fear of Communist agitators was one which would haunt citizens and governments throughout the years of the depression and have a decisive effect on provincial government policies. During the summer of 1931 the Conservative government, fearful of civil unrest, set up camps in the interior to house all the unemployed men from the cities.⁵ The Provincial Minister of Finance, J.W. Jones, writing to Prime Minister Bennett justified this policy

"on account of the Communist elements being very active. Strikes had occurred in several of the mills, riots have occurred in the City of Vancouver with the rough element threatening to break loose."⁶ By the winter of 1931-32 economic conditions had become critical in all parts of the province, cities, small towns and farming areas alike. In 1931 it had cost Vancouver \$1,300,000. to support its jobless; by the spring of 1932 over one-tenth of its population was on relief. In February, the number of registered unemployed in the whole province rose to 67,128.

Initially the depression had little affect on the school system. Government grants remained at pre-depression rates and municipal incomes were sufficient to keep teachers' salaries stable. By 1930-31, however, school boards were feeling the pinch. Not only had government revenues both at the provincial and municipal levels dropped but most school boards were being required to educate more pupils particularly at the secondary level. Vancouver offered the most striking example of the extent of the problem. The report of the Superintendent of Vancouver schools for the year 1930-31 summed up the crisis: an increase in the school population of 1,293 over the previous year,⁷ with a similar increase predicted for the following year: with more than 75% of the increase being at the high school level.⁸ The decline in the birth rate in the later 1920's had resulted in a noticeable decrease in enrolment in the lower grades of elementary schools. The report went on to explain that it had not been thought wise to present a new building plan to the ratepayers at this time. It was decided that many would not "regard the meeting of these school needs as equally urgent, or nearly as urgent, as the meeting of personal

needs that cannot easily be met".⁹

During the year in Vancouver several measures had been taken to affect economies without "losing efficiency".¹⁰ With some success an attempt was made to check the "unwarranted tendency"¹¹ to smaller classes in junior high schools and high schools and, the supervisory staffs in both home economics and music were reduced. On the other hand the staff was added to by the appointment of a director of vocational guidance, "in an endeavour to prepare boys and girls better for fitting into occupations on leaving school".¹² The addition of vocational guidance personnel to the school staff had been one of the recommendations made in the brief presented by the B.C.T.F. to the Putman-Weir Survey and this development was enthusiastically welcomed by the teachers in Vancouver who joined classes conducted by the director to study vocational guidance.¹³ The first and most important step in the new programme was to collect and make available to students definite and reliable occupational information. By the autumn of 1931 the new high school programme of studies was in effect in the province. With its increased recognition of such subjects as art, music and dramatics it was praised for its creation of "greater opportunities for the student to elect courses of study adapted to his aptitudes".¹⁴ Students were now able to take a prescribed number of units and obtain high school graduation standing without having to study matriculation or normal school entrance courses.

During the winter of 1930-31 criticism had begun to mount with regard to the efficiency¹⁵ with which schools of the province were run and

the high level of teachers' salaries. The latter was particularly vulnerable as teachers' salaries made up the largest single item in the educational budget.¹⁶ This subject was to remain a controversial one for several years and served to bring about the alienation of the majority of teachers from the Conservative government. The Premier, Dr. S.F. Tolmie, had appointed as Minister of Education, his old friend and political adviser Dr. Joshua Hinchliffe. Canon Hinchliffe, who had been at various times during his career businessman, educator and clergyman in the Anglican Church, was one of the few members of the Tolmie cabinet to have legislative experience and Tolmie was sometimes reported to be relying too heavily on his judgement. Hinchliffe who was referred to frequently by both press and opposition as antedeluvian, mediaeval and the possessor of a fine crinoline mind considered himself something of an authority on matters educational, and he appears ideologically as a direct descendant of Bishop Strachan. However just as Strachan has recently been rescued by historians from the opprobrium to which he had been assigned for so long,¹⁷ a second look at Hinchliffe may dislodge somewhat the label of hidebound reactionary pinned on him by his political opponents. Comparison with his successor G.M. Weir, who liked to play Ryerson and liberal reformer to conservative class-bound reactionaries, will reveal that despite sharp differences there were striking similarities.

In the autumn of 1930 Hinchliffe writing to Tolmie stated his objective with regard to his department to be to put the finances of education "on a satisfactory, sound and permanent basis".¹⁸ Hinchliffe recommended

that land was to remain the basis of school financing, "every acre to be taxed a just amount",¹⁹ but in addition to this he proposed a levy of a tax of one-half of one per cent on all incomes, in addition to all other taxes and levies. "Every citizen of the province", he wrote, "is required to pay his just share of educational costs."²⁰ The money so raised was to be distributed in such a way as to relieve those taxpayers who had been paying too heavily for the upkeep of schools. This would involve an increase in government grants to some school areas. The yardstick for these grants was to be teachers' salaries which would be fixed, subject to change only by the consent of the municipal council or the ratepayers. From this recommendation came the appointing of first one, then two, then three committees to try to determine a just level of teachers' salaries with all the attendant acrimony.²¹

The attack on the school system itself came chiefly from municipal councils, ratepayers' associations, the conservative press and business organizations. Criticism generally centred on inefficient administration and the curriculum, its extent and variety, or what was generally referred to as fads and frills.²² Inspectors and superintendents were well aware of these criticisms and sought to defend themselves. The increasing cost of education in Vancouver was justified on the grounds that it was "increased payment for increased or better school service demanded by those who pay the bills".²³ Generally speaking school boards refused to bow to the demands for cutting the curriculum back to the basic subjects. The provincial director of home economics, Miss Jessie McLenaghan stated

with pride in her report of the year 1930-31 that no school board had dispensed with home economics. "To have survived this test" she stated, "is to assume that at last we have outlived the stage when home economics as a school subject might be called a 'frill'".²⁴ Similarly manual training was said to be firmly entrenched in the school curriculum. Under the searching criticism, it was thought that "technical work had become more widely understood, not only for its educational value but for its practical lead towards industrial activities".²⁵ At the same time the new four year high school course offering a wide variety of options continued to be viewed with approval and promoted both by schoolmen and school boards.

As the depression wore on, however, it became more and more difficult for school boards, both urban and rural, to maintain the system as it had been built up over the preceding few years. By the school year 1931-32 the total amount spent on education in the province fell by \$342,000, or a mere 3.5%, but greater cuts were to come. By the summer of 1931 the financial position of the province had become very perilous indeed. With a large debt structure inherited from the previous Liberal governments, large relief expenditures, decreased revenues, and a \$3,000,000. note due in New York in the autumn, the province was tottering on the brink of bankruptcy. In November Tolmie demanded that Hinchliffe "explore every avenue for reducing costs" and that he "regard the matter as one of urgent necessity, not to be regarded from any other point of view".²⁶ Hinchliffe in his reply advised eliminating the free text book branch, closing one of

the Normal Schools, since twice as many teachers were being trained as the system could absorb, cutting teachers' salaries, nominally in rural areas and from 25 to 30 per cent in urban areas; and making a substantial cut in the grant to the University of British Columbia.²⁷

When the budget was brought down in the spring of 1932 a huge reduction was shown in the Department of Education estimates. The vote asked was \$2,846,012 compared with \$4,737,110. for 1931-32. Given the desperate financial circumstances of the government, the lack of confidence shown by financial institutions in their refusal to extend credit, the tardiness of the federal government in reaching an agreement on the sharing of the cost of unemployment relief, there was little less that could be done other than to cut expenditure. The only other alternative, additional taxation, had been resorted to in the budget brought down during the session of 1931. Instead of the one half of one per cent suggested by Hinchliffe earlier, the Minister of Finance had, in order to produce additional government revenue, imposed a supertax of one per cent on all classes of incomes over \$25. a week for married men and \$15. for other employees. However the revenue so collected was not earmarked for any specific purpose and the tax proved uniformly unpopular with all classes of society.

Drastically reduced government expenditure on education was not the only problem faced by school boards at this time. In March, 1932 Hinchliffe made known his intention of giving to city and municipal councils the power to prohibit school boards from continuing or establishing courses in manual training, domestic science, technical education and other courses

which had been described as educational frills.²⁸ School trustees immediately protested this proposal claiming that "councils were not concerned with details of educational policy and should not have power to direct school boards".²⁹ For the time being the matter was shelved, but it was now very apparent that most subjects outside of the traditional ones were still regarded by many as expendable frills.

The financial position of municipal councils was an unenviable one. Their revenues were decreasing as property taxes became increasingly difficult to collect, while they bore the burden of high relief costs. Since early in 1932 the municipalities had been "obliged to finance the total cost of their relief expenditures out of their own meagre resources instead of the third of the costs for which they were responsible according to the agreement of the previous August"³⁰ made with the provincial government. At the same time school boards were finding themselves with an increased enrolment at the secondary school level where per pupil costs were higher. In Vancouver the increase in enrolment was attributed not only to the desire of parents to have their children acquire more education and the unavailability of jobs, but also to the new restrictive policy regarding entrance to the University of British Columbia. A maximum had been placed on the number of students who could be enrolled in any faculty and the entrance requirements had been raised. The report on the Vancouver schools for 1931-32 predicted an even greater enlargement of classes in the near future to cope with the situation. At the same time it was regretfully announced that a cut in teachers' salaries of 10 per cent on all those of \$1,200. per annum or more, and 5 per cent on all others

had been made. However, despite reduced revenues it had not been found necessary to discontinue any essential services. The report concluded proudly "It is deserving of note that, during a year marked by persistent attempts to practically abolish School Boards or place School Board finances in a greater measure under the control of local Councils, ostensibly in the interests of economy, the Vancouver School Board and the City Council have co-operated 100 per cent with each other--- and not under compulsion but gladly."³¹

The following school year 1932-33 was to see even greater pressure brought to bear on school boards and the "new education"³² which had been slowly but steadily gaining ground particularly in the cities and larger municipalities of the province. In April, 1932 the Conservative government, confused and demoralized, with a provincial debt well over the \$143 million mark, and a bank overdraft for unemployment relief of \$2,393,600., sanctioned the appointment of a committee of business executives to look into the financial affairs of the province.³³ These men, George Kidd, W.L. Macken, Austin Taylor, A.H. Douglas and R.W. Mayhew representing business organizations mainly in Vancouver and Victoria which were highly critical of the government's handling were given permission to scrutinize the records of all departments of government of provincial finances. In July, the committee reported and its report was made public the following month. The Kidd Report as it became known after the name of the chairman of the committee exploded like a bomb on the political stage.

The Kidd Report was in essence a plea for a balanced budget through

the drastic curtailment of expenditures. It was also, more profoundly, a statement of the political and social attitudes of the highly conservative, British rather than American oriented,³⁴ business elite of the province's two major cities, and the most prominent backers of the Conservative party. To these men the idea of higher taxes was completely inimical, and the Keynesian concept of deficit financing was either unknown to them or so far outside the pale of business orthodoxy as to be totally unacceptable. The greatest area of public expenditure was social services, and within that area the largest percentage was devoted to education. So educational expenditures fell very heavily under the axe. Pointing to figures which would indicate a phenomenal rise in educational expenditures over the previous 21 years, the report attributed the causes to school boards which failed to collect fees from the considerable number of pupils in the schools who had passed their fifteenth birthday, to politicians who promised educational progress through increased expenditure, "without much consideration of the results that are being obtained",³⁵ to the Teachers' Federation and the Parent Teacher Association for constantly pushing for more costly equipment, the competition among school boards for the most skilled and highly trained teachers, and finally and, most importantly, the amount and kind of education which most pupils were receiving. The last item before the report's list of recommendations with regard to schooling read

"160.--We further question in the interests of many of the pupils themselves, the wisdom of their taking up the study of the more advanced branches of learning when

their time might be spent with more ultimate advantage to themselves in acquiring some other industrial occupation, in which their lives are to be spent. Once the elementary stage of education has been passed the sooner the majority of the students commence to assist in producing the wealth lying dormant in our natural resources, the better will it be for themselves and the society in which they live. A conception of education which is confined to scholastic attainments is far too prevalent. The skill of the agriculturalist to produce, the craftsman to create and the salesman to distribute, are as worthy of esteem as is any other branch of human endeavour. The capacity of society, as it is at present constituted, to absorb aspirants, whether qualified or not to the scholastic, professional, executive, and similar occupations is limited, and our educational authorities should not ignore this very practical aspect of their problem," 36

This section of the report and the one which followed it, which recommended limiting free education to the completion of the pupil's fourteenth year caused a great public outcry and damned the report in the eyes of teachers, trustees, the educational bureaucracy and many professors at the university. These two sections were regarded by educators and large numbers of the public as a turning back of the clock on educational progress, anti-democratic, a denial of equality of opportunity and a classbiased attempt to create a class of serfs. On closer inspection, however, it becomes apparent that the critique of education set out in the report is very similar to those criticisms which had been voiced by some educators in the province for years.³⁷ Indeed it was the attempt to

dislodge "a conception of education which is confined to scholastic attainments"³⁸ which lay at the heart of most of the innovations of the "new education". The junior high school movement, the new four year high school course, the Putman-Weir Survey itself were all assaults on traditional attitudes toward education. Similarly the view that the majority of the population should direct their efforts to developing the wealth of the province was integral to the thinking of most of the educators in British Columbia. Statements made in defence of the University of British Columbia, and innumerable inspectors' reports over previous decades bear adequate testimony to this fact. The main differences between the thinking of the businessmen of the early 30's and their counterparts in the educational establishment was the means of achieving their goals and the emphasis given to the importance of the school's role in the social conditioning of the child. Generally speaking the educators had the public totally on their side.³⁹ It was surely the height of folly to expect that in a province devastatingly hit by depression there would be much public support for the suggestion that students 14 years of age and over pay fees sufficient to cover "50 per cent of the entire cost of his education including interest and sinking fund charges on capital raised for the school building".⁴⁰ In fact this recommendation was widely interpreted at the time by academics, educators, teachers, editorial writers and parents as a crude means of eliminating large numbers of children from secondary schooling, and it is difficult to see it in any other light.

To mitigate the blow of compulsory school fees the report recommended the establishment of a scholarship fund by the provincial government and municipalities, "so that all pupils of exceptional ability and promise may have an opportunity of enjoying the full benefits of our complete educational facilities".⁴¹ On the contentious question of the control of school expenditures it was advocated that such control be "vested in the body charged with the duty of raising the taxes to pay them, namely the Municipal Council".⁴² School boards should be abolished and their functions performed by a standing committee appointed by the Municipal Council. It was further suggested that a minority of this standing committee be elected by the electors, in order to ensure them "the right of placing on this standing committee those specially qualified by experience and training in educational matters".⁴³ Although the issue of teachers' salaries was at the time of the writing of the report under review by a committee of nine teachers and nine laymen, the Kidd committee expressed "no hesitation in recommending that a new schedule be prepared providing for a reduction in the aggregate of salaries by 25 per cent".⁴⁴ The report also advocated the payment of fees to cover the full cost of teacher education at Normal Schools. It was the opinion of the committee that the government would not be able to continue the grant of \$250,000. to the university, even if its discontinuance might lead to the demise of the university. It was recommended that night schools and correspondence classes be continued. The latter was a virtual necessity if the recommendation regarding the number of children required in an area before a rural school could be opened was adopted.⁴⁵

In the weeks following the publication of the Kidd Report a barrage of words issued from groups and individuals interested in education. The Government published a rebuttal in a pamphlet which included the report in which it refused to consider reducing the age-limit of free education to 14 years. An editorial in the B.C. Teacher, the official organ of the B.C.T.F., praised the reaction of the "common people" in opposing "any attempt at interference with the equal privileges and opportunities which are so rightly given to all by this vital institution of the State".⁴⁶ The editorial took the report to task for what it saw as the assumptions underlying sections 160 and 161; a narrow view of education which saw it only as a means to making a living; an erroneous estimate of the educational requirements of industry; and ignorance of the secondary school curriculum. All these criticisms appear valid. The arguments used to back them up relied heavily on an ideal interpretation of the aims and accomplishments of education. The editorial attributed the assumptions of the Kidd committee to its idea of a proper social order, "not that of a democracy but of a feudal or caste system".⁴⁷ The B.C.T.F. also roundly condemned the recommendation to abolish school boards as a 'distinctly retrograde step', one which would have a disastrous effect"⁴⁸ upon the educational system.

Most of the criticisms levelled at those sections of the Kidd Report pertaining to education were fairly similar to those enunciated by the B.C.T.F. Professor H.F. Angus, head of the Department of Economics at the University of British Columbia and one of the most persistent and

outspoken critics of the report, condemned the proposals as emotional and irrational. Adopting the commonly held depression point of view that the greatest economic problem was overproduction, he criticized the report for setting as a goal the increase of the work force.⁴⁹ The proposal to impose fees on secondary school students he designated as one to "restrict access to certain occupations to those who can pay for their training and 'pupils of exceptional ability and promise', who may receive scholarships".⁵⁰ To achieve this--"the comfort of these two classes"⁵¹-- he claimed the majority were to be "forced into handicrafts, salesmanship and agriculture".⁵² He concluded that although not a declaration of class war, the report nevertheless was a "highly provocative act in inter-class diplomacy!".⁵³ Dr. G.M. Weir stormed against the report claiming that it condemned the young people of the province to intellectual serfdom "at the caprice of certain capitalist parvenus".⁵⁴ As for closing the university this, he maintained, would only serve to increase the crime rate among the disadvantaged poor who could not afford to go elsewhere.⁵⁵

This last note--the fear of youthful lawlessness-- had been sounded with greater frequency as the depression deepened. The Liberal opposition had stated during the debate on the budget in the spring of 1932 that continuance at school was preferable at any cost to the growth of juvenile misdemeanour.⁵⁶ It now became one of the most prominent arguments in favour of allowing students to remain in school on a non-fee-paying basis through late adolescence. An editorial in the Victoria Daily Times

quoted a Winnipeg judge's warning that "where school boards shut off full classes they are making criminals. There is a criminal responsibility on them. Youth will become demoralized and degenerate".⁵⁷ The cost to the taxpayer, he asserted, to rehabilitate these young men and women would be much greater than extra educational training. A Vancouver School Board Trustee presented the Rotary Club of Vancouver with substantially the same argument. Responding to the Kidd committee's proposal regarding the termination point for free education he said that the money saved would have to be spent on reformatories and police work. It was, he contended, "just as important in the long run, that the state should have good citizens---citizens with a proper idea of their duties toward the state and toward their fellows---as it is that it should have citizens capable of maintaining a decent level of subsistence".⁵⁸ Training in the rudiments of citizenship was incidental in elementary schools, he explained. At the secondary level, however, it was a deliberate part of the curriculum. For a student to miss his secondary education, he concluded, meant that "he would miss a great deal that would have helped make him a better citizen".⁵⁹ Dean R.W. Brock of the University of British Columbia took up the same theme when he offered youths education as a shelter from the depression. Speaking to the Vancouver Kiwanis Club in October, 1932, he said the great need of the day was the care of the rising population. One generation had been lost in the war, he asserted, and there was the danger that if care was not taken another generation might be lost "with worse results to the nation than the penalty paid in the war".⁶⁰ It was his opinion that with no work available young men should be kept in

high schools and the university rather than thrown on the streets where they were in great danger of becoming 'hobos'.⁶¹

The government rested its case against the Kidd Report on its moral duty to provide education for all youngsters of the province, rich and poor alike.⁶² As it was, said Hinchliffe, the burden of educational expenses fell more heavily on the poor than on the rich and if the Kidd Committee Report were followed the dice would be loaded even more heavily against the poor. In a statement quoted in the Vancouver Province in December, 1932 he further stated, "Even though a poor man withdraws his children from school when they are fifteen (the age limit now provided for) he must still pay taxes towards the school system which allows the children of richer men to continue studies.... If the age limit was reduced to 14, it would make it still more unfair for parents of limited means."⁶³ With regard to allowing free Normal School training, the same reason was given, that the province had a moral responsibility to provide teachers even if those able to qualify for training were unable to pay the full cost of their tuition. Neither were the Conservatives prepared to scuttle the university. Such would be a retrograde step for the "bountiful resources of the province demand a university with special courses to enable our rising generation to be equipped for the task of developing our resources".⁶⁴

To what extent these public pronouncements were a realistic statement of Conservative policy on education is difficult to say. Certainly no political party whose term was running out would be likely to espouse the recommendations of the Kidd Commission in view of the adverse public

reaction which they had occasioned. There is little doubt, however, that Conservative thinking tended toward an elitist view, but an elitism based on brains, not only on wealth. In a memorandum of 1930, Hinchliffe wrote that a Government funded programme of scholarships and bursaries "lies at the foundation of my ideal for education in British Columbia".⁶⁵ These scholarships and bursaries were to be granted "on such terms and conditions, especially with respect to character, intellectual ability and financial circumstances"⁶⁶ as might be prescribed by the Council of Public Instruction. "In this way" he continued, "I am hoping in years to come to see a system established in B.C., whereby the child of the poorest parents, who shows that he has the ambition to get along, can have the advantage of scholarships offered by the Government".⁶⁷ The same intellectual elitism is apparent in his approach to the provincial university which he declared he wished to see as a university "into which only students with real ability and ambition can enter".⁶⁸ Although he did not wish to see the leaving age reduced there is never a hint that he wished to see it increased until after the publication of the Kidd Report when he is reported to have said that "it might even be questioned if this age should not be increased".⁶⁹ Hinchliffe also declared himself in 1930, in favour of many of the new innovations in education. In a speech before the Vancouver Board of Trade in April of that year he defended the educational system of the province, the changes in methodology and the new courses which had been added in recent years, in his opinion in response to public demand. "The new standard costs more" he stated "and it is worth it. If we reduce the cost of education, we reduce its effectiveness and its effect on the

generation who will occupy the province after us."⁷⁰ After delivering his speech Hinchliffe defended his position in the face of severe criticism from the members, the same kind of criticism which was to surface later in the Kidd Report.

It is likely that a speech made by Premier Tolmie during education week in November 1932, summed up the Conservative party's thinking on the education of the majority. "Are we bringing up our young people to look at a dollar's worth of overalls with a curling lip" he asked his audience. The answer of course, at least in his mind, was that young people had developed a contempt for work, particularly manual work which was needed to develop the province. In his opinion it was "impossible to stress too strongly the importance of training our young people along lines which are likeliest to assist in the development of the province and which are most likely to develop as the province develops".⁷¹

After the sound and fury occasioned by the Kidd Report had died down the provincial government, municipalities and school boards were still faced with the problem of how to keep the schools running with vastly decreased revenues. Government expenditures of education for the year 1932-33 were over \$1,165,000. less than for the previous year, a drop from a cost per pupil per year of \$33.18 to \$23.98. Most school reports of the year brought out the effect of the depression on both teachers and pupils. Reduced salaries, overcrowded and inadequate facilities, insufficient reading material, and children suffering the effects of malnutrition or inadequate clothing. In a number of rural areas a problem of non-

attendance had arisen because parents were keeping children out of school to assist with farm chores and harvesting. The report for the Vancouver schools for the first time struck a pessimistic note. In the words of the superintendent, "To report on conditions in the Vancouver Schools for the school year 1932-33 is to turn from years of 'expansion and confidence' to one of 'contraction and perplexity!'" The sum total of the year's activities were described as "a slightly forced retreat educationally, despite strenuous efforts to maintain ground previously gained".⁷²

There had been no attempt made to increase school accommodation as the anticipated increase in high school students had not materialized. The elementary school teaching staff had been reduced by six, the high school staff had been increased by one. Eight special classes had been closed and there had been a marked reduction in school services. Attendance officers and inspectors were not replaced on retirement and special supervisors and instructors were assigned to regular teaching positions; health services were curtailed and the dental clinic was closed. In February, 1933 the school board had found it necessary to cut salaries of under \$1,200. by 10 per cent, those over that amount by 20 per cent.

At the end of 1932 the committees working on the contentious problems of the control of school finances submitted their reports. Early in 1933 the Minister of Education announced his proposed legislation on these issues. Teachers' salaries were to be fixed at \$780. for elementary school teachers and \$1,200 for high school teachers irrespective of location. In an attempt to equalize the taxation burden throughout the province the government proposed to reorganize its grants in such a way

that the various cities and towns whether large or small would all tax themselves in the neighbourhood of $2\frac{1}{2}$ mills. In the cases of Vancouver and Victoria this meant raising the tax rates $1\frac{1}{2}$ and 1 mill respectively, while many small towns would be able to lower theirs by 3 and 4 per cent. It should be noted that this change was in line with recommendations made in the Putman-Weir Survey.⁷³

With regard to control of school finance, legislative amendments were made to the Public Schools Act which would give municipal councils "the right to refer back to school boards ordinary estimates considered beyond the ability of taxpayers to meet".⁷⁴ If the two bodies could not resolve their differences, the matter would then be laid before an arbitrator. Opposition from teachers, parents and school boards had obviously been strong enough to prevent the government from following its declared policy of the previous year.

No relief appeared in sight for harassed school boards or poorly paid teachers during the spring of 1933. The budget brought down continued the philosophy of retrenchment and still more retrenchment in an effort to produce a balanced budget. The Conservatives were by this time a disunited if not demoralized party. Split between those who wished to follow Tolmie's lead to form a coalition government and those who wished to retain the traditional party politics regardless of depression problems, the government, whose term ran out on the first of September, waited until the end of August to announce the date of the election. The ensuing election campaign was notable for the fact that it saw the appearance for

the first time of the Canadian Commonwealth Federation (C.C.F.) party. But it was also notable for the educational historian, because of that rare event in provincial politics: education was a major issue.

The Kidd Report had thrown education into the spotlight and there it was to remain until after the election. It had also helped to polarize opinion and in the process to identify Conservative policy with that of the business elite. The Liberals hit them hard as hidebound reactionaries, while some members of the C.C.F. added to that charge a promise to eliminate any class orientation in the schools by turning them into institutions dedicated to the indoctrination of socialist ideology.

The Liberal party had as its spokesman on educational matters, Dr. G.M. Weir, on leave of absence from the University of British Columbia. Weir, at this point in his career, was considered to be a man who typified, to quote the Vancouver Sun, "the university and school groups scientifically elevating the mind and ability of the human race".⁷⁵ Although as recently as the fall of 1931 he had lauded the report of a U.S. investigator who had by the application of "the cold logic of statistical figures to the educational systems of the Canadian provinces"⁷⁶ placed B.C. ahead of the rest, he now declared the province's educational system to be in a parlous state. A message to the teachers of British Columbia referred to the "baneful influence of educational reaction" which "even before the financial depression had produced its unhappy results" and the harm wrought by "a unique combination of government ineptitude and ministerial hostility towards public education".⁷⁷ The Liberal party, it continued, would

restore education to its rightful place as the most important activity of the state. The system would be characterized by the principles of democracy and ensure educational opportunity for all.

The Liberal party platform with regard to education was long on rhetoric and short on practical proposals. At its convention in the fall of 1932 the B.C. Liberal Association had passed several resolutions with regard to educational matters. The convention went on record as rejecting "any proposed organization or reorganization which involves a caste system of education", and as being in favour of an educational system "democratic in principle so as to facilitate such intellectual growth of each individual member of society as may be required to equip him for his daily tasks, and for the enjoyment of such cultural pursuits as may be in keeping with our social customs".⁷⁸ A third resolution was passed in favour of a general review of the educational system in order to place it on as sound an administrative footing as possible. It would seem that attacks on Conservative educational policy and promises to implement a democratic system dedicated to equality of opportunity in the schools was the thrust of the Liberal party's message.

The C.C.F., too, concentrated its fire on the current system. However as an amalgam of various socialist and radical parties which had existed in the province over the last three decades, as well as converts to the new party's policies, the C.C.F. contained members, some of whom were candidates, whose prescription for improving education far outran the party's official platform. Party policy with regard to education called

for the establishment of a "thoroughly democratic progressive education, free to all, adapted to individual needs and designed to prepare young people for a full and complete participation in a co-operative order".⁷⁹ There was nothing very revolutionary about this, indeed it might have been lifted from a Liberal party policy statement. In addition the C.C.F. called for the "creation of vocational schools, particularly in order to care for the educational needs of unemployed youths pending such time as they can be drafted into the industrial scheme".⁸⁰ Again not a very radical objective. But from election meetings throughout the province came statements about revising text-books to suit the teachings of socialism, having night classes for school teachers in socialism, dismissing any teacher who would not advocate socialism in the schools, and, having the children "generally trained from an early age to socialist theories and ideals".⁸¹ Such pronouncements stirred up a furor in the press. The C.C.F. was labelled Marxist, Communist, autocratic, opposed to freedom of thought and speech, and at the very least utterly lacking in political acumen. It is almost certain that the controversy occasioned by the more radical of some of its members caused the new party to lose some potential support.

The brunt of the criticism which assailed the Conservatives was borne by Minister of Education Hinchliffe who remained loyal to Tolmie in the now disoriented party. By and large he defended the record of his department but made no statements regarding future plans for education other than a review of the curriculum, of both elementary and secondary schools. The B.C.T.F. had passed a resolution at its annual meeting in

1932 advocating such a review, but at the time Hinchliffe had turned it down as unnecessary. In an address to the B.C. School Trustees Annual Convention he said that what was needed in the schools was utilitarianism. Referring to the new general course which had been introduced in the high schools he pointed out that this course "followed the modern trend towards utilitarianism...and would help materially in training youths for their life work".⁸² The other significant innovation made during his ministerial term, the change in the formula for provincial grants, was often cited as an attempt to minimize the distinction between rich and poor, urban and rural.

The most revealing remarks, however, made by Hinchliffe on public education, its role and purpose, were given in an address to a church group several months before the beginning of the election campaign. Centring his comments on the question of what should be the limit to public education paid for out of the public purse, he based his remarks on the assumption that "the greatest part of education including character building at the first and the application of knowledge later was conducted entirely outside of school life. Schooling was then but a part of education, and public schooling as a part again of the smaller division."⁸³ From this is apparent the great gulf which separated Hinchliffe and the Conservatives from the Liberals and Weir whose Survey emphasized the primary importance of character building in public schooling at all levels.

Within the limits thus defined Hinchliffe then set out the chief concern of the state in the provision of public schooling, the making of a

good citizen. The good citizen was then defined as "one who would earn a livelihood for himself and his dependents; bear in turn his share of the costs of state institutions; and thus keep up the revolving fund out of which his children in turn would be taught".⁸⁴ In addition this good citizenship also entailed imparting a proper appreciation of and loyalty to Canada, Britain and the British Empire. Further to that the state had no responsibility. The profession or occupation in life which he chose to follow was the responsibility of the student and his parents. "If the state had to decide that question it would have to examine every child to determine that for which it was best suited. I say very definitely", he concluded, "that the state is not concerned whether any pupil shall become a doctor or a sewer digger. It is concerned that each shall be taught to secure an honest living, and become an asset and not a liability to the state."⁸⁵ In addition to this he stated on a number of occasions that it was his intention to try to determine the type of training needed for entry into various professions and businesses. On the basis of this information it would then be possible to see what adjustments in schooling "might be both feasible and warranted".⁸⁶ Here too the difference in attitude between Hinchliffe and Weir is apparent. Although both were proponents of the practical in education, Weir's view certainly encompassed a role for the public schools and indirectly the state in directing students into vocations and professions.

But an increased role for the state in education and in other areas of life, was the trend of thinking of many groups and organizations. For example, in the autumn of 1933 both the Roman Catholic Bishop of Vancouver

and the Baptist Church in British Columbia were declaring themselves in favour of direct intervention by the state in the economy, and its provision of adequate support for the unemployed.⁸⁷ The Parent Teacher Association and the Vancouver Principals' Association, while not supporting any party, called on government to assume a greater role in economic and social affairs.

The election results confirmed public opinion's shift to the left. The new legislature would contain 34 Liberals, 3 Conservatives and 7 C.C.F.ers with the C.C.F. forming the official opposition. It is impossible to gauge how important an issue education was in the election. As far as the Liberals were concerned it was part and parcel of their policy of the time, which called for a greatly increased role for government, both in the managing of the economy and the provision of social services. In a province which was experiencing severe economic hardship, where the total number of unemployed had reached the figure of 100,000, the electorate had turned away from the philosophy of the balanced budget to the "left-leaning reform platform articulated by the Liberals but one which fell short of the centralized state control for which the C.C.F. stood".⁸⁸ In addition, and this certainly applied with regard to education, they had turned to the only party which they believed would preserve equal opportunity for all unobstructed by the authoritarianism of the right or the left. This was a theme much played upon by the Liberals after it became apparent that the C.C.F. was going to be a force to be reckoned with. Repeatedly the Liberals referred to themselves or were referred to by the press as the only force which could preserve society and its freedoms from the tyranny of a selfish capitalism or a dictatorial socialism.

Notes

Chapter III

- 1 Margaret A. Ormsby, British Columbia: A History (Vancouver, 1971), pp. 431-434.
- 2 R.E. Caves and R.H. Holton, "An Outline of the Economic History of British Columbia, 1881-1951" in J.W. Friesen and H.K. Ralston eds. Historical Essays on British Columbia (Toronto, 1976), pp. 152-166.
- 3 Timothy Allan Dunn, "Work, Class and Education: Vocationalism in British Columbia's Public Schools 1900-1929" M.A. Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1978.
For a detailed account of economic developments in British Columbia during this period see Chapter II of this thesis.
- 4 Ormsby, Op. Cit., p. 443.
- 5 Ibid., p. 445.
- 6 Robert E. Groves, "Business Government, Party Politics and the British Columbia Business Community 1928-1933". M.A. Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1976, quoted p. 104.
- 7 Percentage increase slightly less than 5%.
- 8 There is no general agreement among historians as to the causes of the increase in attendance at the high school level. The two most probable reasons are the lack of employment for young people coming out of school and a conviction on the part of parents and students that more education was now needed for advancement in the world of work. In this instance the superintendent also mentions greater difficulties faced by students wishing to attend university.
- 9 60th Annual Report of The Public Schools of the Province of British Columbia, 1930-31. L41
- 10 Ibid., L42

- 11 Ibid., L42.
- 12 Ibid., L42.
- 13 Ibid., L42.
- 14 Ibid., L44.
- 15 The Victoria ratepayers Association went so far as to request that the cost of education in the province be reduced by 50%.
Victoria Colonist, July 20, 1932.
- 16 It was estimated that about 95% of the provincial government's grants to school districts was for direct services which included teachers' salaries. This figure did not include the salaries of those teachers administering the correspondence courses for elementary and high schools, industrial education or those employed by the two provincial normal schools and the school for the deaf and the blind, which amounted to an additional 5% of the government's share of education costs. It is impossible from the data available to determine the percentage of the amount expended by districts which went towards teachers' salaries.
- 17 For a good example see J.D. Purdy "John Strachan: Conservative Reformer" in Profiles of Canadian Educators.
- 18 Hinchliffe to Tolmie 1930, Tolmie Papers, Box 7.
- 19 Ibid., Tolmie Papers, Box 7.
- 20 Ibid., Tolmie Papers, Box 7.
- 21 Provincial salary committees were in existence from 1931 to 1933. Difficulties arose because the teachers' panel and the so-called people's panel composed of government appointees could not come to any agreement.

- 22 Usually used to refer to those subjects which were not part of the standard academic curriculum i.e. manual training, domestic science.
- 23 59th Annual Report of The Public Schools of the Province of British Columbia, 1929-30. Q 34.
- 24 60th Annual Report of the Public Schools of the Province of British Columbia, 1930-31, L40.
- 25 61st Annual Report of the public schools of the Province of British Columbia, 1931-32. L30.
- 26 Tolmie to Hinchliffe Nov. 1931, Tolmie Papers, Box 7.
- 27 Hinchliffe to Tolmie November 9, 1931, Tolmie Papers, Box 7.
- 28 These courses were frequently described as frills by those wishing to pare education costs such as municipal councils, property owners' associations and some businessmen's associations not only because they required extra teachers but also because they frequently necessitated the purchase of costly equipment.
- 29 Vancouver Sun, March 22, 1932.
- 30 Groves, Op. Cit., p. 109.
- 31 61st Annual Report, Ibid., L36.
- 32 The most reliable source of information on the extent of the adoption of the "new education" up to this time are the annual reports of the public schools of the province and they by no means give a complete picture. They provide evidence that there were 11 junior secondary schools, that manual training and industrial arts, and home economics had been introduced in many schools in the province, but statistical evidence is in most cases lacking. The 1929-1930 report, for example, states that there were 83 home economics centres in the province but does not state where they were. The report of the same year also

- 32 records that most of the high schools in Vancouver had
 ... introduced a course in industrial arts but gives no
 indication of the number of classes or the number of students
 enrolled in them. With reference to the introduction of
 new pedagogical techniques the evidence is even more inexact.
- 33 Ormsby, Op. Cit., pp. 446-448.
- 34 D.C. Jones and T.A. Dunn, "Education, The Depression, and The Kidd
 Report". Unpublished paper, April, 1976, p. 7.
- 35 Kidd Report Section 156, Quoted from May Committee Report.
- 36 Ibid., Section 160.
- 37 This does not imply that an educational system based on the Kidd
 Report recommendations would have been the same as one based
 on the Putman-Weir Survey. The former would in all probability
 have pared education down to the three r's.
- 38 Kidd Report, Section 160.
- 39 Jones and Dunn Op. Cit., p. 18. Not even the business community
 was united in support of the Kidd Report.
- 40 Kidd Report, Section 161.
- 41 Ibid., Section 163.
- 42 Ibid., Section 169.
- 43 Ibid., Section 169.
- 44 Ibid., Section 173.
- 45 Ibid., Section 166. This section recommended the closing of any
 school in a municipal school district or a rural school district
 if the average attendance fell below 10.

- 46 B.C. Teacher, October, 1932, p. 1.
- 47 Ibid., p. 7.
- 48 Ibid., p. 9.
- 49 D.C. Jones and T.A. Dunn Op. Cit., Union leaders rejected the report on the grounds that it was solely in the interests of the rich and would throw thousands more on an overcrowded labour market. p. 19, p. 26.
- 50 B.C. Teacher, Op. Cit., p. 23.
- 51 Ibid., p. 23.
- 52 Ibid., p. 23.
- 53 Ibid., p. 23.
- 54 Vancouver Province, August 31, 1932.
- 55 Ibid.
- 56 Victoria Colonist, April 1, 1932, Tolmie Papers Box 14. According to newspapers the chief opposition critics of the Conservative government's education policies appear to have been T.D. Pattullo, the Liberal leader and A.M. Manson, Liberal member from Omineca.
- 57 Editorial Victoria Daily Times September 15, 1932. Tolmie Papers Box 14.
- 58 Vancouver Province October 21, 1932. Tolmie Papers Box 14.
- 59 Ibid.
- 60 Vancouver Sun, October 5, 1932.

- 61 Ibid.
- 62 The Conservatives took exception to some of the recommendations made in connection with every department of government.
- 63 Vancouver Province, December 7, 1932. Tolmie Papers Box 14.
- 64 Victoria Colonist, August 20, 1932. Tolmie Papers, Box 14.
- 65 Memorandum Minister of Education Tolmie Papers Box 20.
- 66 Ibid.
- 67 Ibid.
- 68 Victoria Daily Times, March 10, 1931. Tolmie Papers Box 14.
- 69 Victoria Colonist, November 24, 1932.
- 70 Vancouver Sun, April 29, 1930.
- 71 Victoria Colonist, November, 1932.
- 72 62nd Annual Report of the Public Schools of the Province of British Columbia, 1932-33. M49
- 73 Putman-Weir Survey, p. 287.
- 74 Victoria Daily Times March 20, 1933 Tolmie Papers, Box 14.
- 75 Vancouver Sun September 27, 1933, Tolmie Papers Box 15.
- 76 Vancouver Sun, October 7, 1931.

- 77 B.C. Teacher, October, 1933.
- 78 B.C. Liberal Association Minute Book, March, 1927-October 3, 1932
Minutes of Convention Oct. 3 and 4, 1932, Resolution 9.
- 79 C.C.F. Provincial Platform and Manifesto (Vancouver: C.C.F.,
1933) Section 11. McCarter Collection Special Collections
U.B.C.
- 80 Ibid.
- 81 Victoria Daily Times October 2, 1933. Tolmie Papers, Box 15.
- 82 Victoria Colonist September 19, 1933. Tolmie Papers, Box 14.
- 83 Ibid., May 27, 1933.
- 84 Ibid.
- 85 Ibid.
- 86 Ibid.
- 87 Vancouver Sun, October 3, 1933. Vancouver Sun, September 20, 1933
Tolmie Papers, Box 15.
- 88 Groves, Op. Cit.

CHAPTER IV

EDUCATIONAL CHANGE 1933-1935. UNDER THE NEW LIBERAL GOVERNMENT

When the Liberal party took office in the late fall of 1933, it was the focus of the hopes of a majority of the electorate. A new era, if not of pre-depression prosperity, at least of an adequate human standard of living, would, it was thought, soon become a reality. Liberal leader Duff Pattullo's slogan of "Work and Wages" had led people to believe that the provincial government could ensure that all who wished to work would be able to do so in the very near future. But the voters were unaware of the intricacies and difficulties of public finance, nor did they foresee the intransigence of both Conservative and Liberal prime ministers when faced with demands from the provinces for greater financial assistance. Neither Pattullo nor his government ^{was} ~~were~~ unaware of the magnitude of the problems facing them, but the euphoria of the moment led them to feel that all difficulties were surmountable. That the Liberal party in British Columbia would ultimately help to seal its doom by the intransigence of its own stand vis-à-vis the federal government was probably never contemplated.

Like F.D. Roosevelt, who also came to power in the dark winter of 1933-34, Pattullo voiced ideas which seemed to some at the time to be too socialistic, even to pose a threat to the continued existence of capitalism. The severity of the depression with its attendant social problems had convinced both men that government must play a much greater role in the economic and social affairs of the state than had hitherto been

the case. This was not to say that either politician was radical in the sense of wishing to create a new restructured society. As most American historians now agree Roosevelt succeeded admirably in preserving the essentials of the capitalist system in the United States, and like Keynes, his administration's most famous economic mentor, might most accurately be described as a radical conservative. The same term might equally well be applied to Pattullo.

Pattullo was 60 years of age when he became premier. He had spent the last seventeen years in politics as a member of the provincial legislature, cabinet minister and leader of the opposition. During this time he became known as a strong party man with a great admiration for the common man who had come to the west and through courage and enterprise had built the province.¹ With the onset of the depression he began to question a system which was bringing misery to so many and whose basic assumptions were being openly assailed by both socialists and communists even in British Columbia. The result was his adoption of a position which was certainly more radical than the generally accepted Canadian Liberalism of the day.² He gradually became convinced that British Columbia

"...like the entire western world, was entering a new period in which the state was determined to play a just, creative role in lightening the burden of others 'unable to carry the load'. Under the new system, characterized by wider Government control, regulation and direction, individual ownership would be preserved, but capital would be used 'for the benefit and not the

detriment of the people as a whole". 3

Jean sees little for word!

Pattullo frequently bemoaned the fact that in his own province, as well as Canada as a whole, so little was being done to mobilize the effort to bring the new system into being. He feared, as he stated in a letter to R.J. Cromie, publisher of the Vancouver Sun in 1932, that the passivity of governments would "increase the attractiveness of Communism as an alternative for the disadvantaged, especially as times became harder".⁴

The role that Pattullo intended his government to play then was that of economic planner, in order to minimize as much as possible the vagaries of unrestricted laissez-faire capitalism, and to protect and assist those who suffered most from capitalism's excesses. In practical terms this meant the setting up of an economic council to advise government on what measures it could take to assist in the direction of the economy, labour legislation to restrict hours of work and increase minimum wages, and continued and, if necessary, greater government spending in the field of social services. "Schools, hospitals and welfare agencies, he thought, must not suffer for lack of funds during the depression."⁵ Pattullo believed that it was the duty of the politician to "wrest concessions from business for his dispossessed constituents, to help create new business opportunities, thereby maximizing employment".⁶ If all possible measures taken by private enterprise proved unsuccessful in taking up the slack of employment he was prepared to try "all methods, short of public ownership and expropriation, to facilitate full employment and relieve the poor from

the despair of poverty".⁷ Both the reactionary businessman and the socialist were equally condemned for being the cause of social unrest and perhaps, ultimately, conflict. To Pattullo the liberal way provided the means to achieve a harmonious and just society. Such a society was never thought of as an egalitarian one. Economic and social inequality, he believed, was rooted in nature, had existed in all societies and was inevitable notwithstanding the form of government. The only role the liberal politician could fulfill was to try to prevent the abuse of social and economic power; and to lead public opinion to the acceptance of the view that the "welfare of every individual in the state is the concern of all the individuals of the state".⁸

Although Pattullo made relatively few public statements about education, generally leaving this subject to G.M. Weir, his indefatigable Minister of Education, and those in his party who had been closely involved in educational matters, it is reasonable to suppose that education occupied an important place in his concept of a stable and prosperous society. In a speech made immediately prior to the election he emphasized his party's policy of abolishing fees for those students over the age of fifteen who had not yet finished their high school education. Youths should be allowed to remain in high school throughout adolescence without monetary obligation. "I am not", he stated, "opposed to the so-called frills in education. We have too little education. That's what the country is suffering from now. The trouble is that the financial side of the country has not kept pace with scientific progress."⁹ Again in the spring of 1935 he returned to the theme of the paramount importance of education in an address delivered

at the annual meeting of the B.C.T.F. entitled 'Education as a Public Service'. He defended education past the primary level for its important contribution to the training of the mind, the building of character and the inculcation of a spirit of service. He asserted that in his opinion it was the educational system which had "contributed in no small way to that mental stability and soundness of character which have enabled our people to preserve their sanity...in what has too often appeared to be a disintegrating world".¹⁰ Pattullo also stressed the economic value of education as a "medium of circulating dollars and cents". "Through education" he asserted, "has come about higher standards of living. In the light of discovery and invention people are not prepared to live in the primitive fashion which existed within the memory of us all and which in outlying districts exists in the same measure to-day."¹¹

There was nothing particularly new in all this. Since the beginnings of public education in Canada, indeed in North America generally, most educators and many politicians had been extolling the role of education in the cause of social, economic and political betterment. However as the perspectives on the problems of a society changed, so too did the specific means by which education was seen to be able to assist in their solution. Without doubt the 1930's was a time of heightened interest in education with educators and lay people of varying political hues calling on the schools to fulfill the hopes of all in the creation of a happier and more prosperous world.¹² By this time in her history British Columbia with its strong radical element and the ever-present threat of violence, a surprisingly successful socialist party, a substantial urban proletariat, and a wealthy,

extremely conservative business elite presented a profile distinctively different from any other province of Canada. Headed by a Liberal administration committed to traditional capitalist values as well as the necessity of state leadership in economic and social affairs, it was to draw from the broad spectrum of ideas called progressive education, those which seemed best fitted to her problems, her traditions and her aspirations.

By and large the decisions regarding educational matters were made by a relatively small number of educators, of whom by far the most influential was G.M. Weir, both by virtue of his status as an educator and his position as Minister of Education. After joining the staff of the Department of Education at the University of British Columbia, he became a consistent advocate of the new education and of raising teaching standards in the public schools. His outspoken criticism of the Kidd report had helped to marshall public opinion against its recommendations regarding education.¹³ His co-authorship of the Putman-Weir Survey had brought him national prominence and in 1929 he was asked by the Canadian Medical Association and the Canadian Nurses Association to conduct a thorough investigation of nursing education in Canada.

A Survey of Nursing Education in Canada, which was published in 1932 affords insight into Weir's social philosophy as well as his beliefs, attitudes and values in the field of education which make more understandable his future career as Minister of Education and Provincial Secretary with responsibility for health services. The Survey had been commissioned because of disagreement in both associations as to what constituted a

desirable standard of nursing education. The nurses generally favoured the raising of standards while some sections of the medical profession argued that standards should be lowered thereby decreasing nursing fees and thus bridging the gap between patient and nurse. The report came out, predictably, solidly in favour of the raising of the entrance requirements for nursing schools and improvement in the quality and methods of instruction given to student nurses.

In presenting his case for the raising of admission requirements Weir relied heavily on the evidence provided by I.Q. tests. Such tests administered in different parts of the country had shown 22 per cent of nurses to have an I.Q. less than 90, and 39 per cent to have an I.Q. less than 95. "It appears very doubtful" he wrote "whether any profession which has such a dead-weight in its ranks can attain high levels of achievement unless its standards be considerably elevated. A purging process seems overdue".¹⁴

Anticipating criticism of his findings, Weir defended the I.Q. tests on the grounds of their validity and their applicability to the nursing profession. As well he pointed to the relationship which the tests allegedly proved between intelligence and nationality and socio-economic background. He claimed that the tests given, a modification of the American Army Alpha test and the same one as had been used in the British Columbia School Survey "with highly satisfactory results" was a "guaranteed measure of abilities".¹⁵ These tests, "standardized by competent authorities, constructed on scientific principles, free from ambiguity" were, he wrote,

"adapted to the purposes the survey had in mind when the testing programme was undertaken".¹⁶

Although the intelligence tests were designed to measure the ability to learn and not moral values, they served as well as a fairly reliable though not infallible guide to an individual's moral worth, Weir claimed. Adopting the same position as Thorndike¹⁷ Weir wrote that "dullness and moral delinquency are related almost as closely as twin brothers. The investigation of numerous cases has proved this statement beyond reasonable doubt. The converse also, with certain exceptions, appears true. Intelligent people usually have the greatest moral worth."¹⁸ He further claimed that there was a high degree of correlation between "abstract or pure intelligence (such as the tests are alleged to measure) on the one hand, and social intelligence (tact, handling people) and motor intelligence on the other".¹⁹ Finally Weir made clear that the most intelligent students were of English, Scotch and Irish ancestry and middle class background. "The average intelligence of student nurses, whose parents belong to the professional group," he pointed out, "considerably exceeded that of the students whose parents are engaged in various occupations and types of unskilled and semi-skilled labour".²⁰ On the basis of the foregoing Weir concluded that I.Q. tests should be administered to all applicants for admission to nursing schools and that all with I.Q.s under 100 should be rejected. This was not to be the only criterion for admission; other factors such as social background, family history and character should also be taken into consideration.

In Weir's opinion, once the student nurse had embarked on her training she should receive an education much more intellectually rigorous than had been the case in most nursing schools up to that time. Nursing must be taken out of the category of a trade and professionalized as quickly as possible "the inexorability of social evolution, with its emphasis on public health education, specialization in medical science, preventive medicine, as well as enlightened public interest in health matters".²¹ Superior education would, the Survey claimed, result in greater open-mindedness, a willingness to co-operative attitude of mind, and greater social adaptability. Weir had come to the conclusion that education was the sine qua non for survival in the world of his day. He wrote,

"Modern democracy has declared its faith in the value of superior education. Nations are vying with one another to raise the level of social intelligence by exterminating the blight of ignorance. In international as in national and social relationships, leaders of foresight realize today as never before that 'the race is to the swift'. No individual, no occupation and no profession that aspires to success can afford to ignore this homely truth." 22

However, arguments for intelligence and education were not always pitched on such a high plane. Education was necessary to the nurses not only for reasons of professional competence but also to ensure a pleasant relationship with educated patients. Unless the nurse were educated she was in danger of feeling inferior and awkward in the presence of such

patients, and of resorting to gossiping about the hospital staff. The cultural background of many nurses was very poor, bemoaned one doctor quoted by the survey, "little if any better than the cultural background of the servant-girl class".²³ So trying could the relationship between patient and nurse become that convalescence could be retarded, as in the case of a convalescing doctor whose nurse was unable to read Dickens intelligibly out loud to him.

On the subject of health care Weir was completely convinced of the necessity and inevitability of state supported hospital and medical service. Arguments against public assistance for health care were, he stated, "reminiscent of arguments versus public education a century ago".²⁴ Many Canadians had come to think that every citizen had a right to be healthy and to be protected against ill-health. Canadians, he declared, were becoming "community-minded without becoming communists".²⁵ The question of state medicine had arisen at approximately 75 per cent of the meetings to discuss nursing problems, the survey stated. There were, however, two dangerous classes of opinion which militated against the achievement of a sound and sensible solution of the problems of health care, and which were mischievous in their "influence on the judgement of the average working class citizen".²⁶ On the one hand there was communism which would transform the political system into a tyranny of hate under which it was "certain that few men and women of high ideals and intelligence would either enter or remain"²⁷ in the medical and nursing professions. On the other hand there was a "certain school of psuedo-professional individualism" which was quite indifferent to the "toad beneath the harrow". Followers

of this philosophy were motivated primarily by greed. Although there were few who could be classed in this category, according to Weir, "relatively fewer than the extreme communists",²⁸ he saw their influence as equally harmful.

Weir was anxious to counter the arguments of the proponents of individualism and did so in a revealing section entitled "Intelligence and Improvidence". According to their thinking the average citizen could afford to look after his own health needs, and if he were sufficiently provident to budget for the possible contingency of future illness. With "the fact that Mr. average man is a notoriously improvident person" Weir emphatically agreed. However the corollary of that was not to let him suffer for his improvidence, but rather to have the state force him to be provident, and by so doing in large part remove the burden of costs from the "shoulders of the paying patient of moderate means".²⁹ In summation Weir stated

"If we assume--and the assumption does not appear unwarrantable--that the average intelligence of the 2280 student nurses discussed in Chapter Ten is at least equivalent to the average intelligence of the citizens of Canada, the conclusion appears inescapable that approximately 50% of the latter need some guidance and possibly even compulsory direction, paternal or otherwise, in the matter of providing against the high and constantly mounting costs of illness." 30

Weir did not elaborate on this 'or otherwise' in the above passage, but the implications are clear. Freedom of choice was not the right of

those deemed arbitrarily to be inferior. If peaceful persuasion proves ineffective then sanctions must be used. The parallel with fascism circa 1933 is difficult to avoid. He continued in the same vein,

"This is not the statement of any new conclusion based on scientific fact--although the facts are scarcely subject to dispute--but a well-known principle already accepted in the sphere of public education. If compulsory attendance at school is justifiable for the protection of the state against the evils of ignorance and illiteracy, the seedbed of anarchy and communism, is not some form of compulsory health insurance also justifiable for the protection of the community as well as the individual against the improvidence of that rather large section of the population that lacks sufficient foresight or moral stamina or earning capacity or social opportunity to protect itself and its dependents against the possible inroads of disease?" 31

Here, for once, Weir drops the conventional liberal rhetoric of the state being made for man not man for the state. The primary and only necessary justification of any action by the state is its own protection and perpetuation. Views such as those expressed above provides substantiation for the thesis of Karier and other American historians that in times of crisis the weaknesses in liberal ideology are exposed, and liberalism moves to a dictatorial right.³² Having established his basic position Weir now goes on to inject a note of humanity.

"The question of state intervention in the matter of health insurance, however, cannot be determined on the basis of

one factor, namely intelligence. The presence of lowgrade intelligence is only one aspect of this problem. There are also many people of normal or superior intelligence who are notoriously improvident while many are, irrespective of intelligence, the victims of unavoidable misfortunes and lack of opportunity that cripple their productive capacities. The state, therefore, can strengthen its case for compulsory health insurance on other grounds than improvidence due to low grade intelligence. Owing to the fact that intelligence, unlike education, cannot be appreciably improved, the improvidence arising from this source must ever remain a fairly constant factor. But lack of the individual's earning and saving capacity, whatever be its composite cause---and lack of intelligence is probably one of the most potent single causes---along with the inescapable incidence and mounting cost of illness must provide the ultimate justification for state intervention in the matter of health insurance." 33

However in his concluding paragraph Weir returned to his first theme, eugenics. He wrote,

"While, in the judgement of the Survey, there is ample evidence on the above grounds to justify the adoption of compulsory health insurance in the interests of the average adult, certain more radical and ultimately more effective methods of combatting disease are also desirable. These are the following:--

- (a) Sterilization of the feebleminded and morons.
- (b) More vigorous and comprehensive programmes of preventive medicine and public health teaching." 34

Although it is extremely doubtful that in his role as politician and Minister of Education Weir ever expressed the low opinion he had of the intelligence of such a large percentage of the population as cited above, such a conviction was basic to many of the changes he and the Liberal government subsequently proposed. Those deemed to be lacking in intelligence were not at any cost to be left to their own devices, for in that way lay the possible disintegration of the state and the almost certain impoverishment of the middle class. In a subsequent passage Weir quoted with approval a prominent British doctor whose case for state intervention in health matters was founded on Darwinian theory. So too throughout the Survey the belief expressed was that the recommendations made were ultimately inevitable, in tune with an inexorable evolutionary development.³⁵ As a corollary to this it was the intelligent, moral and educated, in fact the middle class of Anglo-Saxon stock, who must assume the leadership and guidance of society in this critical period of its development. The authoritarianism, intolerance, prejudice, elitism and racism which appeared in the Survey reappear, sometimes subtly, at other times blatantly in the subsequent events in the field of education during the depression years.

Immediately after assuming office, the new Minister of Education issued a message to the teachers of British Columbia. Addressing them as "sentinels of the new Social Order,"³⁶ he urged them to retain their faith "in the efficacy of education as the chief cornerstone of national well-being"³⁷ and in the eventual surmounting of all obstacles in the path of

educational improvement. The B.C. Teacher responded with a statement of faith that the new Minister's understanding of educational problems would lead to a "sane and progressive educational development"³⁸ in the future. "He has the confidence of the teachers," the editorial continued, who "well know that education will not be called upon to bear more than its fair share of the necessary economies".³⁹

True to their election promises the new Liberal administration proceeded during its first session to make important changes to the educational system of the province. Amendments were made to the "Public Schools Act" increasing the pay of teachers at both the elementary and secondary school levels and the grants to some school districts. As well, the age up to which a pupil was entitled to free tuition was raised from 15 to 18, or until the pupil had completed grade 12.⁴⁰ In a speech to the legislature in March, 1934, Weir stated that it was also his desire to provide education for unemployed youths and foster adult education. The intellectual and spiritual bankruptcy of youth must be avoided, for to fail to do so would be to eventually increase the population of the jails he asserted. "Education, the greatest business and social enterprise of the state...could not remain static but must be made socially effective".⁴¹ This would entail modernizing the curriculum, allowing a broader selection of courses, and placing greater emphasis on vocational guidance.⁴²

All of these commitments, plans, and proposals entailed, of course, the expenditure of considerable sums of public monies. A Liberal party election message to the teachers of British Columbia had proudly stated

that it would have a solution for the financial problems of education, for it was "absurd to suppose that British Columbia cannot pay for her schools".⁴³ This, however was a difficult feat to perform. With an inherited deficit, falling revenues, and increased commitments to education, as well as other social services, the only solution which the Liberal government was able to propose during the spring of 1934 was to further increase the deficit without at the same time making any provision for sinking fund or unemployment relief expenditures.⁴⁴ Despite increased grants, many school districts continued to go bankrupt and become the administrative charge of a government appointed official trustee. Other districts, with local budgets severely restricted, dropped plans for proposed changes or radically altered their methods of handling the existing curriculum. Vancouver and New Westminster were two cases in point.

In his report for the school year 1933-34⁴⁵ H.N. MacCorkindale, Superintendent of Schools in Vancouver, outlined the changes in organization and instruction of manual training and home economics in the elementary schools. Heretofore these courses had been organized as special subjects, taught in specially equipped classrooms by specially trained teachers. The cost of such a system being relatively high a new form of organization had been adopted which incorporated manual arts in the school organization "on the same basis as any other subject".⁴⁶ Instruction would be given by grade teachers from grades 1 to 6, and by special teachers at the junior and secondary school levels, under the category of practical arts (drafting, woodwork, electricity, applied art and design, foods and clothing). The

same year New Westminster dropped the 6-3-3 plan, although it had been fully implemented the previous year and enthusiastically praised as instrumental in the retention of many pupils in school and of successfully bridging the gap between elementary and senior high schools. This had the result of the city schools all reverting to the 8-4 system.⁴⁷

While financial stringency and how to cope with it preoccupied governments, school boards, administrators and teachers, other issues were being debated by educators. The question of examinations once again became the centre of controversy. Gradually examinations had been losing their place of prominence in the educational system;⁴⁸ promotions were being made from grade to grade and elementary to junior secondary and from junior secondary to senior secondary schools largely on the basis of the recommendations of teachers and principals. However matriculation examinations, set by the Department of Education, had still to be passed by all students seeking university entrance. In addition many students wrote those examinations to satisfy personal pride, parental pride and the demands of prospective employers, although since 1930, a High School Graduation Diploma could be granted to any student who had successfully completed a general high school course. The goal of many educators and the Department of Education was the reduction of the number of students required to write the Junior Matriculation examinations and the creation of a High School Graduation Diploma which would be all-inclusive.⁴⁹

However the achievement of this goal entailed the solution of a number of problems. With the elimination of the standard set by province-

wide examinations how were standards to be set? If by each high school operating independently, what assurance could there be that a sufficiently high level of standards was maintained? One approach to the problem was suggested by the High School Principals' Association of the Lower Mainland. They proposed that uniform tests be given to all students and by the winter of 1934 committees of teachers in the Lower Mainland were drawing up lists of questions which had been tried and found satisfactory in algebra, English grammar, Latin, French and general science.⁵⁰ The proponents of this plan cited a number of reasons for its adoption. Uniform tests they contended would "add greater prestige to the High School graduation certificate by furnishing a larger and more representative number on which to carry out the letter grading";⁵¹ be better tests as they would be the result of the cooperative work of many teachers; "promote greater uniformity in the teaching of the various schools";⁵² and most importantly "may free the teachers from the unfairness of external examinations".⁵³ It was as the B.C. Teacher wrote, "another step in the direction of the accredited high school".⁵⁴

But, as the article also pointed out, it had its critics who brought forward sound arguments against it. Briefly, they contended that uniform tests would bring back "all the evils of the old examination system", teaching for examinations and "thus killing spontaneity, initiative and individuality, and making for an exhausting and irritating rivalry between colleagues".⁵⁵ They also doubted the "wisdom of so much objective testing and of the modern tendency to train the children to do little more than fill in blanks."

And finally they regretted this "trend towards standardization, this conformity to a pattern, this stereotyped sort of work". They considered much was being "sacrificed to please the scientific and statistically-minded to whom medians, norms, and curves are the breath of life".⁵⁶

It is interesting to note that one of the most prominent members of the High School Principals' Association of the Lower Mainland was H.B. King, then principal of Kitsilano High School in Vancouver, and shortly to be named technical advisor to the royal commission on School Finance in British Columbia. Subsequently he was appointed policy advisor to a committee set up to revise the public school curriculum, in 1936 represented the Department of Education on a committee on the accrediting of senior high schools, and in the following year was appointed Chief Inspector of Schools for the province. At the B.C.T.F. convention of 1934 the subject of testing was very much to the fore. One speaker, who addressed a meeting on the question, was reported to have the support of the teachers when he advocated that "teaching rather than testing"⁵⁷ be stressed. He felt that better teachers, encouraged by a group of trained supervisors, would be the most effective way of attaining the "uniformity of achievement....necessary for the accrediting of High Schools".⁵⁸ To this point of view King objected as there was "no science of education mentioned".⁵⁹

There is no doubt that the scientific, or psuedoscientific, aspect of progressive education, as expressed in the whole testing movement, was of primary importance to the leading educators of the province, even though it may not have held sway over the rank and file of the teaching profession. The opinions outside of the system cannot be assessed. It

is probable that it was considered a subject too specialized for the general public, one which should be left to the experts.

On another aspect of education, much in the forefront of discussion at this time, there was a general consensus of opinion held by the educational hierarchy, teachers, students, and their parents, and many segments of the public, alike. Practicality was deemed, by many, to be the key to educating large numbers of students in an age of social, economic and political stress. Not only did this include pre-vocational and vocational training, but also a wide variety of subjects which were thought of as training for the students' future worthy use of leisure.

From the moment of his appointment as Minister of Education, Weir emphasized the fact that the Liberal government intended to insure that education be made more relevant to the everyday needs of the students. Although by the mid-thirties only about 20% of the number of children who entered the school system in British Columbia, completed high school, the high school was the focus of most discussion concerning the objectives and aims, and curriculum of education. As in the United States at an earlier date, educators wished to encourage all pupils to carry through their education to the completion of secondary school.⁶⁰ The nub of the question was what kind of education should be offered to a high school population, only a small proportion of whom would proceed to some form of post-secondary education. British Columbia was not alone in facing this dilemma. All provinces were to some extent involved in attempting to find an answer to the question of what constituted the best

education for all children. The idea which had motivated the early educational leaders on the North American continent, that all children should have access to the same education, presumably the best although rarely in practice so, thus providing social cohesion and affording equality of opportunity had been crumbling since before the turn of the century. It had been supplanted by the concept that equality in education meant providing for each child the type of education best suited to its needs. From this it was hoped that a happy adjustment of each individual to his environment would follow, thus contributing to the achievement of a stable society. The problem was how to make the transition from a system built up on the first premise to one built up on the second. The Canadian Education Association at its convention in November 1934 recognized the problem and put secondary education at the head of its agenda. At this convention

"the opinion was frequently and vigorously expressed by speakers that the curriculum of the secondary schools should be determined by the needs of that large body of students who never go beyond that stage, rather than by the admission requirements of the universities. In other words, secondary education should be post-primary and not pre-university". 61

Delegates to the Canadian Education Association were drawn from Departments of Education, universities, administrators, teachers and trustees associations. One can be certain that most delegates from British Columbia were in agreement with the opinions mentioned. Addressing the annual meeting of the B.C.T.F. in March, 1934 G.M. Weir promised his

audience that "during the next ten years, education in the schools will become more practical and realistic without the lessening of its cultural value".⁶² The Superintendent of Schools for the city of Vancouver H.N. MacCorkindale was more specific when he suggested that Latin, algebra and spelling were education frills which should be dropped from the curriculum. "The objective of the Vancouver school system" he said in an address to the Kiwanis Club in September, 1934, "is to give each student an education in keeping with his capacity of assimilation, and which will best fit him for his future work in life".⁶³ It was particularly the role of the secondary school to give the student a thorough knowledge of subjects that would prove of most use to him. MacCorkindale concluded, "one of the greatest wastes in the system to-day...is the teaching of subjects which should not be taught at all. They were merely frills and an inheritance from the 19th century."⁶⁴

The Annual reports of the Public Schools in British Columbia contained statements of commendation for the practical approach to schooling. The director of home economics wrote that the "practical arts courses justify their place in the curriculum to-day upon the basis of social need as well as upon their cultural values to the individual, and they have attained a new status in education".⁶⁵ This new status was the result of the growing awareness that the practical arts were a "necessary agency in the development of types of knowledge, skills and attitudes that are increasingly necessary for successful living in a new and extremely complex social order".⁶⁶ Music, art and physical education were also singled out for commendation by a number of superintendents and

in these areas despite economic stringency Vancouver added new teachers to the staff.⁶⁷

Physical education became increasingly important in the school curriculum at this time and was later to be the core of a province-wide programme for unemployed youth sponsored by the Department of Education.⁶⁸ An article in the B.C. Teacher by a teacher in a Vancouver high school in February, 1934 seems to sum up the thinking of educators on the importance of this subject. Civilization, in the view of the writer, was on the threshold of a new epoch which would bring, along with many other changes, a shorter working day. This great increase in leisure could be either a blessing or a curse, "for it is not hard to imagine the outcome if we do not educate our students for leisure as well as for vocation."⁶⁹ Physical education, then assumed a role of great importance which because of its many branches "becomes a subject which develops mental attitudes, acceptable social traits, skills for leisure time, mental efficiency and education of the emotions. In short a subject which makes a definite contribution to the whole of life."⁷⁰

Fear of the consequences to society of youth untrained to occupy non-working time in socially acceptable ways ran like a thread through many articles and speeches of the time. The previous month's issue of the B.C. Teacher published another article entitled "Youth and the Depression" by D.R. Buchanan, professor of education at the University of British Columbia. Pointing to a twelve-year study of the relationship between unemployment and delinquency in Massachussets, which showed that

adult crimes were highest when unemployment was highest, but that the same trend was not observable with juveniles, Buchanan concluded that one important factor was the "stabilizing influence of the schools".⁷¹ Let this be removed, he wrote, "and the result would be a tendency towards delinquency--without a doubt".⁷² One of the answers to the question of what to do about unemployed youth was to make available courses that would "combine the cultural and the practical and lure the unemployed youths back into the schools".⁷³ An editorial in the Victoria Daily Times that same winter gave voice to the same concern with delinquency. Taking its cue from a speech by a visiting British advocate of governmental economy, on the high cost of education, the editorial accused all those who advocated the restriction of education of having their heads in the sand. "Keeping the young in school" the editorial contended, "was a vital requirement in these times. They would cost Canada much more than \$178,000,000 a year if they were turned on to the streets. We can think of no finer agency than this for the spread of an aggressive communism."⁷⁴ If government spending were to be reduced it should be done in areas which did not "involve the direct and intimate well-being of the people. Moreover it should not involve any increase in the unemployment problem of the country, since that is less a financial than a social liability charged with dynamite."⁷⁵

The public also showed interest in the promotion of a kind of education related to the practical problems of living. At a public meeting held in Victoria, a resolution was passed "favouring the establishment of classes and other training facilities for the unemployed". The type

of education desired was along two lines; first the practical or vocational, and secondly the general--art, music and literature-- or education for leisure.⁷⁶ It was also probable that a sizeable number of the students themselves wished to have this kind of education. In the words of one teacher "practical and directly beneficial" subjects were what the majority of boys and girls wanted to study. Boys knew that they "were not hired because of their knowledge of traditional subjects", but rather because they knew more about the job they were after than did other applicants.⁷⁷ As the apprenticeship system was no longer operative, students must receive the many different types of training required by the machine age in the schools.⁷⁸

It was not without reason that the trend toward practicality in education with its emphasis on vocational guidance and subjects geared to leisure-time activities should be accelerated at this time. By the winter of 1934 British Columbia had a total of 100,000 unemployed, and in the spring the violence, always feared, had briefly broken out. In April, Vancouver was invaded by 1,700 men from the relief camps who had gone on strike for "work and wages". After several days, becoming restless, they had organized a march which finally erupted into violence at the Hudson's Bay Company in downtown Vancouver. Even after the riot act had been read there was "sporadic fighting in the streets between the police and the sympathizers of the strikers".⁷⁹ The mayor, Gerry McGeer, was "convinced that Vancouver was 'being victimized by an organized attempt to capitalize, for revolutionary purposes, the conditions of depression which now exist'".⁸⁰

As the depression dragged on from year to year with few signs of hoped-for upswing in the economy, more and more schoolmen came to see the school as a saviour of a society gone awry. It became the conviction of many that the education of the young was a crucial factor in the reshaping of society. Educators of every philosophical and political hue were prescribing how the schools might best aid in bringing about a better world. Canadian journals dealing with educational matters were printing articles by such eminent American educators as John Dewey and William H. Kilpatrick, as well as prominent Canadians, Peter Sandiford, Hubert C. Newland and C.C. Goldring, to name but a few, in addition to those by many principals and teachers across the country. One notable trend evident in British Columbia and across Canada was to see in the subject of social studies an instrument for the creation of a viable democratic society.

An article appearing in the B.C. Teacher in June, 1934 touched on the major themes discussed in most writing on the social studies; their place in the school curriculum, their importance as an aid in forming a better understanding of mankind, their role in assisting in the formation of values, and their guidance in forming a better society. The centrality of the social studies to the school curriculum as expressed by the author Hugh Morrison, later to become a member of the senior high school curriculum revision committee, stated what many educators thought at the time.

"The teaching of the social studies should constitute the core of our future secondary school education. The other subjects should

be wrapped around them. With such a system more depth and significance would be imparted to our education, and a solid foundation would be laid, upon which to build our vocational studies." 81

To a large extent social studies had replaced the separate subjects, history, geography and civics in the elementary schools of British Columbia as it had in some other provinces of Canada. In some schools international relations, sociology and economics were included at the senior secondary level, although economics was sometimes considered too controversial to be allowed on the curriculum. It was the expressed objective of most writers on the social studies that this fusion of subjects would facilitate a more comprehensive programme of studies on the many activities of mankind and through this to a much deeper and more intelligent understanding on the part of both teacher and pupil. Although not ignoring the past the focus of study was to be the present, so that the student might learn of the world around him in which he must some day find his place.

In this process it was confidently expected that the student would achieve a sense of values. In the view of some, values were to be developed as part of the life situations which would be encountered in the course of study; in the opinion of others were to be instilled in the pupils by the teacher. Regardless of the route, however, there was no doubt, at least in Canada, as to the core values. Individualistic values were dead and had been supplanted by, or were in the process of being supplanted by, an ethic of co-operation. Not only was such a change

imperative to ensure society's survival, but in the opinion of many all social progress in the past was the result of co-operative effort.

"Mankind is discovering, after many hard and painful lessons, that co-operation is not merely desirable but absolutely imperative."⁸² At the feet of 'rugged individualism' was laid all the guilt for the then sorry state of civilization. Individual, corporate and national greed had brought the world to depression and near-disaster and only by its suppression could salvation be achieved. An article by Duncan McArthur, Deputy Minister of Education in Ontario, printed in The School in December, 1934, and reprinted in The Canadian School Journal the following year, probably set out better than any other appearing in Canada at that time the thinking of educators on that point. McArthur took as his cue a speech made by Woodrow Wilson shortly after the end of the war, in which he urged teachers to "increase materially the time and attention devoted to instruction bearing directly on the problems of community and national life"⁸³ and to re-emphasize and reaffirm the ideals of democracy. McArthur continued.

"More forcibly even than the destruction effected by the war has the distress and misery wrought by the economic maladjustment revealed during the post-war period emphasized the insistence of the plea issued by Woodrow Wilson. The old wine of unrestrained individualism, of laissez faire, the "God's in His Heaven, all's well with the world" complacency of the Victorians will not be contained within the new bottles of respect for human rights, of a planned economy, and of subordination of individual freedom to the well-being of the community." 84

The old ethic having been tried and found wanting, it now became the responsibility of the school to orient children toward a society based on a new ethic.

"If the school of to-day is to discharge adequately its responsibilities it must recognize that the old order has changed and prepare the new generation to adjust itself harmoniously in an independent and integrated society...It is necessary, therefore, at the outset, that in all the activities of the school, emphasis should be placed on the development of the creative and social rather than upon the acquisitive impulses." 85

The importance of the community and community living must be learned within the school in order that good citizenship might follow in adulthood.

"The good citizen recognizes the binding force of obligation to the community and realizes that his own well-being cannot be separated from that of the common-weal. The foundations on which alone the structure of good citizenship may be erected must be laid in the schools. The social relations formed within the community of the class room or the school will influence the attitude of the young man or woman to the larger community of the state in later years". 86

Finally McArthur places on the schools the onus of interpreting to students the society in which they live, in such a way that good citizenship will be assured.

"Still further, it is during these years

of instruction in the school that the thought of the boy or girl is first directed consciously towards the larger community and the state. The conception of the nature of the social structure formed during the school period, in large measure, determines the character of the citizenship of later years." 87

The article then went on to discuss how the different subjects included under the heading of social studies might be used by the school to "create and promote right social attitudes".⁸⁸ Dealing with history it commended the recent trend away from military and constitutional history to social and economic history. "History" it concluded, "is essentially a record of citizenship, of the behavior of individuals as members of social groups". While it was admitted that to employ history to propagate "certain theories" was a "violation of a sacred trust", it declared that it was "essential that it should demonstrate the fundamental nature of man as a social being and the interdependence of the welfare of the individual and the well-being of the group".⁸⁹

The above could have been adopted as a manifesto regarding the place and function of social studies in the curriculum by any Department of Education in any province in Canada during the mid-depression years. Differences occurred over the application of general principles to practice, and these in turn were partially at least related to the political concepts held by either provincial governments or those most influential in the educational bureaucracy of the province. In Alberta,⁹⁰ the enterprise encouraged group work⁹¹ from the choice of a project through to its conclusion, with each child contributing to the best of his ability to the

group, for the individual's happiness was seen to be dependent upon satisfactory group membership. Reflecting the social democratic convictions of those most influential in bringing about educational change in that province it was believed essential that "those who direct education for social behavior, before collecting material and developing a technique should decide in what kind of a society the pupil should be taught to live".⁹² In this case one administered by the contributing members, in which the individual could not take out more than he or she contributed, and otherwise could do as he pleased as long as he did not interfere with the rights of others, "the state was made for man not man for the state."⁹³

In British Columbia, a different economy and political philosophy resulted in different emphases throughout the educational system. The relationship between the individual and the group and the citizen and the state, viewed differently, called forth, at least on the theoretical and blueprint level, contrasts in administration and curriculum.

Notes

Chapter IV

- 1 Margaret A. Ormsby, British Columbia: a History (Vancouver: MacMillan, rev. ed. 1971), p. 441.

- 2 Canadian Liberalism was slow to adopt the policy of decisive state interference in economic affairs. The Liberal summer conference at Port Hope in 1933 explored the relationship of politics and economics and came to the conclusion that a "new form of alliance between these two is possible". Introduction The Liberal Way, A Record of Opinion on Canadian Problems as Expressed and Discussed at the First Liberal Summer Conference Port Hope, September, 1933. J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd., Vancouver, 1933.

However even after the election of the Liberals in 1935 the government was slow to implement any new policies.

- 3 Martin Robin, The Company Province, 1934-1972 (Toronto, 1973) p. 11. Quotations from Pattullo Papers, Provincial Archives of British Columbia, T.D. Pattullo to R.J. Cromie, June 10, 1932, and Victoria Colonist, September 1, 1935.

- 4 Robert A. Groves, "Business Government, Party Politics and the B.C. Business Community, 1928-1933. Unpublished M.A. Thesis University of British Columbia, 1976. Quoted p. 77.

- 5 Ormsby, Op. Cit., p. 456.

- 6 Robin, Op. Cit., p. 10.

- 7 Ibid.

- 8 Ibid.

- 9 The School, November, 1933, p. 266.

- 10 B.C. Teacher, May, 1935, p. 8.

- 11 Ibid., p. 9.
- 12 In Canada political leaders covering the spectrum from R.B. Bennett to J.S. Woodsworth were calling on schools to assist in building a better world.
- 13 Not only Weir but his colleagues at the University of British Columbia, Professors H.F. Angus, G.F. Drummond and W.A. Carrothers (later to become chairman of the economic council set up by Pattullo) attacked the report.
- 14 G.M. Weir, Survey of Nursing Education in Canada (Toronto, 1932) p. 210.
- 15 Ibid., p. 198.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Edward L. Thorndike was a major pioneer in the development of mental testing and measurement, and also one of the leaders of the eugenics movement in the United States. Throughout his career he maintained that there was a definite correlation between intelligence and moral virtue.
- 18 Weir Op. Cit., p. 200.
- 19 Ibid., p. 216.
- 20 Ibid., p. 211.
- 21 Ibid., p. 317.
- 22 Ibid., p. 380.
- 23 Ibid., p. 385.
- 24 Ibid., p. 415.

- 25 Ibid., p. 416.
- 26 Ibid., p. 474.
- 27 Ibid., p. 474.
- 28 Ibid., p. 475.
- 29 Ibid., p. 478.
- 30 Ibid.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 See C.J. Karier, The Roots of Crisis: American Education in the Twentieth Century. Chapter V, "Liberal Ideology and the Quest for Orderly Change".
- 33 Weir, Op. Cit., p. 478.
- 34 Ibid., p. 479.
- 35 When Weir moved second reading of the Health Insurance Bill in March 1936 he again emphasized this point. We are living, he stated, in an era of great social and economic change when it had become a vital necessity to care for the masses and "although it might be possible to retard this movement...it was impossible to thwart it". Three other points appear to have been emphasized in the speech. First that insuring against illness was a businesslike way of paying the bills: second that people of average means could be bankrupted for from 2 to 5 years by a serious illness: lastly that the federal government had no right in the field of health insurance. He elaborated the last point by saying that sex education, birth control and the sterilization of the mentally unfit might be possible under the jurisdiction of the province of British Columbia, but it would almost certainly be blocked federally by Quebec, New Brunswick and "certain organizations in Ontario". Victoria Times March 24, 1936.

- 36 B.C. Teacher, November, 1933, p. 3.
- 37 Ibid.
- 38 Ibid., p. 1.
- 39 Ibid.
- 40 Victoria Colonist, March 6, 1934.
- 41 Ibid.
- 42 Ibid.
- 43 B.C. Teacher, October, 1933.
- 44 Ormsby, Op. Cit., 459.
- 45 H.N. MacCorkindale was appointed Superintendent of Schools for Vancouver in September, 1933, a position which he held for 21 years. At the time of his appointment the B.C. Teacher welcomed the choice of the Board of Trustees, saying that McCorkindale was a progressive educator, "keenly alive to the modern trends of educational practice". He was also praised for his ability to communicate to the public the new aims and policies of education. McCorkindale had been born and raised in Ontario, graduated from the University of Toronto in Mathematics and Physics, and then moved to the west first to Calgary and then to Vancouver where he became principal of Prince of Wales High School. During the years before his appointment as superintendent, he attended summer session courses at the University of California, Berkley, and Stanford University. While superintendent he was also a member of the Senate of the University of British Columbia, the Association of School Administrators of the United States, the Vancouver City Kiwanis Club and the Vancouver Board of Trade.
- 46 63rd Annual Report of the Public Schools of British Columbia, 1933-34, N46.

- 47 63rd Annual Report of the Public Schools of British Columbia, 1933-34, N49.
- 48 A number of reasons were usually cited for dispensing with examinations, the most common being that it encouraged fact-oriented teaching geared to passing children in examinations.
- 49 B.C. Teacher, January 1934, p. 9.
- 50 It was proposed that the tests would be written by every grade in June, and the marks sent in to a central committee to determine the letter grades. These would then be sent to each school to apply to its set of marks.
- 51 B.C. Teacher, January, 1934, p. 19.
- 52 Ibid.
- 53 Ibid.
- 54 Ibid. The Department of Education was a prime mover in the movement towards the establishment of accredited high schools. In a paper prepared for the sixteenth National Conference of Canadian Universities, S.J. Willis, Superintendent of Education for British Columbia, stated that the gradual elimination of examinations throughout the school system in the province had not resulted in the lowering of standards. Such being the case, he argued, the granting of matriculation standing to students by those high schools accredited to do so by the Department of Education, should not result in reduced standards for university entrance. B.C. Teacher, October, 1934, pp. 7-11.
- 55 Ibid., p. 20.
- 56 Ibid.
- 57 B.C. Teacher, April, 1934. p. 12.

- 58 Ibid.
- 59 Ibid.
- 60 This was believed necessary to ensure the socialization of students.
 See E.A. Krug, The Shaping of the American High School.
- 61 The School, December, 1934, p. 294.
- 62 Ibid., May, 1934, p. 824.
- 63 Vancouver Sun, September 14, 1934.
- 64 Ibid.
- 65 64th Annual Report of the Public Schools of the Province of
 British Columbia. 1934-35. S48.
- 66 Ibid.
- 67 Ibid., S52, S53.
- 68 The Provincial Recreation Programme, sponsored by the Department
 of Education which became very popular during the second half
 of the decade was built almost entirely around gymnastics and
 sports.
- 69 B.C. Teacher, February, 1934, p. 24.
- 70 Ibid., p. 25.
- 71 Ibid., January, 1934, p. 7.
- 72 Ibid.

- 73 Ibid., p. 10.
- 74 B.C. Teacher, March, 1934. Quoted from editorial reprinted from
 Victoria Daily Times, February 27, 1934.
- 75 Ibid.
- 76 Victoria Colonist, January 16, 1934.
- 77 B.C. Teacher, April, 1934, p. 17.
- 78 Ibid., p. 18.
- 79 Ormsby, Op. Cit., p. 463.
- 80 Ibid.
- 81 B.C. Teacher, June, 1934, p. 32.
- 82 The School, November, 1934, p. 185.
- 83 Ibid., December, 1934, p. 283.
- 84 Ibid., p. 284.
- 85 Ibid.
- 86 Ibid., p. 285.
- 87 Ibid.
- 88 Ibid.
- 89 Ibid., p. 286.

- 90 The enterprise approach was most widely adopted at the elementary level although it was applicable to all levels of schooling. See R.S. Patterson, "The Establishment of Progressive Education in Alberta". Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Michigan State University 1968. pp. 136-146.
- 91 In Manitoba the "activity method" became part of the curriculum of the upper grades in the elementary schools. This method centred around group projects which, in the social studies, for example, would involve students in the making of artifacts, charts and maps.
- D.A. Lawr and R.D. Gidney, Educating Canadians, (Toronto, 1973) pp. 216-217.
- 92 Donalda Dickie. The Enterprise in Theory and Practice (Toronto, 1941) p. 51.
- 93 Ibid., p. 52.

CHAPTER V

PROBLEMS OF EDUCATIONAL FINANCE AND THE KING REPORT

While the survival of democracy and the kind of curriculum best suited to the school population in a world of economic depression and, as many were convinced, of profound social and political change, were questions of long-range significance, the immediate and pressing question was how to finance education in a time of shrinking provincial and local revenues. The problem of school financing had been a recurring and constant one in British Columbia. The province had never, despite surveys, submissions, and suggestions from groups concerned with education, been able to come up with formulas for the financing of schools which would please urban and rural districts, rich and poor areas, municipal councils and school boards or politicians and their constituents. Adjustments and readjustments never seemed to satisfy for more than a short period of time. The difficulty of finding a satisfactory solution to the problem of educational financing in a growing province with fluctuating population densities, a wide divergence of economic levels, and an economy very susceptible to booms and slumps was not an easy one. The depression had exacerbated the difficulties of the situation and, as the government well knew, a long-term solution would have to be found. This appeared as a pressing necessity to those who saw universal schooling as fundamental to the survival and ultimate adjustment of society to a changed world.

During the election campaign in 1933, Weir had frequently reiterated

the promise that a Liberal government would find answers to the problems which plagued education. Further he had given strong indications of the kind of solutions which he hoped would ultimately be adopted. At an all-party election rally in October, 1933, he had advocated "a centralized, efficient, educational system, giving equal opportunities for all, and raising the standards of the teacher".¹ Two months later he was reported to have emphasized again the importance of centralization in his plans for education in the future. "While there is no immediate possibility of the province assuming the entire cost and control of education, the door will be left open for future examination of state education by practical methods"² he said. Centralized control of education was not a new idea; many European countries had been following this plan of organization for decades.³ However in North America, with its long tradition of local control of education it had always proved unpopular. Any suggestion to diminish the power of or abolish local school boards had always been met by strong resistance from the boards themselves backed by considerable support from public opinion.⁴ It was argued that the school board allowed parents more direct control over the education of their children, that it was more responsive to the needs of its own community than a centralized administration could ever be, and that it was an essential institution in a democratic society.

On the other hand there were a number of reasons advanced against school boards which tended to become increasingly convincing as economic conditions worsened. The Royal Commission on Municipal Taxation appointed by the Tolmie government in 1933 gave ample evidence of this. Generally

speaking it was contended that education costs, which accounted for a large part of local revenues, were too high, as the result of inefficient administration, the inclusion of too many "fads and frills" in the curriculum, and too high a level of teachers' salaries.

The Vancouver Real Estate Exchange summed up the thinking of many people when it stated that (1) The city council should have the power to control effectively any and all expenditures proposed by School Boards: (2) The whole system of education needs a radical over-hauling: (3) The time has now come when education should be controlled throughout the whole province by the Provincial Department of Education, assisted by small advisory unpaid committees nominated by the councils.⁵ The school trustees themselves were in favour of the province covering the "ordinary costs of education" with the municipalities "providing sums for school buildings and other such extraordinary expenditures". Such a system they concluded, would ensure the adoption of a "real provincial salary schedule".⁶ Superintendents had frequently complained not only of low teachers' salaries, but also of the poor living and working conditions provided by some school boards.⁷

Clearly the times were auspicious for the adoption of a much more centralized system. Early in 1934 Weir had asked teachers to co-operate with him by setting up committees to study and report upon the financing of education in the province and the administration of education for leisure. No record of these committees are available but in April it was reported that many preliminary discussions and conferences had been held with the Minister of Education.⁸ Whatever proposals were made by

teachers, they could not have failed to emphasize the urgency of the financial problem. Meanwhile an increasing number of school districts, unable to raise sufficient revenues from land taxes to cover their proportion of school costs were requesting that the government furnish the additional funds required. It was also apparent after the refusal of Prime Minister Bennett to meet Pattullo's request for \$8,000,000. that the policy of robbing Peter to pay Paul and then having the federal government make up the difference could not be pursued further.⁹ To have passed legislation making radical alterations to the administrative system of the public schools, legislation which would have necessitated revision of taxation, could have been a dangerous move. The government therefore adopted the usual expedient of appointing a commission.

In June 1934, the Minister of Education announced the setting up of the Commission on School Finance. Weir had cast a wide net and the general committee contained some twenty members, drawn from business organizations, the B.C.T.F. and the Trades and Labour Councils of Vancouver and Victoria, presided over by Harry Charlesworth of the B.C.T.F.¹⁰ Weir also appointed a revision committee of six whose task it was to review all the submissions made to the larger committee and all the recommendations made by that committee and prepare a preliminary report. The revision committee consisted of three members of the legislature drawn from each of the three parties, Mrs. Paul Smith, Liberal, and former chairman of the Vancouver School Board, Herbert Anscombe, Conservative and the Reverend Robert Connell, C.C.F.; two University of British Columbia professors, H.F. Angus and G.F. Drummond; and a Vancouver educationist Dr. W.D. Knott. In addition H.B. King, Weir's old friend

and colleague, was appointed technical adviser.¹¹ Looking over the composition of the commission one would expect that the final report would be in line with the Minister's thinking. The completed work of the committees was to be reviewed by Weir and John Hart, the Minister of Finance, the two commissioners, and they were to present a final report to the legislature.

The announcement of the commission's formation met with a mixed reaction. The teachers responded enthusiastically; they seemed most impressed with the size and composition of the general committee, feeling that this would ensure that all opinions would be "given due consideration" and would add "greatly to the value of the work and...doubtless give greater confidence to the ultimate findings".¹² A Conservative newspaper, on the other hand, saw it as yet one more enquiry in a long series which achieved little in improving the educational system but added to the burden of the taxpayer.¹³ Municipal heads objected strenuously to the number of educationists on the committees, all of whom would be likely to take the educationists' viewpoint rather than the taxpayers'. The upshot of these complaints was that Mayor David Leeming of Victoria, vice-president of the Union of B.C. Municipalities, was appointed to the revision committee. Subsequently his place was taken by R.F. Blandy, Municipal Assessor of Oak Bay, and Professor Drummond was replaced by Charlesworth.

The commission held its first public meeting in Victoria near the end of June and briefs were requested from all interested groups and

individuals. The question being asked of the public was how educational costs should be met. In the meantime, until the commission had reported, no further major decisions would be made regarding education. The planned curriculum revision would not be carried out until the survey had been completed. "The first job" said Weir "is to find out how much education the community can pay for and then add a curriculum to the financial capacity".¹⁴ Later in the summer in a radio address to Vancouver, particularly to his constituents in the Point Grey riding, he intimated that they would be asked to pay considerably more in the near future into the provincial treasury. The taxation structure of the province, he told his listeners, was undergoing a complete overhaul and the income tax levy would probably be drastically changed. In addition he predicted higher taxes on mining.¹⁵

From the end of July through September the Commission held hearings in Vancouver, Victoria and centres in the interior of the province. Several themes emerged in the submissions made. In the first place virtually all were agreed that the province should assume a greater share of the costs of education. However there was a wide divergence of opinion as to the proportion in relation to local taxes. The Vancouver School Board wanted a grant of at least ten per cent of the total cost of the Vancouver school system, while the B.C.T.F. suggested that the province provide a minimum standard of schooling and the local areas supply the funds for facilities beyond that point. Secondly there was general agreement that land was being required to bear too much of the burden of school costs. The B.C. Union of Municipalities judged the present tax

confiscatory and urged that other bases for taxation be found, and the B.C. Parent Teacher Federation requested a more uniform assessment of property. Thirdly, if it were conceded that additional revenue would be needed to finance the schools, an increase in taxes was the most common solution offered.¹⁶

The brief which made the most radical suggestions, some of which were later incorporated in the final King Report, was submitted by the B.C. branch of the Canadian Manufacturers Association. The province, it recommended, should take over full responsibility for providing funds for education and school boards as such should be abolished. At the same time the administrative control of education should be centralized and although school districts should continue to exist they should be enlarged to conform to topography and population rather than municipal boundaries. The direction of each school district should be in the hands of one official responsible to the central provincial authority. On the contentious questions of how much free education should be provided and how the monies for education should be raised, the submission suggested that "education be limited up to the point of the pupil's ability to assimilate it, which would be discovered by elimination of examinations".¹⁷ and that revenues should be provided by a special school levy in each municipality.

The Vancouver Board of Trade records demonstrate that the Vancouver business community had made little change in its thinking since the spring of 1932. George Kidd was the current president and some of the

members of the Council had worked on the Kidd Report. Reporting to the Board on the sittings of the enquiry which he had attended, a Council member drew attention to the many suggestions which had been made for increasing revenue by heavier taxation on higher incomes, those of \$5,000. a year or more. He recommended that if the Board should decide to submit a brief that it concentrate on the necessity of further economies. He warned that any further increases in taxation whether on incomes, corporations, or land would merely serve to discourage capital investment and industrial expansion. "The time has arrived" he wrote, "when business interests, so vitally affected, must again make a strong stand against those who demand increasing public services at the expense of business recovery".¹⁸ The memo also argued for centralized control and supervision by the provincial government. The writer concluded by saying that he thought that if the Canadian Manufacturers' Association co-operated with the Vancouver Board of Trade, as he believed they would in "demanding greater economy in administration" and no further increases in taxation, he "had reason to believe that much would be accomplished".¹⁹

It is possible to infer from this statement that the business community of the province had received confidential assurances from the Liberal government that if they presented a solid front their recommendations would be the decisive ones. Thus far had the Liberals come from the work and wages campaign of 1933. While business was reiterating its traditional stand, labour was requesting that the cost of education be removed from improved property and placed on incomes. Both the Victoria and District Trades and Labour Council and the Vancouver and New Westminster

Trades and Labour Council advocated a graded tax on higher incomes and "social equality" in the educational system. The Victoria and District council also suggested that cadet training be eliminated and replaced by a course of social and economic education.²⁰

Several weeks after its original discussions regarding educational finance the Vancouver Board of Trade approved a motion to submit a brief along similar lines to the Canadian Manufacturers' Association. In their final forms the briefs differed in two respects. The Canadian Manufacturers' Association "suggested that consideration be given to increasing the gross income tax by one per cent as the fairest method of distributing over the largest proportion of the population" the extra administrative costs which would have to be assumed by the provincial government.²¹ The Board of Trade stuck to its position that no additional sources of revenue should be sanctioned.²² It also, while deploring the multiplicity of school boards in the province, acknowledged that if it were "not found possible to eliminate School Boards entirely"²³ much larger school districts would be a step towards the goals of economy and efficiency.²⁴

In the spring of 1935 after the report of the Revision Committee of the Commission on School Finance²⁵ had been made public, education again became a subject of discussion of the Vancouver Board of Trade. It is significant that in one particular area the education committee of the Board had adopted a new policy. Always staunchly opposed to the extension of free public schooling past the age of 15 years, as adding unnecessarily

to school costs, the committee following the lead of the Revision Committee recommended that the government's policy of not charging fees for students under the age of 18 years should be continued. Present conditions of unemployment, it stated, made it much more profitable for children to continue their education than to leave school.²⁶

Such a radical departure from the traditional attitude of these businessmen particularly at a time when to keep youths in school to that age could result in demands for increased taxation, calls for some explanation. From the summer of 1934 to the spring of 1935 economic conditions had worsened in British Columbia and the Vancouver area had borne the brunt of them. The promises of better times held out by the Liberals in the election campaign of November, 1933 had failed to materialize. The Liberals had come to realize that their provincial New Deal was dependent to a considerable extent on an "inter-governmental New Deal, a restructuring of the relationship"²⁷ between the federal government and the provincial governments.²⁸ Consequently Pattullo and his party were expending much of their energies on a campaign for better terms from Ottawa. As a result even short-term palliative solutions were ignored. The legislative session of 1935 saw few bills of major importance introduced, and those which were passed were "hardly calculated to curtail high employment or mobilize effort in support of the new collectivism".²⁹

It was generally agreed that British Columbia was at that time the most radical province in Canada.³⁰ In April, coincidental with the Vancouver Board of Trade's discussions on education, strikers from the

camps³¹ had invaded the city with disturbing results. A subsequent memorandum to the Council of the Board forcefully drew attention to the fact that the men were "heartily supported by the people of the town" while at the same time a lecture sympathetic to Soviet Russia was drawing large audiences. It was also pointed out that in the event of a concerted movement of all camp inmates upon Vancouver (probably 5,000) there might be violence and bloodshed. The suggestion was then put forward that a committee be formed of representatives of the larger industries of the city to try to find out the "true situation" in the camps and what the "authorities are actually doing in the matter".³² The businessmen of Vancouver were obviously distressed and frightened by the mood of the city and interested in new ways of coping with the unemployment problem. Extending the age of free education to 18 years and thereby keeping young men off the streets, out of the work camps and, if possible, away from pernicious influences must have had considerable appeal.

But this was not the only measure which the Department of Education inaugurated to meet the problem of youth unemployment which was enthusiastically backed by community leaders and the citizens of Vancouver in general. In November, 1934 Weir announced the opening during the coming winter of 9 or 10 centres in Vancouver for sports and recreational activities for unemployed youths. Both the Vancouver School Board and the Vancouver Park Board had pledged their complete co-operation and facilities. A similar plan had been instituted in 1930 by the Park Board, operated

successfully for two winters and then dropped for lack of funds. It was felt that with the Department of Education assuming the cost it could not fail. Writing to the Park Board Chairman, Weir reiterated his view of the importance of healthful exercise as a preventative for the physical and moral degeneration of unemployed youth. It was absolutely necessary to them to have recreational facilities available to them in order that they might "improve their physique and keep their minds clean".³³

The Revision Committee's Report was made public shortly after the Minister of Finance had brought down the budget in which it was declared that no increase in taxes could be attempted that year nor could increased aid to municipalities be forthcoming immediately.³⁴ Under these circumstances the recommendations of the report to increase grants to school districts and to impose a 1-2% tax on incomes in excess of \$50.00 per month could not be implemented right away although they were completely in line with the Minister of Education's stated policies that the government should gradually assume all educational costs, and that the multiplicity of school districts be replaced by large educational units. It had become apparent that the complete overhaul of the provincial taxation system referred to earlier by Weir was either not yet ready for unveiling or had been dropped. As later events were to indicate the latter was the case. In addition King's Report which was submitted to the government later in March was not made public until August and the final report expected from Hart and Weir never materialized. As Dorothy Steeves, M.L.A. of the C.C.F. correctly predicted, neither the recommendations contained in the Revision Committee's

Report nor the health insurance bill which Weir was at that time piloting through the house would become a reality.³⁵

A number of factors were operating at the time which could have produced the decision not to proceed with radical school reform. It is possible, as Mrs. Steeves suggested, that Weir was no longer able to obtain his party's support for proposed social legislation.³⁶ By the spring of 1935 the reforming ardour of the Liberal party had begun to cool. Weir's health insurance legislation had been met with the determined opposition of employers (who objected to the compulsory contribution of 1% on the wage bill) Boards of Trade, Chambers of Commerce and trade associations, all of whom condemned it as a "dangerous socialist experiment".³⁷ Most adamant of all was the Canadian Medical Association which was reported to have set up a political fund of \$10,000. and joined with delegations of businessmen and farmers in lobbying the Liberal causes.³⁸ At the same time the government was faced with a difficult problem in communication. Although provincial grants to hospitals might be reduced in the long run by health insurance, the immediate problem was to convince people in depressed times to submit to what was seen as a form of increased taxation. The same situation existed with regard to changes in the school. Despite assurances that the net cost of education would not be increased under a centralized system, partly because such a system would make possible new economies, the most obvious fact was that an immediate increase in income taxes would be forthcoming. Lastly, if Weir had had to make a conscious choice as to which would receive priority, school or health legislation he would in all probability have chosen the health

insurance act. He had made it plain on a number of occasions as well as in his report on nursing education that in his opinion the state's first consideration should be the good health of its citizens. To educate those in poor health was simply a waste of time and money.

It is understandable that King's Report, with its controversial proposals regarding school boards guaranteed to alienate yet another segment of the population, was not immediately released after being presented to the government. When it was finally made public economic conditions in the province were most distressing and the Liberal party's fortunes were at a low ebb. By that time neither Hart nor Weir, even had they been able to agree on a report, seemed willing to risk further alienating members of the business and professional middle class. Conversely they ran the risk of loss of support of those voters who had seen the Liberal party as the authors of a more just and progressive society. It would appear that the support of the former weighed much more heavily than the support of the latter. In the ensuing weeks King was allowed to assume full responsibility for his report, while Weir tried to allay the fears of those who would be most seriously affected if the report were to become official government policy.

In his letter to Weir and Hart on the submission of his report King listed the 13 recommendations which he considered the most important. In summary they advised that the provincial government take over the complete financial responsibility for education, listed various sources of revenue, and advocated the ultimate abolition of school boards and

the creation of large educational areas, each to be administered by a Director of Education under the Superintendent of Education. King disagreed with the Revision Committee that all incomes over \$50. per month be taxed 2% as this "would be oppressive on people of low earnings"³⁹ and recommended the continuance of existing exemptions. When asked which of the recommendations might be implemented, Weir replied that "resulting action would be a matter of policy much of which must wait until the next sitting of the legislature".⁴⁰

The report engendered much comment and discussion in the weeks that followed its publication, not only in British Columbia but in educational circles across the country. Reactions were mixed, most accepting some recommendations while condemning others. In general the proposed reduction of taxes on land for school purposes was welcomed, as was the replacement of a large number of small administrative units with a few larger ones. At the annual meeting of the B.C. School Trustees Association some of the main points of criticism were highlighted. Centralized administration it was feared might result in political interference and extravagance once local control was removed. The sales tax which King had suggested as possible alternative to the income tax was thought by many of the trustees to impose too heavy a burden on industry.⁴¹ But it was the abolition of school boards and the consequences of this which occasioned the greatest debate. The Chairman of the Vancouver school board, speaking on the King Report just two days after its publication, probably expressed the consensus of opinion favourable to the retention of

school boards when he said that although there were some areas in which a consolidation of school boards should take place, school boards as such should be retained "as a means whereby the parents can keep in contact with school management and the management know something of the parents' wishes". It was also his opinion that the elimination of all school boards would not "effect any great economy".⁴²

The Daily Province in a lengthy critique rebuked Hart and Weir for having passed on their duties to King, rejected the proposal for centralized control and the abolition of school boards and reminded the public of the Minister of Education's stand on the same matter taken ten years earlier by quoting from the Putman-Weir Report the following passage

"In the opinion of the surveyors such a system of centralized control and administration---for administration and control cannot be separated---would be more Prussian than British in its essential characteristics. The enervating effect on our future democracy, through the weakening of its powers of local self-government in school matters, would more than counter-balance any real or imaginary gains from such a dangerous experiment. Nor would such a system of centralized control lead to increased efficiency of the system. Rather, indeed, the converse would be the case".⁴³

The critique concluded by endorsing the foregoing opinion and reminding the reader that the experiment in centralized control in the Peace River area had not been met with "harmony and peace".⁴⁴

An editorial in The School, published by the Ontario College of Education, took much the same stand. While not doubting that centralization

would bring greater efficiency in administration the writer wondered if this efficiency would not be purchased at too high a price. The immense value that "local interest, local initiative, and the training a community receives in managing its own affairs" are to a democracy should not be sacrificed, particularly as "most of the benefits which Mr. King hopes to secure can be got through the erection of larger school areas".⁴⁵ The editorial also took strong exception to other recommendations in the report aimed at the saving of money: the closing of small rural schools and very small classes in high schools for some subjects, home economics, art music, manual training, typewriting and science. "Behind all these proposals" the editorial pointed out, "are two fundamental fallacies of which Mr. King is no doubt fully aware, although he is forced by the exigencies of the financial situation to minimize them: first that correspondence or lecturing or demonstrations can satisfactorily take the place of effective classroom teaching and pupil experimentation; second, that classes can be made larger and larger without impairing seriously the effectiveness of the teaching."⁴⁶

The above critical comments bring into focus the question of the extent to which considerations of economy and efficiency were the guiding principles of the report. Had King adopted completely the outlook of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association that the principles of business administration must be applied by the educational authorities to schooling in order to produce an efficient system? Was the proposal of complete centralization, so radical in the Canadian context, prompted solely by a desire to save money by being able to apply economy of scale and a

bureaucratic administration? Were educational considerations and values being consciously sacrificed to financial ones? The report gives indications of the answers, for it includes not only the necessary financial data, but also a history of education in British Columbia, sections on the meaning and purpose of education, the educational systems of other countries and the economic effects of education.

Strangely none of the published comments and criticisms on the report give these sections more than a passing mention. It is impossible to tell whether this omission indicated agreement or whether these were considered secondary to the main purpose of the enquiry. However it was in these passages that King set out his philosophy of education on which the practical recommendations were to a considerable extent based. In addition they indicate what to him were the important features of the "new" or progressive education.

King's exposition of his beliefs is terse, trenchant and uncompromising as befitted a man inordinately proud of his military training and achievements.⁴⁷ Like the officer giving orders to his subordinates King had no use for subtleties or complexities. Everything was either self-evidently right or self-evidently wrong; there was no room for equivocation. Truth also was a commodity which was relative to his arguments. Surely it was stretching a point, even for Canadian education, to state that "there have been no clearly defined objectives, no well-thought-out philosophy of education".⁴⁸ And to refer to the "Seven Cardinal Principles of Education" as being the "purposes of education as understood by recent authoritative writers"⁴⁹ although they had been formulated in

the United States two decades before and were no longer agreed to by prominent authorities on education, exhibits either a dishonest disregard of facts, or a woeful ignorance about the field in which he considered himself a pre-eminent authority.

King's arguments centred around three main points, the necessity for efficiency in education, the provision of equality of opportunity and the pre-eminence of the state. He never questioned the "he who pays the piper calls the tune" and that he, the state in this case, had the right to demand whatever those in authority deemed necessary for its perpetuation. It was the duty of the individual to conform and his only rights, at least as far as education were concerned, were the aye and nay of the ballot box and a powerless voice on an advisory committee. Child in the introduction to his article on King has said that he (King) "combined a curious love of authoritarianism with his commitment to the freedom of progressive education".⁵⁰ It is unfortunate that the only evidence of the latter given in his report is the highly debatable one of freedom of choice of subjects and curriculum, and even that is qualified by the emphasis on the necessity for expert guidance.

King had discarded the ideas of the purposes of public education as discipline, culture and self-realization. Although the pursuit of any of these ideals might be of advantage to the individual, he stated, an education devoted to these goals would be the "purely personal possession" of the individual and thus not entitled to state support.⁵¹ It is difficult to see how a disciplined, cultured, self-fulfilled populace

would not also contribute to the creation of a vigorous state. However to King's narrow statist mind this was not the case. In eliminating these goals from consideration in education he showed his rejection of that strain of child-centred progressivism, which saw the cultivation of freedom and self-expression in the child as an ultimate guarantee of a healthy society.⁵² Interestingly he also discarded education for social efficiency and social welfare, the impulse behind many of the educational principles he espoused, on the grounds that they did not lead to a proper balance between the "claims and nature of the individual and the nature and demands of the State."⁵³ He concluded that the only justification for the support of "public education is that education is a public function, necessary both for the safety and preservation of the State and for its progress".⁵⁴ Although King believed that the "safety and preservation" of the state were the overriding concern of a system of public education he did not believe that the individual should be regarded as an automaton. The individual should be allowed to be the kind of person he wished to be as long as he was in harmony with society. Nevertheless the individual had no significance from an educational point of view, for education as a public function was "not primarily maintained in the interests of the individual as distinguished from the citizen or future citizen".⁵⁵

King, like most of his contemporaries in the field of education, placed the school above all other educative institutions. While not denying that the school had a role to play as a transmitter of the

social inheritance---the experience of the race---and for the extension of it", he believed that its chief function was as an "integrating social influence".⁵⁶ That society had not collapsed during the depression crisis was attributable to this function. Such educative institutions as the "Church, the Press, and industry itself" had contributed to the development of civilization, but they in turn had been "dependent upon education for their own development, ...been moulded and modified by it."⁵⁷ Business and industry, in fact "in their organized technical complexities, would be helpless without the continued supply of young recruits furnished by the schools".⁵⁸ Seen in this way then the educational system was primarily a supplier of raw, semi-processed or processed material for other institutions. Its influence on these institutions was not only through the skills its products brought to them, but more importantly through its attitudes and values, which would act as the ultimate social cement. The essential roles of the school in King's view can be summed up as vocationalism and social control. This is not to imply that King was anti-intellectual; as a classics teacher he defended the much maligned Latin and Greek. But intellectual training was necessary only for those few with the capacity who would become the leaders of the future.⁵⁹

If the state were to serve itself well efficiency was necessary. This was axiomatic in King's mind. The duty of the democratic state he declared was to create "rational well-integrated systems" necessary for efficiency and economy.⁶⁰ Efficiency and economy demanded a number of things. Of primary importance was a centralized system which would

ensure that disadvantaged communities would receive the benefits of advantaged communities, those which offered manual training, domestic science, agricultural education, junior high schools and vocational training. In the second place, efficiency necessitated a trained educational bureaucracy guided by the correct social philosophy and the science of education. As education was King wrote a "peculiarly difficult professional task" it was imperative that it be taken out of the hands of laymen.⁶¹ He was prepared to allow a place for local participation, either through the Parent Teacher Association, or an elected school committee which could express the local point of view to an area director of education.⁶² But in no way were such groups to be allowed any measure of control, for to do so might signal a return to the old days which he characterized as having been "as though an army was controlled by elected Municipal Councils and organized and trained by regimental officers brought up upon the traditions of Wellington, under a general staff with limited executive powers".⁶³ A third ingredient was essential if schools were to run efficiently, a curriculum fashioned according to scientific principles. Such a curriculum providing a wide variety of options would eliminate the enormous waste incurred under the then existing curricula. Under such a reformed system students would no longer take academic courses "although destined to fail in them". They would be persuaded through a strong programme of vocational guidance, not to seek for "social position through education" but to follow courses suited to their "tastes, needs and capacities".⁶⁴

The ultimate justification for all these efficiency measures was

that only in this way could equality of opportunity "the essence of democracy" be provided.⁶⁵ The question arises as to whether King's major preoccupation was with the provision of equality of opportunity, or efficiency and economy. The two considerations are, of course, in the situation under discussion very neatly intertwined. It is probably impossible, unless the teacher is one of extraordinary capabilities, to provide a first class education to pupils in a one-room school in a poor remote area of the province. More affluent areas, particularly urban ones with a wide variety of facilities and specialists can obviously provide a much better educational environment. Any measure which would make these available to all children regardless of the affluence of their parents would increase equality of opportunity. On the other hand equality of opportunity could be seen merely as a by-product of a streamlined efficient system constructed along the lines of a business corporation, and at that more apparent than real. In order to attempt to find an answer to this basically important question it is necessary to examine other sections of the report.

In a chapter entitled "What They Think in England" King published the replies of a number of prominent Englishmen to the question of who should be educated at public expense and to what extent. The crucial sentences in the letter sent by King requesting this information were "Can the problems which affect the individual and society be solved by the training of a small intellectual elite....or will the elite be impotent if the masses are not educated sufficiently to follow them".⁶⁶ King's stated purpose was to demonstrate to those in British Columbia

dominated by so-called English ideas regarding education that English education was in reality similar to and guided by the same attitudes as he and his colleagues. However, attempts to sell the new system of education to the public on the grounds that it took its inspiration and models from British educational theory and practice, wear thin on closer inspection. Canadian educational thought was derivative of American and nowhere was this more apparent than in its preoccupation with efficiency. Neither the sentences quoted above, nor the rest of the letter reflected a concern with equality of opportunity or the diffusion of democratic principles throughout the educational process. The main problem was seen as the creation of a rational system which could turn out people capable of fitting into a complex society, vocationally and ethically, in accordance with the designs of its leaders.

In another section King gave the opinions of a wide variety of economists on the economic effects of education, in an effort to show that "education is not merely an activity of society upon which wealth is expended, but that it directly contributes to production and is in fact one of the productive activities of society".⁶⁷ The excerpts from the writings reinforce this opinion by stating that increased or more specialized education increased worker productivity, raised the standard of living which in turn made for more productive efficiency and developed wider demands for consumption. Like the chapter on English education this can be interpreted as a rebuttal of the Kidd Report. In fact the King Report can be viewed as another attempt to vanquish the authors and supporters of the Kidd Report who, it was clear, had changed their thinking

very little since 1932.

It is probable that those who have written about education in British Columbia at this time have accepted King's assessment of the situation as progressives versus reactionaries, or out-of-date, aristocratic, old-world traditions versus a modern, democratic outlook. However, despite the obvious differences there were striking similarities between the two points of view. To begin with neither spokesman for their respective set of educational values had an optimistic assessment of the intellectual capacities of the school population. Although King on the basis of I.Q. tests argued that half of the school or at least 40 per cent were fitted for secondary education, only a small percentage of these were capable of the traditional academic kind which allowed entrance to the universities and ultimately to positions of leadership. Secondly both King and Kidd were elitist in their thinking. The only difference lay in the fact that Kidd would draw society's leaders from the ranks of the well-to-do and those few who could obtain scholarships, while King would remove any financial obstacles. The structure of society would remain the same but the rules would be somewhat changed. In the third place both would reduce the one democratic element in the administration of schools, the one by placing school boards under the control of municipal councils, the other by replacing them by provincial bureaucrats.

King and Kidd were each essentially conservative and hierarchical in outlook. Their differences had their roots in their perceptions of society and its needs and the role the school could play in fulfilling

those needs. To Kidd, and the conservative business and professional community he represented, classical laissez-faire doctrine, whether or not it was defined as such, still held sway. If the economy could be kept buoyant and expansive, a task for the unfettered initiative of the businessman, then the problems of society would inevitably be solved insofar as the limitations of human nature would allow. In British Columbia which depended for its prosperity on primary resources, and where industrialization was not generally dependent on an advanced technology, the role of the school was to train those few leaders required, and provide the rest with a rudimentary general education and the commercial and technical education needed for a relatively unsophisticated economy. King and the "liberal progressives" for whom he spoke, had on the other hand, lost faith in the efficacy and justice of the unseen hand. Two things were needed to ensure that society would remain stable and progressive, for social progressiveness² was seen as a necessity for survival: greater government intervention in economic life, and an improved and comprehensive educational system. To the conservative, nothing must be allowed to interfere with the flow of capital into economic investment; therefore tax rates must be kept down, and such essential services as schools must be run as efficiently and economically as possible. To the liberal educator the importance of efficiency in the construction of an educational system is more difficult to assess.

In the opinion of the writer in The School King was consciously sacrificing sound educational values to efficiency in order to ward off the accusation of extravagance from his conservative critics and to make

his educational recommendations palatable to them. This interpretation that educators were forced in self-defence to adopt policies of efficiency to placate the wealthy, materialistic and influential was frequently used to explain similar occurrences in American education in the early part of the century. Raymond E. Callahan, in his book Education and the Cult of Efficiency an exploration of the "origin and development of the adoption of business values and practices in educational administration"⁶⁸ Callahan points out that emphasis on efficiency originated around the turn of the century in the United States at a time of massive immigration and rapid industrialization and urbanization. The problems attendant on these developments were thought by reformers to be amenable to solution by the application of "modern business methods" and "efficiency", and also the concepts of scientific management of F.W. Taylor and his followers. These ideas gained such prestige that soon they were being applied to the schools and the schools were found wanting. American educators then began to apply the same methods to their own enterprise and the "era of the dollar as educational criterion"⁶⁹ was ushered in. But it was Franklin Bobbitt, instructor in educational administration at the University of Chicago, who applied scientific management to schooling and fathered the scientific administration movement with approval by King in his report. According to Bobbitt "education was a shaping process as much as the manufacture of steel rails".⁷⁰ Just as the manufacturing process required standards, so too did the education process require both qualitative and quantitative standards from which there were "practically no limits to the benefits to be achieved".⁷¹ If standards were sufficiently

defined, "teachers would know instantly when students were failing. Principals would know when teachers were inefficient"⁷² and so on. In Bobbitt's view just as standards and specifications for steel rails were set by the consumer, so too should educational standards be "set by the community and not by the educators".⁷³ Under this system the duties of the inspectorial department were twofold. First it should undertake independent testing of the work being done in the schools. Secondly, the inspectors should find the best scientific procedures or methods to be used in the schools, a job "too large and too complicated to be laid on the shoulders of the teachers".⁷⁴ This approach to administration took such a hold, Callahan states quoting a prominent educator, that by 1930 all work in educational administration was "permeated with the philosophy of management, of business efficiency".⁷⁵ Despite this fact Callahan believes that most administrators adopted the approach to administration of Bobbitt and his school in self-defence.

There is little question that King had adopted the stance of the scientific administrator, indeed he specifically stated that the application of the science of administration was a necessity if education was to be improved. In the chapter entitled "Economy" King gave repeated evidence of the importance he attached to economy, "the Aristotelian mean between the vicious extremes of parsimony and waste".⁷⁶ In fact waste was the key word in the chapter and all means and methods were judged good if they helped to eliminate it. The junior high schools in Vancouver were commended for having reduced the cost of educating pupils in comparison with the cost of educating them in the elementary school and the high

school. According to the Bureau of Measurements of the City of Vancouver, the junior high schools actually saved the ratepayers over \$70,000. in 1931. High school and elementary school correspondence courses were praised for the economies they could effect. The closing of a small rural school would result in a saving of approximately \$100. per pupil per year. There was no discussion as to the comparable value to the pupil of instruction received in this manner, other than to mention that it was "well organized pedagogically". Such was not the case, King pointed out, when the Kidd committee recommended more use of the Correspondence Department which was at that time "in a formative stage and in no state to undertake the duties satisfactorily".⁷⁷

When he discussed economy in the practical arts subjects, manual training and home economics, typewriting and science, King dealt with the educational aspects of the more economical methods advocated. In the case of manual arts, traditionally small classes of 20 to 24 should now be supplanted by classes of 40, thereby halving teacher costs because experience with large classes in junior secondary schools in Vancouver had proven that the results were equally good. The crucial requirement for the teaching of large groups, King asserted, was the use of jobsheets and information sheets. Such a method, he explained, allowed students to advance at their own speed, develop more initiative, responsibility and self-reliance, and more time on the part of the instructor for individual instruction.⁷⁸ In other words self instruction, an impersonal atmosphere, and individual instruction on the basis of approximately one and one half minutes per pupil in an average sized class of 40 pupils would

provide an ideal learning environment. The comparison with the factory is almost too obvious to mention.

In his defence of more economical methods of instruction in the sciences King placed himself in the ranks of pedagogical conservatives and in opposition to one of the most cherished pedagogical principles of the "new education". The teaching of science was made costly by the extensive use of laboratory equipment. But the use of such expensive apparatus, he argued, was not necessary in order to achieve the objectives of secondary science education,

"...the important outcome of science study is the understanding of the major concepts, principles, laws and general ideas which are to be learned from...science...

Experimental studies with parallel class groups have demonstrated that the objectives of science-teaching...are better achieved by the teacher demonstration method than by the method of individual experimentation. This is what would naturally be expected. The focusing of attention upon the fundamental principles which are to be learned...is more likely to result in learning than when these principles are lost in the manipulation of complicated apparatus.

By manipulating apparatus the student simply learns to manipulate apparatus. He acquires a certain manipulative skill which may be of advantage to those few students who afterwards take the honour science courses in the university..." 79

King did not recommend the total elimination of experimental work because it "stimulates interest" and "gives a satisfaction which is favourable to learning".⁸⁰ The project method, the enterprise, learning by doing

were thus expendable depending on the cost factor. All that was really necessary, except for those of superior intelligence, were the teacher and the text-book.

King made other recommendations for greater economy in the schools relating to the use of the library, high school study halls, teacher supervision, and budgeting and accounting. Throughout, the guiding principle was economy of size. In this way, for example, study halls would be large enough to hold several classes at a time under the supervision of one teacher, thus saving the cost of the services of several teachers. He also suggested the closing of one of the province's Normal Schools. The whole trend of the administrative system was geared to greater size of classes and school areas, more professionalization, and more bureaucratization. In all a significantly more depersonalized system in which paradoxically every pupil was to be accurately guided into his life's work.

It is difficult to accept King's advocacy of efficiency and economy as a hypocritical pose, adopted to placate his reactionary critics. There is too much of a ring of conviction in his writings to be able to place him in the ranks of Callahan's administrators who espoused scientific management as an act of self-defence. Taken in conjunction with statements made on other issues, King appears as a convinced believer.⁸¹ This is not to say, however, that he fitted exactly into the Bobbitt mould nor that scientific administration was the overriding concept in his educational thought. There is no evidence to suggest that he wished to tailor the

schools to the express wishes of the business community. Yet he appears to find no conflict between administrative values and educational values: the one would seem to follow the other.

King's primary objective was to create a system which would fulfill its most important function, as he termed it, its integrative function. A rational, efficient, administrative system was a very important factor in the achievement of his goal, but it was not the only one. If the schools were to be effective integrative agents they must ensure that all children and young people were provided with the means whereby they could become trained to fit into and unify society. In this sense equality of opportunity was an essential element in ensuring the safety, perpetuity and, in liberal eyes, the progressiveness of the state. Equality of opportunity as a condition of social mobility was not a consideration: in fact education sought for that reason was roundly condemned. The student should be encouraged to develop his capacities to the fullest, but he should do so not for the purpose of personal advancement but rather for the satisfaction to be gained from being a contributing member of society.

The tool to be used to produce the right kind of citizen was the curriculum. As had been promised, shortly after the Report on Finance was submitted Weir announced that curriculum committees would be set up in order that the curricula of elementary, junior high, high and technical schools might be revised. The work was to be under the direction of a central committee of five members, "with a background of administrative

experience and special equipment in educational psychology, educational sociology, comparative education and the history of education, research and statistical procedures". One member of this committee would have the function of curriculum adviser (King was subsequently given this task), to advise upon "all phases and aspects of the revision...afford guidance in the principles to be laid down and followed throughout... and assist in effecting articulation and co-ordination in each stage in the processs".⁸² The guiding principles were to be found in the works of "such writers as Spencer, Bobbitt, Snedden, Bonser, Chapman and Counts"⁸³ all with one exception men who emphasized the practical, vocationalism and social efficiency.

But it was not only in the curriculum that changes were to be made. Having failed to carry his party and the public with him in his grand design for a centralized educational system Weir set out to achieve his secondary goal of the consolidation of school districts. The government had already made a beginning in this direction when, in October 1934, it combined 37 school districts in the Peace River region into four units.⁸⁴ School boards had been abolished and an official trustee appointed by the Department of Education. In August 1935 the Abbotsford, Matsqui, Sumas district was set up in the Fraser Valley under the complete financial control of the government. Two months later, the entire Peace River District with the exception of three larger centres, was placed under the control of the official trustees. In the Abbotsford, Matsqui, Sumas district most of the people "welcomed the change".⁸⁵ In the Peace River, however, both in 1934 and 1935 there were outbursts against it, but the government

held fast to the plan. Indeed it was necessary for Weir to prove to the province by successful test cases that a completely government controlled school system would result in better education and greater efficiency and economy.

Unable to acquire more funds from the provincial treasury for his department, Weir, like the premier and his cabinet colleagues, turned his attention to acquiring greater grants for education from the federal government. In a letter to the provincial premiers in the fall of 1934 Prime Minister Bennett had asked whether the provinces were prepared to "surrender their exclusive jurisdiction over legislation dealing with such social problems as old age pensions etc. to the Dominion Parliament... and if so on what terms and conditions".⁸⁶ Although no specific mention had been made of education Weir immediately took a very determined stand in defence of the B.N.A. Act and the retention by the provinces of complete jurisdiction over education. At the same time he began pressing demands for greater federal assistance for education. Addressing the fourth biennial convention of the Home and School Federation of Canada he stated that the Act "had definitely in mind elementary education" when education was placed under provincial control, "even high school education was probably not thought of. This being the case, the federal government was therefore "free to assist the provinces in the conduct of education without infringing on matters covered by section 93".⁸⁷ As assistance had previously been given to technical education and agricultural education it might now grant money to the provinces "in aid of vocational education, adult education and health education. All health serves to

undo much of the benefit to be derived from education".⁸⁸ The establishment of a bureau of education federally funded to do research and recommend policies had long been the desire of many educators. Weir added his voice in advocating such a bureau, but cautioned that it have only "advisory functions, but no legislative powers".⁸⁹ He was an indefatigable defender of provincial rights, and like the school boards he wished to abolish, he wanted the money provided by someone else while he retained full control on the grounds that his knowledge of local conditions far surpassed that of the central government.

The King Report was destined never to be implemented, the Abbotsford, Matsqui, Sumas experiment did not live up to the expectations of its supporters, and the B.C.T.F., which had made many of the suggestions which were discussed and amplified in the report under the heading of economy finally became convinced that the government was more interested in economy than a better quality of education.⁹⁰ However the King Report is historically important because of the insight it affords into the social and educational theories of those few who had at that time the direction of the schools in their hands.

Notes

Chapter V

- 1 The School, December, 1933, p. 363.

- 2 Ibid., January, 1934, p. 458.

- 3 The school system in British Columbia had completed centralization of school financing from 1872-1888. However elected three-man school boards were authorized under the Public Schools Act, but their functions were relatively limited.

- 4 For example see reaction of school boards to the suggestion that they be absorbed by municipal councils in British Columbia 1920-1925.

- 5 The Report of the Municipal Taxation Commission, 1933.
 (Victoria King's Printer, 1934) p. 6.

- 6 Ibid., p. 18.

- 7 Although teachers wanted a minimum salary set, they did not want maximums set. They wished these to remain at discretion of local school boards.

- 8 B.C. Teacher, April, 1934, p. 4.

- 9 Margaret A. Ormsby, British Columbia: A History (MacMillan, rev. ed., 1971), p. 459.

- 10 Harry Charlesworth, General Secretary of the B.C.T.F. had been a strong advocate of the "new education". In a speech delivered to the Department of Superintendence in Minneapolis, February, 1933 he urged that the schools lead the way in creating a less individualistic more socially oriented society. Charlesworth papers, Special Collections, University of British Columbia.

- 11 "King was not only a personal friend, confident and political supporter of Weir, but also a professional associate, having

- 11 served as part-time lecturer at U.B.C. since 1925." A.H. Child
... "Herbert B.King,Administrative Idealist" Chapter 16, Profiles
of Canadian Educators; R.S. Patterson, J.W. Chalmers, and
J.W. Friesen, eds. (D.C. Heath Canada Ltd., 1974) p. 310.
- 12 B.C. Teacher, June, 1934, p. 2.
- 13 Victoria Colonist, June 29, 1934.
- 14 Vancouver Sun, July 14, 1934.
- 15 Ibid., July 20, 1934.
- 16 Ibid., July 31, 1934.
- 17 Ibid., September 7, 1934.
- 18 Vancouver Board of Trade, Council Minutes, Volume 12, p. 133.,
Vancouver City Archives..
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Victoria Colonist, July 19, 1934; July 31, 1934.
- 21 Vancouver Board of Trade, Op. Cit., pp. 145-147.
- 22 Ibid.
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 It should be noted that this was by no means a new or novel
proposal; the larger unit had been strongly recommended in
Canada, by educators, since long before World War I.
- 25 Volume 13, p. 63.

- 26 Vancouver Board of Trade, Op. Cit., Volume 13, p. 63.
- 27 Martin Robin, The Company Province, 1934-1972. (Toronto, 1973), p. 16.
- 28 For a full discussion of this point see Margaret A. Ormsby
"T. Dufferin Pattullo and the Little New Deal" Canadian
Historical Review, Vol. XLIII no. 4, December, 1962.

Ormsby claims that Pattullo was well aware that his promise
of 'work and wages' was dependent for its realization on
massive financial assistance from the federal government.
However "many provincial politicians although they mounted
the slogan did not know what" Pattullo meant by it;
in fact "almost no one in B.C. comprehended the scope of
his proposals". Pattullo had no success in convincing
either the Conservative Prime Minister, R.B. Bennett,
although he did manage to wring a few financial concessions
from him, or the Liberal Prime Minister W.L. MacKenzie
King of the soundness of his economic theories.
- 29 Ibid., p. 15.
- 30 Ibid., p. 17, p. 22.
- 31 Ormsby, Op. Cit., pl 463. Vancouver was invaded by 1,700 men from
relief camps in the interior who had gone on strike for "work
and wages". Violence broke out in the Hudson's Bay store
and in other parts of the city.
- 32 Vancouver Board of Trade, Op. Cit., Volume 12, p. 202.
- 33 Vancouver Sun, November 9, 1934.
- 34 Victoria Colonist, March 5, 1935.
- 35 Vancouver Sun, February 16, 1935.
- 36 Victoria Colonist, February 16, 1935.

37. Robin, Op. Cit., p. 29.
- 38 Ibid.
- 39 H.B. King, School Finance in British Columbia., p. iv and v.
- 40 Victoria Colonist, August 8, 1935.
- 41 The School, November, 1935, p. 261.
- 42 Vancouver Sun, August 10, 1935.
- 43 The School, February, 1936. Quoted from the Vancouver Daily Province of December 13, 1935.
- 44 In October, 1934, in the Peace River district 37 school districts had been combined into 4, school boards were abolished and an official trustee placed in charge. Despite the outcry from many people in the area the government in October, 1935 placed the entire district with the exception of three larger centres under an official trustee and there were renewed protests.
- 45 The School, October, 1935, p. 92.
- 46 Ibid.
- 47 H.B. King was born in Ontario and began his teaching career there. After moving to British Columbia he taught classics at Kitsilano Junior-Senior High School, later becoming its principal. According to A.H. Child few people who remembered him spoke favourably of him, "usually stressing his vanity, arrogance and intolerance." "He saw service overseas during World War I and thereafter insisted on being addressed as Major King even after being granted a Doctor of Pedagogy degree from the University of Washington in 1936.
- 48 H.B. King, School Finance in the Province of British Columbia. (Victoria King's Printer, 1935), p. 27.

- 49 Ibid., p. 32.
- 50 R.S. Patterson, J.W. Chalmers and J.W. Friesen, eds. Profiles of Canadian Educators, (D.C. Heath Canada Ltd., 1974), p. 308.
- 51 H.B. King, Op. Cit., p. 31.
- 52 Lawrence Cremin, The Transformation of the School (New York, 1964) pp. 201-202.
- 53 H.B. King, Op. Cit., p. 31.
- 54 Ibid.
- 55 Ibid., p. 32.
- 56 Ibid., p. 27.
- 57 Ibid., p. 27.
- 58 Ibid.
- 59 It is interesting to note that Neatby in her broadside against progressive education accused it of being anti-intellectual and for failing to provide the intellectual training for the cultivation of leadership in all fields. Whatever the results may have been this is an erroneous interpretation, at least of the intent of the leaders of progressive education in British Columbia.
- 60 H.B. King, Op. Cit., p. 128.
- 61 Ibid., p. 27.
- 62 Ibid., p. 125.

- 63 Ibid., p. 27.
- 64 Ibid., p. 29.
- 65 Ibid., p. 128.
- 66 Ibid., p. 46.
- 67 Ibid., p. 38.
- 68 Raymond E. Callahan, Education and the Cult of Efficiency.
 (Chicago, 1962), Preface.
- 69 Ibid., p. 72.
- 70 Ibid., p. 82.
- 71 Ibid.
- 72 Ibid.
- 73 Ibid., p. 83.
- 74 Ibid., p. 84.
- 75 Ibid., p. 199.
- 76 H.B. King, Op. Cit., p. 141.
- 77 Ibid., p.146.
- 78 Ibid., pp. 149-150.
- 79 Ibid., pp. 156-157.

- 80 Ibid., p. 157.
- ✓ 81 Prentice in The School Promoters (Toronto, 1977) traces the drive for efficiency in the educational system of mid-nineteenth century Ontario and links it with the desire to give education a public function.
- 82 B.C. Teacher, April, 1935, p. 21.
- 83 Ibid. Herbert Spencer; English philosopher whose works, particularly had a great impact on American thought. He stated that the function of education was preparation for complete living, ie. activities ministering to self-preservation and securing the necessities of life.
- David Snedden; American sociologist, virtual founder of the sociology of education who believed that all education should be judged by its contribution to social efficiency. He was also a consistent advocate of vocational education.
- Frederick Gordon Bonser; American educator who pioneered curricula centred around the production and consumption of goods. He also promoted industrial arts and economic education.
- George S. Counts; American educator chiefly noted for his social criticism. With the publication of a pamphlet entitled "Dare the Schools Build a New Social Order" in 1932 he became the leading figure in the social reconstructionist movement in American education.
- ✓ J. Crosby Chapman; English born and educated educational psychologist who became professor of educational psychology at Yale University. He co-authored one work with Edward L. Thorndike and another with George S. Counts, the latter entitled the "Principles of Education".
- 84 On the basis of reports of inspectors of the ineffectiveness of the local school boards to provide suitable accommodation and an adequate education, the Department of Education, proposed the setting up of the four units on an experimental basis. The units were created from former school districts in which the trustees were ineligible to hold office because of unpaid school taxes.
- 65th Annual Report of the Public Schools of the Province of British Columbia, 1935-36, H 59.

- 85 Patterson, Chalmers and Friesen eds., Op. Cit., p. 313.
- 86 The School, October, 1934, p. 145.
- 87 Ibid., September, 1935, p. 86.
- 88 Ibid.
- 89 Ibid., p. 88.
- 90 Patterson, Chalmers and Friesen eds., Op. Cit., p. 313.

CHAPTER VI

CURRICULUM REVISION

When the province of British Columbia embarked upon a revision of the curriculum in the spring and summer of 1935 it was not beginning a new of unique task. Curriculum revision had been an ongoing affair in the province for a number of years, the last partial revisions having been made in the elementary programme of studies in 1933, in the junior high school programme in 1932 and in the high school programme in 1933.¹ What was new was the scope and extent of the latest venture. Every subject in every grade from one through high school was to be examined and reformulated, if necessary, in accordance with the principles of the "new education". It was a formidable task requiring the efforts of four committees with a total of 55 members, under which "over 250 teachers, supervisors, normal-school instructors and inspectors of schools were selected to revise the programmes of study in the various subjects".² The central revision committee, consisting of five members included, in addition to H.B. King, D.L. MacLaurin, Assistant Superintendent of Education as chairman, H.N. MacCorkindale, Superintendent of Schools for Vancouver, C.B. Wood, a member of the staff of the Department of Education at the University of British Columbia, and J. Roy Sanderson, Principal of King Edward High School in Vancouver. The membership of the elementary school committee was overwhelmingly drawn from Vancouver and Victoria schools, as was the membership of the convening section of the junior high school revision committee, under the chairmanship of King, and the

convening section of the senior high school revision committee under the chairmanship of MacCorkindale. The advisory sections of the latter two committees were composed largely of school principals in the smaller cities and towns in the province.³ All members of all committees were selected by the Central Curriculum Revision Committee and approved by the Department of Education, none was selected by their peers. It is clear that despite the numbers involved, the work of curriculum revision would be tightly controlled by a small group drawn from Vancouver whose ideas would be consonant with the thinking of the Minister of Education and his principle advisor.⁴ Weir did request the "cooperation of all teachers, parent-teacher associations, industrial leaders, service clubs, local councils of women and similar organizations".⁵ Teachers were urged to "forward their suggestions for the careful scrutiny and sympathetic consideration of the Department". As well they were invited to forward to the chairmen of subject committees "any constructive suggestions they may care to make for the revision of the programme in the respective subjects".⁶ It is unfortunate that no records exist which would indicate to what extent teachers and community organizations contributed suggestions and what significance they had in the formulation of the new curriculum.

But British Columbia was not the only province which undertook to revise the school curriculum during the 1930's. Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and New Brunswick all engaged in extensive curriculum reform during this period. All were convinced that much in existing curricula was out-of-date, the remnants of a tradition no longer relevant.

to the greatly changed world which had come into being in the past decade or two. Whatever differences existed between educators in different parts of the country with regard to educational philosophy or pedagogical methods, all were agreed that a changed world demanded a changed education. As the report of the Committee on Educational Philosophy, under the Chairmanship of C.B. Wood put it "The purpose of the school is to assist the child in his adjustment to society. As society is constantly changing the adjustment must be flexible and progressive."⁷ This did not mean that all the existing curricula had to be jettisoned. Weir admitted that a great deal of excellent work was "exemplified in the present programme" and that "many improvements undoubtedly have been made in the curriculum since the report of the School Survey in 1925".⁸ But nothing was, in the words of an article on Saskatchewan's new school curriculum, to be "tolerated because of the sanctity of long use".⁹

It is likely that the people of Saskatchewan remodelled their existing curriculum, they did not "simply open the doors and let it blow away on a prairie wind". And it is unlikely that they erected "on a new foundation...a noble structure, designed on the four square pattern of utility, hope, self-expression and the joy of achievement...with its spires of character-building" pointing "heavenward".¹⁰ However such extravagant phraseology does capture something of the feeling of the magnitude of the task and the hope and expectation of the results. For the curriculum was to be the main instrument used by the school to create a better society. In a speech to the revision committees Weir emphasized

the school's social role and decried earlier education which had failed the adults of the day. "The schools of to-morrow", he stated, "must teach co-operation rather than selfish competition". Their principal task must be that of "socializing the youth of the nation". And, he continued, "we must make such provision for adult education as will in some measure indemnify the present adult generation for the imperfections of traditional educational methods and institutions".¹¹ Turning to the subject matter of the curriculum Weir pointed out that it must have "immediate" appeal to the pupil as well as "social significance". At the same time subject matter must never assume greater importance than the learner. The pupils physical, mental, and moral health must always be the paramount concern of curriculum maker and teacher. In this connection he noted that at the present British Columbia was "limping far in the rear, in comparison say with Russia, as regards physical and recreational education. These are the matters that appeal to laymen, whose sympathetic support conditions the success of educational reforms."¹² Weir concluded by urging those planning the curriculum to keep in mind that the material used should be selected "primarily for its functional value with social utility in mind".¹³

This speech to the revision committees revealed clearly Weir's major preoccupations and his general cast of mind. Fresh from his struggles with businessmen and the medical profession over the issue of health insurance, he placed the inculcation of co-operative social attitudes at the head of the school's functions. The very fact that he wished to attempt the re-education of the adult population in this regard testified

eloquently to the strength of his convictions. It appears obvious that from his observations of the society in which he was living and the political and social developments which were taking place in the rest of the world, Weir had concluded that democracy as he understood it was in a perilous state, Weir also indicated that the other major concern of schooling should be with the health of the pupil. And here too, its importance seemed to be closely linked in his mind with the survival of the state. Throughout the Minister's words exhibit a belief in the indisputable rightness of his convictions and also a certain authoritarianism which was evident in the Report on Nursing Education. There does not appear to be any doubt in Weir's mind that critical and constructive thinking will not lead inevitably to his point of view. Those who cannot be persuaded to see the light must nevertheless follow the prescribed way.

The task of remaking the curriculum in terms of an educational philosophy radically different from that of the 19th century, was one which was being attempted with increasing frequency in the United States. Beginning just after the turn of the century the movement had gained such momentum that by 1931 it was estimated that 168 large city school systems in that country were engaged in rebuilding their curricula.¹⁴ Teaching staff of entire school systems were reported to be working on curriculum problems, and "curriculum and course study building was the theme of educational year books".¹⁵

However despite this feverish activity there was much criticism of the work being done. Prominent educators were by no means of one mind

as to what was being done or of what should be done. There was skepticism about the very possibility that curricula could be constructed according to the much quoted scientific principles, and the belief that most curriculum changes, despite their authors use of the term, were largely subjective.¹⁶ John Dewey criticized the developments in American education at the beginning of the 30's as lacking in a "great directive aim".¹⁷ David Snedden, a pioneer in educational sociology agreed and added that it expanded and improved only by "piecemeal additions".¹⁸ Snedden himself would substitute for over-arching philosophical statements of educational purpose, concrete limited objectives, scientifically determined in terms of social efficiency.¹⁹

There was obviously not the agreement among leading educators on the most important educational questions of the day that King had asserted, nor was there the same confidence in what science had accomplished or could accomplish. However in one sense his statement can be regarded as accurate, namely, the so-called seven cardinal principles of education had been adopted by most of those involved in curriculum revision. These principles: health, command of fundamental processes, worthy home membership, vocation, citizenship, worthy use of leisure and ethical character, had become the "slogan formulation"²⁰ which guided many schoolmen. The popularity of the report which set forth these principles was such that by 1929 110,000 copies had been sold.²¹ The report was the product of the Committee on the Reorganization of Secondary Education set up by the National Education Association of the United States in 1915, under

the chairmanship of Clarence D. Kingsley an assistant to David Sneddon at the State Department of Education of Massachusetts.

It is pertinent at this point to examine briefly the rationale for these principles which exerted such an influence on American schoolmen and on the most influential educators in British Columbia. In his exhaustive work The Shaping of the American High School Edward A. Krug gives a detailed analysis of the report. Although this was by no means the first study made on secondary education the authors justified their report on the grounds of the extent of social change during the previous decade. Not only had the life of the individual become more complex but at the same time agencies other than the school were doing less than before to support and educate him. Under these circumstances the school must take up the task of training the youth of the nation for life in a democracy, the purpose of which was, stated the report, "so to organize society that each member may develop his personality primarily through activities designed for the well-being of his fellow men and of society as a whole".²²

As it was the responsibility of the school to train the whole person for the totality of his future life, the cardinal principles grew out of an of the life patterns which the majority of people were most likely to adopt.

"Normally, said the report, the individual was a member of a family, of a vocational group, and of various civic groups. The next consideration was that of leisure, discussed in the report

as an adjunct of efficiency...The next objective, that of health, was important because of its effect on the 'vitality of the race' and the 'defence of the Nation'. Ethical character...gained its place in the list, partly on its own merits and partly through its relationship to good citizenship, vocational excellence and the worthy use of leisure time... Command of fundamental processes, was viewed not as 'an end in itself' but nevertheless as indispensable to the affairs of life..." 23

It is interesting to note that the report in its original draft did not include fundamental processes.²⁴

In Krug's opinion, the report was consistent with the thinking of many educators of the time, but it in no way expressed the break with traditional education which many of Kingsley's contemporaries would like to have seen. Vocational education was not emphasized, and Kingsley prescribed that all high school pupils should take four or five of the traditional subjects. The committee also rejected the proposals of some educators for different curricula for groups of students. It proposed that the comprehensive high school should remain the standard type of secondary school as a means of achieving social unity. The report also came out strongly for universal secondary education to the age of 18, again in the interest of promoting a "sense of social solidarity". In this regard the report declared, "'To the extent to which the objectives outlined here are adopted as the controlling aims of education...to that extent will it be recognized that an extended education for every boy and girl is essential to the welfare and even to the existence of democratic

society."²⁵

King saw the cardinal principles report as an expression of the scientific social efficiency movement in education which had dominated the thinking of many educators for more than a decade before the report was written. The intellectual origins of this movement were to be found in the social philosophy of two professors of sociology, Charles H. Cooley and Edward A. Ross who wrote and lectured during the years before and after the turn of the century. Both were considered progressives who influenced the leaders of political progressivism in the United States, but in the words of one historian writing in the early 1970's an analysis of their theories "reveals a sophisticated intellectual justification for repression".²⁶ Both men, according to Paul C. Violas, thought that an era of rapid change with its attendant social problems required "ever-increasing functional specialization" and the leadership of an expert elite which was allowed to make "correct social decisions". "Education, they contended, would play a crucial role as the chief sorting agency in society".²⁷ They did not deny equality of opportunity or social mobility or individuality, but only, in Violas view, as a means of obtaining a social unity which was determined by the "corporate organism"²⁸ or in effect the expert elite.

Violas' analysis of Cooley and Ross points up parallels between this school of American sociology and British Columbia educators Weir and King. For example these pronouncements by Cooley and Ross on democracy surely strike responsive chords with liberalism in British Columbia

in the 1930's.²⁹ Ross wrote, "... democracy at its best, substitutes the direction of the recognized moral and intellectual elite for the rule of the strong, the rich or the privileged".³⁰ And Cooley declared "The rule of public opinion, then means...a latent authority which the public will exercise when sufficiently dissatisfied with the specialist... It cannot extend to the immediate participation of the group as a whole in the details of public business".³¹

In an article published in 1930, entitled "The Hurtful Influence of Scholars on Useful Education" Snedden gives illustrations of the educational sociologists approach to curriculum construction. Taking history for one of his examples he questions that most history is of use to the principals and experienced teachers whose job it is to draw up courses and curricula. Although some history may contribute to cultural education by giving accounts of social change this is secondary to the main purpose of instruction in the schools. "The schoolmaster knows" he wrote that "even for his bright pupils only a very few incidents...or other findings from...history can be made significant in producing either civic motivation or civic guidance".³²

This article points out very clearly that the goal to be sought was quite simply the moulding of the school population into the kind of citizens that the schools thought that society required.. What was to be emphasized in any course of study, were those ideas, concepts or facts which would condition the pupil to desirable social behavior. It is Krug's contention that the scientific management movement and the movement for

social efficiency merged after 1905 and became the dominant point of view among American educators after 1910. The implications of this development for the curriculum were that all subjects had to justify themselves on the basis of their contribution to the production of a socially efficient individual. Thus classics and mathematics, because they were found, on scientific enquiry, to contribute little in this regard, were the least necessary subjects for any curriculum. Conversely, home economics was one of the most important.

As mentioned earlier, although the cardinal principles report adopted the aims and objectives of the dominant educational theory of its time it retained the traditional subjects at the core of the curriculum for all students. It did not demand as social efficiency and scientific management had done, that the subjects prove their right to exist, but it called on them "to make their contribution to the objectives".³³ There was one other aspect of the work that should be mentioned. Although the report did not emphasize vocationalism, it did consider that vocational guidance was essential. The discovery of aptitudes in the individual was deemed to be essential and it was recommended that systematic testing be used toward this end.

When Weir set out the duties of the central committee he instructed the members to formulate fundamental principles of education from an analysis of the writings of a number of educators and several reports, including that of the seven cardinal principles. He noted also that the theories of several prominent educators were set forth in a book entitled

The Technique of Curriculum Making. The author Henry Harrap, a professor at Western Reserve University, was noted for his interest in furthering economic education in the schools. The book was first printed in 1928 and had since gone through six printings.³⁴

The work can hardly be said to contain even an elementary analysis of the writers mentioned, Spencer, Bobbitt, Chapman Snedden, Bonser and Counts. What it does do is to set out a formula for curriculum construction which incorporates some of educational objectives mentioned in the writings of these men. Harrap's book is essentially a rather simplistic piece of propaganda for the school of scientific management and social efficiency of which Franklin Bobbitt was the chief spokesman, modified by a plea that the schools help to reconstruct American life. Ideally speaking, Harrap stated the objectives of any curriculum should be determined by a direct analysis of the needs of the learner. This method being costly, however, curriculum makers should base their work on the "wealth of quantative data already in existence which describes the actual habits of people, their activities, their deficiencies, their needs".³⁵ He countered the criticism that education based on this approach to curriculum making was geared mainly to adjustment to the status quo, by saying that most curriculum makers were convinced that the emphasis should be on social improvement through democratic processes. To this end those in charge of fashioning new curriculums, were stressing the social education of the child rather than his mental development and discouraging the ineffective and unwholesome idea of personal development as a "conscious

objective for individuals".³⁶

Such then were the models and rationale for curriculum construction advocated by the Minister of Education advocated for the guidance of those who were to be responsible for the revised curriculum for British Columbia. It remains to make a critical assessment of the curriculum to determine in what respects it embodied the social philosophy and objectives of both the cardinal principles report and Harrap's work.

The new curriculum was issued to the schools in a series of successive bulletins from the summer of 1936 to the autumn of 1937, and its implementation began during those years. The bulletins for the new programme of studies for the elementary school and the junior secondary school each ran to approximately 660 pages, while those for the senior secondary school, including one for parents, totalled over 1,000 pages. The curriculum for each level of schooling was prefaced by the same statement of educational philosophy, followed by a complete outline of every course at each grade level accompanied by a statement of the specific objectives to be realized. The outlines were formidable in their comprehensiveness and detail. At the same time it was frequently stated that course outlines were not intended to be binding on teachers who were instructed instead to use their own ideas and initiatives, provided that they were in harmony with the general aims of the course.

The much heralded "Aims and Philosophy of Education in British Columbia" dealt with the functions of the system of education, both from

an individual and a social point of view, and left no doubt that the social function took precedence over the individual. The opening sentence sounded the keynote for the section, "From the point of view of society" it read, "the schools in any state exist to develop citizens or subjects according to the dominating ideals of the state or society".³⁷ Although the individual's "growth and self realization" were important, they were of secondary consideration to his adjustment to his environment, both social and physical.³⁸ It was admitted that the process of adjustment and growth, although "largely complementary" sometimes "involve conflict". In such instances it was the function of the school to discourage development which "is opposed to the social good" and foster that development which is "conducive to the good of all".³⁹

However there was another side to the problem of adjustment of the pupil to his environment. As the social environment did not remain static the school must also train the young to be able to make adjustments to a constantly changing order. While it was possible that the student at some future date "may be" able to change the environment, the emphasis was not on training for active participation in the modification process, but on training for "progressive adjustment" to change.⁴⁰ The qualities which were required of the individual to facilitate this adaptability were the ability to think critically with an "open-mindedness and freedom from prejudice unimpeded by unregulated emotion".⁴¹ These attributes were subsumed under the heading of character, which, it was stated might therefore "be said to be the main objectives of education. The school and

the curriculum should be organized to achieve this end."⁴²

The section on character education, included in the parents' bulletin, re-emphasized the primary importance of the development of moral character in the students, and set out in considerable detail the methods the school should use in attaining this goal. Despite the pre-eminent place given to character education, it was never specified what character was, or what character traits, other than those mentioned above, were considered admirable and most amenable to cultivation in a school setting. However those who had drawn up the curriculum were quite definite as to the type of person they would like to see emerge from the process of schooling. The person of character was one who acted in such a way as to contribute to the social welfare and the good of others. The emphasis should be, it was pointed out, "upon doing good rather than upon being good".⁴³ This meant not following a rigid moral code but rather a flexible morality "dependent upon insight into the institutional problems which surround us".⁴⁴

The ways and means of achieving the 'main objective of education' were numerous. School clubs were valuable in assisting "the adolescent in his change from an individual to a social outlook".⁴⁵ The guidance counsellor was important in co-ordinating the efforts of teachers and any specialists who might be necessary to deal with a student's problems. Teachers were important not only because of their day-to-day influence on the students but also because of the liaison which they should establish with the home. The tone of the school and the handling of discipline

were also vital. The individual conference, the case study and the group discussion were all techniques recommended as useful in instruction related to moral character and conduct. Group discussion appeared to be the most favoured as there was "no surer way of cultivating a social point of view than by encouraging discussion by a class of problems affecting the whole group".⁴⁶ After group discussion, carefully directed by the teacher, proper conduct was to be achieved by group pressure, for "the approval of the group is the most effective way of achieving the results desired".⁴⁷

Taken as a whole the section on character education reflects a downgrading of the individual and the elevation of the group, under the leadership of those possessed with the correct attitudes. Not only is the individual seen as as prone to idleness, selfishness, self-centredness, and irrationality, but the family, as noted earlier, is viewed with suspicion. There is no doubt left that in conflicts of attitudes between the home and the school, it is the home which is in error. None of this can be seen as surprising, when taken in the context of the Report on Nursing Education and the King Report, both of which point up the fallibility of the individual and the superiority of the corporate entity when guided by those with the right social values. A section headed "Differentiation of Instruction," also included in the parents' bulletin, reinforced the point made by Weir in the Report on Nursing Education that those of superior intelligence were also those of greater moral worth.⁴⁸ The salvation of society was to be accomplished by weaning the young away

from tradition and conditioning them to accept the change deemed necessary by those with superior insight into society's needs. The state, by means of its most vital institution the school, was to replace the church, the family and individual conscience as the chief arbitrator of morality and conduct.

An analysis of the programme of social studies illustrates the dominant place that the inculcation of social values held in the minds of the curriculum planners. Social studies provide perhaps the best example because they occupied an important position in the curriculum as socializing agents, "The Social Studies are designed to train the pupil as a member of society and to cultivate his social efficiency"⁴⁹ stated the opening paragraph of the section on social studies for senior secondary schools. In line with Sneddon's outlook the preamble further asserted that all branches of the social studies "must contribute...toward the aim of developing in the pupil a social and civic personality...From each of these separate disciplines such materials are drawn as can be used in achieving the general and specific objectives of the Social Studies".⁵⁰ A reading of some of the "Eight Ideals and Attitudes" to be developed by the junior secondary social studies programme, illustrates the extensiveness of the goal the curriculum makers had set, as well as the inconsistencies involved.

- "1. Love for other nations of the British Commonwealth and for our constitutional monarchy.
3. A sincere appreciation of our great pioneers of empire, government and reform, science and invention.

- 4. Tolerance and respect for other nations and races.
- 7. A respect for the rights and property of others.
- 9. An appreciation of the dignity of labour and its part in the development of character." 51

One wonders how the curriculum planners intended to reconcile Sir Robert Peel, Wilberforce, Clive, Cecil Rhodes, Lord Durham and George Brown with one another, let alone with tolerance and respect for other races, and the rights and property of others.⁵²

The instructions on methods set out in the social studies programme for senior secondary schools asked teachers to note that although "the development of desirable social attitudes and responses" should be the aim of the course⁵³ the expectations for each category of pupils should be different. "In general" it was stated, "dull pupils should develop the true essentials of social living--the ability to get along agreeably and effectively with the people with whom they associate daily; some power as consumers to evaluate the merits of various solutions to vexing social problems: some ability to choose among candidates for leadership". Bright pupils needed all this and more including the "need to learn the responsibilities and duties of leadership".⁵⁴

The social studies curriculum also made a plea for the encouragement of critical thinking and open-mindedness. The teacher was cautioned to refrain from propagandizing "his own views---political, economic, religious, or other---or with the views of any party or group to which he may belong or with which he may sympathize"⁵⁵ and urged to "exercise the

highest measure of objectivity and impartiality".⁵⁶ The discussion on methodology pointed out that students must be trained to exercise analytical and critical powers by means of the material with which social studies provided them. Clearly, the members of curriculum revision committees had placed themselves on the horns of a dilemma. The only resolutions possible were either to assert that objectivity must lead inevitably to one conclusion, an untenable intellectual position, or to indulge in pupil manipulation to achieve the desired results. While the problem is not dealt with directly, manipulation seems to be quite acceptable. The methods to be used at the senior secondary level, were "essentially inherent in the objectives and must be such as will ensure the maximum of pupil co-operation toward the attainment of ends with which he has been led to identify his interest".⁵⁷

Taken within the political context of British Columbia during the mid-thirties, the injunction to teachers to be impartial and refrain from propagandizing can be interpreted, not so much as a statement of general principle, but as a warning to those with radical sympathies. It is impossible to estimate how many teachers at that time held political opinions which could be interpreted as being to the left of the Liberal administration. Nor can it be known how many may have been influenced by the social reconstruction theories then at their zenith in the United States. However it is probably safe to assume that the proportion was at least as great as in the population at large,⁵⁸ and it was predicted by political observers in 1936, that had an election been called in British

Columbia at that time, the C.C.F. would have been certain of victory. It is significant that the statements regarding impartiality and objectivity appeared in the revision of the senior secondary curriculum after rumours had been widely circulated about socialist and even communist theories having been disseminated in the schools.⁵⁹

On the other hand there is no doubt that Weir was determined to use the schools to attempt to achieve the kind of society which he envisaged. Whatever reservations others might have had, he never appeared to have questioned that critical thinking and the right values were synonymous, or that both were identical with Liberalism as he understood it. In a speech delivered to the Laurier Club of Vancouver in August 1947, and later published as a pamphlet, Weir expressed his faith in Liberalism as the virtual saviour of democracy, if not of mankind. Liberalism, he stated was practically the equivalent of "sane Humanitarianism" and if the application of its principles should fail, then the "outlook for democracy is well-nigh hopeless".⁶⁰ Taken as a whole the speech is a paen of praise to Liberalism past and present and an exorcism of all other political philosophies, or isms, as they were referred to.

The speech is of interest to the educational historian because it points up the parallels between Weir's political convictions and his educational policies. Political ideologies of the right and the left were abhorrent because the one glorified unrestricted free enterprise and the other centralization and collectivism. He repudiated the charge that Liberalism upheld the doctrine of laissez-faire. In his version of

British history laissez-faire economic activity became more and more circumscribed during the 19th century largely due to the onslaughts of Liberalism most particularly "government-controlled education of the masses".⁶¹ Liberalism in its present form, Weir stated, reflected the extremely complex nature of society and stood both for "social control and free enterprise".⁶² Equality on the other hand was discarded because it was not rooted in nature and therefore an unrealistic goal. The equality promised by some politicians would in effect be the enforced equality of the totalitarian state. It should be pointed out that Weir was not referring only to communism here but also to socialism which bore the main brunt of his opprobrium in this speech. In his opinion those with superior intelligence quotients should be allowed to achieve the greatest success, indeed it was almost inevitable that they would. The best that a democracy could do was to guarantee "so-called equality of opportunity to all the children of all the citizens"⁶³ by providing them with a good education. After that if free competition were allowed to operate life would reward those with superior intellectual and moral attributes. Only Liberalism in Weir's estimation would allow these conditions to pertain.

There is no doubt that for Weir political and educational theory were closely related. With such an uncritical faith in Liberalism combined with such complete condemnation of all other political parties and creeds it was not surprising that he should find nothing reprehensible in making the schools the vehicle for a Liberal set of values. It is worth noting

that no mention was made in Weir's speech that a political party, or for that matter democracy itself should represent the attitudes, aspirations, or will of the people. Only the Liberal party is aware of what is best for the masses and more important is able to lead them to the promised land. The promises of other parties are merely snares and delusions which will ultimately lead them by means of the evils of collectivism and centralization to dictatorship. It seems to be implicit in all this the feeling that the average person is incapable of directing his own destiny. Certainly the curriculum guides would seem to bear this contention out. Despite the glowing rhetoric of public speeches and the King Report concerning the ability of large numbers of students to benefit from a high school education, the new secondary school curriculums repeatedly made the crude categorization of pupils into the bright and the dull, on the basis of which different subject matter was prescribed and different results expected. Nowhere is there a mention made of the average pupil. At the school level there were only the bright and the dull, the morally superior and the morally inferior, those to be initiated into leadership and those who could be expected to acquire some judgement "as consumers" as to the merits of political platforms and candidates.

From the point of view of pedagogy, the new curriculum adopted a unit form of organization. Every course was divided into "units of learning", centring around one specific topic. When a topic was finished no further reference or testing was to be done on it.⁶⁴ Although the project method was to be used both for group and individual work was no suggestion as with the enterprise programme in Alberta that topics were

to be chosen on the basis of a joint decision of teacher and pupils. Each unit was prescribed by the curriculum guide complete with the general and specific aims to be realized. However the items of subject matter were to be based on the interests of the child "either native or acquired".⁶⁵ The mastering of facts was not to be considered as an aim of any unit. Programmes, because of the need to recognize child interest had to maintain a certain amount of flexibility, but nevertheless this did not "necessitate the abandonment of subject matter, the essentials of which are fixed in advance".⁶⁶ The model used as a guide for the organization of units was the State of Montana Course of Study "classed as 'excellent' by the Teachers College Columbia University".⁶⁷

Guidance, on which King had placed so much emphasis in his report, received a prominent place in the curriculum of grades 9, 10, 11, and 12. and gave much more importance to educational, moral, social and civic guidance than it did to vocational. This was understandable in view of the fact that the school now "considers itself responsible for the Child's moral, physical, and social development as well as for his intellectual development and his vocational guidance".⁶⁸ This last statement regarding guidance can be taken as a summing up of the new curriculum. While it is probably true that the moral and social development of the child have always taken precedence in the minds of the chief promoters in North America,⁶⁹ it was not until the 20th century that it was so explicitly stated as such. Intellectual development, or command of fundamental processes, as the cardinal principles report termed it, was merely one of

the many concerns of schooling, and as the British Columbia curriculum made abundantly clear by no means one of the most important.

The new programme of studies followed closely the pattern set down by the cardinal principles report with its emphasis on social utility and preparation for life situations. The dimension added by Harrap's guide was the importance of adjustment to desirable social change. What is noticeable in all three instances is that while the growth of the individual was frequently mentioned as a most worthy goal of education, the welfare of society or the state took precedence. The school population was to be adjusted to a value system dictated by a minute minority of society, in this case of a progressive liberalism of truly enormous pretensions. At the heart of both the political and the educational philosophy there lay a dogma which had little faith in the individual's ability to direct his own life or contribute in any meaningful way to the direction of society. He was a consumer, not a producer, and as such, must be conditioned to consume what was best for society, which by definition was also best for him.

When the new curriculum revisions were published in the autumn of 1936 they received wide coverage in the daily press as well as educational publications. In general the public response was favourable, even enthusiastic. When the first bulletin was issued containing the statement of educational aims Weir announced that the British Columbia Government was aiming at nothing less than a "new philosophy of education". An editorial writer commenting on this statement, told his readers not to be

alarmed as there was nothing "revolutionary in this programme of studies as indicated in the statement of educational aims." Nothing was new in substance, although it might sound new to those who were "unfamiliar with the academic dialect".⁷⁰ The editor of the B.C. Teacher thought that although many educators in many parts of Canada were working on new programmes of studies, nowhere had the "problem of curricular revision been faced with such intelligent awareness of basic principles and such wise insistence upon the unity of the whole undertaking". Mistakes had been made he conceded, and there were even some thoughtful teachers who "questioned the infallibility of the Commission's Confession of Faith in the matter of educational aims and philosophy".⁷¹ However as the new programme was not intended to be fixed and static, differences and difficulties could be resolved in the future. The School ran a series of articles on the new curriculum, written by a T.A. Brough of Vancouver, which were both lengthy and laudatory.

That no critical appraisals of the new programme of studies ever reached the printed page of educational publications is unfortunate. Perhaps those who disagreed among the teaching profession were fearful of the consequences of outspoken public criticism. However that disagreement existed with the philosophical basis of the new curriculum was again indicated by an editorial which appeared in the B.C. Teacher in February 1937. The editorial defended the "Aims and Objectives" against "those qualified to express an opinion" who could not give it their unreserved approval especially those who "believe that in it they see traces of the

ideology of the corporate state".⁷² Even if this were the case the writer concludes it was productive of worthwhile goals. It is impossible to determine to what extent this editorial expressed the views of the writer alone or was the consensus of a sizeable body of the teaching profession in British Columbia. If it were the latter it indicates not so much whole-hearted agreement as the enthusiastic acceptance of what were seen to be concrete, understandable, unequivocal, practical objectives where none or a confusion or multiplicity had existed before.

Certainly the teachers responded enthusiastically to the new programmes of studies, at least according to the inspectors' reports of the years 1936, 1937, and 1938. Most inspectors noted a "perceptible quickening of professional interest"⁷³ while a Burnaby inspector commented approvingly that many principals, in order to give competent leadership to their staffs were taking education courses at the University of British Columbia and the University of Washington during the summer.⁷⁴

By the fall of 1939 inspectors were almost uniformly writing approvingly of the improved conditions of the schools now that the new programmes of study were in full operation. H.N. McCorkindale wrote that the school year 1938-39 "should be called a year of consolidation of policies inaugurated in the previous two years". His only criticism was that the school plant and equipment were not sufficient to provide at the secondary school level, the "necessary training suited to the varying abilities of this large heterogeneous group of students".⁷⁵ The City of Victoria inspector attributed the increased high school enrolment at least in part

to the "recent revision of the Programme of Studies and the resulting changes in high school organization".⁷⁶ The New Westminster inspector wrote glowingly that the year had been marked by the "continued development of an excellent instructional programme providing as it did for the individual pupil the opportunity to develop mentally, morally, physically and spiritually to the most of his capacity".⁷⁷

In 1940, H.B. King issued his first report as Chief Inspector of Schools for the province. The new curriculum was pronounced a success, for the effort to "understand and apply" it had given an "intellectual quickening to the teaching body which has brought freshness and vitality to their teaching".⁷⁸ Unfortunately not all the teachers had shown the same keen interest in the new philosophy and methods. Principals and secondary school teachers he had noted had been "conspicuously absent" from summer school programmes although eminent educationists had given courses "keyed to the level of the more able and mature teachers".⁷⁹ King, always aware of those he would have termed his reactionary English critics, drew attention to the fact that the most recent Handbook of Suggestion for Teachers issued by the English Board of Education was very similar to the latest curriculum bulletins issued by the Department of Education in British Columbia, although neither he nor his committees had been aware of this publication until after their work was finished. This was an educational movement of the English-speaking world, he emphasized, not an "American peculiarity".⁸⁰

It is of course impossible to judge how many teachers earnestly

tried to teach to the new aims and objectives and applied the new methodologies. Reading the inspectors' reports for the years 1935 to 1940, two themes stand out: the greater number and variety of courses being offered, and the prevalence of testing. In those schools in which they were not already taught home economics, industrial education, music and art were consistently seen as welcome additions to the curriculum. With the increase in options available many inspectors reported urging teachers, trustees, and parents to encourage children to opt for the high school graduation course rather than the matriculation course. One wonders to what extent the addition of these subjects reflected a desire to discover their talents and abilities or an attempt to make the schools more effective holding institutions. It is not unlikely that there were many who met with Weir in the summer of 1936 to request curriculum changes because the "holding quality of the curriculum did not appeal to the majority of the high school students".⁸¹ One wonders also how many pupils without any noticeable mechanical, musical or artistic capacities were encouraged to enrol in such courses because the demands made on the student were so low that he was assured of successfully completing the course.

By the late 30's the use of intelligence and standardized achievement tests seems to have become a generally accepted procedure in all schools. The Vancouver Bureau of Measurements supplied many of their examinations and standardized tests to the "various inspectors and other officials of the Department of Education".⁸² During the 1935-36 year the Bureau had, in accordance with an agreement between the Vancouver School

Board and the Vancouver General Hospital, given intelligence tests to "both probation classes of the hospital training school".⁸³ The same year tests were administered to Vancouver school children in reading and arithmetic and the results compared with the test scores obtained by children in the same grades in 1924, when tests were given to provide data for the Putman-Weir Report. Interestingly the results showed very little improvement in medium scores except in Grade 6 reading where the score increased by just under 8 points. Retardation in reading had by this time become a much discussed topic in the schools.⁸⁴ It was felt to be the cause of much later school failure and an increased emphasis was being placed on remedial reading instruction. In Vancouver the Medical Department and the Bureau of Measurements were engaged in a co-operative effort to arrive at the causes for the number of repeaters in Grades 1 and 2. "By eliminating much of the retardation at this early age in their school experience" McCorkindale wrote "I feel confident that less juvenile delinquency will occur in our community".⁸⁵ In Victoria, the inspector stated that intelligence tests and standardized achievement tests were being extensively used. The results of these tests in conjunction with "objective and other achievement tests constructed by teachers and supplemented by the teachers' judgement were the main basis for promotion and classification to the higher grades".⁸⁶

Even if inspectors and a large number of the teaching profession were satisfied or even enthusiastic about the new curriculum it was still necessary to make sure that the public was in sympathy with the changes

which had been made, and the new directions being taken. The government had been criticized for being arbitrary and dictatorial in its policies regarding social services and education, and although public input might not be welcomed neither was public antipathy. In November, 1935 Weir addressed the Vancouver Institute and defended his policies of "introducing highly trained university graduates into the administrative staff in place of political appointees": increasing centralization in education: and extending the benefits of public health services "especially in the matter of health education and preventive services". The university graduates were, he contended, "making a great contribution to the rationalizing of public thought". Centralization of education had resulted in an "increase of efficiency through standardization and government assistance". He concluded by deflecting the charges of "Hitlerism and dictatorship" which had been levelled at the government by saying the "people don't worry very much about dictatorship when they get the services they want".⁸⁷

During education week the following spring, McCorkindale called for the "maximum co-operation" between the home and the school. This was necessary more than ever before because the school, he declared, had in many ways "changed as much as the modern store or factory", and was now attempting to develop the whole man, and hence to intensify the personality". In this process both education for leisure and physical and health education were necessary. Education for leisure he said, quoting an English educator was not "'a luxury provided by the taxpayer for the children of the ambitious poor'". It was "'Society's self-assurance against

disruption'".⁸⁸ With regard to physical and health education the public appeared to be in complete agreement with Weir and McCorkindale. At its annual convention in April 1936 the Parent Teacher Federation thanked the Vancouver School Board for the progress already made in this subject and pledged itself to work for the day when every school on the province would have the proper facilities for physical education and recreation. "Give us a younger generation" the president stated in her address "which knows and can observe the laws of healthy thinking and healthy living and half of our economic troubles will be over."⁸⁹

During 1936 and 1937 Weir and King used every opportunity to publicize the new curriculum. Both decried the influence that examinations had had on education in the past and heralded the new system which made promotion dependent on the recommendation of teachers and principals. Promotion by this means was in reality nothing new; it had been practiced for a number of years in many schools. But with the introduction of the new programme of studies it became more widespread. When accrediting of high schools became official policy in 1937 university entrance could be achieved without the writing of departmental examinations. "It is harder to get rid of the examination influence in the modern curriculum than to move a graveyard" said King addressing a Women's institute Convention. Now that the new curriculum had accomplished this, however, teachers would no longer teach for examinations but concentrate on the child.⁹⁰ And this from the man who but a short time earlier had been such a vigorous spokesman for standardized tests for high school students.⁹¹

Addressing a Liberal party meeting in 1937 Weir stressed the new direction that education was taking "away from the Prussian system' which Canada had hitherto followed." British Columbia was in fact leading Canada in educational reform he claimed. The aim of its education was to "adapt children for the practical part they would fill in life, in a rounded education, paying attention to character-forming studies to bring about individual self-realization in harmony with social adjustment".⁹² Throughout the speech the importance of the individual was constantly emphasized. The new programmes of study were presented as being the first attempt in the history of schooling in Canada to take any interest in the learner. The impression was left that this was the first truly democratic system of education ever launched in this country.

With the approach of the election set for the first of June, 1937, the so-called democratization of education was one of the themes most frequently heard in the Liberal campaign in relation to education. The other was the decrease in per capita costs for education, "notwithstanding increased efficiency and expanding services".⁹³ Unlike the previous election, however, education was not a major issue. There seemed to be no public disagreement while the importance accorded to health and physical education seems to have been applauded in all quarters. Of the two opposition parties, the C.C.F. appeared to be most in harmony with the new directions. In an address given in the fall of 1936, just after the issuance of the new courses of study for elementary and junior secondary schools, the Reverend Robert Connell leader of the provincial party,⁹⁴ gave his stand on educational matters. He advocated concentration on the

practical aspects of schooling as well as the development of character and the ability to think. He declared himself in favour of more education for everyone as the country was moving forward into a new era of a "more just distribution of the community's wealth" and a more widely diffused education was needed "to face these changes intelligently". At the same time he was in favour of teaching a trade to "every girl and boy, as a means of spreading knowledge and the use of tools and eliminating a tendency to overcrowd the white collar professions".⁹⁵

The Conservatives on the other hand, tended to see in the new curriculum's insistence that education should adapt pupils to future social change an unwelcome move to the left. Weir countered Conservative criticism by claiming that there was no politics in education. In an address to the Lady Laurier Club three weeks before the election, he denied that the new curriculum was socialistic. "If our curriculum is socialistic" he declared "...then that of Great Britain's conservative government is communistic in its socialization of education". Weir also said that he had no need to know the political beliefs of his inspectors. "We are trying" he stated "to build up a civil service on merit, with technically-trained men in technical jobs".⁹⁶

The election held on June, 1937 gave a resounding victory to the Liberals who but a year before had been predicted to be certain losers. The results showed the Liberals to have won 31 seats, the Conservatives 8, thereby becoming the official opposition, and the C.C.F. 7. There were also two independents of socialist persuasion. It seemed obvious that

the province was beginning to turn from its much publicized radicalism to a more conservative stance. Pattullo seems at any rate to have interpreted the election results in this way for he became much more cautious and conservative in his policies from then on.⁹⁷ The reasons for this probably ran the gamut from disenchantment with the C.C.F. because of its confusion in leadership,⁹⁸ and growing scepticism with what governments could do to alter conditions, to the dramatically increased activity in lumbering and mining and Pattullo's northern vision of new wealth in mining and oil.

Immediately following the election Weir took the opportunity to again defend the new curriculum against charges of socialism and radicalism. Addressing 700 teachers at the opening of the summer school in Victoria, he based his speech on the idea that change was a basic condition of existence. This being the case, he stated "What we are striving to do is to lay the foundation for a changing civilization". Two of the courses being given at the summer school, "The New Curriculum, Its Objectives and Procedures" and "The School in the Social Order" both by Dr. Roy Evan Johnson of the University of Chicago were concerned with the school as a social institution related to social change. There would be special value in this training Weir felt for it would help the students to "Distinguish between the propagandist and the teacher who had a sense of practical reality and fact as well as the ideal".⁹⁹

A few days later the Conservative Daily Colonist in a lengthy editorial replied to Weir's speech. Taking as his cue the phrase laying

the foundation for a new social order the writer accused the Minister of wishing to "march ahead and blaze the trail toward the social millenium". The editorial went on to question whether the educators in British Columbia seriously wished to adjust young people to society as it existed. Were they not in fact trying to use the schools to train the young to "become members of a society organized on lines approved by our educational masters"? If such were the case the writer called on the Department of Education when a Socialistic planned economy was to be ushered in through the schools. The editorial concluded by saying that the "doctrine of historic Liberalism" seemed to be undergoing a notable change as the stand of some very advanced Liberals did not seem to be very different from the Socialists.¹⁰⁰ Shortly afterwards, King, addressing the closing assembly of the summer school came to the aid of Weir in his battle with the Conservatives. He categorically denied that he had any belief in the idea that the schools should bring about a new social order. No one knew, he declared, what society would be like in the future, and if the schools attempted to train people for a "definite social order in the future", it would end by producing people maladjusted for the future also". At the same time he asserted that it was the aim of the schools to produce people "capable of new adjustments in an evolving progressive social order" because that was the way a democratic system lived and grew.¹⁰¹ Whether he was aware of the inconsistency in his thinking one cannot tell, but his critics were. Their mistake was to interpret it as socialist convictions which both he and Weir sincerely denied, for neither were in favour of any basic restructuring of society which was basic to the socialism of the day.

The press heaved a collective sign of relief when the new curriculum for senior high schools was published in the summer of 1937 with its instructions to teachers to "rigidly exclude propaganda from classes".¹⁰² It was hoped that those socialist teachers who did not heed the warning would be "inhibited from attempting to spread their doctrines among the youth".¹⁰³ Weir was hailed as an enlightened Liberal, desirous of making education "in itself the very essence of democracy" available as a "sovereign right to every child".¹⁰⁴ As with the two previous courses of studies, those for senior high schools met with general approval. The Vancouver Sun praised them for the great prominence given to physical and health education, singling out for particular commendation the course on traffic safety.¹⁰⁵

Although there may not have been many criticisms from teachers about the philosophy or the overall direction of the new programmes of study there appears to have been considerable disagreement with specific units within the programmes. The B.C.T.F. convention in the spring of 1937 passed a resolution requesting that the Department of Education be "asked to include a majority of teachers who are actually teaching the subjects in each curriculum revision committee".¹⁰⁶ Perhaps in response to this resolution as well as criticism from inspectors and teachers, King in December, 1937 issued a statement requesting any teacher or group of teachers, "anywhere to be effective participants in curriculum improvement" by submitting either suggestions for improved organization of courses or new material. He blamed geography, in large part" for the fact

that "much of the professional ability of the teaching body was untapped" during the original work of curriculum revision. Now however it had been decided that although the work could be done by specialists, there were "advantages in a more democratic procedure".¹⁰⁷ If King and the decision makers who decided on the personnel of the revision committees were afraid that teachers might not understand nor be in favour of the new directions in education their fears appear to have unfounded. On the basis of resolutions passed at B.C.T.F. meetings, at any rate, teachers appeared to think that the new curriculum was not being sufficiently implemented. One resolution complained that teachers were limited too much to the text book method, another advocated that the social studies courses of Grades 7 and 8 be revised again to bring them more into line with the "basic principles suggested in the 1936 Programme of Studies".¹⁰⁸

After the autumn of 1937, little appears to have been spoken or heard about new educational philosophies, character education, social adjustment or the dissemination of the subversive doctrines of socialism or communism in the schools. Despite its resounding victory at the polls the Liberal Government did not continue to pursue policies which were aimed at the amelioration of social problems. A new committee set up in 1936 to redraft medicare legislation had run into just as much opposition from lobbyists as the previous one. In the view of one historian Pattullo, fearful of driving large numbers of the middle class into the arms of the Conservatives, or alienating "the lower strata who had flocked to the Liberal camp in the work and wages campaign of 1933"¹⁰⁹ made the health insurance plan the subject of a referendum to be held in conjunction with

the election. Although the referendum was approved by a 4 to 3 margin, health insurance was shelved until after the newly appointed Commission on Dominion Provincial relations should bring down its report. The administration adopted a middle of the road course of action, with the exception of its attack on the fuel monopolies.

The main thrust of Liberal policy continued to be obtaining better terms from Ottawa, particularly after the upturn in employment which had occurred in 1936 and 1937 was followed by a sharp recession in 1938. With this economic slump came renewed demands that the province assume the full cost of education as many municipalities were going bankrupt thereby making government grants to education useless. At their convention at Kelowna in the summer of 1938 the Liberals voted for the adoption of all educational costs by the provincial government. As the resolution read such a move would afford "permanent relief" and definitely solve the "problem of municipal finance and credit".¹¹⁰ Although Pattullo did not oppose the resolution he indicated that he would prefer to see it deferred. Where, he asked, would the money come from? If land were not to provide the revenues then with provincial coffers low it would have to be realized by a tax on industry or incomes. In view of the fact that he had promised to give industry a "fair deal" and try to improve the position of the working man he did not see how this could be done.

It was not just the Liberal party which had renewed the idea that the province pay the full cost of education, many municipalities were

petitioning the government with the same request. In some areas facilities were woefully inadequate, in others schools were forced to close altogether. McCorkindale, writing in January, 1939 to S.J. Willis, Superintendent of Schools, stated that the previous year of the depression in Vancouver. In some schools in the city "as many as 60 percent of the parents of students were on reliefs".¹¹¹

With educational finance once more occupying the centre of educational discussions, those most involved with schooling, at least in Vancouver, were increasingly advocating that students concentrate on vocational training and choose a course of practical studies. In the spring of 1937, the Chairman of the Vancouver School Board, W.D. McLaren, an engineer, was reported as being "persistent" in bringing the need for increased vocational and technical training in Vancouver to the attention of the public.¹¹² During the depression as the supply of skilled mechanics had decreased, "leading educators and friends of education" were pointing out that if normal times returned there was the danger that skilled workmen would have to be brought in from outside. In Vancouver the technical school was crowded and first and second year courses were being covered in several of the academic high schools. In order that sufficient technical education might be provided it was thought that a technical high school for girls and another for boys was needed. McCorkindale too joined the cry for increased trade training. In June, 1939 he stated before the school board that "there was too much academic education in Vancouver high schools".¹¹² He called for more manual training and vocational courses in the upper grades, with only English, social studies

citizenship and health as compulsory subjects. The professions he declared were overcrowded, and there were many on relief who lacked artisan or trade training. There was still "in spite of the advancement of science...demand for people to work with their hands".¹¹⁴ Commenting on McCorkindale's speech an editorial in the Vancouver Sun said

"It would seem as Mr. McCorkindale infers, that the first duty of the schools would be to create a supply of young people, commensurate in kind and quality with the economic and social demand. 'When a boy gets to be sixteen' says Mr. McCorkindale 'we ought to offer him something useful to him'. Under present conditions, that is as fair a definition of the educational duty as we have seen." 115

There are here more than faint echoes of the maligned elitist Conservative education policy of eight years earlier and of Tolmie's speech urging educators not to bring up youth to scorn overalls. If a leading progressive educator and the leading Liberal newspaper of the province could exhibit these attitudes after six years and the introduction of a "completely new philosophy of education" one is led to ask how fundamental the changes in education really were. To state the question in another way, it is necessary to decide whether the movement generally referred to as progressive education was motivated by a sincere concern for the welfare of the child, and an attempt to make the educational system more humane, democratic and egalitarian, or if it had at its heart a desire for social control. In order to arrive at an answer for the province of British Columbia it will be necessary to review the evidence presented in the preceding chapters.

Notes

Chapter VI

- 1 65th Annual Report of the Public Schools of the Province of British Columbia, 1935-36, H26.
- 2 Ibid., H 28.
- 3 Ibid., H 27, H 28.
- 4 In a statement issued in the spring of 1935, Weir made the crucial role of the central committee quite clear. "All other committees" he wrote, "will conform with the principles laid down by the Central Committee and with its directions." Furthermore one member of the central committee was to be appointed curriculum advisor to have "general advisory functions upon all phases and aspects of the revision...afford guidance in the principles to be laid down and followed throughout, and...assist in effecting articulation and co-ordination at each stage of the process".
B.C. Teacher, April, 1935, p. 21.
- 5 B.C. Teacher, April, 1935, p. 23.
- 6 The School, January, 1936, p. 452.
- 7 B.C. Teacher, February, 1936, p. 23.
- 8 Ibid., April, 1935, p. 20.
- 9 Ibid., November, 1934, p. 8.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 Ibid., February, 1936, p. 11.
- 12 Ibid., p. 12.

- 13 Ibid.
- 14 School and Society, Volume XXXIII, January-June 1931, p. 17.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 Ibid., Volume XXXII, July-December 1930, pp. 411-414.
- 17 Ibid., Volume XXXIV, July-December 1931, pp. 581-584.
- 18 Ibid., p. 746.
- 19 Ibid., pp. 745-747.
- 20 Ibid., p. 746.
- 21 Edward A. Krug, The Shaping of the American High School, Volume 2, (Madison, 1972), p. 20.
- 22 Edward A. Krug, The Shaping of the American High School, Volume 1, (New York, 1974) p. 387.
- 23 Ibid., p. 388.
- 24 Ibid., p. 384.
- 25 Ibid., p. 392.
- 26 Clarence J. Karier, Paul C. Violas, Joel Spring, The Roots of Crisis: American Education in the Twentieth Century, (Chicago, 1973). Chapter 3, "Progressive Social Philosophy: Charles Horton Cooley and Edward Alsworth Ross" Paul C. Violas, p. 41.
- 27 Ibid., p. 42.

- 28 Ibid.
- 29 No concrete evidence exists that either Weir or King had read the works of these American sociologists. The point is that the progressive liberalism of the early decades of the century did not contain the commitment to individual freedom and worth, which it is frequently reputed to have had, and this can be seen both in the writings of men who were important progressive theorists and the words and actions of educators and politicians.
- 30 Karier, Violas, Spring, Op. Cit., p. 49.
- 31 Ibid., p. 50.
- 32 School and Society, Volume XXXI, Janaury-June, 1930, p. 135.
- 33 Krug, Op. Cit., Volume I, p. 389.
- 34 Henry Harap, The Technique of Curriculum Making, (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1935).
- 35 Ibid., p. 77.
- 36 Ibid., p. 48.
- 37 Programme of Studies for the Elementary Schools of British Columbia, Bulletin 1, (Victoria, 1936), p. 7.
- 38 Ibid.
- 39 Ibid.
- 40 Ibid.
- 41 Ibid.

- 42 Ibid.
- 43 Programme of Studies for the Junior Secondary Schools of British Columbia, Bulletin 1. (Victoria, 1936), p. 266.
It should be noted that the development of character was also held to be the ultimate objective of education according to the Putman-Weir Survey.
- 44 Ibid., The passage from which the quotation is taken stated that morally desirable conduct was socially determined, not the product of a rigid set of traditional rules about right and wrong. Character education then consisted of encouraging in youth "a flexible and progressive social attitude dependent upon etc."
- 45 Ibid., p. 263.
- 46 Ibid., p. 267.
- 47 Ibid., p. 266.
- 48 Ibid., Bulletin 6, p. 17.
Teachers were told to keep in mind that bright and dull pupils might require different teaching procedures. To assist the teacher in differentiating between the two groups, four sets of contrasting characteristics were set out. The last of these related to correct attitudes. Dull pupils, it was pointed out, often "possess narrow and individualistic points of view", while bright pupils usually "possess a thoroughly social point of view".
- 49 Programme of Studies for the Senior Secondary Schools of British Columbia, Bulletin 1. (Victoria, 1937), p. 110.
- 50 Ibid.
- 51 Programme of Studies for the Junior Secondary Schools of British Columbia, Bulletin 1. (Victoria, 1936), p. 233.

- 52 The curriculum guide lists approximately ten books which may be used in connection with each unit in the junior secondary curriculum. Without reading a fair sampling it is not possible to give reliable answers, however one work which appears several times on these lists may provide some clues. W. Stewart Wallace's "A New History of Great Britain and Canada" sets out a clear and unequivocal portrayal of British colonial policy on the basis of the right of the superior to impose control over or acquire, temporarily or permanently, the lands of others. The account is replete with such phrases as the British "right of expansion" and those who oppose incorporation into the 'fold of the British Empire are termed simple, backward, difficult, unreasonable or corrupt. Commercial gain is never mentioned, but in the legitimate interests of trade Britain is occasionally 'compelled' to go to war. There is certainly little here that connects with items 4 and 7 on list of right ideals and attitudes, but there is a great deal of material for the exercise of critical thinking.
- W. Stewart Wallace, A New History of Great Britain and Canada, (Toronto, 1935) Chapters VI, VII, and VIII.
- 53 Programme of Studies for the Junior Secondary Schools of British Columbia, Bulletin 1. (Victoria, 1936), p. 233.
- 54 Ibid.
- 55 Ibid., p. 110.
- 56 Programme of Studies for the Junior Secondary Schools of British Columbia, Bulletin 1. (Victoria, 1936), p. 233.
- 57 Programme of Studies for the Senior Secondary Schools of British Columbia, Bulletin 1 (Victoria, 1937), p. 113.
- 58 In the opinion of Professor William A. Bruneau, of the Faculty of Education of the University of British Columbia, at present at work on a historical study of the B.C.T.F., there were in the ranks of the teaching profession in British Columbia at that time, a small number of Communist sympathizers, whether card carrying members of the Communist party cannot be definitely established, while no less than 25 per cent and no more than 33 per cent were members of the C.C.F. Although a number of the

- 58 teachers were believed to be adherents of Counts
... social reconstructionist theories, Professor Bruneau
is convinced that they did not use the class-room
as a platform for the dissemination of their
political convictions.
- 59 All the newspapers of the day in British Columbia carried these
rumours, see p. 30 this chapter.
- / 60 G.M. Weir, Our Faith in Liberalism (Vancouver, 1947) pamphlet,
Special Collections, University of British Columbia, p. 6.
- 61 Ibid., p. 21.
- 62 Ibid.
- 63 Ibid., p. 28.
- 64 Education Department, Instructions to Members of the Junior
and Senior High School Curriculum Committees,
Legislative Library, Province of British Columbia, p. 1.
Victoria B.C. 1936.
- 65 Statement of Educational Philosophy (Revised Report of Sub-
committee on Philosophy), Legislative Library, Province
of British Columbia, Victoria, B.C., p. 4.
- 66 Ibid., p. 5.
- 67 Instructions to Members of the Junior and Senior High School
Curriculum Committees, p. 1.
- 68 Programme of Studies for the Senior Secondary Schools of British
Columbia, Bulletin 1, (Victoria, 1937), p. 445.
- 69 For a discussion of this point see Alison Prentice, The School
Promoters: Education and Social Class in Mid-Nineteenth
Century Upper Canada. (Toronto, 1977).

- 70 Victoria Colonist, August 6, 1936.
- 71 B.C. Teacher, October, 1936, pp. 49-51.
- 72 Ibid., February 1937, p. 260.
- 73 65th Annual Report of the Public Schools of the Province of British Columbia, 1935-36, H 41.
- 74 66th Annual Report of the Public Schools of the Province of British Columbia, 1936-37, I65.
- 75 68th Annual Report of the Public Schools of the Province of British Columbia, 1938-39, H56, H57.
- 76 Ibid., H 60.
- 77 Ibid., H 60.
- 78 69th Annual Report of the Public Schools of the Province of British Columbia, 1939-40, B32.
- 79 Ibid., B33.
- 80 Ibid., B32.
- 81 Victoria Colonist, July, 1936.
- 82 65th Annual Report of the Public Schools of the Province of British Columiba, 1935-36, H 87.
- 83 67th Annual Report of the Public Schools of the Province of British Columbia, 1937-38, J51.
- 84 Reports, 1935-36, H87, 1937-38, J59, 1938-39, H64. In February 1939 King gave lectures to teachers in the use of technical equipment in diagnosing reading disabilities.

- 85 65th Annual Report of the Public Schools of the Province of British Columbia, 1935-36, H84.
- 86 Ibid., H 90.
- 87 Vancouver Sun, November 4, 1935.
- 88 Ibid., February 22, 1936.
- 89 Ibid., April 20, 1936.
- 90 Victoria Colonist, August, 1936.
- 91 see Chapter IV.
- 92 Victoria Colonist, January 16, 1936.
- 93 Vancouver Sun, April 24, 1937.
- 94 While there is no record of the thinking of the radical members of the C.C.F. with regard to the new curriculum there was a feeling that the Department of Education was not above patronage. In 1937, E.E. Winch requested that the Minister provide the legislature with information regarding the number of authorized books which had been written by officials who occupied positions in the educational system of the province. The answer tabled was 56 of whom only a small percentage did not receive royalties.

Legislative Library, Province of British Columbia, Victoria, B.C.
- 95 Victoria Colonist, October 8, 1936.
- 96 Vancouver Sun, May 5, 1937.
- 97 Margaret A. Ormsby, "T. Dufferin Pattullo and the Little New Deal", Canadian Historical Review, Vol. XLIII No., 4 Dec., 1962. pp. 293-295.

- 98 The split over policies and leadership within the ranks of the C.C.F. probably cost them some of the votes which caused their percentage of the popular vote to fall from 32% in the 1933 election to 28.3%. The Conservatives, on the other hand, who were split into several parties during the 1933 election campaign re-emerged as a united party, regained control of several city seats and polled 28.3% of the popular vote.
- 100 Ibid., July 13, 1937.
- 101 Ibid., August 7, 1937.
- 102 Vancouver Sun, August 11, 1937.
- 103 Victoria Colonist, October 31, 1937.
- 104 Vancouver Sun, August 16, 1937.
- 105 Ibid., September 2, 1937, January 31, 1938.
- 106 B.C. Teachers' Federation, Minutes, p. 1050.
- 107 B.C. Teacher, November, 1937, p. 181.
- 108 B.C. Teachers' Federation, Minutes, p. 1143.
- 109 Martin Robin, The Company Province 1934-1972, (Toronto, 1973), p. 30.
- 110 Vancouver Sun, August 27, 1938.
- 111 MacCorkindale to S.J. Willis, Superintendent of Schools, Province of British Columbia, January 24, 1939. Dept. of Education, Correspondence, 1939.
- 112 The School, March, 1937, p. 622.

113 Vancouver Sun, June 23, 1939.

114 Ibid.

115 Ibid.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The central problem with which this thesis has been concerned has been the motivating force or the basic reasons for the adoption of the innovations in schooling associated with the "new education" and those changes both in attitudes and practices which were an expression of the movement generally called progressive education. Lawrence Cremin, in the preface to his landmark work The Transformation of the School has stated that "progressive education began as part of a vast humanitarian effort to apply the promise of American life---the ideal of government by, of, and for the people---"¹ to urban-industrial society. Since its publication in 1961, a number of American historians subjecting the same movement to very critical scrutiny have come to very different conclusions. Despite differences in time periods, location and approaches to their material, most have concluded that the reforms of progressivism, did not result from "democracy, rationalism and humanitarianism" but rather from the "desire of the middle class and professional educators", to serve their own interests.² The schools, viewed in this light, continued to be a "vehicle of control and repression".³

Before applying either of these generalizations to the educational history of Canada it is necessary to look closely at the changes that occurred in schooling in this country in conjunction with contemporaneous social, political and economic conditions. As Canada's regional differences

are so great it is not possible to apply the findings of one area to the rest of the country. Nevertheless as British Columbia was, in the period under review, undergoing a process of industrialization and urbanization, it is a particularly good subject for study. Although not all regions of Canada experienced the change from rural and agrarian to industrial and urban at the same time, at the same rate, or to the same extent, it has been the dominant trend in the development of this nation.

This decisive shift began in British Columbia just before the turn of the century and was chiefly concentrated in Vancouver and the lower mainland area. At that time educational innovation being very largely at the discretion of local school boards, the decisions of the Vancouver School Board provide very good evidence of, not only those changes made, but also the reasons underlying them. Between the years 1897 and 1918 manual training, home economics, music and art became part of the curriculum of all schools; and with the addition of playgrounds a much greater emphasis was placed on physical fitness. The new importance accorded to the health of children was reflected in the addition of a medical officer and school nurse to the school system. At the secondary school level, a full range of technical courses was made available to both boys and girls, pre-vocational classes were added and a commercial high school was established. Behind some of these changes lay a conviction that with the growth of the city had come a "loosening of the ties of home life"⁴ necessitating the schools take the place of parents and do the duties they used to do. Of equal importance was the firmly held

belief that it was the role of the school to provide vocational training and thereby foster the economic growth of the province. Behind the innovations of the "new education" during the early years of the century lay the feeling that the school must stand in loco parentis providing the values and skills that the family would not or could no longer provide. The inter-war years saw the pendulum swing back and forth between an emphasis on pre-vocational and vocational training to an emphasis on the inculcation of values and character training, although both were always present.

During the immediate post-war economic slump the schools in many parts of the province experienced financial hardships, and this, plus the feeling held in many quarters that the province was suffering from moral and social degeneration, led to the appointment of the Putman-Weir Survey. The report which covered every aspect of education in the province from finance and administration to teacher training and the curriculum bore many of the hallmarks of progressive education in its philosophy as well as its suggestions for pedagogical change. Its faith in science as the key to the solution of educational problems, its recommendation of junior high schools and the cognizance it took of the developmental stages of childhood, among many other features all gave evidence of its debt to the theory and practice of progressive education in the United States. However there was absent the commitment to social reform which was one of the most distinguishing marks of progressive education, a manifestation of its connection with the larger movement of political progressiveness in that country.

Slowly some of the recommendations of the Survey began to be implemented. In particular, junior high schools and testing received the greatest amount of attention. Both were seen as a means of combatting retardation and keeping children in school for longer periods of time. From the evidence available these innovations would seem to have stemmed less from a concern with the individual child (for retardation was costly) than from a desire to obtain greater economy and efficiency, to keep children from becoming delinquent and a charge on the community, and to provide a better work force for industry. It is significant that changes were most often implemented in industrial areas. The greatest number of junior high schools were built in Vancouver and the principal of the secondary school in Nanaimo was lauded for his thorough implementation of a policy of promoting pupils to a higher grade in any subject for which he had received a passing mark.⁵

The Putman-Weir Survey had been appointed by a Liberal government and its implementation began under that aegis. No changes appear to have been made in educational policy after the election of the Conservatives to power in 1928. Junior high schools continued to be established, a new curriculum was drawn up for them, and more practical courses continued to be added to the programmes of study in many schools. However with the onset of the depression the government reduced its grants to schools which now found themselves in severe financial straits because of lack of funds at the local level. Committed to the theory of the balanced budget and faced with falling revenues, large debt charges, and unemployment

relief costs, the provincial government cut back on social services. As the depression worsened and the financial position of the province became critical the Conservatives allowed a group of businessmen, representing the business community of Vancouver, to review government spending and make recommendations to guide future government policy. The resultant report, known as the Kidd Report after the spokesman of the group, drew the ire of all who believed that it was the responsibility of government to provide a good level of social services to its citizens. In particular, the report's proposals to cut back on the number of years of free schooling which should be provided for all children and the rationale put forward for all other curtailments in the educational field came in for special condemnation. Not only educators, but the general public joined in the outcry and the report was labelled, class-biased and anti-democratic, opposed to the basic concept embodied in contemporary education of equal opportunity for all.

The Liberal party strongly opposed the report, which became identified with Conservative policy although the Conservatives repudiated many of its recommendations. Education became an issue in the election of 1933. The victory of the Liberals on a platform of government intervention in social and economic affairs and work and wages for the unemployed seemed to promise the voter a new deal in which the interests and welfare of the common man would take precedence over financial considerations. This feeling was carried over into education with the promise to get rid of old-fashioned fact-oriented, education, to implement the Putman-Weir Survey, to provide education for every child in accordance

with his individual aptitudes and interests, and to ensure equal opportunity for all regardless of geographic location or social background.

The man chosen to guide British Columbia into the new era was G.M. Weir co-author of the Putman-Weir Survey, head of the Department of Education at the University of British Columbia, an educator turned politician. Without falling into a discredited 'great man' theory of history, one can still say that his influence on the course of education up to the mid-1940's was crucial. It is not possible to determine on the basis of the evidence available to what extent his convictions were in agreement with those of the small coterie of schoolmen who were the prime movers of the changes which took place in education during this period. But it is highly unlikely that he would have chosen H.B. King for so many crucial and responsible assignments if there had not existed a real accord in their thinking. As the important members of committees were all chosen by the Department of Education, it is probably safe to assume that no fundamental differences of opinion existed.

The Survey of Nursing Education undertaken by Weir just before the onset of the depression and published in 1932, set out clearly and unequivocally some of his basic beliefs which were in marked contrast to the rhetoric of Liberalism. Most notably, Weir expressed a totally uncritical faith in the validity of intelligence tests, even of the crude variety used by the United States military during World War I. In line with the thinking of E.L. Thorndike, virtual founder of the educational testing movement in the United States, as well as a leading figure in

the eugenics movement in that country, Weir was in complete agreement with the idea that the amount of intelligence also indicated the degree of virtue. The link between the two appeared to him fixed and indissoluble. As the further down the intelligence scale the greater the incidence of criminality and mental and physical disease became, he recommended the sterilization of the feeble minded and morons. Weir carries these concepts over into his advocacy of health insurance. His basic argument in this regard was that low-grade intelligence and therefore improvidence, necessitated the state's implementation of compulsory health insurance, primarily in its own protection. There was little of humanitarianism, or faith in liberty or equality in his assessment that at least fifty percent of the population were in need of guidance, even compulsory direction, paternal or otherwise.

While Weir had shown little interest in social change in the Putman-Weir report, by the time he became Minister of Education he had become dedicated to the idea of using the schools as a vehicle for the achievement of social reform. In this he was expressing the opinions of many Canadian educators. With few exceptions--H.C. Newland of Alberta was one---the method to be used toward this end was not the reform of institutions but the socialization of the individual. Individualism had come to be regarded as the cardinal sin to be eradicated. Society, even civilization itself, was seen to have been brought close to the verge of disaster by unrestricted or rugged individualism. Such socialization was not to be accomplished in the Deweyan sense by the increased participation of all in common interests

so that by "free interaction and mutual adjustment" a "more worthy, lovely and harmonious" society should be built. How could it be when half of the population were in need of direction? Rather it was to be accomplished by the inculcation of the 'right' social values by means of the curriculum, teachers, principals, indeed by the whole social structure of the school. As the depression wore on with its ever present threat of social unrest and the seduction of the young by radical politics, even the most conservative businessmen came to favour the Liberal party's policy of providing free education up to the age of 18. In this way youth could be removed from contact with pernicious influences and acquire the correct social values of the society through the school.

Weir himself, if not the Liberal party, seemed to become more insistent on the socializing role of the school as the projected health insurance legislation was turned back by the determined obstruction of vested interests. Faced by a radical C.C.F. dedicated to a thoroughgoing programme of socialization of the economic system, it appeared as if the Liberal party and its programme of preserving the capitalist system by means of policies aimed at social amelioration might go down to defeat in the next election. Under such circumstances it became vitally important that the evil of selfish individualism and selfish group interests be rooted out. The new programme of studies issued in 1936 and 1937 were intended, in every particular, to be an embodiment of the currently held idea of a viable and progressive society.

The ten years between the publication of the Putman-Weir Survey and the tabling of the King Report saw not only a change in the thinking

of the Minister of Education on the role of the school in social reform, but also on the role of democracy in education. In his defence of school boards against the encroachments of municipal councils Weir had written eloquently in the Putman-Weir Survey of the importance of this democratic institution in the development of a sound educational system. By the time of the appearance of the King Report, he had reversed his stand and become the advocate of a completely centralized system, with only minimal public input, a view which accorded well with his low estimate of the public's intelligence and morality. The criticisms levied against school boards, particularly in rural areas, of incompetence, ignorance and mean-mindedness, were undoubtedly true. To deduce from this, however, that the main reason for their elimination was to ensure educational opportunity for all regardless of geographic location, does not accord well with the facts. On the basis of the report itself the setting up of an efficient system, one which would provide good education at lower cost, seems to be the primary motivation. Given Weir's belief that superior intelligence was chiefly the preserve of the children of Anglo-Saxon business and professional middle class parents, in conjunction with the fact that the number of these children would be relatively small in primarily rural districts, it is difficult to accept the equality of opportunity argument.⁶ It is far more reasonable to suppose that the main impulse was to provide an education sufficiently broad and varied to hold children in school until they could acquire the right social values and a sense of vocational direction, to become what was frequently referred to at the time as socially efficient citizens.⁷

Throughout the pronouncements and writings on education during the Liberal administration in the thirties there was constant reference made to the importance of education in the preservation of the state. Indeed in the King Report education was declared to be the primary function of the democratic state and the primary reason why the country had been able to weather the depression without social collapse. In view of this basic premise all educational change and innovation was an expression of policies designed to foster the strengthening of democracy, as that concept was understood by those in power. Some American historians⁸ have claimed that the concept of democracy guiding educators at this time was that of the corporate state. This is a difficult hypothesis for American historians to prove, and it is even more difficult in the Canadian context as the historian is dealing with a less highly advanced industrial nation. Nevertheless the parallels between education and the corporate state are numerous. By the end of the 1930's the educators in authority had attempted, although not in every instance successfully, to institute an educational system which was highly centralized bureaucratic, autocratic, geared to the development of a meritocracy of intelligence, to lead and direct an adequately socialized majority.

On the basis of this study education can be seen to be a reflection of political and social policy. Looked at in that perspective, progressive education cannot be interpreted as a humanitarian effort as Cremin has asserted, but rather notwithstanding the introduction of a more child-centred pedagogy and a concern for the whole child, as a massive effort at social control in the interests of the preservation of the "progressive" state.

Notes

Chapter VII

- 1 Lawrence A. Cremin, The Transformation of the School, (New York, 1964), Preface viii.
- 2 Michael Katz as quoted in Carl F. Kaestle, "Social Reform and the Urban School" History of Education Quarterly, Summer, 1972, p. 212.
- 3 Clarence J. Karier, "American Educational History: a Perspective", Education Forum-Vol. 37, March 1973, p. 295.
- 4 Vancouver Board of School Trustees Annual Report, 1908.
- 5 B.C. Teacher, November, 1933. p. 28.
- 6 It is worth noting that King was a firm believer in the theory that success in life was largely determined by heredity. In a biography of a friend which he wrote after his retirement King attributed the success of his friend's six children, all educated in British Columbia, to their inherited characteristics. They have, he wrote "much more to thank their parents for than their education and the start in life which they have given them, they have to thank them for their genes". Solomon Mussallem a Biography (Mission City, B.C., 1955)., p. 136.
- 7 It is ironic that Christopher Jencks starting as a severe critic of the failure of the schools to provide equal opportunity has, in his recent work Inequality, A Reassessment of the Effect of Family and Schooling in America, (Basic Books, 1972) come to the conclusion that school reform cannot make adults more equal. "None of the evidence reviewed" he writes, "suggests that school reform can be expected to bring about significant social changes outside the school". p. 255.
- 8 See S. Bowles and H. Gintis Schooling in Capitalist America (New York, 1976), C.J. Karier, P.C. Violas, J. Spring, The Roots of Crisis: American Education in the Twentieth Century, (Chicago, 1973), G. Kolko, The Triumph of Conservatism (New York, 1963) and J. Spring, Education and the Rise of the Corporate State, (Boston, 1972).

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