

The Road to 1944 - the history of the development of education in south and south west Wales in the lead up to the wartime Education Act, and its implementation in the years that followed.

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Abstract

This thesis is principally concerned with the period between the two Education Acts of 1918 and 1944 and as such, builds on and contributes to the history of education in Wales. Although a number of studies¹ have examined aspects of Welsh education there has not been a strong focus on its development during the interwar years. This particular period is generally regarded as one "untouched by significant research."² In spite of this neglect, it was an extremely interesting period, and one when the service was faced with grave difficulties: austerity during the depression years, and severe disruption caused by evacuation during the Second World War. The period culminates with the serious negotiations which precluded the Education Act 1944, which was the only major piece of social legislation to be passed onto the statute books during the war years.³ The study is set against overarching national education legislation and considers how this affected implementation in south and south west Wales.

The research differs from previous studies in that it focuses on a neglected period in the history of education in Wales. It identifies and documents the way in which two major sources of influences: politics and religion shaped the society which predisposed education provision in south and south west Wales to be modified in specific ways. It draws strongly on the work of Welsh historians to assess the effect of non-conformity in Wales and how society became radicalised after the publication of the Blue Books in 1847. It explores the part that the non-provided sector had in delaying education change and also identifies the considerable differences that developed between education in England and Wales, caused partly by the Welsh Intermediate Education Act of 1889 and partly by the attitudes and influences of Welsh politicians at all levels.

¹ Evans, L. W., *Studies in Welsh Education: Welsh Educational Structure and Administration 1880 – 1925* (UWP: Cardiff, 1974). Jones, G. E., *Controls and Conflicts in Welsh Secondary Education 1889-1994* (UWP: Cardiff, 1982).

² B. Simon, 'The History of Education in the 1980s.' *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 1982. p. 87

³ C. Chitty, *Education Policy in Britain*, 2nd Edition (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.) p. 18. See also <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/1944> which indicates that ten Acts passed into legislation during 1944. The majority of these were related to the ongoing conflict. For example: Police and Firemen (War Service) Act 1944 (repealed).

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List of Abbreviations

AAW	Archdiocesan Archives Westminster
BRL	Library of Birmingham
BodL	Bodleian Library
CinWA	Church in Wales Archive
CofERC	Church of England Record Centre
CAS	Carmarthen Archive Service
CCL	City of Cardiff Library
IWM	Imperial War Museum
GA	Glamorgan Archives
KHLC	Kent History and Library Centre
LMA	London Metropolitan Archives
LRL	Llanelly Reference Library
NA	National Archives
NLW	National Library of Wales
PHM	People's History Museum
TRL	Treorchy Reference Library
WGAS	West Glamorgan Archive Service

Chapter 1 - Introduction

“The duty of the historian of education is to rescue from oblivion those whose voices have not yet been heard and whose stories have not yet been told.”¹

This thesis is about education **legislation and policy in England and Wales during the first half of the twentieth century**. It will set out the social, political and religious dynamics which influenced legislation and the way this was implemented in south and south west Wales. This research will have a specific focus upon the development of elementary and secondary education from the Education Act 1918 until after the planning for the implementation of the Education Act 1944. Other aspects of education such as the curriculum, pedagogy, gender issues or Welsh education will not feature prominently **unless these matters occur incidentally during the research**. All are worthy of a detailed examination beyond the scope of this study.

Despite the importance of this period **in terms of education** development, it has previously been subject to **limited** academic research. The implications of the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education Reports² and the effects that the economic circumstances, **together**, had on education in **England and Wales** have been largely ignored. **Similarly, the** historiography of Welsh education during the period fails to provide any in-depth study of the cause and effect of the pivotal **influences** of religion and politics **on development**,³ and the most important investigation of education during the interwar years makes only passing references to Wales.⁴ This thesis will attempt to rectify this by drawing together the threads of education legislation, political, **religious**, and socio-economic influences and offer an interpretation of how these impacted on the development of educational **policy** in south and south west Wales. It will examine the complex interplay between the Board of Education and the local authorities and how this was affected by extrinsic factors, particularly by religious **attitudes** and **the economics of the period which proved fundamental to the ongoing development of the service**. The research will also investigate how the education philosophy of the two main political parties:

¹ R. Aldrich. *Lessons from History of Education: The Selected Works of Richard Aldrich* (Routledge: London, 2005), p. 18.

² Under the Board of Education Act 1899, a Consultative Committee was set up to advise “on any matter that may be referred to it by the Committee of the Board.” Board of Education Act 1899 Para 4.

³ See for example G.E. Jones and G. W. Roderick, *A History of Education in Wales* (UWP: Cardiff, 2003).

⁴ B. Simon, *The Politics of Educational Reform 1920-1940* (Lawrence and Wishart: London, 1974).

Conservative and Labour, influenced the decisions made about the direction and purpose of education during the period. These were fundamentally significant to the way education progressed and led directly to the subsequent changes made by many Local Education Authorities⁵ immediately after the Education Act 1944. The history of education for the period appears to put forward a supposition that very little happened, but this study will suggest that this is something of an unfounded conclusion. It soon becomes apparent from research that it was a period of tension with intricate manoeuvrings on the part of the Government and the Board of Education to covertly manipulate education provision at a local level.

The thesis is divided into historical periods associated both with educational legislation and the social, economic and political events which influenced the development of education. Its main aim will be to link the key national developments with those at local level in south and south west Wales. This geographic area includes the two counties of Carmarthenshire and Glamorgan; the nine Part III local authorities within their boundaries and the three county boroughs of Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil and Swansea.⁶ Although these local authorities were closely clustered they were diverse: economically, socially and politically and this led to fundamental differences in the way education legislation and recommendations were interpreted. The scrutiny of primary sources of these local authorities will provide the basis for an empirical examination of development. This will include an overview of the political and financial pressures on reform, and the way in which the Board of Education attempted to coerce LEAs into implementing legislation through the recommendations of the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education,⁷ and a series of non-statutory instructions.⁸ It will also scrutinise the actions taken by the some authorities in their attempts to implement legislation and the substantial barriers to educational change that they encountered.

This thesis will depend almost entirely on primary research for its outcomes and the lack of secondary sources is more than compensated for by the vast amount of primary archival material at all levels. Those at local level reflect the pressures

⁵ From now on abbreviated to LEA. This term should not be confused with the way that the term 'local authority' is used in this research to the term 'local authority', This latter provided wider services, for example, housing and billeting.

⁶ See Appendix 1.

⁷ Particularly the *Report of the Consultative Committee on The Education of the Adolescent* (HMSO: 1927).

⁸ Through a series of instructions delivered in circular for example: NA ED 22/180, Circular 1397. Raising of school leaving age and NA ED 110, Secondary Education Fees and Special Places, and LEA Files

for change at national level and their wide variety adds interest and variation. The findings of this research will add considerably to the very limited level of knowledge and understanding of the history of education during the period at a national, and most importantly at a local level. It will offer an insight into a number of aspects of educational change, particularly the ongoing battle between the Welsh LEAs and Government for devolution of education, and the subtle politically religious undercurrents which were so influential during the period from 1918 until 1950.

In order to do this the thesis will:

- Scrutinise the education legislation and policies of the period in the national context and its implementation in south and south west Wales.
- Establish how the socio-economic situation and political policy influenced implementation of the various legislation in the area.
- Examine the effects that the differences in philosophy of the political parties had on education legislation and development
- Analyse the effect that the non-provided sector had on educational change
- Enquire into what effect the claims for the devolution of education powers to Wales had on development and implementation.

The outcomes, drawn mainly from primary sources, will establish a history of education in south and south west Wales for the years between the Education Act 1918 until after the period of planning for the implementation of the Education Act 1944. This period will be placed in an historical context by an examination of earlier education legislation as well as the cultural and religious influences in Wales at the time. The conclusions will go some way to complete the history of education in Wales by answering those questions left largely unanswered by other prestigious writers about the interwar period and the political and religious influences in one part of the country.

Historiography of Education: a general theoretical framework

In terms of the historiography of education the interwar years is somewhat limited, especially when compared to other periods. Writings about the establishment of charitable and popular state education⁹ are numerous, as is the substantial body of work which refers to comprehensive education.¹⁰ Later trends have considered the various and changing influences on schooling and pedagogy. Other facets of education, such as the development of the teaching of religious education,¹¹ and morality and citizenship have all been well researched.¹² However, the interwar period has not attracted the same volume of research. Contemporary writing is limited partly because state education in Great Britain was still in its infancy, and as a result, in England and Wales, unlike in Scotland, the history of education was not generally a taught subject in higher education.¹³ McCulloch points out that “before the 1930s, historical studies of education in England were few and far between”¹⁴ and it was rare for writers to link education with other social influences, religion for example, although he notes that John Adamson¹⁵ was an exception to this. McCulloch believes that Adamson began an analysis of the factors that influenced education, which were further examined by G.A.N. Lowndes during the late 1930s¹⁶ and later extended to included details of discussions in the preamble to the Education Act 1944. Dent however, is critical of the fact that Lowndes tended to concentrate on the quantitative development of provision although he praises the fact that he included an analysis of nursery provision and a

⁹ J. Hurt, *Education in Evolution, Church, State and Popular Education 1800 – 1870* (Hart-Davis: London, 1971); A. Green, *Education and State Formation: The Rise of Education Systems in England, France and the USA*, (Macmillan: London, 1990) for example.

¹⁰ G. McCulloch, *Education Reconstruction: The 1944 Education Act and the Twenty First Century* (Woburn Press: Essex, 1994); D. Rubenstein and B. Simon, *The Evolution of the Comprehensive School 1926-1972* (Routledge and Kegan Paul: 1973).

¹¹ P. Chadwick, *Shifting Alliances: Church and State in English Education* (Cassell: London, 1997); B. O’Keefe, *Faith, Culture and the Dual System: A Comparative Study of Church and State Schools* (The Falmer Press: Lewis 1886).

¹² S. Wright, *Morality and Citizenship in English Schools. Secular Approaches 1897-1944*, (Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke 2017); R. Freathy. (2007) ‘Ecclesiastical and Religious Factors which Preserved Christian and Traditional Forms of Education for Citizenship in English Schools, 1934–1944’, *Oxford Review of Education*, (2007) 33:3, 367–77; R. J. K. Freathy, The Triumph of Religious Education for Citizenship in English Schools, 1935–1949, *History of Education*, (2007) 37:2, 295–316.

¹³ G. McCulloch, *The Struggle for the History of Education*, (Routledge: London, 2011) p. 28; G. McCulloch and W. Richardson, *Historical Research in Educational Settings*, (OUP: Buckingham, (2000), p. 34.

¹⁴ G. McCulloch, *ibid.*, (2011) p. 28

¹⁵ J. W. Adamson, *English Education 1789-1902*, (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge 1930) in G. McCulloch, *ibid.*, p 29.

¹⁶ G.A.N. Lowndes, *The Silent Secret Revolution*, (Oxford University Press: London, 1937).

“dispassionate summary of the growth of comprehensive education.”¹⁷ A second criticism is that although Lowndes was the Board of Education officer seconded to the Ministry of Health in the period immediately before evacuation in 1939 he makes very little reference to this or to the war time conditions in education. His chapter on the period of the Second World War tends towards the trivial and confirms the idealistic picture frequently portrayed of evacuated children and their teachers enjoying an idyllic holiday in the countryside. This is unfortunate because it was a missed opportunity to have a detailed account of education during war time by an official who had access to information not have been available elsewhere.

In contrast, Dent’s own writing on the same period is a detailed account of education during war time and one in which he attempted to “relate educational trends and changes to the social context.”¹⁸ He was very critical about the way that evacuees were treated in reception areas and asked questions about both the education system and the social ignorance that was apparent during the period. His examination is wide ranging and he examines the education spectrum from nursery to university. He finishes with an examination of the Education Act 1944 and indicates that although during the early 1940s he had had grave reservations about the future of education his mind had been changed. He writes with optimism that

“there has been much to encourage, and little to excite new fears and apprehensions ... Today I feel I can hear the opening cords of what may prove to be a composition on the grand scale.”¹⁹

Although Dent’s writing has substance as an historical record and is of obvious interest, it is, like the work of many of his contemporaries, Clarke²⁰ and Tawney²¹ for example, now very dated and staid and his philosophy is very much of the period.

Michael Sadler is perhaps the most important contributors to the history of education during the interwar years. He offered a detailed view of comparative

¹⁷ H. C. Dent, Reviewed Work(s): *The Silent Social Revolution: An Account of the Expansion of Public Education in England and Wales 1895-1965* by G. A. N. Lowndes, *British Journal of Educational Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (Jun., 1970), p. 234.

¹⁸ H. C. Dent, *Education in Transition: A Sociological Study of the impact of war on English Education* (Kegan Paul: London, 1944) p. ix.

¹⁹ H. C. Dent, *ibid.*, p. 23.

²⁰ F. Clarke, *Education and Social Change: An English Interpretation* (The Sheldon Press: London, 1940); F. Clarke, Educational research in the new setting. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, (Vol XIV: 1944), 1-6.

²¹ R. H. Tawney, *Secondary Education for All: A Policy for Labour* (The Labour Party: London, 1922).

education which became a benchmark for later education historians both in Great Britain²² and the United States of America,²³ which Cohen suggests are “brilliant excursions into sociology.”²⁴ According to Cohen, Sadler began to link social factors with education development during a period when the history of education was generally restricted to studies of institutions, pedagogy, and autobiography.²⁵ Sadler believed that it was only through an improved education system that England could retain its prestige in the world and suggested that children from all sectors of society should be offered far greater educational opportunity. This should be through “a deliberate reconstruction of the education of the masses with a view to ‘social unification and increased collective efficiency’”²⁶ and it is apparent that this theme was prominent throughout the early twentieth century..²⁷ Sadler’s analysis of elementary education suggests that it should not only teach the literacy skills but to engender character, fellowship and spirituality.²⁸ Although much of his language is now dated, he uses phrases that have made their way into modern educational parlance: ‘educational ladder’²⁹ for example.

McCulloch is of the opinion that Clarke³⁰ and Mannheim³¹ were part of the generation that began to look for an “alternative approach to the history of education.”³² during the late 1930s. Clarke was greatly influenced by Mannheim, as, interestingly, were R.A. Butler, who considered that Mannheim’s philosophies and ideas were very similar to his own, and William Beveridge. However, his views were disliked by many politicians as they “were discordant with traditional patterns of English thought.”³³ Butler considered that Mannheim’s philosophies and ideas were

²² For example, N. Hans, *The principles of educational policy*, (P.S. King & Son, London, 1929); N. Hans, *Comparative Education*, (1949)

²³ See for example E. Pollack, Isaac Leon Kandel, 1881 -1965, *Prospects*, (Paris, UNESCO: International Bureau of Education), vol. 23, no. 3/4, 1993, p. 775–87; I. G. Kandel, *Studies in Comparative Education*, (Harrap, 1933).

²⁴ S. Cohen, Sir Michael Sadler and the Sociopolitical Analysis of Education, *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol 7, No 3 (1967) pp 281-294

²⁵ H.A.L. Fisher, *Educational Reform* (1918); A. Mansbridge, *Margaret McMillan, Prophet and Power* (1920); G.W. Ketewich, *The Education Department and After* (1920).

²⁶ "The School in Some of Its Relations to Social Organization and to National Life," p. 340 in . Cohen, Sir Michael Sadler and the Sociopolitical Analysis of Education, *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol 7, No 3 (1967) p. 286.

²⁷ C. Cannon, The Influence of Religion on Educational Policy, 1902-1944. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, Vol 12, (May 1964), p. 155.

²⁸ M. E. Sadler, *Our Public Elementary Schools*, (Thornton Butterworth Ltd: London 1930) p. 28.

²⁹ M. E. Sadler, (1930) *ibid.*, p. 30

³⁰ F. Clarke, *Education and Social Change: An English Interpretation*. (The Sheldon Press, London, 1940.)

³¹ K. Mannheim, *Freedom, Power and Democratic Planning* (Oxford University Press; New York, 1950.)

³² G. McCulloch, (2011) *op.cit.*, p. 31

³³ J. Harris The Debate in the Welfare State in H.L. Smith (ed) *War and Social Change*. Manchester University Press. Manchester. 1986 p. 241

very similar to his own. Clarke came to believe that there was a very strong association between education and sociology and that progress in education development could not be made unless conditioned by historical and economic social factors. He draws attention to the ideas of earlier writers, Tom Paine and Thomas and Matthew Arnold, who wrote in the “explicitly held social philosophy”³⁴ of the period but at the same time did not show an understanding of their social precepts. He draws parallels to these traits and those of British education historians writing in the last decade who wrote with a lack of critical self-awareness. He was also very critical of the way in which education in Great Britain was arranged, particularly selection for entry into secondary schools, and to the fact that British life was dominated and controlled by the public and independent school sector. He draws attention to the fact that there was no cross connection between the different sectors of education and that this was greatly harming social unity. Similarly, he suggests that the Spens Report reflects a great resistance to change in the secondary sector, particularly towards technical education and multi-lateral schools.³⁵ Hsiao Yuh Ku, in a very interesting journal article, refers to the importance of Clarke’s influence on policy during the war years, which perhaps reflects on his relationship with R. A. Butler. She suggests that he tried to influence Butler against the tripartite system and he lobbied strongly for a later transfer into secondary schools.³⁶ Clarke’s ideas and philosophy were in many ways far ahead of their time and more attuned of those of the 1960s.

It is thought that there is a narrowness to the history of education in England and Wales which has led to it being an impoverished area for research. In general, it relied heavily on ‘Acts and Facts’ and empirical study. In some respects these characteristics are exemplified by Birchenough’s³⁷ early research into elementary education. His writing, like that of Lowndes,³⁸ can be seen to parallel that of the much criticised³⁹ Cubberley⁴⁰ in the United States of America but nevertheless gives

³⁴ F. Clarke, (1940) op. cit., p. 7

³⁵ F. Clarke, (1940) *ibid.*, p. 21.

³⁶ Hsiao-Yuh Ku, Education for liberal democracy: Fred Clarke and the 1944 Education Act. *History of Education*, Vol 42, No 5, (2013), pp. 578-597.

³⁷ C. Birchenough, *History of Elementary Education in England and Wales from 1800 to the Present Day* (University Tutorial Press: London, 1920).

³⁸ G.A.N. Lowndes, (1969) op. cit.

³⁹ L. A. Cremin, *The Wonderful World of Ellwood Patterson Cubberley: an essay on the historiography of American education* (Teachers College: Columbia New York, 1965).

⁴⁰ E. P. Cubberley, *Changing conceptions of education* (1909); *Public Education in the United States* (1919), for example.

an interesting overview of elementary education during the 1920s. This narrowness certainly appears to have been the case during the interwar period.⁴¹ Gareth Stedman Jones points out that historians have tended to examine educational events minutely, using a wide variety of tools including “archaeology, philology and painstaking textual criticism”⁴² although this type of historical research had been heavily criticised but was perpetuated by many of the post war historians: Curtis,⁴³ Barnard⁴⁴ and Dent⁴⁵ for example. They asked few questions about social class and modernisation in the same way as those writing in the mainstream of history. It is also the case that the comparative dearth of education history offered few opportunities for criticism or further debate. This situation slowly began to change, and by the 1960s there was a groundswell of new ideas from the United States of America as researchers, Cremin,⁴⁶ Bailyn⁴⁷ and Katz,⁴⁸ for example, began a revision of the history of education. They discarded the old “epithets”⁴⁹ of narrow institutional history and began to link education with other societal areas to develop “new sub-disciplines”⁵⁰ in the subject. However, it appears that English historians were silent during the revisionist debate that was raging in North America during the 1960s and 1970s. As a consequence, it was difficult for historians, Brian Simon and W. B. Stephens,⁵¹ for example, to break away from the safe traditionalism taught and understood in teacher training establishments to form a new approach to the discipline.

In spite of this, recent historiography has accepted that education cannot be viewed in isolation and a number of sub-disciplines or influences have been put forward. Historians have variously divided the study of education into distinct areas

⁴¹ R. Lowe, History as propaganda: the strange uses of history, *History of Education Major Themes*, Vol 1, (Routledge Falmer, London, 2000.)

⁴² G. Stedman Jones, History: the poverty of empiricism, in R. Blackburn, (Ed.) *Ideology in Social Science Readings in Critical Social Theory*, (Fontana, London, 1998.) p. 97 in Gary McCulloch, (2011) op. cit. p. 12.

⁴³ S. J. Curtis, *History of Education of Great Britain*, (University Tutorial Press, London, 1968.)

⁴⁴ H. C. Barnard, *History of English Education from 1760*, (Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1961.)

⁴⁵ H. C. Dent, *1870-1970 Century of Growth in English Education*, (Longman, 1970.) H. C. Dent, ‘To Cover the Country with Good Schools: A Century’s Effort,’ *British Journal of Educational Studies*, Vol 19. No 2 (1971)

⁴⁶ L. A. Cremin, (1965) op. cit.

⁴⁷ B. Bailyn, *Education in the Forming of American Society* (Random House: 1960).

⁴⁸ M. Katz, The Origins of Public Education: A Reassessment. *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol. 16, No. 4: (1976) 381-407.

⁴⁹ D. Sloan, Historiography and the History of Education. *Review of Research in Education*, Vol. 1: (1973) 239-269, p. 239.

⁵⁰ D Reeder, History of Education and the City in R. Lowe, (Ed) *History of Education Major Themes*, Vol 2, (Routledge Falmer: London, 2000) p. 352.

⁵¹ W. B. Stephens, ‘Recent trends in the history of education in England to 1900,’ *Education Research and Perspectives*, 8, 1, 1981, pp. 5-15.

which reflect its diversity.⁵² However, there is a commonality in these themes which Silver⁵³ suggests was intended to further a sense of nationhood and cultural homogeneity and to serve the purpose of the writer in a way which reflects the period or current thinking. Overall the history of education “is best considered as part of the wider history of society, social history broadly interpreted with the politics, the economics and, it is necessary to add, the religion put in.”⁵⁴

Some of the elements suggested by Briggs and others as relevant to the history of education are only of limited importance to its development during the interwar period. However, three were extremely influential, and these, politics, religion and the economic situation, were all critical. The economy, and its effects on education are included in much of the history of the period⁵⁵ and it underpins Simon’s work.⁵⁶ According to McCulloch,⁵⁷ Simon was influenced by the challenge set by Fred Clarke⁵⁸ who had called for research into the links between education and other social structures. Clarke was critical of the lack of interrogative qualities in the historiography which frequently relied solely on empirical studies and ignored links with socio-economic and religious issues. Simon set out to establish these links and set education development in the context of the political movements of the period and essentially documented the working class struggle for education.⁵⁹

Simon was actively engaged in education policy making and McCulloch points out that Rattansi and Reeder⁶⁰ have argued that he “regarded the struggle for the history of education in activist terms as being not simply academic in nature but also political and ideological.”⁶¹ He developed “a rationale for the study of the history of education as a basis for critical scholarship”⁶² and examined the relationship between education and social change. Initially he interpreted this within

⁵² A. Briggs, *The Study of the History of Education* in R. Lowe ed, (2000), op.cit; W. Richardson, *Historians and educationalist: the history of education as a field of study Part 1, 1945-72. History of Education, Vol 28, Issue 1: (1991) 1-30; W. Richardson, Historians and educationalist: the history of education as a field of study, Part II, 1972-96. History of Education Vol 28, Issue 2: (1999) 109-141; G. McCulloch, (2011) op. cit.,*

⁵³ H. Silver, *Aspects of Neglect: The Strange Case of Victorian Popular Education. Oxford Review of Education, 3, 1: (1977) 57-69.*

⁵⁴ A. Briggs, *ibid.*, p. 153

⁵⁵ A. Hutt, *The Condition of the Working Class in Britain* (Martin Lawrence: London, 1933) for example.

⁵⁶ B. Simon, (1974), op.cit.

⁵⁷ G. McCulloch, (2011) op. cit., p. 8.

⁵⁸ F. Clarke, (1940) op. cit.

⁵⁹ G. McCulloch, (2011) *ibid.*, p. 14.

⁶⁰ A. Rattansi and D. Reeder, eds, *Rethinking Radical Education: Essays in Honour of Brian Simon* (Lawrence and Wishart: London, 1992), p. 16.

⁶¹ G. McCulloch, (2011) op. cit., p. 41.

⁶² *ibid.*, p. 41.

the Marxist framework of social class conflict but gradually became to believe that this was a flawed ideology. In a key essay in *Can Education Change Society*⁶³ Simon suggested that in England state education had been established to reinforce social and economic relations “but had become itself a site of conflict.”⁶⁴ Although he acknowledged that there had been ‘a silent social revolution’ any changes to education provision were ultimately the outcome of long and difficult confrontation. According to Simon it had been the efforts of the working classes that had created and strengthened the system and that people like Robert Owen and Kay-Shuttleworth spoke only for the middle classes, a fact which undermined the efforts of the working classes both in society and in education. He also came reject the Marxist idea that education was purely a form of social control and believed that

“Gramsci’s more positive evaluation of the achievements of elementary schooling and finds in Marxist theory support for the progressive rather than a humanist curriculum, adapted to take account of the interests of contemporary social groups, constitutes an appropriate agenda for the school of all.”⁶⁵

Simon’s discourse on education during the interwar years⁶⁶ illustrates his determination to place provision in the context of the politics of the period. This detailed analysis draws on a wide range of contemporary documentation, and is one of the few histories of education that include an investigation of the profound restraining effect that financial pressures had on development.

Despite the general approbation for Simon’s historiography, he has come under some criticism for presenting only a male orientated view of the history of education. This lack of gender awareness was very common before it became an area for academic study, and there is a persistent theme that the role of women in the development of education has been largely ignored. Purvis⁶⁷ suggests that both liberal and Marxist historians⁶⁸ are guilty of this, and points out that Simon⁶⁹ presented a view of the struggle of the working classes for education which focused

⁶³ B. Simon, *Can Education Change Society?* in *Does Education Matter?* (Lawrence and Wishart: London, 1985a), in G. McCulloch, (2011), op. cit.

⁶⁴ G. McCulloch, (2011) *ibid.*, p. 43.

⁶⁵ P. Cunningham, ‘Educational History and Educational Change: The Past Decade of English Historiography’, *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol. 29, No. 1: (Spring, 1989), 77-94, p. 82.

⁶⁶ B. Simon, *The Politics of Educational Reform 1920-1940* (Lawrence and Wishart: London, 1974).

⁶⁷ J. Purvis, *The Historiography of British Education* in A. Rattansi and D. Reeder eds, (1992) op. cit.

⁶⁸ P. Miller, *Education and the State: The uses of Marxist and feminist approaches in the writing of the histories of schooling*. *Historical Studies in Education*, 1. 2: (1989) 283 – 306.

⁶⁹ B. Simon, *The Two Nations and the Education Structure 1780-1870* (Lawrence Wishart: London, 1974).

solely on the education of men and their part in the educating process. She suggests that this set the scene for the future of education history and records that Jane Marcus,⁷⁰ the radical feminist, pointed out that

“first histories invent the narrative and historical plot. The choice of decisive events and the naming of key figures sets the scene for the drama; the next generation of historians has to struggle hard if it wishes to break the grip and force of the first account.”⁷¹

Some of the most fruitful research during the interwar period was written by two historians who explored the interconnection between Labour Party policies and education. Barker⁷² presents a picture of a philosophically divided party which could not decide its priorities: whether to support employers or workers, a theme which was common in Labour Party policy throughout the period. He identifies the class consciousness that lay beneath the veneer of socialism and which was evident in all attempts to reform elementary education. Barker shows that it was not so much that Labour did not have an education policy but that it had a number of conflicting ideas and as a result there could be no agreement on a way forward. Barker makes little reference to either the two critical influences on education during the period, the economic situation or the whole question of the non-provided sector. Barker’s research focuses very much on the history of the Labour Party in the context of education, and gives the former considerable emphasis. Education, in this instance, was used as a vehicle for party policy rather than the key issue.

While Barker used education as a vehicle for exploring political history, Brian Simon’s focus was the historical development of education and how this was influenced by extrinsic factors. He points out that the history of education was a key element in teacher training and this linked “interest in the educational past with operation in the present.”⁷³ He suggests that while this has proved useful, it also has proved dangerous as it sometimes crystallised “complex issues into convenient responses.”⁷⁴ Exceptions to this would be the early education historiography of

⁷⁰ J. Marcus, *Suffrage and the Pankhursts* (Routledge Kegan Paul: London, 1987).

⁷¹ J. Purvis, *The Historiography of British Education*, p. 251 in A. Rattansi D. Reeder (Eds) (1992) *ibid.*

⁷² R. Barker, *Education and Politics 1900-1951 A Study of the Labour Party* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1972).

⁷³ B. Simon, ‘The History of Education in the 1980s’, *British Journal of Educational Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 1: (1982), 85-96, p. 86.

⁷⁴ B. Simon, (1982), *ibid.*, p. 86.

A. E. Dodds⁷⁵ and Elié Halvéy⁷⁶ who “analysed the views of philosophical radicals in terms of their educational implications.”⁷⁷ He points out that because the interwar years were considered uninteresting “the earlier history of education became bedded down into something approaching a reverent commentary on the findings of predecessors.”⁷⁸

It appears that the most well researched area in the history of education was Labour party influences on education. This is an interesting characteristic and Marwick has pointed out that the educational politics of the period were so dominated by the Conservative Party that there has been no need to review them.⁷⁹ However, there have been a number of reviews about Conservative education policies⁸⁰ and Simon offers an interpretation,⁸¹ as does Mowat⁸² but there has been little in-depth academic research on the same scale as that of the Labour Party. It is interesting to note that although Dean’s article suggests it is mainly about Conservative policy this is not entirely the case. It is very much an empirical study of the relationship between the two main parties and the Labour battle to try and win the heart and minds of the voters, especially with regard to social reform. Dean links the fact that Conservatives thought education reform might be damaging to future electoral results. He captures the essence of Conservative party policy by pointing out that it considered that advance should be “gradual ... the product of necessity rather than ideology”⁸³ a theme which is apparent through the historiography of the period.

There is some consensus that the major events in education during the interwar period were brought about by “a crisis.”⁸⁴ Akenson,⁸⁵ Marwick⁸⁶, Gosden⁸⁷

⁷⁵ A. E. Dodds, *Education and Social Movement* (1919).

⁷⁶ E. Halvéy *History of the English People in the Nineteenth Century The Rule of Democracy. Vol. 6* (Ernest Benn Ltd: London, 1912).

⁷⁷ B. Simon, (1982), op. cit., p. 86.

⁷⁸ B. Simon, *ibid.*, p. 87.

⁷⁹ A. Marwick, (1970), op. cit., p. 319

⁸⁰ D. W. Dean, Conservatism and the National Education System 1922-40, *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 6. No 2 (1974) pp 150-165, for example.

⁸¹ B. Simon, (1974) op.cit.

⁸² C. L. Mowat, *Britain Between The Wars* (Methuen: London, 1968).

⁸³ D. W. Dean, *ibid.*, p. 154

⁸⁴ A. M. Rivlin, Reflections on twenty years of higher education policy, educational access and achievement in America’, New York, College entrance examination Board 7 in H. Silver, *Education, Change and the Policy Process* (Falmer Press: Lewis, 1990), p. 5.

⁸⁵ D. H. Akenson, Patterns of English Educational Change: The Fisher and Butler Act. *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol. 11, No 2: (1971), 143-156, p. 145.

⁸⁶ A. Marwick, (1970), op.cit.

⁸⁷ P. Gosden, Putting the Act together, *History of Education*, Vol. 24, No 3. (1995), pp. 195-207.

and Titmuss,⁸⁸ although each has a slightly different viewpoint, all suggest that the Education Acts of 1918 and 1944 were precipitated by a period of conflict. Marwick, for example, is of the opinion that war is an extreme example of a sociological study of disasters, and quotes Marx' view that "war passes extreme judgement on social systems that have outlived their vitality."⁸⁹ Akenson suggested that the two Education Acts followed the same pattern of development as in both cases the "ideational components"⁹⁰ of the Acts were conceived by the Board of Education in the years before the two World Wars. He believes that the crystallisation of these ideas failed because once the events of wartime had been removed, the momentum for change was lost due to external factors, politics and the economy, for example.

Both Gosden and Titmuss offer evacuation as one of the factors in the origins of the Education Act 1944. Gosden, draws from his extensive study of education during wartime⁹¹ to point to the "dissatisfaction with the education system and the increasing lack of confidence in what it provided"⁹² which became even more obvious once evacuation had begun. It provided evidence of poverty, depravation, and particularly inequality of provision across England and Wales. It also indicated the weaknesses and ineptitude of both the Board of Education and LEAs He believes this, together with the fact that there was a need to national unity meant that there was "a very strong movement of public opinion from 1940 in favour of social reform and extensive change."⁹³ Gosden also draws attention to the fact that religious belief became far more important during wartime and that this became an important issue in the plans that emerged for education in 1944.

In much the same way, Richard Titmuss considers that it was the disclosure of elements of depravation in society during evacuation that was a significant factor in precipitating the Education Act 1944.⁹⁴ He points out that the resulting promise of new educational and social policies after the end of the war was intended to "fuse and unify"⁹⁵ different elements in the community, not only to ensure that they acted

⁸⁸ R. M. Titmuss, *Essays on the Welfare State* (Allen and Unwin: London, 1958).

⁸⁹ Karl Marx, *The Eastern Question* (1897) in A. Marwick, (1970) *ibid.*, p. 13.

⁹⁰ D. H. Akenson, *op. cit.* p. 144.

⁹¹ P.H.J.H Gosden, *Education in the Second World War* (Methuen and Co. Ltd: London, 1976).

⁹² P. Gosden, (1995), *ibid.*, p. 195.

⁹³ P. Gosden, (1995), *ibid.*, p. 195.

⁹⁴ K. Jefferys, *British Politics and Social Policy during the Second World War. The Historical Journal*, Vol. 30, No 1: (1987) 123-144, p. 123; S. Parker, (2005), *op. cit.*

⁹⁵ R. M. Titmuss, (1958) *op. cit.*, p. 84.

co-operatively but also to offer an understanding that they would have a better life when peace came. This promise of change, as a reward for co-operation, is a constant theme in the historiography of the period and one which led to “a passion for making social reconstruction plans ... Education was very much to the fore.”⁹⁶ It has been suggested that Titmuss’ premise that evacuation was very significant in designing social policy coloured later historical judgements, and this influence remained until historians such as Harris⁹⁷ and Macnicol⁹⁸ began to question his views.⁹⁹ Titmuss’ oeuvre on eugenics, poverty and social policy was highly regarded at the time. For example, Chambers in his lengthy review of *Social Policy* praised Titmuss by suggesting that: “Whatever future generations may think of the way in which their forbears conducted themselves in the civilian war they will surely agree that they were fortunate in their historian.”¹⁰⁰ Despite his standing as a social historian Titmuss views have been heavily criticised in the years since the publication of his work in 1950.¹⁰¹ Regardless of this, his work remains a valuable historical record of social provision and policy during the Second World War.

Jose Harris puts forward an alternative to Titmuss’ opinions by suggesting that the wide ranging post war construction in England and Wales was paralleled “by comparable changes in all other Western European countries, both Allied and Axis, both combatant and neutral.”¹⁰² She argues that reconstruction was brought about purely by political and intellectual factors and that it was not influenced in any way by any of the events of wartime. Harris suggests that pressure for welfare reforms, begun by the Webbs in 1897 “when they formulated their principle of ‘national minimum’.”¹⁰³ continued in various guises through the intervening period until the 1930s when there was “Pressure for comprehensive social welfare –

⁹⁶N. Middleton and S. Weitzman, (1976) op. cit., p. 207.

⁹⁷ J. Harris, Some Aspects of Social Policy During the Second World War, in W. H. Monmasen (ed), *The Emergence of the Welfare State in Britain and Germany*(London: 1976) in J. Welshman, *Evacuation and Social Policy During the Second World War: Myth and Reality. Twentieth Century British History*, Vol. 9, Issue 1: (1998) 28-53, p. 29.

⁹⁸ J. Macnicol, *The Evacuation of Schoolchildren*, in H. L. Smith (ed), *War and Social Change* (MUP: Manchester, 1986), in J. Welshman, *ibid.*, p. 29.

⁹⁹ J. Welshman, *ibid.*, p. 29.

¹⁰⁰ R. C. Chambers, Reviewed Work(s): *Problems of Social Policy* by R. M. Titmuss, *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (Sept., 1950), p. 269

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¹⁰¹ R. M. Titmuss, R. M., *Problems of Social Policy* (HMSO: London, 1950)

¹⁰² J. Harris, *War and Social History: Britain and the Home Front during the Second World War. Contemporary European History*, Vol. 1. No. 1: (1992) 17-35, p. 35.

¹⁰³ S and B Webb, *Industrial Democracy* (1897), pp. 766-84 in J. Harris, *The Debate in the Welfare State*, in H.L. Smith ed, (1986), op. cit. p. 250.

together with a full employment programme and corporatist planning.”¹⁰⁴ The political discontent and divide that followed was due to the fact that in order to make major changes in both education and welfare there would also need to be changes within organisations and operation of the State in order to implement them. This move towards a “qualitative change in the identity of the State”¹⁰⁵ was universally disliked and although there was a real perception of the need to change, agreement could not be reached. This view connects to the wider examination of evacuation by Parsons and others in the European arena.¹⁰⁶ She points out that regardless of the intellectual philosophical arguments it was the entry of the Labour party into the wartime coalition Government that accelerated the reconstruction process. Harris believes that Labour “with its strongly internationalist and quasi-pacifist tradition, needed far more than other parties to find a rationale for fighting the war other than mere national defence.” She quotes Harold Laski¹⁰⁷ who put forward the premise that the ‘price’ for Labour’s co-operation and support of the war effort was the ‘making of a more equal society’ – “ a goal which expressed itself throughout the party in passionate discussion of post-war social reform.”¹⁰⁸ Harris concludes that although changes in education and the welfare state did come into being these did not attract the moral or philosophical argument that previous social policies had aroused, and because of this they have had a continuing unclear definition that has left them open and “vulnerable to changes in political and economic climate, and to attacks from more rigorous and dogmatic intellectual rivals.”¹⁰⁹

Other interpretations of education and social development are now much more influential than those of Titmuss. Briggs, for example, believed that in terms of educational development, “long term influences and trends”¹¹⁰ are generally more important than crisis and different elements offer a range of constantly changing values with distinct priorities. Similarly, McCulloch¹¹¹ suggests that while the history of education is strategic in relation to other fields of study, sociology for example,

¹⁰⁴ J. Harris, (1986) op. cit., p. 236.

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*, p. 236.

¹⁰⁶ M. Parsons, (Ed) *Children: The Invisible Victims of War. An Interdisciplinary Study* (DSM: Peterborough, 2008); N. Stargardt, *Witnesses of War: Children’s Lives Under the Nazis*, (Jonathan Cape: London, 2005).

¹⁰⁷ H. Laski. *Where Do We Go From Here*. New York 1940 in J. Harris *The Debate in the Welfare State* in H.L. Smith (ed) *War and Social Change*, (MUP: Manchester. 1986) p. 251.

¹⁰⁸ J. Harris, *ibid.*, p. 257

¹⁰⁹ J. Harris, (1986) op. cit., p. 257

¹¹⁰ A. Briggs, *Serious Pursuits: Communications and Education, The Collected Essays of Asa Briggs, Volume 3* (Harvester Wheatsheaf: 1991) p. 238.

¹¹¹ G. McCulloch, *The Struggle for the History of Education* (Routledge: London, 2011).

this relationship can sometimes be uncomfortable and insecure. These associations are complex and frequently disputed. Donato and Lazerson reflect that time, place and educational background create conflict for educational historians who see themselves as adding to a body of work by asking questions that are rooted in the past. Conversely, sociologists are led in another direction:

“to view the past in contemporary terms, finding historical questions in today’s conflict and framing the questions in terms that make sense to present minded colleagues. In choosing one end of the spectrum we risk neglect and rejection of the other.”¹¹²

They also point out that, in their opinion, there are fundamental differences in the way that education historians and sociologists think and that while “social scientists place a high value on research design, educational historians often wonder what that means”¹¹³ These opinions are held together by Durkheim’s suggestion that “we should carry out historical research into the manner in which educational configurations have progressively come to cluster together to combine and form organic relationships.”¹¹⁴ This multiplicity of direction is a clear indicator of not only the complexity of the history of education, but of education itself. In spite of this, it is recognised that there is a tendency for historians of education “not to make explicit”¹¹⁵ the perspective from which they write, and therefore it is not uncommon find references to a number of social theories and different interpretations of these. Silver suggests that many historians, especially those writing from a Marxist perspective, have a very limited understanding of social class, the breadth of social structures and the place of education within them.¹¹⁶

The influence of religion on education cannot be understated. It was fundamental to its early development during the nineteenth century when denominational groups began to establish a voluntary schools system.¹¹⁷ and was to remain a very pertinent factor throughout the period under investigation. It has remained a constant and very strong influence on the organisation of schools, on

¹¹² R. Donato and M. Lazerson, New directions in American educational history: problems and prospects, *Educational Review*, 29(8), 1-15, p. 4 in Gary McCulloch, (2011), *ibid.*, p. 5.

¹¹³ *ibid.*, p. 4.

¹¹⁴ E. Durkheim, *The Evaluation of Educational Thought: Lectures on the Formation and Development of Secondary Education in France* (RKP; London, 1977) p. 10-11 in G. McCulloch, (2011) *op. cit.*, p. 4.

¹¹⁵ J. Purvis, The Historiography of British Education a Feminist Critique in A. Rattansi and D. Reeder eds, *Rethinking Radical Education: Essays in Honour of Brian Simon* (Lawrence Wishart: London, 1992) p. 16.

¹¹⁶ H. Silver, *Historiography of Education* in R. Lowe ed, Vol. 1 (2000) *op.cit.*

¹¹⁷ C Birchenough, *History of Elementary Education in England and Wales from 1800 to the Present Day* (University Tutorial Press: London, 1920); S. J Curtis, *History of Education in Great Britain* (University Tutorial Press: 1948) particularly Chapter VI.

policy and legislation. In common with other areas of historiography there is little contemporary writing for the period which illustrates the links between religion and education. This is confirmed by a review of the references in some well known historiography¹¹⁸ although writing on aspects of links with the community are common.¹¹⁹

By the end of the 1930s there was beginning to be deep unease about the place of religion in community life and how this impacted on education. This issue is central to *Church, Community, and the State in Relation to Education* published in 1938.¹²⁰ Its chapters reflect the fact that education is largely determined on the basis of the “norms and values which are dominant in the society from which it takes its rise.”¹²¹ As would be expected for the period, its main focus is not only on Christianity but also on the role of the Church in education. Clarke questions whether the perceived crisis in education was caused by the breakdown of the “settled social and cultural order”¹²² of society after the end of the First World War. He suggests that the focus of religion should not be only in its teaching in schools but should be an underlying philosophy throughout education. These opinions are somewhat out of tune with his later sociological work which reflects a more liberal viewpoint.

However, Clarke’s philosophy is mirrored to some extent in a second chapter which suggests that while in totalitarian countries, Russia for example, education is generally atheistic, there are growing similarities between this and western countries. Smith is of the opinion that:

“In Britain, for example, the Church still retains a position in public life which conceals the extent to which her hold on the community has weakened, and there is a strong allegiance to Christian values which may create a false impression of the strength of Christian belief.”¹²³

¹¹⁸ In F. Clarke, W. Zenkovsky, P. Munroe, C. R. Morris, J. W. D. Smith, Ph. Kohnstamm. ‘X’, J. H. Oldham, *Church, Community, and state in Relation to Education*, (George Allen & Unwin Ltd: London, 1938); J. Murphy, *Church, state and Schools in Britain, 1800-1970* (Routledge & Kegan Paul; London, 1971).

¹¹⁹ W. A. Visser, W. A. Hooft, and J. H. Oldham, *The Church and its Function in Society*, (George Allen & Unwin; London, 1937) for example.

¹²⁰ F. Clarke et al., (1938) *ibid.*

¹²¹ F. Clarke et al., *ibid.*, p. 3.

¹²² F. Clarke et al., *ibid.*, p. 9

¹²³ J. W. D. Smith, *The Crisis in Christian Education*, in F. Clarke et al., *op. cit.*, p. 122.

Smith believes that this was reflected in schools, because although religious knowledge was taught there was an “uncertainty about moral and spiritual values.”¹²⁴ This is confirmed by Ph. Kohnstamm who pointed out that the spiritual ethos of education was facing a crisis because it was being diminished “as the result of secularist attacks which have had an extensive influence.”¹²⁵ He further suggests that education was becoming intellectualised and has moved from being an affair of the heart to one solely of the head. It “pays more attention to the formulation of correct theological formulae than to a life of trustful obedience.”¹²⁶ Although the language in these chapters is now very dated its philosophy is very much in tune with many of modern ideas about the place of religion in education. An interesting modern interpretation of this has been put forward by Rob Freathy. He refers to the fight by William Temple to defend the status of the Anglican church “at a time when the nation was looking for a powerful enough ideology with which to fight off secular evils and prepare for post-war reconstruction.”¹²⁷

In the mid 1960s Cannon returned to the influence of religion on education policy.¹²⁸ She believes that although there had been an apparent decline in religion, especially in education, in Great Britain this is something of an overstatement of the reality of the situation. Cannon points out that religion was affecting education in a number of ways: through policy making; religious and secular schools and through “the influence of religion in schools themselves.”¹²⁹ She examines the religious debate during the 1902 and 1944 Education Acts and finds that it was central to discussion, especially at parliamentary level. However, she also points out that the rise of secularisation in education policy came mainly from the teacher unions, the Local Education Authorities and to some extent from the Labour party. She maintains, however, that “Although many studies show the increasing secularisation of left-wing politics, even in such religious strongholds as Wales, there remained a thread of religious motivation in parts of the Labour leadership.”¹³⁰ This trend appears to have been of long standing as Cannon quotes George How writing in

¹²⁴ J. W. D. Smith, op. cit., p. 131.

¹²⁵ Ph. Kohnstamm, *Christian Education in the World of the Present Day; Its Nature and its Mission*, in *Education in F. Clarke et al.*, *ibid.*, p. 138.

¹²⁶ Ph. Kohnstamm, *ibid.*, p. 137

¹²⁷ R.J. K. Freathy, *Ecclesiastical and religious factors which preserved Christian and traditional forms of education for citizenship in English schools, 1934-1944. Oxford Review of Education*, (2007) pp. 367-377.

¹²⁸ C. Cannon, *The Influence of Religion on Educational Policy, 1902-1944. British Journal of Educational Studies*, 12 (2): (1964) 143 – 160

¹²⁹ C. Cannon, (1964) *ibid.*, p. 143.

¹³⁰ C. Cannon, (1963) op. cit., p. 155.

1904, "Labour feels ... the Church is a capitalist organisation. The churchgoing employer and the stay away trade-unionist are alike suspicious of each other."¹³¹ However, the situation in Wales may not have been as simple as Cannon suggests. There have been suggestions that after the First World War and the disestablishment of the Church of England in Wales "the churches have retired from the field of political controversy"¹³² as the causes they fought for were no longer important. The radical non-conformity of the Liberal party had been overtaken by the rise in Labour party which did not have the same appeal to the non-conformist middle classes. This premise has been discussed at length in Pope's more recent and very detailed work. He suggests that the labour movement "challenged and ultimately replaced, the Non-conformist hegemony in Welsh life."¹³³

The decline in Christianity is challenged by Stephen Parker who provides an extremely interesting and readable contemporary oral history of attitudes in war time Birmingham.¹³⁴ This sits in much the same time-frame as Pope's research but examines Anglican attitudes to religion rather than those of Non-conformists. This is one of the few oral histories that draws directly from a wide range of personal religious experiences during the Second World War. Parker suggests that there was something of a revival in Christianity during the period and which continued post war which "historians and sociologists have never come to terms with."¹³⁵ He believes that this was partly due to the physical, moral and spiritual support given to the general population by the clergy during war time. Parker also believes that the Church played a considerable role in offering a view of social reform after the end of the war, a factor which is a theme throughout the historiography of wartime education.¹³⁶ It is difficult to draw conclusions from these viewpoints but it is clear that there was a considerable difference in attitudes between the two denominations, although certainly the secularisation of Welsh life and organisations may have been a substantial factor.

¹³¹ G. How, in R Mudie-Smith, ed., *The Religious Life of London* (London : Hodder & Stoughton, 1904) in C. Cannon, *ibid.*, p. 155.

¹³² T. Brennan, E. W. Cooney, H. Pollins, *Social Change in South-West Wales* (Watts: London 1954) p. 139.

¹³³ R. Pope, *Building Jerusalem: non-conformity, Labour and the social question in Wales, 1906-1939* second edn, (UWP: Cardiff, 1998), p. 241.

¹³⁴ S. Parker, *Faith on the Home Front: Aspects of Church Life and Popular Religion in Birmingham 1939 – 1945* (Peter Lang: Bern, 2005)

¹³⁵ C. Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularisation 1800 -2000*, (Routledge: London 2001)p. 170 in S. Parker, (2005) *op. cit.*, p. 215.

¹³⁶ B. Simon, *Education and Social Order 1940-1990* (Lawrence and Wishart: London, 1991); P.H.J.H Gosden, (1976) *op. cit.*, for example.

Pope's and Parker's work do not relate directly to education but rather emphasise the fact that during the late 1930s questions had begun to be raised about the position of religion in community life. This grew to be a major factor and was certainly influential in the years immediately prior to the Education Act 1944. Although many historians have discussed the Education Act 1944, its origins and legislation¹³⁷ only Cruikshank¹³⁸ makes an in-depth examination of the religious influences and pressures of the period. She deals with these through an examination of twentieth century legislation and it is clear that her personal link with R.A. Butler gave her a different perspective on the Education Act 1944, as well as access to unpublished primary sources. She presents a clear picture of how religion was interwoven with the development of education and why it was so difficult to separate non-provided and state education in England although she makes few comments about the situation in Wales. Her review of the Education Act 1902 and the religious difficulties that followed are echoes in her remarks on the Birrell Bill of 1908 which if it had been accepted would have substantially solved many of the problems of denominational schools by replacing them with a unified system of education. Although sometimes criticised for being lacking in detail in some aspects,¹³⁹ her work remains one of the most valuable and interesting pieces of research about the role that religion played in education.

Historiography of Evacuation

The historiography of evacuation is a very small body of work that can be divided into several quite discrete parts. Firstly there has been the investigation into the reasons; the processes and the effects of evacuation¹⁴⁰ which Gärtner suggests have been of lasting interest, although these concentrated on its social impact rather than "political ontology."¹⁴¹ This includes one of the only histories which related

¹³⁷ H C. Dent, *The Education Act 1944* (ULP: London, 1944); M. Barker, *Making of the 1944 Education Act* (Cassell Education: London, 1994); G. McCulloch, *Education Reconstruction: The 1944 Education Act and the Twenty First Century* (Woburn Press: Essex, 1994); K. Jones, *Education in Britain, 1944 –to the Present* (Polity Press: Cambridge, 2001) for example.

¹³⁸ M. Cruikshank, *Church and State in English Education* (Macmillan: London, 1964).

¹³⁹ J. Roach, Reviewed Work(s): Church and State in English Education, 1870 to the Present Day by Marjorie Cruickshank. *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (1964), pp. 181-182, for example.

¹⁴⁰ T. L Crosby, *The Impact of Civilian Evacuation in the Second World War* (Croom Helm: London, 1986); J. Welshman, Evacuation and Social Policy During the Second World War: Myth and Reality. *Twentieth Century British History*, Vol. 9, Issue 1: (1998) 28-53; M. L. Parsons, *'I'll Take That One': Dispelling the Myths of Civilian Evacuation 1939-1945* (Beckett Karlson Ltd: Peterborough, 1998); H. V. Nicholson, *'Prisoners of War'* (Gordon Publishing: London, 2000).

¹⁴¹ N. Gärtner, Administrating 'Operation Pied Piper' how the London Council prepared for the evacuation of its schoolchildren 1938-1939. *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, 42 1: (2010) 17-32, p. 18.

entirely to the evacuation scheme in Wales.¹⁴² Second is the sociological discussion of evacuation which offers the view that it was the fundamental catalyst in the reconstruction of the welfare state,¹⁴³ although this has largely been discounted by revisionist historians who have come to substantially different conclusions.¹⁴⁴ Lastly, is the most recent and largest oeuvre of oral discussion written by adults about their experiences of evacuation, often as very young children.¹⁴⁵ There is a suggestion that this form of history is only valuable when used to support other concrete evidence or facts and Parsons believes that “to take either example at face value would be equally problematic.”¹⁴⁶ Passerini adds to this and points out that these intensely personal accounts must be accurate if they are to give a credible explanation of events.¹⁴⁷ There is a strong element of cathartic reminiscence in many of these histories and it is quite clear that whatever the outcome for evacuees the process produced either a profound negative or positive effect.¹⁴⁸ Johnson believes that these narrative histories

“are more valuable and meaningful ... than the impersonality and generalization of sociology: solipsistically, in face of something as huge and important as this, all you can rely on is the personal, all you are left with is the subjective.”¹⁴⁹

This **form of** historiography is almost completely directed towards the social aspects of evacuation and generally portrays the Scheme as one intended to protect children from the outcomes of war. However, despite the fact that evacuation was a significant historic event in educational terms it has not been researched to any great extent. Parsons suggests that this lack of research emanates from the fact that after the end of the Second World War there was a concerted and collective effort to forget about all issues concerning children and in Great Britain “the words

¹⁴² Wallis, J., A, *Welcome in the Hillsides? The Merseyside and North Wales experience of Evacuation 1939-1945* (Avid Publications: Merseyside, 2000).

¹⁴³ R. M. Titmuss, *Problems of Social Policy* (HMSO: London, 1950); R. M. Titmuss, (1958); D. Fraser, *The Evolution of the Welfare State* (Palgrave: London, 1973).

¹⁴⁴ See: A. Marwick, (1968) op. cit.; J. Harris, (1992) op. cit.; S. G. Parker, R. Freathy and J. Doney, The Professionalisation of Non-Denominational Religious Education in England: politics, organisation and knowledge. *Journal of Beliefs & Values: Studies in Religion & Education*, Volume 37, 2: (2016) 201-238.

¹⁴⁵ For example: B. Holman, *The Evacuation: A Very British Revolution* (Lion: London, 1995); B. Wicks, *No Time to Wave Goodbye* (Bloomsbury: London, 1988); B. J. Johnson, (Ed) *The Evacuees* (Victor Gollancz, London, 1968).

¹⁴⁶ M. Parson, *War Child: Children Caught in Conflict* (Tempus: 2008) p. 18.

¹⁴⁷ L. Passerini, Mythbiography in Oral History in R. Samuel and P. Thompson eds, *The Myths We Live By* (Routledge: London, 1990), p. 49.

¹⁴⁸ See for example B. Wicks, *The Day They Took the Children* (Bloomsbury: London, 1989); M. L. Parsons, (1998.) op. cit.

¹⁴⁹ B. J. Johnson, (1968) op. cit., p. 19.

Civilian Evacuation were removed from common parlance in March 1946 as part of a national strategy.”¹⁵⁰ In most countries where evacuation did take place it is now regarded as an embarrassing exercise which developed from of the perceived inconsequential position of children in society.¹⁵¹

Apart from contemporary studies undertaken during the war period,¹⁵² evacuation, as a subject for research did not reappear until the 1950s with the publication of the official histories of World War Two. The two that directly concerned the scheme: *Problems of Social Policy*¹⁵³ and *Studies in the Social Services*¹⁵⁴ were mainly concerned with the role played by health and welfare during the period. Although Titmuss’ investigation remains the best considered study it makes only incidental reference to education provision¹⁵⁵ and he was prevented from having access to Board of Education documentation. Officials at the Ministry of Education were “reluctant to see all the Board’s material swallowed up, and perhaps inadequately digested, either by Mr Titmuss or Sir Arthur Macnalty who appears to be writing a medical history of the war.”¹⁵⁶ It is clear that there were plans to write an official history of the war time activities of the Board of Education and, although reluctant to do so, officials kept diaries and other information that was intended to inform this. There was a particular reluctance to deal with the matter of evacuation although Davidson wrote that he supposed that it would be useful as guidance in the next war and would be part of the planning for defence which was already taking place alongside that of post war reconstruction.¹⁵⁷ Dr Sophia Weitzman¹⁵⁸ was originally appointed to write the history of education in war time but did not complete it due to arguments about fees and ill health.¹⁵⁹ The project was later revived by the

¹⁵⁰ M. Parsons, *War Child: Children Caught in Conflict* (Tempus: Stroud, 2008), p. 23.

¹⁵¹ See M. Parsons, ed, *Children: The Invisible Victims of War. An Interdisciplinary Study* (DSM: Peterborough, 2008); N. Stargart, (2005) op. cit., for interesting perspectives on the treatment of children in wartime.

¹⁵² For example: Hygiene Committee of the Women’s Group of Public Welfare. *Our Towns A Close Up*. (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1943); R. Padley and M. Cole, *Evacuation Survey. A Report to the Fabian Society* (Routledge: London, 1940).

¹⁵³ R. M. Titmuss, (1950) op. cit.

¹⁵⁴ S. Ferguson and H. Fitzgerald, *Studies in the Social Services* (HMSO: London, 1953).

¹⁵⁵ M. Davies, Education in the Second World War: The preparation of an official history. *Journal of Education Administration and History*, Volume 8, Issue 2: (1976) 51-55.

¹⁵⁶ NA ED 138/58, Letter D. Du B. Davidson to Mr Bosworth Smith, 12 February, 1944.

¹⁵⁷ NA ED 10/252, Davidson to Rokeling, 24th February 1942 in M. Davies, (1976) *ibid.*, p. 53

¹⁵⁸ Her collected papers are in the University of London. They are also referenced in LMA LCC/ED/WAR/01/239 Official History of World War Two Education Volume, Dr Sophia Weitzman, although this file actually contains only records of the information that had been examined in the process of drawing together information from LCC schools

¹⁵⁹ NA ED 138/58, op. cit..

Social Science Research Council and completed by P.H.J.H. Gosden.¹⁶⁰ His very detailed commentary on education during wartime refers almost entirely to London and the south east of England and this regional emphasis appears to be a trend in research.¹⁶¹ There is a complete absence of studies of Welsh education during the evacuation period even though many thousands of children were sent into reception areas there. The most disappointing element of the history of evacuation is that G.A.N. Lowndes, who was seconded to the Ministry of Health to advise on education in 1938, makes little reference to his personal experiences of war time education.¹⁶² This profile of evacuation historiography is very similar to that of the interwar years because by the time archival material was available research interest had moved to other areas: pedagogy and gender differences for example.

History of Education in Wales

Although England and Wales shared the same education legislation it is clear that little of the history of education in Wales was included in the research of English historians. There are few clear references to Wales in any of the most informative texts of the period: by Simon, for example. Even Roy Lowe and Rodney Barker who spent time teaching in Wales, do not appear to have mentioned it in any of their writing. The history of Welsh education is a small body of work and dominated by a few writers, G.E. Jones, W. G. Evans and L. W. Evans, for example, although other historians have made contributions.¹⁶³ This is especially the case when it is compared to other areas of Welsh history which is extensive and because of the singularity of the social and industrial history of Wales it ranges from explorations of Victorian Wales,¹⁶⁴ to economic and political studies¹⁶⁵ and the extensive work of K. O. Morgan¹⁶⁶ and Glanmor Williams¹⁶⁷ with many other historians¹⁶⁸ making intuitive and penetrating observations on Welsh life. It is clear that Welsh identity is central

¹⁶⁰ P.H.J.H Gosden, *Education in the Second World War* (Methuen: London, 1976).

¹⁶¹ For example E. Hopkins, Elementary Education in Birmingham during the Second World War. *History of Education*, Vol. 18: (1989) 242-255.

¹⁶² G.A.N. Lowndes, (1969), op.cit.

¹⁶³ For example P. Stead, Schools and Society in Glamorgan before 1914. *Morgannwg*, XIX: (1975); E. D. Lewis, *The Rhondda Valleys* (Phoenix House: London, 1959); R. Smith, *Schools, Politics and Society: Elementary Education in Wales 1870-1902* (UWP: Cardiff, 1999).

¹⁶⁴ I. G. Jones, *Communities: Essays in the Social History of Victorian Wales* (Gomer Press: Llandysul, 1987).

¹⁶⁵ C. Williams, *Capitalism, Community and Conflict: The South Wales Coalfield 1898-1947* (UWP: Cardiff, 1998).

¹⁶⁶ K. O. Morgan, *Wales In British Politics 1868 -1922* (University Press: Oxford, 1963).

¹⁶⁷ G. Williams, *Religion, Language and Nationality in Wales: Historical Essays* (UWP: Cardiff, 1979).

¹⁶⁸ J. Davies, *A History of Wales* (Penguin Books: 1990); G. A. Williams, *When Was Wales?* (Penguin: 1985).

to any historical exploration although this is often accompanied by an over exaggerated trend towards self-examination which take the place of critical analysis.¹⁶⁹ There is agreement amongst Welsh historians about this and Davies suggests that “Welsh historians have often written Welsh history with a view to safeguard, or justify a particular standpoint in the historian’s present.”¹⁷⁰ Similarly, this is the case in much of the history of education, as historians tend to identify, and study, individual incidents rather than provide an overview of a period, or of the influences on education general.

The publication of the Blue Books¹⁷¹ in 1847, and the accompanying slur on Welsh identity are an example of this. Although the Report of the Commissioners is undeniably a pivotal incident in the development of Welsh education which Morgan suggests was so controversial that, “their publication marked a greater turning point in Welsh history than the election of 1868”¹⁷² it was only one incident. Evans suggests there were a number of official reports that were equally as damning, and which “employed the term ‘educational destitution’ to denote the poor provision of education in South Wales.”¹⁷³ The focus on such incidents appears to have led historians to largely ignore the wider informal influences on education such as Sunday Schools, for example. Instead they have made rapid progress to the creation of the University College of Wales and the Welsh Intermediate Act 1889 as the key catalysts of educational change in Wales. Very little attention has been paid to the influence of the Welsh language¹⁷⁴ or to nationhood, and there must be some consideration that because Wales was not a separate state, historians were unable to develop a separate historiography.¹⁷⁵ This assumption may correlate with Green¹⁷⁶ and Archer’s¹⁷⁷ belief that education development is closely connected to state formation.

¹⁶⁹ M. Johnes, For class and nations: dominant trends in the historiography of twentieth-century Wales. *History Compass*, Vol 8, Issue 11: (2010) 1257-1274.

¹⁷⁰ R. Davies, Hope and Heartbreak: A Social History of Wales and the Welsh 1776-1871 (UWP: Cardiff, 2005). in M. Johnes, *ibid.*, p. 1.

¹⁷¹ PP. 1847 (870) (871) (872) Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into the State of Education in Wales.

¹⁷² T. Evans, *The Background to Modern Welsh Politics 1789-1846* (UWP: Cardiff, 1936) in P. Morgan, *From Long Knives to Blue Books* in R. R. Davies, R. A. Griffiths, I. G. Jones and K. O. Morgan, (Eds) *Welsh Society and Nationhood: Historical Essays presented to Glanmor Williams* (UWP: Cardiff, 1984).

¹⁷³ L. W. Evans, *Education in Industrial Wales* (Avalon Books: Cardiff, 1971) p. 15.

¹⁷⁴ N.J. Smelser, (1991) *op.cit.*, p. 147.

¹⁷⁵ *ibid.*, Chapter 6 in particular.

¹⁷⁶ A. Green, (2000) *op. cit.*

¹⁷⁷ M. Archer, *The Social Origins of Education Systems* (Sage: London, 1979).

During the 1960s the study and writing of the history of education began to change¹⁷⁸ and historians began to “root the study of formal education in the wider society ... take a much broader definition.”¹⁷⁹ By the 1970s Welsh historians had begun to produce educational research that broke away from writing that was not wholly empirical.¹⁸⁰ As an example, Leslie Wynne Evans in the introduction to *Education in Industrial Wales 1700-1900* makes no apologies:

“for the inclusion of generous helpings of Welsh economic history or for emphasizing the geographical setting, for the whole theme ... revolves around the works which in turn produced the industrial community with its particular sociological background.”¹⁸¹

In spite of this there is a tendency for the history of education in Wales to concentrate on specific influential events rather than put these in a wider conceptual field. The historiography of Welsh education tends towards investigation into development of provision up to and including the Education Act 1902 and there has been very little research after this date. Certainly an examination of the interwar period is almost non-existent and warrants only a few pages in the more general education histories of education in Wales.¹⁸² Much of twentieth century Welsh history revolves the Welsh Intermediate Education Act 1889 which is generally thought to have been “an event of major importance in the history of Wales.”¹⁸³

The importance that was attached to secondary education in both England and Wales was enormous, so much so that it subsumed any interest in the elementary sector. Jones emphasises this in his very short discussion of interwar education: “The provision of elementary education ... was a relatively uncontentious issue. It was accepted as a state responsibility.”¹⁸⁴ The Welsh Intermediate Education Act remains one of the most critical element of Welsh education history¹⁸⁵ and undoubtedly Jones’¹⁸⁶ study is the most detailed, and lays the foundation of an

¹⁷⁸ H. Silver, *The Concept of Popular Education: A study of the ideas and social movements of the early nineteenth century* (Rowman and Littlefield: London, 1965).

¹⁷⁹ G. E. Jones and G. W. Roderick, (2003) op. cit. p. vii.

¹⁸⁰ For example of research into aspects of individual Welsh schools see: E. K. Jones, *The Story of Education in a Welsh Border Parish. The Schools of Cefnawr 1776-1932* (A. Smith: Wrexham, 1933).

¹⁸¹ L. W. Evans, (1971) op. cit.; L. W. Evans, (1974), op. cit.

¹⁸² G. E. Jones and G. W. Roderick, *A History of Education in Wales* (UWP: Cardiff, 2003), op.cit.

¹⁸³ G. W. Evans, The Aberdare Report and education in Wales 1881. *Welsh History Review*, Vol. 11, No 2: (1982) 150-172, p. 150.

¹⁸⁴ G. E. Jones, *Which Nation's Schools? Direction and Devolution in Welsh Education in the Twentieth Century* (UWP: Cardiff, 1990), p. 21.

¹⁸⁵ For example L. W. Evans, (1974) op. cit.

¹⁸⁶ G. E. Jones, *Controls and Conflicts in Welsh Secondary Education 1889-1944* (UWP: Cardiff, 1982).

understanding of secondary education in Wales. He has sometimes been criticised for being too biased towards administrative and legislative matters and the absence of explanation of these “may be difficult for novice historians.”¹⁸⁷ His writing lacks the social dimension that would have been provided by detail of the secondary schools themselves and their curricula influences. Regardless of the perceived narrowness of interpretation, Jones’ understanding of the Welsh secondary system cannot be surpassed and he remains one of the most well-known of Welsh education historians. He has been deeply critical of the fact that the history of education is no longer taught as part of teacher training.¹⁸⁸ This, “academic downturn”¹⁸⁹ he believes, is a paradox as “decline in the study of education history has correlated with increased independence and sense of identity of the Welsh education system.”¹⁹⁰ Jones suggests that a revival of the history of education as an academic subject is necessary to assist in deeper levels of understanding in teacher education. He quotes McCulloch¹⁹¹ who pointed out that “history teaches ‘an instrumental, functional and prescriptive set of lessons’”¹⁹² which assist teachers when confronted with a new set of problems. Jones’ extensive writing has also been criticised for presenting a vision of Wales that “comes over as a male ‘white one’”¹⁹³ and ignores the contribution made by minority groups in Wales. He “is also silent on gender,”¹⁹⁴ and does not acknowledge the contribution women have made to education in Wales. This was corrected to some degree in his short examination of the study of education history when he identified the ongoing contribution that was being made to gender history in Wales.¹⁹⁵ This latter is a growing body of work as a number of Welsh writers have begun to examine the social and cultural development of women in Wales and the “numerous social changes that have affected historical perceptions.”¹⁹⁶ These have included of the place of female teachers¹⁹⁷ in society

¹⁸⁷ C. Baker, Review G. E. Jones Controls and Conflicts in Welsh Secondary Education 1889-1944. *British Educational Research Journal*, Vol. 10, No. 2: (1984), p. 200.

¹⁸⁸ G. E. Jones, Perspectives from the brink of extinction: the fate of history of education study in Wales. *History of Education* Vol 2 Issue 3: (2013). 381-395. p. 381.

¹⁸⁹ *ibid.*, p. 381.

¹⁹⁰ G. E. Jones, (2013) *op. cit.*, p. 381.

¹⁹¹ G. McCulloch, (2011) *op. cit.*, p. 11.

¹⁹² G. E. Jones, (2013) *ibid.*, p. 388.

¹⁹³ S. Delamont, Reviewed Work: The Education of a Nation by Gareth Elwyn Jones, *British Journal of Educational Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 1: (1998) 91-94. p. 93.

¹⁹⁴ S. Delamont, *ibid.*, p. 93.

¹⁹⁵ G. E. Jones, (2013), *op. cit.*

¹⁹⁶ W. G. Evans *Education and Female Emancipation: The Welsh Experience 1847-1914* (UWP: Cardiff, 1990) p. 3.

¹⁹⁷ S. R. Williams, Women Teachers and Gender Issues in Teaching in Wales c. 1870-1950. *The Welsh Journal of Education*, 13.2: (2005) 68-83; S. R. Williams, *Unsung Heroines: Wales’ Women Teachers* in H. V. Bowen (Ed) *Heroes and Villains of Wales: Myths and Realities* (Gomer Press: Llandysul, 2011).

and more generally the role of women in Welsh life.¹⁹⁸ W. Gareth Evans,¹⁹⁹ is an exception to the rule in the writing of women's history, which is generally written by women, and researched the links between education and emancipation and identifies the "relevance of the historical perspective"²⁰⁰ for women's struggle for education in Wales.

Few historians from outside Wales have made any real contribution to Welsh education history but Smelser²⁰¹ suggests that despite the fact that Wales was linked to England administratively, it was culturally more like Scotland and Ireland, particularly the latter, because of the Celtic influences that came into play. He points out that while there were some similarities between England and Wales, Wales was very different because it had a markedly two tier social structure made up of a small elite of landowners and industrialists, and a very large agricultural and industrial working class. This social divide was reflected in the religious and linguistic social structure of Wales. He suggests that the landowner group was mostly English speaking and associated with the Established Church, while the working class was overwhelmingly non-conformist and Welsh speaking.²⁰² Smelser, however, overlooks the fact that many industrialists were both non-conformist and Welsh speaking which greatly assisted the preservation of the Welsh language during industrialisation. However, both Smelser and Evans agree that this class division was one of the casual factors in the slow rate of development of formal education in Wales compared to England. Smelser also suggests that the delay was also due to three factors: religion, culture and language, which frequently caused "polarisation and 'primordialization'"²⁰³ These were mostly associated with the fact that the informal education provided in non-conformist Sunday Schools hindered the development of voluntary sector education which had grown incrementally in England.²⁰⁴

¹⁹⁸ D. Beddoe, *Parachutes and Petticoats - Welsh Women Writing on the Second World War*, (Honno Press: Aberystwyth, 2003); A. John, *The Sweat of Their Brow. Women Workers at Victorian Coal Mines* (Routledge & Kegan Paul: London, 1980); A John. *The Men's Share? Masculinities, Male Support and Women's Suffrage, 1890-1920* (Routledge: London, 1997).

¹⁹⁹W. G. Evans, (1990.) *ibid.*

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. x.

²⁰¹ N.J. Smelser, (1991) *op. cit.*, p. 147.

²⁰² N.J. Smelser, (1991) *ibid.*, p. 146.

²⁰³ N. J. Smelser, *ibid.*, p. 146.

²⁰⁴ N. J. Smelser, *ibid.*, p. 158-9.

The history of education is complex, and in many ways is “all things to all men.”²⁰⁵ Theorists have developed various interpretations although Silver²⁰⁶ suggests that some of the theories that have been proposed, especially when linked with sociology, have been wrongly construed and this has placed unwarranted emphasis on deductions. As a result many aspects of and influences on education remain unresolved. Welsh historiography tends to ignore these links and concentrates on other influences, religion for example, had on the development of education. It is undoubtedly the case that the history of education has

“diverse roots in different areas of knowledge ... it is not simply a pale reflection or imitation of any one of its constituent parts, but a broad coalition based on all of them and it is weakened and undermined when it loses the contributions of one or more.”²⁰⁷

²⁰⁵ Corinthians 1, 9:22 (King James Version): “To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made All things to all men, that I might by all means save some.”

²⁰⁶ H. Silver, *Aspects of Neglect The Strange Case of Victorian Popular Education*. *Oxford Review of Education*, 3. 1, Part Two: (1977), 7-69 (1971).

²⁰⁷ G. McCulloch, (2011) *op. cit.*, p. 115.

Methodology

This thesis is about education policy during the interwar period and until after the planning for the implementation of the Education Act 1944. It is also a local study focusing on south and south west Wales. It examines the political, economic and religious circumstances of Wales and how these impacted on the development of education from 1918 until 1944. It sets out to answer the questions set out earlier in this chapter through a detailed investigation of the development of education at a local level and how this was influenced both by legislation and national trends. It includes no comparative history, between education development of education in England, nor have there been any attempts to include any reference to other areas of Wales. This research grew out of two previous short studies undertaken as part of an MA in Local History: Poor Law education and the historical circumstances of evacuation in Carmarthenshire. In this respect, a considerable amount of prior knowledge was utilised, for example, a thorough working knowledge of primary and secondary sources.

Evacuation remains a central plank to this research as there are indications that it was partly responsible to the Education Act 1944 which was drawn up during the same period. While the original intention was to investigate only education and child health during the evacuation period of 1939 – 1945 this proved impossible without the supporting evidence of earlier education development and the planning which took place after the Education Act 1944. As a result of this extension of the time frame the aspects of child health during war time that were originally planned, had to be discarded. In many respects evacuation remains the key constituent of this thesis, because it anchors much of the history of education for the period. However, major changes were made and the plans for the original research were substantially altered. There was an original intention to examine aspects of evacuation through oral history but in the event this was not considered necessary and only one oral account has been included: that of an evacuated teacher who was able to describe aspects of her educational experiences during the period.

This is largely an historical study of the development of education using mainly primary sources guided by the existing historiography. It includes very little reference to sociology and is driven mainly by a focus upon the political and religious

aspects of society at the time. The primary sources that have been used are wide ranging although the secondary sources are rather more limited. This is generally because there are few that are pertinent to this particular thesis, and care has been taken not to include any works that are not specifically relevant. Two works have been of especial importance and Barker²⁰⁸ and Simon²⁰⁹ have been drawn on extensively to give purpose and shape to the research from primary sources. However, neither offer much information of the development of education in Wales, and because of this the writings of a number of Welsh historians have been used, even when their main focus has not been on education. These include K. O. Morgan's extensive work on Welsh politics which includes reference to many of the influences on education, especially from the 1840s onwards.²¹⁰ The work of I. G. Jones also proved important, especially his detailed chapter on the Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales²¹¹ which proved to be a pivotal event in the development of education in Wales.²¹² Earlier aspects of Welsh education history have been drawn from the work of L. W. Evans²¹³ and the writing of G. E. Jones has been used as a guide to the legislation of the Welsh Intermediate Act 1889.

There has been no intention to consider any aspects that are not central to education policy-making, and in this regard gender issues, the Welsh language, aspects of the curriculum and citizenship have been excluded unless there was some incidental involvement. The main influences on the development of education have been thoroughly investigated because politics and religion are considered central. Although religion is a major theme throughout the research this is considered only in terms of policy making. The political aspects are considered of prime importance at a local level and records of the various LEAs have been examined minutely as have the remaining and available records for the Church in Wales and the local diocese of the Catholic Church. It is not apparent that these have been used extensively by Welsh historians, although there is some evidence

²⁰⁸ R. Barker, op. cit., (1972).

²⁰⁹ B. Simon, *The Politics of Educational Reform 1920-1940* (Lawrence and Wishart: London, 1974).

²¹⁰ K. O. Morgan, *Wales In British Politics 1868 -1922* (University Press: Oxford, 1963).

²¹¹ PP 1847 (870) (871) (872.) Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales.

²¹² I. G. Jones, *Mid-Victorian Wales: The Observers and the Observed* (UWP: Cardiff, 1992).

²¹³ L. W. Evans, *Education in Industrial Wales 1700 -1900* (Avalon Books: Cardiff, 1971); L. W. Evans, *Studies in Welsh Education: Welsh Educational Structure and Administration 1880 – 1925* (UWP: Cardiff, 1974).

that they were used to report the development of comprehensive education in Swansea post 1944²¹⁴ and at Cardiff.²¹⁵ These were not reviewed before undertaking this research.

At a national level records at the National Archives have been widely used, especially to identify information in regard to evacuation. They were also very important especially in regard to planning for the implementation of the Education Act 1944 and include LEA records of consultations with the Ministry of Education. These proved very interesting and informative, although unfortunately the reports on reorganisation in City of Cardiff are still withheld. Some of the records relating to Wales have apparently been used by G.E. Jones in two of his works although they are generally unreferenced.²¹⁶ This time-period also includes records of meetings and correspondence between the Board of Education, including those of R.A. Butler's with the various church bodies, particularly those with the Church of England. The records of the Conservative Party held at the Bodleian Library at Oxford contain of R. A. Butler's personal correspondence and memoranda which give another perspective on his negotiations with the various church bodies. It is unfortunate that some of the records of the Catholic Church are either missing, as in the Cardiff Diocese, and the Archdiocesan Archives of Westminster were difficult to access. Similarly, although the Church in Wales records include some interesting information although these are found at both the Diocesan office at Cardiff and the National Library of Wales at Aberystwyth. Unfortunately all the records of the Diocese of St Davids are either missing or unavailable.

At a local level, there is an enormous amount of valuable information although quality varies considerably between local authorities. These may offer a slightly different perspective and often a counterpoint of political and educational detail. Undoubtedly the records of Carmarthenshire County Council proved most valuable and interesting. The Education Committee minutes books are detailed and include other sub-committee minutes which provide minute details of events throughout the period. It appears that all documents relating to education were

²¹⁴ G. E. Jones, 1944 and all that. *History of Education*, 19.3: (1990), 235-250.

²¹⁵ A Geen, Resistance to Change: Attempts to Reorganize Cardiff's Elementary Schools, 1918-1951 *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, Vol 18, No 1 (1996) pp. 62-74.

²¹⁶ G. E. Jones, *Which Nation's Schools? Direction and Devolution in Welsh Education in the Twentieth Century* (UWP: Cardiff, 1990); G. E. Jones, and G. W. Roderick, *A History of Education in Wales* (UWP: Cardiff, 2003).

saved and provide a rich vein of information. There is also a considerable amount of information about education during the evacuation period which include documents not found elsewhere. In contrast Glamorgan County Council contain not of the sub-committee meeting minutes which mean that there is little detail about the actions taken in respect to many education events. Some of the small local authorities, Cardiff Rural, for example are filled with useful detail especially about the war period. Similarly, although Swansea Borough Council records, are lacking in some respect, sub-committee minutes for example, it more than makes up for this by having a large archive about planning for the implementation for the Education Act 1944 which includes a copy of the London County Council Plan.

The richness of primary sources more than compensate for the lack of historiography for the period and offer a clear understanding of the pressures and influences on the development of education provision both locally and nationally during the first half of the twentieth century.

Chapter 2 - Setting the Scene

“Education is in the ascendancy, the present demands of trade, commerce and labour are such that we must be abreast of the requirements of the time.”¹

The development of mass elementary education in England and Wales lagged behind that of all other industrialised countries. This chapter examines the time line of development, together with the cause and effect of the economic, religious and social factors that are considered to have influenced direction. It sets out the distinctions between education in England and Wales even though both countries shared the same legislation. Much of this was the result of differences in cultural dimensions, especially the impact that non-conformity and language had on Welsh life. In the long term this resulted in a strand of radicalism that can be traced throughout the development of provision and frequently resulted in demands for devolution of powers for education to Wales.

Setting the Scene

Great Britain was one of the last industrialised nations to establish a system of state elementary education for the lower classes. There had been little educational opportunity for the majority of children since the Dissolution of the Monasteries before which the Church had offered some educational support to the poor. After this there was a “systematic economic doctrine hostile to the idea of any governmental interference of any sort in the free working of society.”² Government absolved itself from offering support to the less prosperous sections of society and allowed the wealthy and industrial classes to maximise profits and exercise social control. Gramsci suggests that the *laissez-faire* policies of the early nineteenth century were particularly important and he perceives these as “a distinguishing English feature,”³ that had had a negative effect on the development of any state organisations and it has been suggested that this was “another form of state regulation ‘introduced and maintained by legislative and coercive means’.”⁴

¹ Editorial. Llanelly and County Guardian 27th June 1889 in W. Gareth Evans, *Education Development in a Victorian Community* (Centre for Educational Studies, Faculty of Education: Aberystwyth, 1990), p. 2.

²A. Marwick, *Britain in the Century of Total War: War, Peace and Social Change 1900-1967* (Penguin Books: Harmondsworth, 1968), p. 27.

³ A. Green, *Education and State Formation: The Rise of Education Systems in England, France and the USA* (Macmillan: London, 1990), p. 107.

⁴Q. Hoare and G Nowell, eds. A. Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, in A. Green, (1990), *ibid.*, p. 107.

The consequence of this was that the introduction of state sponsored education system for the poor was very delayed, and the education system that emerged was “first made by the pioneering efforts of private individuals, singly or in association, and often against scepticism or private opposition.”⁵ There were a number of reasons for the late establishment of a state system, but it is clear that there was no immediate or perceived need to educate the children of the working classes. The nature of early industry meant there had been no reason to have a highly trained or educated workforce as industrialisation was achieved by an “uneducated population which on many occasions was inspired both in the technical and commercial fields by individuals who themselves were lacking in any formal education and sometimes were barely literate.”⁶ A further reason for the delay was the fact that both Government and industrialists considered that educating the working class “would be prejudicial to their morals and happiness, it would teach them to despise their lot in life ... Instead of teaching them subordination, it would render them fractious and refractory.”⁷

The deeply divided social structure in Great Britain is generally considered to have been an additional and influential factor in the slow development of mass education. The landowning classes played a powerful role which had never been “fully undermined by ‘a savage confrontation with the people,’”⁸ as had been the case in France, for example. As a consequence, their influence and strong ties to the Anglican Church had shaped a “pattern of patrician education”⁹ that emphasised class, patriotism and empire. A highly élitist system of education emerged, with independent and endowed grammar schools for the middle and upper classes which was the only form of education for older children in England until after the Education Act of 1902. This latter allowed the establishment of other types of secondary schools in England although the Welsh Intermediate Schools Act 1889 had already provided Wales with a system of secondary education. However, there was very little education provision for the poor and this group was dependent on voluntary provision. It is considered that this divided system of education imposed a high level

⁵ *The School Health Service 1908 -1974* (HMSO: London, 1975).

⁶ G. Bernbaum, *Social Change and the Schools 1918-1944* (Routledge and Kegan Paul: London, 1967), p. 2.

⁷ H Silver, The Concept of Popular Education, p. 23, in E. Hopkins, *Childhood Transformed: Working Class Children in Nineteenth Century England*, (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1994.) p. 129.

⁸ A. Green, (1990), op. cit., p. 107.

⁹ L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (Vintage Books: London, 1992) p. 180.

of social control by landowners over the working classes in England and Wales which replaced that of the state in other countries.¹⁰ This divide was particularly marked in rural areas, in south and south west Wales for example, where landowners dominated all aspects of the socio-political lives of tenants.¹¹ It produced a deferential society which was an imperative because, “in a free society where slaves are not allowed, the surest wealth consists in a multitude of laborious poor.”¹²

Another less considered, but equally influential, factor in the delayed development of state education was the position of children in society. In early nineteenth century Great Britain children “barely obtained a footnote”¹³ mainly because the high infant mortality rate meant that children from all classes were likely to have been considered only temporary constituents of a family and, as such, were often little valued.¹⁴ Many children began to work when they were very young and “They had few, if any, legal, rights and might actually be bought and sold or otherwise disposed of by their parents. Concepts of childhood were still largely unformed.”¹⁵ This view of the value of children does not appear to have been class limited and it has been suggested that children from all classes suffered equally, and while working class children were subject to hardship through employment and harsh conditions, social emulation by middle class parents was also a form of repression.¹⁶ This also had the consequence of perpetuating the existing class structures making them more difficult to eradicate.

Religion perhaps played the most influential and long lasting role in the development of education, and this was particularly the case in Wales. During the English Civil War many social structures were dismantled, and non-conformity became an alternative to the Established church as puritan preachers began to establish groups, at Llanfaches in Monmouthshire for example. In the years that

¹⁰ A. Green, (1990), op. cit., p.

¹¹ M. Cragoe, *An Anglican Aristocracy: The Moral Economy of the Landed Estate in Carmarthenshire, 1832-1895* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1996), p. 3 - 4.

¹² Bernard Mandeville, (1772), unreferenced in N. Middleton and S. Weitzman, *A Place for Everyone: A history of education from the eighteenth century to the 1970s* (Victor Gollancz: London, 1976) p. 27.

¹³R. Cooter, ed, *In the Name of the Child. Health and Welfare 1880-1940* (Routledge: London, 1992) p. 1.

¹⁴ A. Wilson, *The Infancy of the History of Childhood: An appraisal of Philippe Ariès. History and Theory*, (1980), 132 – 153 in R. Cooter, *ibid*.

¹⁵E. Hopkins, *Childhood Transformed: Working Class Children in Nineteenth Century England* (MUP: Manchester, 1994) p. 115.

¹⁶ J. Plumb, *The New World of Children in Eighteenth Century England. Past and Present*, No. 67: (1975), 64-95, p. 67.

followed Wales was perceived as uncivilised and undeveloped, and in 1650 an *Act for the Better Propagation and Preaching of the Gospel in Wales* was passed, which as been described as the equivalent of “granting religious home rule.”¹⁷ This, and the Act of Uniformity 1662,¹⁸ had the consequential effect of accelerating the demise of Anglicanism in Wales and strengthening the non-conformist movement in both England and Wales. The groups that emerged: Baptists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians and Methodists all had transient and varied history until the nineteenth century when they became predominant in Wales. Non-conformity overtook the influence of the Church of England and became embedded into the social structures, into politics and more latterly into the administrative organisation of the country. It has been suggested that “religion probably exercised a greater influence on the lives of the people of Wales during the last century than was the case in England or in any other Protestant country.”¹⁹ Although the non-conformist groups co-existed with the Church of England in Wales, relationships were frequently deeply antagonistic, especially in regard to education.

The Early Development of Education

By the start of the nineteenth century England and Wales had undergone substantial social change which was the result of three main factors. These: industrialisation, a massive rise in population and agriculture enclosure, which provided cheap labour for industry, substantially altered the living and working lives of much of the population.²⁰ Living conditions changed and deteriorated, and this resulted in growing demands for social reform. These came from many directions, from religious organisations and prominent people, Lord Shaftsbury and Jeremy Bentham for example. There was condemnation of conditions in prisons, workhouses, asylums, and particularly the widespread employment of children in industry but there was a presumption that any improvements were outside the remit of Government. Roberts suggests that “Faith in voluntary organisations – in

¹⁷ R. Tudor Jones, unreferenced in J. A. Davies, *History of Wales* (Penguin; London, 2007) p. 273. See also J. L. Williams and C. R. Hughes, *The History of Education in Wales, Vol. 1* (Christopher Davies: Swansea, 1978) p. 37.

¹⁸ Act of Uniformity 1662, Reginal 14 Cha 2.

¹⁹ C. R. Williams, The Welsh religious revival, 1904-5. *British Journal of Sociology*, III/3: (1952) in R. Pope, *Building Jerusalem: non-conformity, Labour and the social question in Wales, 1906-1939*, second edn (UWP: Cardiff, 1998) p. 1.

²⁰ D. Roberts, *Victorian Origins of the British Welfare State* (Yale University Press: New Haven, 1960) p. 2;

endowed charities for the sick and in private benefactions for the homeless and unschooled – ran deep in the English mentality,”²¹ a sentiment strongly supported by the religious groups. This paternalistic view extended to mass education, and there was an expansion of “philanthropic and educational activity”²² by the voluntary sector which marked a strong link between education and religion.²³

The position of the Anglican church had been fundamental to the early development of education²⁴ but the growth of non-conformity and the social circumstances of the industrial revolution “accentuated the controversy over the respective roles of Church and State in education.”²⁵ There had never been a separation of the two, as had been the case in the United States of America for example, and the Church assumed a primacy in education. The rapid process of industrialisation and the resulting sordid social conditions during the early nineteenth century led to a perception that education would be “vital to cope with the immediate task of inculcating elementary concept of lawfulness and decent habit.”²⁶ The Church of England took control of the process. This caused significant problems and the level of dissent between denominations, non-conformists in particular, was often intense. The National Society²⁷ was foremost in founding schools, and this became a source of long lasting animosity from non-conformist groups, in particular Methodists and Baptists. However, the spread of education provision very much depended on the financial resources of voluntary organisations and it soon became apparent that the emerging system was disorganised with no central control either at a national or local level.²⁸ This caused a great deal public concern, but not quite enough to sweep the Tory Government’s *laissez faire* policies aside “As a result successive governments uneasily hovered on the brink of taking action but could not see what machinery was needed nor where the funds were coming from.”²⁹

²¹ D. Roberts, (1960) op. cit., p. 24

²² C Birchenough, *History of Elementary Education in England and Wales from 1800 to the Present Day* (University Tutorial Press: London, 1920) p. 28.

²³ S. J Curtis, *History of Education in Great Britain* (University Tutorial Press: 1948) particularly Chapter VI.

²⁴ Through monasteries and endowment to early grammar schools for example.

²⁵ B. Sacks, *The Religious Issue in the State Schools of England and Wales 1902-1914, A Nation’s Quest for Human Dignity*, (University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 1961), p. 4.

²⁶ B. Sacks, *ibid.*, p. 5.

²⁷ An abbreviation of *The National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church throughout England and Wales* established in 1811.

²⁸ The funding of charity schools in Wales is discussed in detail in J. L Williams and G. R. Hughes (1978) op. cit., and in England in S. J Curtis, *ibid.*

²⁹ N. Middleton and S. Weitzman, (1976), op. cit., p. 29.

In 1816 a Select Committee of the House of Commons was established to inquire into the education of the poor in the Metropolis³⁰ and this was later extended to include all provision in England and Wales.³¹ The findings of the Report are somewhat unclear because while there were significantly more charitable contributions to education in England than in Wales³² there is no indication of how many schools there actually were. However, Birchenough³³ suggests that about 1:15 of children in England were in education compared to 1:21 in Wales. The Report suggested that because of this lack of provision, financial aid should be given to parishes without a school. As a result, in 1820, Brougham proposed an Education Bill “for the better education of the poor in England and Wales”³⁴ which would have expanded the number of schools but with a curriculum based largely on the precepts of the Church of England. This was met with tremendous opposition from other denominations as it was seen as clearly favouring one religious body, and as a consequence, was quickly abandoned.³⁵

During the 1830s a serious debate about the condition of education in Great Britain began. Ideas were mooted and projects started and although they were very transitory, attitudes towards mass education began to change. A liberal and radical group, including such men as Jeremy Bentham, Robert Owen, John Mill and Benjamin Shaw, promoted the view that all children should be educated,³⁶ and preferably outside the “ecclesiastical monopoly”³⁷ of the period. At the same time a transitional change was taking place in England and Wales. A reformed Parliamentary system was put in place in 1833 and this led to other administrative and social reforms. Government structures became much more centralised and extended, and this impinged on the responsibilities of local government.³⁸ The early structure of the latter was organised around a parish system which oversaw poor relief, the maintenance of highways and law and order in general, and was

³⁰ *Report from Select Committee on the Education of the Lower Orders in the Metropolis: with the minutes of evidence taken before the committee*, 1816 (498).

³¹ W.H.G Armytage, *Four Hundred years of English Education* (CUP: Cambridge, 1970), p. 93.

³² PP. 1816 (498) *ibid.* In England 2,248 parishes were in receipt of charitable donations for education compared to 119 in Wales.

³³ C. Birchenough, (1920), *op. cit.*, p. 60.

³⁴ C. Birchenough, *ibid.*, p. 59.

³⁵ S. J Curtis *History of Education in Great Britain* (University Tutorial Press: 1948) p. 221-222.

³⁶ A. Green, (1990.) *op. cit.* pp 6-11; M. Vaughan and S. M. Archer, *Social Conflict and Educational Change in England and France 1789-1848* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1971).

³⁷ C Birchenough, *ibid.*, p. 31,

³⁸ See D. Roberts, (1960) *op. cit.* particularly Chapter 1; S and B Webb, *English Local Government: English Poor Law History: Part I. the Old Poor Law* (Longmans, Green and Co: London, 1929).

controlled by local magistrates and members of the Vestry. This was a cumbersome and dysfunctional system prone to abuse and misuse of public funds, particularly in regard to poor relief³⁹ and became a focus for reform. However, Members of Parliament, especially Tories, defended this form of local government and “the preservation of their ancient constitutional rights – rights which they believed the very bulwark of English freedom.”⁴⁰ Despite the fact that centralisation was poorly regarded and viewed as extravagant, government systems grew and there was a “modern overlapping with the medieval, in the same pattern of decay and growth that characterised local government.”⁴¹

Some progress was made and in 1833⁴² legislation was introduced to restrict the employment of children under nine years of age and “the Government, for the first time, made a grant of £30,000 to voluntary organisations to help them build “school houses for the children of the working classes.”⁴³ In 1839 there were suggestions from the Committee of Education of the Privy Council that substantial changes should be made to the existing funding arrangements, and other providers, apart from religious organisations should be allowed to establish schools with government funding. It was also proposed there should be a system of inspection of all secular teaching in any school that received public funds. This caused an outcry from church officials who saw it as interference, and from radical politicians who believed it was an ineffectual measure. There was a long standing assumption on the part of Tories and churchmen that it was the Church and not the state that should have responsibility for children’s education.⁴⁴ In a debate in the House of Commons, the Committee of Education was denounced for its attempts to secularise education which was viewed as a threat to the power and authority of the Church.⁴⁵ Although the Tories and the House of Lords attempted to remove the plan to make schools more secular this failed mainly because the education provided in church schools was so poor. James Kay Shuttleworth was appointed to the Committee on Education and the process of school inspection began.

³⁹ See for example L. Hollen Lees, *The Solidarities of Strangers: The English poor Laws and the People* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1998); J. R. Poynter, *Society and Pauperism: English Ideas on Poor Relief* (Routledge and Kegan Paul: London 1969).

⁴⁰ D. Roberts, (1960) op. cit., p. 23.

⁴¹ D. Roberts, *ibid.*, p. 14.

⁴² Factory Act 1833

⁴³ *The School Health Service*, (1975.) op.cit, p. 4.

⁴⁴ D. Roberts, (1960) *ibid.*, p. 56.

⁴⁵ Hansard, 48 (1839) 227-59, 268-75, 578-89, 622-34 in D. Roberts, *ibid.*, p. 57

The provision of education for the working classes in Wales “was unusually retarded,”⁴⁶ even when compared to the rest of the United Kingdom, and had been a matter for debate since the beginning of the nineteenth century.⁴⁷ During previous centuries there had been a number of attempts to introduce informal education systems. Thomas Gouge,⁴⁸ for example, established a society in 1674 to promote the teaching of “the poorest Welsh children to read English and the boys to write and cast accounts, whereby they will be enabled to read our English Bibles.”⁴⁹ Elementary education was provided in private, charitable or Sunday schools although, in rural areas in particular, these were few and many children had no access to education. The situation did begin to change slowly and in 1806, the *Swansea Society for the Education of the Children of the Poor* was founded and the first Lancastrian School established.⁵⁰ A few more schools were built, but the comparative poverty of non-conformists in Wales hampered progress, and the Lancastrian schools were later taken over by the British and Foreign School Society.

After 1811, the National Society began to establish schools in Wales and some of the earliest were founded by diocesan groups, at Bridgend and Bangor for example. By 1816, twenty three had been established throughout Wales but this expansion put the Society under considerable financial pressure and local groups were expected to sponsor schools. For example, at Margam, in Glamorgan, English Copper Company workers paid 1½d from their wages to support the local school.⁵¹ By 1833, the National Society had opened one hundred and forty six schools⁵² conducted strictly on the precepts of the Established Church.⁵³ The British and Foreign Society made little progress into Wales and by 1833 had only established three schools. However, these, together with those of other voluntary groups, meant that collectively there still were very few schools for the size of the population of

⁴⁶ K. O. Morgan, (1963.) op. cit. p. 3

⁴⁷ D. G. Evans, *A History of Wales 1815-1906* (UWP: Cardiff, 1989) p. 96; PP. 1816 (427, 469, 495.) *Minutes of evidence taken before the select committee appointed to inquire into the education of the lower orders of the metropolis.*

⁴⁸ An English Presbyterian clergyman (1609 – 1681) a contemporary of Samuel Pepys, associated with the Puritan movement who travelled widely in Wales. <http://wbo.llgc.org.uk/en/s-GOUG-THO-1605.html>.

⁴⁹ D. Evans, *The Sunday Schools of Wales* p. 87 in C Birchenough, (1920), op. cit., p. 9.

⁵⁰ D. G. Evans, (1989) *ibid*, p. 96.

⁵¹ D. G. Evans, *ibid*, p. 105.

⁵² With approximately 13,424 pupils. D. G. Evans, *ibid*, p. 105; also unreferenced in J. L Williams & G. R. Hughes, *The History of Education in Wales, Vol. 1.* (Christopher Davies, Swansea, 1978.) p. 113.

⁵³ See D. G. Evans, *ibid*, p. 107.

Wales⁵⁴ and the number of children receiving any kind of education was low.⁵⁵ In Carmarthenshire,⁵⁶ out of seventy one parishes, twenty four had no education provision at all, although some parishes had more than one school, Abergwilli and Llanegwad for example.⁵⁷ Glamorgan⁵⁸ was divided into one hundred and twenty four parishes, and of these, sixty three had no education provision. In general terms, rural areas had the least provision, the Vale of Glamorgan and Gower for example, and urban areas the most. Merthyr Tydfil with a population of over eleven thousand, had nineteen schools accommodating just under one thousand children.⁵⁹

Alongside these charitable schools the other main source of education was provided by works schools that already been established by industrialists, at Neath Abbey in Glamorgan for example.⁶⁰ These proved to be somewhat problematic. Although there was a strong desire from Government and parents to provide schools where none existed, when industrialists did offer education, parents and children were very reluctant to make use of it because of the loss of income from child employment.⁶¹ Despite this, schools were built for the children of employees of the metallurgical and extractive industries in the south and the slate quarries in north Wales. The first works school may have been established as early as 1700⁶² and in the years that followed Welsh industrialists provided a significant number.⁶³ These made an important and long term contribution to education in Wales and most were absorbed by school boards after the Education Act 1870. The Sunday School movement also played a very important role in establishing a widespread but very basic informal education system throughout England and Wales where “a religious and humanitarian motive predominated.”⁶⁴ The Ysgolion Sabothol⁶⁵ in Wales were

⁵⁴ Which in 1821 was 794,154. J Williams, *Digest of Welsh Historical Statistics*, Vol. 1 (The Welsh Office: Cardiff, 1985) p. 7.

⁵⁵ Returns show that 2,748 children were in schools recognised by Government. 1,748 children attended Sunday schools. *A digest of parochial returns made to the select committee appointed to inquire into the education of the poor: session 1818. Vol. I*, 1216. 1819 (224).

⁵⁶ Population in 1821 was 90,239 See J. Williams, *ibid.*, p. 13

⁵⁷ A digest of parochial returns, *ibid.*, pp 1214-16.

⁵⁸ Population in 1821 was 102,073. See J. Williams *ibid.*, p 17

⁵⁹ PP 1819 (224) *op. cit.* p 1259

⁶⁰ This was established around 1800 by the Quaker manager of the Neath Abbey Ironworks for the poor families of the district. See D. G. Evans, (1989) *op. cit.* p. 98.

⁶¹ L. W. Evans, *Education in Industrial Wales 1700 -1900*, (Avalon Books, Cardiff, 1971.) *op. cit.* p. 21.

⁶² By Sir Humphrey Mackworth at the Esgair Hir Mines in north Cardiganshire. See L. W. Evans, *ibid.* p. 7

⁶³ Almost 70 works schools were built in the Carmarthen and Glamorgan before 1845 and several more afterwards. Thirteen schools were also built in Monmouthshire. Seventeen works schools were built for the slate, lead and copper mines in north Wales. See L. W. Evans, *ibid.* Appendix, pp 30 – 35.

⁶⁴ C Birchenough, (1920), *op. cit.*, p. 9.

⁶⁵ Translated from the Welsh as Sunday School.

extremely influential but there appears to have been a higher level of emphasis on “personal religious improvement”⁶⁶ rather than on literacy skills as was the case in England. They also differed in that they were less organised, more independent but nevertheless generally became central in Welsh society. However, while the Ysgolion Sabothol helped preserve the Welsh language they negatively provided very limited curricula which focused on Bible study but had the overwhelming advantage of allowing child employment.⁶⁷

In 1839, immediately after the Newport Rising,⁶⁸ Seymour Tremenheere, Inspector of Schools, was despatched to enquire into the state of elementary education in the south Wales coalfield. This report⁶⁹ is of extreme importance as it was the first survey of Welsh education and significant for two reasons. Firstly it describes the generally dire living environment of the in the ‘Dark Domain’⁷⁰ of the eastern valleys of industrialised Wales.⁷¹ Tremenheere chose this area because the four Monmouthshire towns: Bedwelty, Aberystroth, Mynyddyslwynn and Trevethin were at the centre of the Chartist march on Newport. Merthyr Tydfil in Glamorgan, which adjoined Bedwelty, was included in the survey as its men were closely implicated with the Rising.⁷² Tremenheere began his report by making it clear that it would be impossible to inspect the education of the area without taking living conditions into account.⁷³ These, he found, were very poor. He spoke of small, overcrowded houses black with coal dust, roads that were unpaved and often ankle deep in mud and slurry. Many of the houses had actually been built within the boundaries of the mines or iron works and the whole of the area was highly polluted and unsanitary.

⁶⁶ K. D. M. Snell, The Sunday-School Movement in England and Wales: Child Labour, Denominational Control and Working-Class Culture. *Past and Present*, No. 164 (1): (1999), 122 – 168, p. 128.

⁶⁷ P. Jenkins, A History of Modern Wales, 1536-1990 (London, 1992) in K. D. M. Snell, *ibid.*, p. 128.

⁶⁸ The Newport Rising was a demonstration by the Chartist Movement against the living and working conditions in the mining valleys of south Wales. Chartism was the first national political movement in the 1800s with widespread working class support in Britain and was very popular in south Wales. D. J. V. Jones, *The Last Rising: The Newport Insurrection of 1839* (Oxford University Press: New York, 1985) for example.

⁶⁹ Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, with appendices and plans of school houses. Part II. 1839-40, 1840 (254). The second part of the report is entitled ‘On the state of elementary education in the mining districts of south Wales.’

⁷⁰ This is a widely used description of the eastern valleys of Monmouthshire. It was apparently first used by Commissioners investigating conditions in the south Wales coalfield in the 1840s. Unreferenced in M-E Bidder, The Scotch Cattle in Monmouthshire 1820-1825. *Journal of Gwent Local History Council*, No. 63: (1987), 3-16, p. 3.

⁷¹ This area had a total population of 85,000. 1840 (254) *ibid.*, p. 209.

⁷² Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1840 (254). *ibid.*, p. 207.

⁷³ *ibid.*, pp. 208-9.

The second part of Tremenheere's investigation reviewed education provision which consisted of forty seven elementary schools and thirty three dame schools, the latter providing mainly child care. All schools were fee paying and were housed in a variety of buildings which were generally dirty and ill equipped. Reading books were provided by parents and in many cases were no more than "soiled leaves."⁷⁴ Children were taught mainly by men who were unsuccessful or injured workmen or members of the clergy, whose main complaint was the irregular or short term attendance of children. Tremenheere calculated that at least eight thousand children were not in education of any kind.⁷⁵ In his opinion, however, this was not because there was insufficient school accommodation, nor in general, related to poverty, rather it was wholly associated with parental attitudes. He suggested that while parents did not lack intelligence, they did not place any "value on intellectual proficiency"⁷⁶ for either themselves or their children.

A few years later, Kenrick's 1841 analysis of conditions in Trevethin, in Pontypool, and the Blaenavon Ironworks echoes Tremenheere's assessment in many respects. While he found squalor, overcrowding and immorality, he also noted that Welsh workers, in contrast to the Irish and English, were frugal and religious, if somewhat radical.⁷⁷ One of the main areas of Kenrick's research was education and he found that only one in eighteen children attended any day school, most of which was "of an inferior kind."⁷⁸ One in eight received some education at Sunday Schools which he suggests were not very intellectual challenging but rather instilled religious obligations and beliefs. Jones believes that this evidence, particularly that of Tremenheere, were very influential on the later inquiry into education in Wales. In essence "they were fed and watered by the same hands."⁷⁹

There were also criticisms of education from within the Welsh community. Literacy levels were low⁸⁰ and there were ongoing demands through articles in Welsh magazines such as *Y Cronicl* by "Radical Welsh leaders for improved

⁷⁴ Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1840 (254) op. cit., p. 212.

⁷⁵ *ibid.*, p. 210.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 212.

⁷⁷ G. S. Kenrick, Statistics of the Population in the Parish of Trevethin (Pontypool) and at the Neighbouring Works of Blaenavon in Monmouthshire, Chiefly Employed in the Iron Trade, and Inhabiting Part of the District Recently Distributed, *Journal of the Statistical Society of London*, Vol. 3, No. 4: (Jan. 1841), pp. 366 -375.

⁷⁸ G. S. Kenrick, *ibid.*, p. 369.

⁷⁹ I. G. Jones, *Mid-Victorian Wales: The Observers and the Observed* (UWP: Cardiff, 1992), p. 115.

⁸⁰ Unreferenced in J. L. Williams and G. R. Hughes, (1987) op. cit., p. 127.

provision for the children of ordinary people.”⁸¹ A number of factors influenced these low standards. Poor attendance and the poor quality of teaching were exacerbated by the fact that teacher training was inconsistent or non-existent and teachers were poorly paid and poorly educated themselves. The position of the Welsh language in education was also difficult. It was generally the language spoken at home but it was not uncommon for Welsh speaking children to be taught only in English, by a teacher who knew no Welsh. The various charitable organisations had different policies about the medium of teaching although there is an opinion that Welsh was most commonly used in the north of the country and English in the south.⁸²

In March 1846, William Williams,⁸³ speaking in the House of Commons, asked for an inquiry into the state of education in Wales. He drew attention to the fact that education in Wales was more neglected than in any other area of the United Kingdom, as inquiries into education in England, Scotland and Ireland had already taken place. Williams estimated that out of two hundred and fifty thousand children in Wales only seventy thousand were in school and what provision there was so poor it hardly qualified as being education.⁸⁴ This, he found, was a disgraceful situation and suggested that a poorly educated population was also an ill disciplined one. Williams reminded the House that the recent Commission into the Turnpike Trusts in south Wales⁸⁵ had commented on the fact that it was thought that a major causes of the disturbances had been an ignorance of English, which had precluded any advancement of the community. He suggested that it was essential that an urgent inquiry was made into education in Wales, and one which paid particular attention to the place of the English language in Welsh society. Williams made the point that the intellectual development of Welsh working classes was being impeded by the lack of fluency in English and this restricted access to many aspects of life, the legal system for example. This was due entirely to “the existence of an ancient language”⁸⁶ which was proving very damaging.

⁸¹ J. L Williams and G. R. Hughes, (1987) *op. cit.*, p. 127.

⁸² See J. L Williams and G. R. Hughes, *ibid.*

⁸³ Member of Parliament for Coventry. Born Tredarren, Llanpumpsaint, Carmarthenshire.
<http://yba.llgc.org.uk/en/s-WILL-WIL-1788.html>

⁸⁴ Hansard HC, March 10th 1846. Third Series, Volume 84 Page Column: 845-929.

⁸⁵ Final Report by Commissioners for consolidating and adjusting Turnpike Trusts in S. Wales, Sept. 1845.

⁸⁶ Hansard HC, March 10th 1846, *ibid.*

The Report⁸⁷ that followed, intended as a campaign “to remedy the under provision and under endowment of education,”⁸⁸ ended as an attack on all aspects of Welsh society, its language and religion, and was widely referred to in Wales as *Brad y Llyfrau Gleision*.⁸⁹ It offended in two ways. Firstly it suggested that the Welsh language should be removed completely to allow the proper development of education. Secondly, the Report was deeply critical of the morality of the Welsh and the social conditions in Wales. Although many of the criticisms were justified, the Commissioners⁹⁰ “forgot all sense of proportion,”⁹¹ as the conditions that were denounced in Wales were easily paralleled in England. The derogatory remarks overshadowed positive comments which identified absentee landlords, their lack of support for education and the harsh effects that industrialisation had had on Wales.⁹² The condemnations were pivotal to the development of the Welsh credo. They strengthened nonconformity, dissent and aroused, for the first time, obvious and intense anti-English feeling that was central to the development of the nationalism which followed.⁹³ The expansion of the franchise in 1867; the subsequent elections and the landlords’ reprisals across agricultural Wales intensified this.⁹⁴ The accompanying ascendancy of Liberalism appeared to embody all that was important in Wales: non-conformity, language and culture and provided the country “with a sense of cohesion, despite the trauma of industrialisation.”⁹⁵ Ironically the condemnations of the Blue Books resulted in, not only a turning point in the educational life of Wales but also aroused radical Welsh dissent. During the 1860s it was beginning to be suggested that poor educational provision was a contributory factor in Great Britain losing its pre-eminent global trading position.⁹⁶ Three enquiries were set up to examine the different aspects of education, the earliest of which was the Newcastle Commission Report in 1861.⁹⁷ It was appointed

⁸⁷ PP 1847 (870) (871) (872.) Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales.

⁸⁸ K. O. Morgan, (1963), op. cit., p. 16.

⁸⁹ Translated as *Treachery of the Blue Books*. This has been widely reviewed in Welsh historiography. A very detailed account can be found in I. G. Jones, (1992), op. cit., Chapter 5.

⁹⁰ R. R. W. Lingen, Jellynger C. Symons and H. R. Vaughan Johnson

⁹¹ R. T. Jenkins, The Development of Nationalism in Wales. *The Sociological Review*, Volume a27, Issue 2: (1935), 163–182, p. 168.

⁹² R. T. Jenkins, *ibid.*, p. 168.

⁹³ K. O. Morgan, Welsh Nationalism: The Historical Background. *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol 6, No , (1971) pp 153-159.

⁹⁴ D. W. Howell, *Land and People in Nineteenth-Century Wales* (Routledge: London, 1977), p. 61.

⁹⁵ D. H. Davies, *The Welsh Nationalist Party 1925-1945 A Call to Nationhood* (UWP; Cardiff, 1983), p. 6.

⁹⁶ See D. H. Akenson, Patterns of English Educational Change: The Fisher and Butler Act. *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol. 11, No 2: (1971), 143-156.; A. Green, (1990), op.cit.; G. E. Jones and G W Roderick, *A History of Education in Wales* (UWP: Cardiff, 2003), p. 78.

⁹⁷ 1861 XXI, The Royal Commission on the state of popular education in England appointed in 1858 under the chairmanship of the Duke of Newcastle (The Newcastle Report).

as an acknowledgement that the Education Department of the Committee of the Privy Council “was bound to pursue a policy of ‘the extension of sound and cheap elementary instruction to all classes of the people’.”⁹⁸ Its remit was to inquire into elementary education and make recommendations how this could best be provided for all children. The Newcastle Commission undertook the first large scale survey of education and accumulated a vast amount of statistical evidence. It concluded that although most children were in education it was generally of poor quality.⁹⁹ The main recommendation was that elementary schools should be grant funded, and teachers paid according to the quality of their results. The Commissioners rejected the creation of a state education system and compulsory attendance. In this respect, it referred to the state provision in Prussia and suggested that if it were replicated in England and Wales it would be opposed on social and religious grounds.¹⁰⁰

The Newcastle Commission Report was followed in 1864 by the Clarendon Report¹⁰¹ and in 1868 by the Taunton Report.¹⁰² The detail of these two reports are not germane to this research except that, together with the Newcastle Report, they set the parameters for the future of education in England and Wales. These three reports established “basically two sub systems, the elementary and the secondary.”¹⁰³ Simon notes that immediately prior to the Second World War this situation remained and the “two subsets catered in 1937-1938, for some 93 per cent of the nations children,”¹⁰⁴ with the vast majority attending elementary schools. The remaining seven per cent were educated in independent or endowed schools and “dominated Parliament ... the armed forces, the judiciary, civil service and the church.”¹⁰⁵ The Reports clearly linked provision with social class. Each was followed by an Education Act. The Education Act of 1870 was a direct result of the recommendations of the Newcastle Commission Report. The Clarendon Report of 1864 led to the 1868 Public Schools Act and the Taunton Report was followed by the Endowed Schools Act of 1869. This became a familiar pattern of education

⁹⁸ Unreferenced in J. S. Maclure, *Educational Documents England and Wales 1816-1968* (Chapman and Hall: London, 1965), p. 70.

⁹⁹ It was estimated that 2,535,462 out of 2,655,767 children were in education. J. S. Maclure, *ibid.*, p. 71

¹⁰⁰ J. S. Maclure, *ibid.*, p. 75.

¹⁰¹ 1864 (3288) Report of Her Majesty’s Commissioners appointed to inquire into the Revenues and Management of certain Schools and Colleges, and the studies pursued and instruction given therein, (The Clarendon Report).

¹⁰² 1867-68, (3966) Schools Inquiry Commission. Vol I. Report of the commissioners, (The Taunton Report).

¹⁰³ B. Simon *Education and Social Order 1940-1990* (Lawrence and Wishart: London, 1991), p. 25

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.*, p. 25

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*, p. 34

development and generally the subsequent major reports that were commissioned by the Board of Education were followed by educational change. They were used to influence both the House of Commons and the public. Katz suggests that this reflects the fact that reform should not “proceed beyond the limits of public opinion.”¹⁰⁶

The reluctance of Government to intervene in education began to give way as “expansion of education was equated with the national interest.”¹⁰⁷ There was pressure for immediate and radical action and in 1870, William Foster¹⁰⁸ brought an Education Bill before parliament. During the debate that followed he advocated no delay because “If we are to hold our position among the nations of the world, we must make up for the smallness of our numbers by increasing the intellectual force of the individual.”¹⁰⁹ The Elementary Education Act 1870¹¹⁰ established legislation to “educate the lower classes for employment on lower class lines”¹¹¹ and formally confirmed the “caste system”¹¹² of education that would become a fundamental part of the education system in England and Wales. The terms of the Act allowed for the establishment of new schools outside the control of the voluntary sector and managed by a board elected from the community. This offered the opportunity for nonconformists to become involved in the educational process and “In the absence of major elected units of local government, they represented a bold experiment in democratic institutions.”¹¹³ High calibre candidates were attracted to membership of school boards and participation was highly sought after.¹¹⁴ The democratisation of School Boards was not universally popular in Government circles especially when they became polarised by sectarian, and powerful minority groups such as the Fabian Society. These strong influences on Boards rapidly led to an expansion of elementary education and many schools began to offer higher grade curriculum to more able and older pupils. This was a serious challenge to the newly established Board of Education. Officials at the Board, Morant¹¹⁵ in particular, was determined

¹⁰⁶ M. Katz, From Bryce to Newson: Assumptions of British Educational Reports 1895 – 1963. *International Review of Education*, Vol. 11, No. 3: (1965), 287-304.

¹⁰⁷ D. H. Akenson, (1971) op. cit., p. 144.

¹⁰⁸ Liberal. Vice President of Committee of Council for Education.

¹⁰⁹ Hansard HC, February 17th 1870, Vol. 199 Col. 465-466 in D. H. Akenson, *ibid.*, p. 146.

¹¹⁰ This legislation referred only to England and Wales.

¹¹¹ H. G. Wells, Experiment in Autobiography (1934) p. 93 in B. Simon, *Education and the Labour Movement 1870-1920*, (Lawrence and Wishart, London: 1965).

¹¹² G. Kitson Clark, The Making of Victorian England (Routledge: 1962) pp. 273-4, in B. Simon, *ibid.*, p. 97.

¹¹³ J. S. Maclure, *One Hundred Years of London Education 1870-1970* (Allen Lane: London, 1970), p. 15.

¹¹⁴ J. Lawson & H. Silver, *A Social History of Education in England* (Methuen: London, 1976), p. 318.

¹¹⁵ Sir Robert Laurie Morant Permanent Secretary to the Board of Education.

to retain the pre-eminence of the secondary school sector and his aim was to “repel, and in some respects to destroy the upward striving of the elementary schools.”¹¹⁶ Some school boards had become very powerful and were unsympathetic “to what the government saw as the most pressing problems of education: the rescue of the denominational and endowed schools.”¹¹⁷

In Wales, education began to develop in quite a different way. The Report of the Commissioners in 1847 galvanised society and there were concerted moves to improve provision. Wales had no higher education sector apart from a few Anglican¹¹⁸ and non-conformist theological colleges. This meant that students seeking a university education had to study in England which was seen as a major disadvantage. There were a number of early and unsuccessful plans to expand higher education. For example, there was an idea for establishing a university at Neath for the study of science, land management and other professional pursuits as early 1857 but this never came to fruition.¹¹⁹ A scheme for a university similar to that in Ireland was also drawn up, but it was not until 1863 that suitable plans for a secular university in Wales were put in place. These depended on very much on obtaining Government grant which proved to be problematic. In 1870, members of the Welsh University Committee approached Gladstone, who although sympathetic, felt that because he had already refused grants to English colleges he was unable to support one in Wales.¹²⁰ However, a non-denominational University College of Wales at Aberystwyth was opened in 1872 funded entirely by voluntary effort.¹²¹ In 1879, the owner of the Hafod Copper Works in Swansea, Sir Henry Hussey Vivian, proposed a motion in the House of Commons¹²² that Government should provide Wales with higher education facilities at least as good as those in Ireland. He pointed out the difficulties that had surrounded the establishment of the college at Aberystwyth and that it was unfair that this had had to be funded by voluntary contributions. Despite the fact that there was considerable cross party support, there were strong objections to Vivian’s motion from Anglicans and it was defeated. Lord

¹¹⁶ E. R. J. Eaglesham, The Centenary of Robert Morant. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, Vol. 12. No 1: (1963), 5-18, p. 5.

¹¹⁷ M. Vlaeminke, *The English Higher Grade Schools. A Lost Opportunity*, (Routledge, London, 2000) p. 18.

¹¹⁸ St David’s College Lampeter was the only degree awarding institution in Wales during the period and was the third oldest in England and Wales after Oxford and Cambridge

¹¹⁹ G. E. Jones and G. W. Roderick, (2003), op. cit., p. 70.

¹²⁰ K. O. Morgan, (1963), op.cit., p. 46.

¹²¹ See K. O. Morgan, (1963), *ibid.*, p. 47.

¹²² Hansard HC 18th July, 1879, Cols. 1074-1187, Vol. 247 1141 -1183.

George Hamilton,¹²³ for example, saw no reason to spend funds on a Welsh university when it had had such poor local support.¹²⁴ Despite this, within five years, grant funded university colleges was opened in Cardiff and Bangor and eventually University College Aberystwyth also received government funding.

The establishment of universities set in train events that were to considerably influence the development of secondary education in Wales. The Taunton Commission Report in 1868 identified that there were only twenty eight endowed grammar schools in Wales with a total school population of only just over one thousand pupils.¹²⁵ This provision was completely out of step with England and even more so with European countries. The Commission recommended that Wales, because of its special circumstances, of rapid industrialisation and growth, should have a much higher ratio of children receiving secondary education than it currently had.¹²⁶ In 1880, Lord Aberdare wrote to Gladstone drawing his attention to the fact that during the recent elections Parliamentary candidates throughout Wales had pledged to voters that they would keep pressurising the Government about the state of secondary and higher education in Wales.¹²⁷ It has been suggested that this letter was critical and set in train events that resulted in an “educational blueprint for Wales that had no parallel”¹²⁸ in Europe. In 1881 the Aberdare Report,¹²⁹ “regarded ... as an event of major importance in the history of Wales,”¹³⁰ identified that education in Wales had become increasingly unable to cope with the demands put upon it by the needs of a rapidly expanding industrialised society. It recommended that the Principality should have an “education system more advanced than that of England.”¹³¹ This would be funded through a newly established Central Welsh Board and all schools would be wholly secular in character. The Welsh Intermediate Education Act of 1889 provided an advanced curriculum which was in essence a combination of grammar and higher grade elementary schools, and suitable for both

¹²³ Vice-President of the Council.

¹²⁴ K. O. Morgan, (1963), op. cit., pp. 48 – 49.

¹²⁵ G. E. Jones and G. W. Roderick, (2003), op. cit., p. 66.

¹²⁶ The Commission recommended a ratio of 10:1000 rather than the 0.77:1000 it was in the 1860’s. See G. E. Jones and G. W. Roderick, (2003), *ibid.*, p. 6.

¹²⁷ NA ED 91/8 File No 1 Lord Aberdare to Gladstone in L. W. Evans *Studies in Welsh Education: Welsh Educational Structure and Administration 1880 – 1925* (UWP: Cardiff, 1974), p. 6.

¹²⁸ L. W. Evans, (1974), op.cit., p. 6.

¹²⁹ 1881 Report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the condition of Intermediate and Higher Education in Wales (Aberdare Report).

¹³⁰ G. W. Evans, The Aberdare Report and education in Wales 1881. *Welsh History Review*, Vol. 11, No. 2: (Dec. 1982), 150-172, p. 150.

¹³¹ K.O. Morgan, (1963), op. cit., p. 49.

the working class and the growing middle class in Wales.¹³² The curriculum was further enhanced by the Technical Instruction Act of 1889, an obvious priority in industrialised Wales.

The Bryce Commission Report¹³³ in 1895 made a number of fundamental proposals to alter the structure of education administration and provision in England and Wales. Central to these was the intention to replace the many departments that oversaw education by a Board of Education. The Bryce investigations also found that only a small percentage of elementary school children could secure a place at secondary school and recommended that there should be an expansion of the secondary sector. This should be accompanied by a change in the curriculum to meet the demands of an increasingly technological society. By the late 1890s many elementary schools boards especially in large cities in England, were offering higher grade education¹³⁴ which presented a real alternative to endowed grammar schools which had become outdated and moribund.¹³⁵ This threat to the secondary sector did not go unchallenged at the newly formed Board of Education. The opportunity to discredit the School Boards came when it was discovered that the London Board was illegally using the Government grant to provide a higher grade curriculum in elementary schools. The Government Auditor investigated the matter and the Cockerton Judgement¹³⁶ found the London Board guilty of misusing public funds. These factors, combined with the revelations the South African Wars, which raised “essential doubts as to the longevity or even viability of Great Britain as an Empire”¹³⁷ put Government under pressure to once again reform education. The Education Act 1902¹³⁸ that followed has been considered to have been “among the two or three greatest constructive measures of the twentieth century”¹³⁹ although it met with considerable and prolonged opposition. It was a highly political intervention planned to end the covert influences of radicalism present on some school boards:

¹³²G. E. Jones, *Controls and Conflicts in Welsh Secondary Education 1889-1994* (UWP, Cardiff, 1982.) p. 7.

¹³³ Royal commission on secondary education, 1895 (C 7862) (Bryce Report).

¹³⁴ This has been considered a response to the curriculum taught in Intermediate schools in Wales. See G. E. Jones, (1982), *ibid.*, p. 7.

¹³⁵ W. Robinson, *Historiographical Reflections on the 1902 Education Act. Oxford Review of Education*, Vol 28, No. 2/3: (June-September 2002) 159-172, p. 163.

¹³⁶ See S. J. Curtis, (1948), pp. 314-315 for a full account of the Cockerton Judgement.

¹³⁷ D. Dwork, *War is Good for Babies and Other Young Children: A history of the infant and child welfare movement in England* (Tavistock: London, 1987), p. 167. See also C. C. Perry, *Our Undisciplined Brains: ‘The War Test’* in W. Van Der Eyken, *Education, the Child and Society: a documentary history* (Penguin Education: Harmondsworth, 1973).

¹³⁸ Education Act 1902 (2 Edw. VII).

¹³⁹ R. C. R. Ensor, *England 1870-1914* (Oxford, 1966.) p. 225 in J. E. B. Munson, *The Unionist Coalition and Education 1895-1902. The Historical Journal*, 20(03): (1977), 607 – 645, p. 607.

“to bridle democracy.”¹⁴⁰ There was a determination to increase not only the religious aspects in the curriculum, but to ensure that the caste system of elementary and secondary education remained intact. Another long term consequence of the decisions made Morant, Gorst¹⁴¹ and other influential members of the Board of Education in 1902 was to remove the scientific and technical curriculum commonly taught at the higher grade schools as it was not considered one that fitted into the ideal of the curriculum for the secondary schools intended to ensure the survival of the upper classes.¹⁴² It has been suggested that both the leaders of the Conservative Party and the Board of Education were riddled with an élitist attitude and that the latter, particularly Morant, “treated elementary education and elementary teachers with contempt.”¹⁴³

The Education Act that followed in 1902 established a wholly state controlled education system. It brought all sectors of education under local authority control and allowed voluntary schools to be funded from the rateable income of local communities.¹⁴⁴ It also had a number of unintended consequences and was not well accepted in Wales and aroused old and deep seated religious animosities amongst nonconformists. It “put the Church Schools on the rates,”¹⁴⁵ and allowed local authorities to establish secondary schools outside the intermediate sector which would result in a complicated secondary system, and controversially, it would also remove the secular status of the intermediate sector in Wales to bring it into line with English endowed grammar schools.¹⁴⁶ The second, and most contentious issue was the ‘dual system’ of provided and non-provided elementary schools. The changes in legislation meant that all elementary education would be funded by central grant and local rates and effectively meant that “voluntary schools were handed a financial lifeline.”¹⁴⁷ It was a particular problem in Wales where non-conformists had envisaged “one set of schools under popular control,”¹⁴⁸ but instead, a divided system of denominational versus council schools remained.

¹⁴⁰ B. Simon, (1965) op. cit., p. 172.

¹⁴¹ Sir John Eldon Gorst, Vice-President of the Committee on Education between 1895 - 1902.

¹⁴² E.J.R. Eaglesham, The Centenary of Sir Robert Morant. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 1: (1963), 5-18; G.W. Roderick and M. D. Stevens, *Education and Industry in the Nineteenth Century: the English disease?* (Longmans: London, 1978).

¹⁴³ G. W. Kedewick, *The Education Department and After* (1920), p. 11 in B. Simon, (1965), *ibid.*, p. 114.

¹⁴⁴ L. W. Evans, (1974), op. cit., p. 139.

¹⁴⁵ J. Hurt, *Education in Evolution, Church, State and Popular Education 1800 – 1870* (Hart-Davis: London, 1971), p. 225.

¹⁴⁶ G. E. Jones, (1982), op. cit., p. 11

¹⁴⁷ G. E. Jones and G. W. Roderick, (2003), op.cit., p. 109.

¹⁴⁸ B. Sacks, (1961) op. cit., p. 23.

The non-conformist outcry against the 1902 legislation was vociferous, with David Lloyd George at the forefront of objections. Immediately eleven Welsh county councils “passed ‘no rate’ resolutions, declaring that they would not administer the Act.”¹⁴⁹ Lloyd George suggested that the local authorities should operate the legislation only if all voluntary schools were abolished so the Act would be operated on the basis of equality. Long negotiations followed between the Board of Education, the Welsh local authorities and the Church of England but no resolution could be found and “Lloyd George was compelled to advise outright resistance to the Act.”¹⁵⁰ This received a mixed reception but a number of county councils, including Carmarthenshire,¹⁵¹ continued to refuse implementation,¹⁵² and as the Liberal Party’s influence grew in Wales so did the opposition to the Act. In 1904 Government introduced new legislation¹⁵³ which impelled local authorities to action the Education Act 1902. The protests continued unabated¹⁵⁴ and it was not until 1906 and the election of a Liberal administration that the Welsh authorities finally put the Education Act 1902 into operation.

The reform of education in England and Wales remained a “dominant issue”¹⁵⁵ in the years after the Education Act 1902. It was kept alive by agitation from both the Liberal and Labour parties and, for Labour, it came second only to industrial legislation.¹⁵⁶ In the few years before the outbreak of World War One there were a number of unsuccessful efforts to revise the terms of the Education Act 1902¹⁵⁷ although some changes were made to the health and welfare provision for elementary school children.¹⁵⁸ This failure was partly due to opposition from the textile industry, partly from parents who would be losing child income, but mostly “foundered on the reef of Anglicanism firmly embedded in the Conservative

¹⁴⁹ K.O. Morgan, (1963), op. cit., p. 187.

¹⁵⁰ K.O. Morgan, *ibid.*, p. 189.

¹⁵¹ L. W. Evans, *Studies in Welsh Education: Welsh Educational Structure and Administration 1880 – 1925* (UWP: Cardiff, 1974). In particular Chapter III, ‘The Carmarthen Inquiry.’

¹⁵² These included Carmarthenshire, Cardiff, Swansea, Merioneth and Montgomery.

¹⁵³ Education (Local Authority Default) Bill 1904.

¹⁵⁴ HC Deb 15 May 1905 vol 146 cc 363-40.

¹⁵⁵ G.D.H. Cole, *A History of the Labour Party from 1914* (Routledge and Kegan Paul: 1948), p. 451 in R. Barker, (1972), op. cit., p. 12.

¹⁵⁶ R. Barker, (1972), *ibid.*, p. 24.

¹⁵⁷ In 1908, Chiozza Money introduced a Continuation Schools Bill; in 1910, J. H. Whitehouse’s Bill called for more expenditure on education because of the links between child labour and the rise in unemployment. A Bill introduced in 1913 also failed because it was impossible to satisfy non-conformist demands.

¹⁵⁸ Education (Provision of Meals) Act of 1906 and the Education (Administrative Provisions) Act of 1907.

dominated upper house.”¹⁵⁹ Education became a pressure point and Haldane,¹⁶⁰ for example, in an attempt to undermine David Lloyd George, suggested that it would be the most urgent social reform for the next Government because improvement in provision would offer more equality of opportunity and help to remove class barriers.¹⁶¹ This accompanied a growing awareness of Britain’s loss of dominancy on the world stage with increasing competition from Germany, America and Japan.¹⁶² There was an impatience with the lack of social reform.

Conclusions

It becomes clear that religious difficulties played a fundamental role in the development of education in England and Wales. Fraser goes so far as to suggest that “The rivalry between Church and Dissent precluded the growth of a state system”¹⁶³ and this is evident throughout the nineteenth century. Despite the fact that many other industrialized nations had introduced a state education system there is an overwhelming sense that the Government considered this unnecessary. Very few of the population received any education, and even that which was available, mainly for the upper and middle classes, was of poor quality. Bernbaum’s comments that there was no perceived need to educate the lower classes for unskilled tasks especially as many industrialists were generally lacking in formal education themselves are particularly apposite. This position was reinforced by the fact that the *laissez faire* policies of the Tory governments of the period abrogated any responsibility for the education of the poorer classes. These attitudes were crystallised by the deeply divided social structure in Britain. The power of the landowning classes was absolute and this was never challenged by violent confrontation, as had been the case in France for example. The fact that there was also a very close association between the Tory party, the landowning classes and the Anglican church also had a profound effect on the way education developed in England and Wales.

¹⁵⁹ Barker, R., *Education and Politics 1900-1951 A Study of the Labour Party* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1972) p. 20.

¹⁶⁰ Richard Burton Haldane. Liberal Member of Parliament Haddingtonshire and Lord Chancellor in H.H. Asquith’s Liberal government.

¹⁶¹ National Education, speech delivered by Viscount Haldane, Manchester, 10th January 1913, p. 9 in G. Sherington, *English Education, Social Change and War 1911-20* (MUP: Manchester, 1981), p. 25.

¹⁶² See for example S. Glynn & J Oxborrow, *Interwar Britain: A social and economic history*, (Allen & Unwin, London, 1976.) p. 21; R Floud and D. McCloskey, *The Economic History of Britain Since 1700* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1994), Chapter 1.

¹⁶³ D. Fraser, *The Evolution of the Welfare State* (Palgrave: London, 1973) p. 78

By the start of the nineteenth century a debate about the condition of mass education in England and Wales began. Views on this were deeply divided and while there was a growing perception that all children should be educated, there was considerable opposition from employers who wanted to retain child labour, and from parents who wanted their children in paid employment. The fact that responsibility for developing and establishing education provision was assumed by charitable organisations led to a confused system which left a legacy of inadequate schools and poor education. These organisations were principally, but not exclusively, denominational and the Church of England assumed primacy. This generated deep antagonism from non-conformists throughout England and Wales, and this resentment continued throughout the period. The charitable organisation of education led indirectly to the establishment of a deeply divided provision which mirrored the caste system embedded in the social structure of Britain. Elementary education became the norm for the children of the poor in England and Wales and this group had little access to the secondary sector. As a consequence education provision during this period was entirely associated with class although the intermediate sector in Wales offered rather more opportunity of access to secondary education to elementary school children through free places. In England, the elitist and fee paying endowed grammar schools remained almost the only form of secondary education and offered few opportunities to working class children. It has been suggested that this divided system developed into a form of social control by the upper classes that replaced state control in other countries.

Chapter 3 - Education in England and Wales 1918-1939

“The locust years”¹

This chapter examines the major influences on the development of education during the interwar years nationally and locally in south and south west Wales. Even though the Board of Education had limited powers during the period **it will become apparent** that it used these very effectively by directing the conclusions of the reports of the Consultative Committee to implement educational change. This was done by manipulating the membership of the Consultative Committee to ensure a desired outcome. Alongside these determining factors were the effects that the Government’s interwar austerity measures had on education. These conflicting forces created tensions at all levels and especially amongst groups demanding educational change. Underlying this was the continuing influence of the Church of England over education, and **the accompanying** animosity of dissent.

The 1918 Education Act

In the years before the outbreak of the First World War there were a number of unsuccessful attempts to revise the terms of the Education Act 1902, many of which sprang from the **growth** of the Labour party and the **perceived** need to provide a better education for working class children.² World War One became a catalyst for change as its events and circumstances slowly revealed the inadequacies of education across England and Wales. **It was a very difficult period for education.** Government funding was cut substantially and there were shortages of qualified teachers and equipment in all sectors of provision.³ The conditions for children deteriorated rapidly and many were reported to be malnourished and badly clothed.⁴ The elementary sector was badly effected. There was a substantial lack of suitable accommodation, the result of cuts to education funding after the Boer War⁵ and the Cockerton judgement had forced elementary schools to revert to a very limited

¹ K. O. Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation: Wales 1880-1980* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1981). Chapter 8.

²R. Barker, *Education and Politics 1900-1951 A Study of the Labour Party* (Clarendon: Oxford, 1972), p. 19.

³ Hansard, HC Sitting, 18th July, 1916, Volume 84, Column 871.

⁴ G. A. N. Lowndes, *The Silent Social Revolution* second edn (OUP: Oxford, 1969), p. 189.

⁵ N. Middleton and S. Weitzman, *A Place for Everyone: A history of education from the eighteenth century to the 1970s* (Victor Gollancz: London, 1976), pp. 124-126.

curriculum. According to Dent,⁶ many children were exploited by unprincipled employers. The number of children under twelve years of age employed in agriculture increased significantly⁷ and there was an understanding that child employment was assisting the war effort.⁸ As a result attendance fell sharply and this appears to have been condoned by local magistrates. Certainly, His Majesty's Inspectors⁹ of schools estimated that educational progress during the war period had only been retarded by three months.¹⁰ Despite these difficulties in the elementary sector there was an unprecedented increase in demand for secondary school places as parental income increased.¹¹ It was significant, however, that the reductions in provision "heightened expectations of a generous reform once peace came"¹² and there were urgent demands from teachers' unions; the Labour Party; the Trades Union Council and the Workers Education Association for change.¹³ These demands put the Board of Education under intense pressure to make immediate and major changes.¹⁴

By 1916, the process of planning for reconstruction after the end of the war was underway.¹⁵ The war period had revealed serious deficiencies in industry, agriculture and the economy, and it was clear that if Great Britain were to retain her international position, swift improvements would need to be made. In essence, "War was shaping the content of reconstruction"¹⁶ and education was to play an important part.¹⁷ This was on two levels, because although the elementary sector was inadequate, it was the secondary sector that came in for particular criticism. It became increasingly clear that the classical curriculum favoured by secondary schools and universities was a serious barrier to commercial and technological development.¹⁸ The direction of the secondary curriculum stemmed from decisions

⁶ H. C. Dent, *1870-1970: Century of Growth in English Education* (Longmans: London, 1970), p. 83.

⁷ In 1915 there was an estimated 8,000 children employed in agriculture. PP. Hansard, *ibid.*, Col. 874.

⁸ D. H. Parker, *The Talent at its Command: The First World War and the Vocational Aspect of Education 1914-1919. History of Education Quarterly*, Vol. 1, No. 3: (1995), 237-59, p. 237.

⁹ Hereafter abbreviated to HMI.

¹⁰ G.A.N. Lowndes, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

¹¹ B. Simon. *The Politics of Educational Reform 1920-1940* (Lawrence and Wishart: London, 1974), p. 15.

¹² R. Barker, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

¹³ B. Simon, *Education and the Labour Movement 1870-1920* (Lawrence and Wishart: 1965) p. 349.

¹⁴ R. Barker, *ibid.*, p. 24.

¹⁵ NA CAB 37/144/44, Establishment of a Committee to consider and advise on problems that will arise on the conclusion of peace: the Reconstruction Committee.

¹⁶ P.B. Johnson, *Land Fit For Heroes: The Planning of British Reconstruction 1916-19* (University of Chicago Press: 1969) p. 11.

¹⁷ P.B. Johnson, (1969.) *ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁸ Board of Education, Educational Pamphlets No 88 *Educational Problems of the South Wales Coalfield* (HMSO, 1931) for example but this is widely reported in the historiography. See W.H.G. Armytage, *Four*

taken by Morant and others¹⁹ and the classical curriculum had become very closely associated with university entrance. Lord Haldane made the case for a review of the curriculum when he drew attention to the quality of science education in Germany.²⁰ He suggested that although scientific research was being undertaken in Great Britain it was not valued at secondary level or translated into workable ideas. This opinion was confirmed by leading scientists,²¹ and the debate continued with *The Times* pointing to the widespread “official ignorance and inattention”²² in Great Britain to the dominance of the German chemical industries. This became a major factor in attempts to reform the curriculum in years that followed.

In 1916, Arthur Henderson²³ was appointed as President of the Board of Education and he set up three Committees to review areas of education, one of which was the teaching of science. To start the process, he commissioned Herbert Lewis²⁴ to chair a Departmental Committee of Inquiry²⁵ to consider what educational provision should be made for children after the war. One of the most important outcomes of the Lewis Committee research was their analysis of school attendance. Out of a total of 662,000²⁶ children, about thirty thousand pupils between twelve and thirteen years of age were only attending school on a part time basis. Of the remainder, almost thirty percent left school at thirteen years of age,²⁷ thirteen percent²⁸ between the ages of thirteen and fourteen and just over forty percent²⁹ at fourteen years of age. Only thirteen percent³⁰ stayed at school after fourteen years of age and many left shortly afterwards. For the Committee, the latter figure was the

Hundred years of English Education (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1970) p. 186; N. Middleton and S. Weitzman, (1976) op. cit., p. 31-33. The idea of teaching a classical curriculum in grammar schools stemmed from the philosophy of Sir Robert Louis Morant (Permanent Secretary to the Board of Education, 1903-1911) who wanted it to reflect the ethos of public school sector. This was the substance of the *Regulations for Secondary Schools* 1904.

¹⁹ G. Roderick, Social Class, curriculum and the concept of relevance in secondary education. *Welsh History Review*, Vol. 19, No. 2: (1998) 289-318, p. 292.

²⁰ Hansard, HL Sitting, 12th July, 1916, Volume 22, Training of the Nation, cc. 655-705

²¹ ‘Memorial on the Neglect of Science’ quoted in P.B. Johnson, (1969) op. cit., p. 16. See also Z. Wang, The First World War, Academic Science, and the “Two Cultures”: Educational Reforms at the University of Cambridge. *Minerva*, 33: (1995) 107-127, for an interesting overview of the classical versus the scientific curriculum.

²² The Times, Letter VII, in P.B. Johnson, (1969), *ibid.*, p. 16.

²³ Labour Member of Parliament for Barnard Castle.

²⁴ Permanent Secretary of the Board of Education. Herbert Lewis was a close friend of David Lloyd George and a supporter of Cymru Fydd.

²⁵ Report of the Departmental Committee on Juvenile Education in Relation to Employment after the War 1917–1918 (Cd 8512)

²⁶ This represented about 95% of the total of that age group.

²⁷ Approximately 185,000 *ibid.*, p. 3.

²⁸ This equated to about 85,000 children, *ibid.*, p. 3.

²⁹ 266,000 children, *ibid.*, p. 3.

³⁰ 84,000 children, *ibid.*, p. 3.

most interesting as it clearly indicated that, although the prestigious secondary schools were supposed to retain children until they were sixteen, the vast majority left at fourteen, with only about six percent completing a full course. Even children who remained at school were frequently employed before and after school “to an extent which seriously interferes with their educational progress.”³¹

The Committee found this to be an absurd waste and one that it was difficult to understand especially as there had already been substantial investigations into the matter.³² It was also pointed out that apprenticeships and the ‘blind alley’ occupations undertaken by many juveniles did not meet the needs of a new technological society. Perhaps most concerning was the recognition of the inadequacy of elementary education, its poor curriculum and badly trained teachers. It recommended that all children should be retained in school until fourteen years of age with no exemptions for employment. The staffing levels of the last years of elementary education should be improved so that the curriculum could be meaningful. Local authorities should have a legal obligation to provide continuation classes for children over fourteen years of age and enforce attendance. These should provide a suitable practical and technical curriculum, and teachers should be properly trained and paid. The findings of the Lewis Committee set the tone for the Education Act that was to follow in 1918 and was “another example of how far those associated with official educational circles were agreed on the main aims and lines of advance.”³³

In 1917, H.A.L. Fisher³⁴ brought an Education Bill³⁵ before Parliament with the main recommendations that the school leaving age was raised to fourteen without exemption for employment and there should be part time continuation classes until the age of eighteen. These proposals were met with vociferous opposition. Manufacturers objected because it would remove cheap child labour

³¹ Report, (Cd 8512), op. cit., p. 3.

³²For example Royal Commission on the Poor Laws and Relief of Distress. Report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws and Relief of Distress Majority and Minority Reports, 1909 (Cd. 4499); Board of Education. Report of the consultative committee on attendance, compulsory or otherwise, at continuation schools. Vol. I.-Report and appendices, 1909 (Cd. 4757); Board of Educations. Report of the consultative committee on attendance, compulsory or otherwise, at continuation schools. Vol. II. Summaries of evidence, 1909 (Cd. 4758).

³³ B. Simon, (1965), op. cit., p. 353.

³⁴ Member of Parliament for Sheffield Hallam and President of the Board of Education in Lloyd George’s Government. Liberal politician but best known as an academic.

³⁵ Education. A bill to make further provision with respect to education in England and Wales and for purposes connected therewith, 1917-18 (89).

from the workplace. The Trades Union Council would not support it because it failed to raise the school leaving age to sixteen and the Labour Party “described the Bill as falling ‘far short of the minimum that is adequate to the need of the country and the opportunities before it’.”³⁶ These complaints led to it being abandoned³⁷ only to be replaced by another with similar terms in 1918 followed by an Education Act.³⁸ This removed part-time education and the school leaving age was raised although the Act allowed for early leaving for beneficial employment. The local authority rate for the provision of secondary³⁹ education was increased and the supply of secondary school places was augmented by establishing central schools or classes. These would provide a practical, but non-vocational, curriculum with a programme of advanced education for older children especially those who remained at schools after fourteen years of age.⁴⁰ However, the reforms included in the Act were little different from pre-war provision⁴¹ and were “an uncertain half-way house.”⁴²

There was no reference in the Education Act 1918 to the non-provided sector. This was a deliberate omission by Fisher to try to avoid any controversy which might prevent its smooth passage, as had been the case in 1902. He considered that the question of the ‘dual system’ was not important to the development of a state education system.⁴³ However, it was clear that if there was to be a successful reorganisation, local authorities would need to have control of all schools in their areas, including those of the non-provided sector. By 1919, and encouraged by the lack of religious tensions during the passage of the Act, Fisher decided to negotiate a settlement with the denominations so that all non-provided schools would be handed over to the local authorities. In return, a certain amount of denominational teaching would take place in council run schools when parents requested it. It appears that that the Church of England and the Free Churches were generally in

³⁶ Labour Party Conference Report, January 1918, p 122 in B. Simon, (1965), op. cit., p. 354.

³⁷ B. Simon, (1965), *ibid.*, see pp 348 -352 for a full account.

³⁸ Education Act 1918 (8 & 9 Geo. 5 Ch. 39).

³⁹ In the context of this chapter the term ‘secondary’ is used as a term which refers to the education of pupils over eleven years of age. During this period in the history of education it would have referred to almost entirely to those pupils attending grammar or intermediate schools and not to elementary school children regardless of their age unless local authorities had already reorganised elementary education into primary and secondary phases after the Hadow recommendations.

⁴⁰ L. Andrews, *The Education Act 1918* (Routledge and Kegan Paul: London, 1976), p. 36.

⁴¹ G. McCulloch, *Education Reconstruction The 1944 Education Act and the Twenty First Century* (Woburn Press: Essex, 1994), p. 24.

⁴² G Sherington, *English Education, Social Change and War 1911-20* (MUP: Manchester, 1981), p 182.

⁴³ H. A. L. Fisher Memoranda, unreferenced M. Cruikshank, *Church and State in English Education* (Macmillan: London, 1964) p. 114.

favour of the proposals.⁴⁴ In Wales, the tensions over the Education Act 1902 had subsided as the number of voluntary aided schools fell and the strong Liberal opposition towards the non-provided sector gave way to the more moderate religious views of the Labour Party.⁴⁵ By the early 1920s, and after long discussion, the Welsh churches agreed to hand all their schools to the local authorities and, in return, the Cowper - Temple⁴⁶ clause would be activated. However these proposals were rejected by Welsh teachers “who still ridden by the bogey of religious tests, rejected them.⁴⁷ Their veto was decisive and the proposals came to nothing.”⁴⁸ As a consequence the ‘dual system’ remained a part of education provision throughout Wales. In general, this situation remained, although in the years that followed, local agreements were reached with teachers, and church schools were handed over to local authorities in both England and Wales.⁴⁹

It has been suggested that the Education Act 1918 produced nothing new in terms of improvement,⁵⁰ and in terms of implementation was not a great success. Curtis points out that this was mainly due to the fact that it relied on the initiative of local authorities to carry out implementation as “much of the legislation was permissive and not mandatory.”⁵¹ Consequently, local authorities were asked to submit plans to the Board of Education for reorganisation there was no compulsion on them to do so. This ensured that both elementary and secondary provision throughout England and Wales remained dependant on the policies and politics of each local authority. Reorganisation centred on raising the school leaving age and on the secondary sector and these two issues became the key foci.⁵²

The Act established that no child should be deprived of a secondary education because of the cost of fees and offered increased opportunity with a cheaper alternative in the context of selective central schools. While, in theory, this

⁴⁴ See M. Cruikshank, op. cit.; B. Sacks, *The Religious Issue in the State Schools of England and Wales 1902-1914 A Nation's Quest for Human Dignity* (University of New Mexico Press: Albuquerque, 1961).

⁴⁵ Less than 10 per cent of Welsh children attended voluntary schools, M. Cruikshank, *ibid.*, p. 121.

⁴⁶ The Cowper-Temple Clause offered a compromise on teaching denominational religion in state funded schools. It gave a right of withdrawal from religious instruction on grounds of conscience in all elementary schools, including those run by churches. This applied to both teachers and pupils.

⁴⁷ Resolution of the Executive of the N.U.T. in Wales, 11th February, 1922; *The Times Educational Supplement*, 18th February 1922, in M. Cruikshank, op.cit., p. 121.

⁴⁸ M. Cruikshank, (1964) *ibid.*, p. 121.

⁴⁹ In Denbighshire and the West Riding of Yorkshire in 1925. This Concordat was published in *Education*, 6th November 1925 in M. Cruikshank, *ibid.*, p. 121.

⁵⁰ G. Sherington, (1981), op. cit., p. 117.

⁵¹ S. J. Curtis, *History of Education in Great Britain* (University Tutorial Press: London, 1948), p. 341.

⁵² S. J. Curtis, *ibid.*, p. 42.

was very advantageous to children attending elementary schools, central schools were never accepted as being equal in academic standard to either intermediate or grammar schools. They became associated with working class children who were “doomed as slaves in the life and industry of this country.”⁵³ Despite this secondary school places were in short supply and in 1919 less than ten percent of children were able to find a place.⁵⁴ The findings of the Young Report⁵⁵ in 1920 confirmed the inadequacy of provision, and controversially compounded this lack of accommodation by making the suggestion that many more than the recommended limit of twenty five per cent of the child population would benefit from secondary education. This was completely out of step with the thinking of the Board of Education. The Report also identified that the small number of secondary schools in Wales made access much more difficult⁵⁶ although it was acknowledged that this was compensated for by the fact that Welsh local authorities offered the full twenty five percent of free places allowed by Government. Almost all children in the Welsh secondary schools came from the elementary sector as there was much less of a social class distinction than in England.⁵⁷ Despite this advantage there was a real shortage of accommodation, and in the opinion of the Report, it would be advantageous if children were able to make better use of the central school system.

Education 1918-1926

By the time that the Education Act 1918 passed into legislation, Great Britain was beginning to feel the full effect of adverse economic conditions. The nation was already commercially uncompetitive, and this combined with a lack of diversification away from the traditional manufacturing industries had proved very damaging to

⁵³ W. G. Cove, Labour M.P for Aberavon, representative of the National Union of Teachers and the National Association of Labour Teachers, quoted in E. J. Davies. *The Origins and Development of Secondary Education in the Rhondda Valleys 1878-1923* Unpublished MA Wales (1965) in G.E. Jones, *Controls and Conflicts in Welsh Secondary Education* (UWP: Cardiff, 1982), p. 69.

⁵⁴ This figure could be divided into: ‘9,271 because of lack of accommodation, and 8,870 because there were no free places.’ Board of Education Report of the Department Committee on Scholarships and Free Places 1920 Appendix 1, Table D in H-C. Kang, *Education and Equal Opportunity between the Wars*. *Oxford Review of Education*, Vol 9, No 2.(1983) 91-108, p. 91.

⁵⁵ *Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places. Report of the Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places*, 1920 (Cmd. 968) (Young Report).

⁵⁶ *ibid.*, p. 43. There were only one hundred and twenty two secondary which was ten times less than the number in England.

⁵⁷ *ibid.*, p. 44.

economic growth.⁵⁸ There had been a marked drop in demand for British goods⁵⁹ and the situation in the agricultural sector was also difficult because by 1914 Britain was importing half its food.⁶⁰ Although war time conditions had promoted a rise in agricultural and industrial productivity this was followed by a sharp decline that began “one of the most turbulent periods of all of British economic history (and) one of far reaching change.”⁶¹ The effect of this economic downturn was catastrophic to some areas of Wales. Davies points out that:

“The long depression which began in 1925 was the central happening in the history of twentieth century Wales. It was responsible for halting and reversing the industrial growth that had been in full flood for a century and a half.”⁶²

The economy of the years that followed presented “a paradox in British history.”⁶³ While some areas, dependant on the traditional industries were blighted by poverty, unemployment and depression, new industries revitalised others: the Midlands,⁶⁴ the south east of England and some areas of Wales.⁶⁵ Although Britain was still a wealthy country, this prosperity masked poverty on a significant scale but the view of prosperity or poverty depended “upon whether the spotlight is turned on ... Slough or Merthyr Tydfil.”⁶⁶

In 1922, in view of this poor economic situation the Geddes Committee recommended that £75 million savings was made across government departments and singled out the Board of Education for special attention with a cut of £18 million.⁶⁷ The fact that the Board paid half of all local authority education costs was vilified and the Committee has been quoted as saying that it was “impressed by the position of impotence of the Board of Education in either controlling expenditure, or effecting economies, once the policy has been determined.”⁶⁸ Its proposals included cuts to both elementary and secondary education by increasing the teacher pupil

⁵⁸ B.Eichengreen, ‘The interwar economy in the European mirror’, in R. Floud and D. McCloskey, *The Economic History of Britain since 1700. Volume 2 1860-1939* (CUP: Cambridge, 1994), p. 292.

⁵⁹R. Floud and D. McCloskey, *ibid.*, p. 20.

⁶⁰C. Ó Gráda, *British Agriculture 1860-1914* in R. Floud and D. McCloskey, *op.cit.*, p. 171.

⁶¹B.Eichengreen, *ibid.*, p. 291.

⁶² J. Davies, *A History of Wales* (Penguin: London, 1990), p. 533.

⁶³S. Glynn & J Oxborrow, *Interwar Britain: A social and economic history* (Allen Unwin: 1976), p. 13.

⁶⁴ E Hopkins, *Industrialisation and Society: A Social History 1830-1951*, (Routledge; London, 2000).

⁶⁵ K. O. Morgan, (1981), *op. cit.*

⁶⁶ P. Mathias, *The First Industrial Nation*, (Methuen: London, 1971), p, 431 in J. Stevenson *Social Conditions in Britain between the Wars* (Penguin: Harmondsworth, 1977), p 12.

⁶⁷B. Simon, (1974), *op. cit.* p., 37.

⁶⁸ G. Bernbaum, *Social Change and the Schools 1918-1944* (Routledge and Kegan Paul: 1967), p. 29.

ratio, cutting free secondary school places, closing small schools and lowering teachers' salaries. Secondary education should be confined to those pupils whose "mental calibre justified it"⁶⁹ and whose parents could afford to pay for it. Tawney⁷⁰ pointed out, this would once again make secondary education "the privilege of the rich."⁷¹ Certainly the reduction in education funding intensified the nervousness felt by the local authorities in fully implementing the terms of the Education Act 1918 because of the costs involved.⁷² The cuts were heavily criticised and Tawney commented on the naivety and lack of perception by those who supported them "amid paeans of praise"⁷³ and who did not understand their effect on working class children. It has been reported that even Government was shocked at the scale of cuts and, in opposition,

"Labour was bitter: Working men were not impressed with the need for economies in social services 'whilst the rich betake themselves to St Moritz (and) they objected to 'making the children pay' by cuts in education."⁷⁴

Even though the scale of cuts was eventually reduced it was still an almost impossible task to carry out. This, however, was not the perception of the Geddes Committee who did not understand state education.⁷⁵ Percival Sharp, Director of Education for Sheffield, has been quoted as saying in a conference speech to the Association of Directors and Secretaries of Education, "I cannot believe that any body of responsible men with any degree of vision can contemplate what amounts to a wreckage of the education system."⁷⁶

The need for cautious spending continued and in 1925, Circular 1358⁷⁷ instructed local authorities to examine provision to see where savings on education could be made. However, within months of this Circular, others began to reduce the

⁶⁹ L. Andrews, *The Education Act 1918* (Routledge and Kegan Paul: London, 1976), p. 70.

⁷⁰ Richard Henry Tawney, 1880-1962. Tawney was an educationalist, socialist and a leading member of the Fabian Society. He worked as a teacher for the Worker Education Association, and taught economic history at the London School of Economics. He was a member of a number of the Consultative Committees of the Board of Education. He was influential in forming Labour party education policy during the interwar years and wrote *Secondary Education For All* in 1922 which became a policy statement for the party. This was followed in 1924 by *Education: the Socialist Policy*.

⁷¹ R. H. Tawney, *The Guardian*, 21st February, 1922.

⁷² See for example CAS CC/ED/1/1/10 *Education Committee Minutes* 1923 but was a common comment in Education Minutes from the area.

⁷³ R. H. Tawney, (1922), *ibid*.

⁷⁴ C. L. Mowat, *Britain between the Wars 1918-1940* (Methuen: London, 1955), p. 131.

⁷⁵ B. Simon, (1974), *op. cit.*, p. 37.

⁷⁶ *Education*, 13 January, 1922 in B. Simon, *ibid.*, p. 41.

⁷⁷ NA ED 24/1481 *Board of Education Office discussion on programme procedure under Circular 1358*.

pressures on provision. Circular 1360,⁷⁸ asked local authorities to reduce class sizes which appeared to indicate that “economy drives against education were past history.”⁷⁹ This relief was to be short lived and by the end of 1925, Circular 1371⁸⁰ effectively cut the block grant funding to education because plans to expand provision through central schools would put an unreasonable demand upon the taxpayer. This was a devastating blow to reorganisation, and protests from the Labour Party and the Teachers’ Labour League were intense.⁸¹ Opinions elsewhere were quite different and Lord Salisbury⁸² spoke in the House of Lords to suggest that “It must be ruthless economy”⁸³ at the Board of Education especially as so much money had already been wasted on elementary schools.⁸⁴ There were immediate demands for the circular to be withdrawn but this did not take place until March 1926 and marked “a new stage in the battle to restrain Government from gaining full control of the education system in the interests of economy.”⁸⁵

During the same period there were significant political changes at both national and local level and this began to change perceptions of education. While the Liberal Party’s influence was diminishing, the two other main political parties held very different opinions about education. In general terms the Conservative Party showed a distinct political determination to retain the *status quo* of the sub sets of elementary and the secondary provision. It attached enormous prestige to the independent, secondary and voluntary Church of England sectors and very little to elementary schools. This view was confirmed by the attitudes of the upper and middle classes who had been educated outside the state system and who “dominated Parliament (and) the armed forces, the judiciary, civil service and the church.”⁸⁶ At the other end of the spectrum of opinion, Labour Party philosophy focused on an attempt to bring radical change to elementary education through proposals to raise the school leaving age; offer a wider curriculum and, better opportunities for advancement. However, while the Conservatives held typically consistent opinions on education, within the Labour Party there was a divergence

⁷⁸ NA ED 60 *Local Education Authority staffing files relating to a system of approved establishments of teachers ('staffing quotas') 1925 -1926.*

⁷⁹ B. Simon, (1974), op. cit., p. 97.

⁸⁰ NA ED 13/13 *Circular 1371 [block grants] and administrative memorandum 44, 1925.*

⁸¹ B. Simon, (1974), op. cit., p. 113.

⁸² Lord Privy Seal.

⁸³ Hansard HL Vol. 62, Col. 1494, in B. Simon, (1974), *ibid.*, p. 101.

⁸⁴ *ibid.*, p. 101

⁸⁵ B. Simon, (1974) *ibid.*, p. 110.

⁸⁶ B. Simon, *Education and Social Order 1940-1990* (Lawrence and Wishart: London, 1991) p. 34.

of philosophies and a number of factions who offered wide ranging views and ideas.⁸⁷ While some wanted to raise the school leaving age, others, Members of Parliament for the Lancashire constituencies for example, were keen to prevent any legislation that would preclude the employment of adolescents in industry. Trade unionists sometimes believed that raising the school leaving age and continuation schools would both lead to a diminution of working class standards of living because of the loss of child employment income. and, although it was Labour Party policy to promote equality, every attempt to reorganise elementary education was met with criticism from some group within the organisation.⁸⁸ Regardless of the philosophical differences, the protection of the prestigious secondary sector appears to have been as important to the Labour Party as it was to the Conservatives. Even Tawney's memorandum *Secondary Education for All*⁸⁹ which "set the educational system in the midst of the struggle to replace a divided, materialistic society with one properly attuned to intellectual and spiritual values"⁹⁰ actually maintained the existing sub sets of provision. The polarised views on educational change were drawn together by an élitism which was present in both Conservative and Labour political parties as both wanted to retain the prestigious grammar school sector. These two important factors: the economic situation and the political power base, affected how education development was influenced during the first half of the twentieth century.

Education in Wales: 1918 -1926

South and south west Wales felt the full force of decline and economic depression during the interwar years. The mono industrial areas were very badly effected and there was a marked downturn in agriculture which brought serious economic difficulties to rural areas. In spite of some small recovery in the late 1930s the long term effects of depression in the region were considerable. Depravation and poverty were common and although unemployment levels fluctuated, these were substantially high throughout the period.⁹¹ For example, unemployment in the Rhondda Valleys, during the early 1930s were between forty and fifty percent.⁹² Similarly in Merthyr Tydfil, by 1935 the unemployment rate reached almost fifty per

⁸⁷ R. Barker, (1972), op. cit., p. 55.

⁸⁸ R. Barker, *ibid.*, pp. 53-55.

⁸⁹ R. H. Tawney, *Secondary Education for All* (The Labour Party: London, 1922).

⁹⁰ R. Barker, *ibid.*, p. 43.

⁹¹ H. Milford, *The Second Industrial Survey of South Wales, Vol II* (UWP: Cardiff, 1937).

⁹² E. D. Lewis, *The Rhondda Valleys* (Phoenix House: London, 1959), p. 234.

cent.⁹³ The economic situation in rural areas was not so obviously difficult although the levels of poverty were high.⁹⁴ The fortunate intervention of the Milk Marketing Board⁹⁵ in the early 1930s offered some financial stability to farmers. The exception to this decline was the eastern part of Carmarthenshire as the anthracite coal, steel industries and ports of the Swansea area⁹⁶ were not as badly affected by the economic downturn. The accompanying phenomenon to unemployment and depression was a demographic shift in population. It was inevitable that there was considerable migration out of Glamorgan and the population fell by a hundred and fifteen thousand in the space of seven years, compared to a loss of only thirteen thousand across the rest of Wales.⁹⁷ The population of the Rhondda fell by over fifty thousand in the space of ten years⁹⁸ and in Merthyr Tydfil there was a huge fall in the birth rate as young adults left the areas to look for work elsewhere.⁹⁹ Unemployment and emigration had serious repercussions on the finances of local authorities.¹⁰⁰ The decline in industry and a dwindling population also had a profound effect on local authority income. Across Wales almost half the county councils produced less than a thousand pounds and many of the county boroughs, Merthyr Tydfil for example, less than one hundred pounds in penny rate.¹⁰¹ The effect on education was, in some areas, overwhelming and as the population dropped, the number of surplus places in schools increased. Merthyr Tydfil was a prime example of this demographic shift. By 1930 the number of children on roll at elementary schools had dropped by over seven thousand which led to unviable schools and an uneven distribution of teachers.¹⁰²

The interwar period was marked by a significant shift in political power. As the Labour Party gained ground in Parliament it also began to take control at local government level and this was particularly the case in south and south west Wales. The Labour Party's power base was in the South Wales Coalfield where it had

⁹³ K. O. Morgan, (1981), op. cit., p. 212

⁹⁴ There is considerable evidence of this in both the MOH and SMOH annual reports for Carmarthenshire in particular. CAS WWH/2/2 Annual Reports of the School Medical Officer 1907 – 1946 for example.

⁹⁵ See J. Empson, The history of the Milk Marketing Board, 1933–1994: British farmers' greatest commercial enterprise. *International Journal of Dairy Technology*, Volume 51, Issue 3: (1998) 77–85, pp. 77-85.

⁹⁶ This defined the geographical area of the east Carmarthenshire coalfield and the Neath and Swansea valleys. See T. Brennan, T. Cooney, H. Pollins, *Social Change in South-West Wales* (Watts: London, 1954).

⁹⁷ C. L. Mowat, (1968) op. cit. Abstracted from Table 12, p. 467.

⁹⁸ B. Thomas ed, *The Welsh Economy: Studies in Expansion* (UWP: Cardiff, 1962), p. 179.

⁹⁹ S. Thompson, *Unemployment, Poverty and Health in Interwar Wales* (UWP: Cardiff, 2006) p. 195.

¹⁰⁰ K. O. Morgan, (1981), op. cit., p. 232.

¹⁰¹ K. O. Morgan, *ibid.*, p. 232.

¹⁰² GA BMT/1 /49 Merthyr Tydfil Schools 1939. Total on Roll–9382; accommodation available-16,664.

overall control of many, but not all, councils.¹⁰³ In rural areas “the old alignment of ‘Church-Tory’ versus non-conformist radical persisted”¹⁰⁴ and Labour failed to gain control at Carmarthenshire County Council, Carmarthen Borough Council, and only after 1931 at Llanelly. It was unable to make headway in Cardiff although there and in Carmarthenshire working class wards were almost totally under Labour control.¹⁰⁵ In many local authorities, Glamorgan County Council, Port Talbot, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Urban District Council for example, the Labour Party achieved almost total domination over local government during the interwar years. This political power gave it control over local government functions, including outdoor relief, housing and education, all of which “could make a significant difference to the standard of living and the quality of life enjoyed by its constituents.”¹⁰⁶

Planning for change at a local level

The terms of the Education Act 1918 required local authorities to submit plans to show how they would “provide for the progressive development and comprehensive organisation of education in their areas.”¹⁰⁷ The differences in planning that emerged were due to both the progressive nature and vision of some local authorities, and the backwardness of others but, most importantly, were “contingent upon favourable government attitudes in a favourable economic climate.”¹⁰⁸ The plans for reorganisation therefore depended mainly on the political persuasion of elected members although the geographical constraints of south and south west Wales was an additional important factor. The underlying trend for reorganisation was towards an expansion of the intermediate secondary sector rather than improving elementary education by providing central schools. Parents were determined that their children should not “left behind in the academic gold rush” because of a lack of accommodation, and there was a constant demand for a larger secondary sector as it was considered very prestigious and only for the brightest and most privileged children.

¹⁰³ See Table 6.1 in C. Williams, *Labour and the Challenge of Local Government, 1919-1939* in D. Tanner, C. Williams and D. Hopkins, *The Labour Party in Wales 1900 – 2000* (UWP: Cardiff, 2000, p. 142.

¹⁰⁴ Tanner et al, *ibid.*, p. 145.

¹⁰⁵ Splott and Adamstown in Cardiff and in the anthracite coalfield area in Carmarthenshire. *ibid.*, p. 146.

¹⁰⁶ Tanner et al, *ibid.*, p. 141.

¹⁰⁷ L. Andrews, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

¹⁰⁸ G. E. Jones, (1982), *op. cit.*, p. 79.

In Wales, although secondary school places remained selective, a number of Labour controlled authorities made them free for all pupils. This policy came under pressure during the early 1920s but this was vigorously opposed and local authorities continued with their plans for free secondary education as far as the economic circumstances would allow.¹⁰⁹ Glamorgan County Council, Cardiff Borough Council and Rhondda Urban District made substantial efforts to retain free places against powerful opposition from the Board of Education. Merthyr Tydfil Borough Council intended making all places at a new intermediate school at Quakers Yard free, but came under severe pressure from the Board of Education to charge fees. It refused and as a result the school was not recognised for grant until the Labour Party came to power in 1924.¹¹⁰ The brief respite of a Labour controlled Government encouraged the more progressive, and generally Labour led, local authorities to increase the number of free secondary school places. By the end of 1924 there were twenty one non fee paying secondary schools in industrial Glamorgan alone, a total of only a few less than in the whole of England.¹¹¹ This was “something of a Welsh dimension”¹¹² although free places were more available in towns than in rural areas. This latter remained a problem and was identified some years later in a survey of education in rural Wales.¹¹³ The high level of free secondary school places continued throughout the interwar years¹¹⁴ but conversely, there were far more children in Wales in all-age elementary schools than in England, where re-organisation after the Education Act 1918 and the recommendations of the *Education of the Adolescent* for central schools had been more rapidly implemented.¹¹⁵ However, the Board of Education punished the generosity of local authorities in south and south west Wales in 1932 when it abolished free places and “Wales had to pay once again for being administered as an adjunct of England.”¹¹⁶ Jones quotes the Women’s Liberal Association who said: “We feel it hard that Wales and Scotland should be held back by the more backward English.”¹¹⁷

¹⁰⁹ G.E. Jones, *Which Nation’s Schools? Direction and Devolution in Welsh Education in the Twentieth Century* (UWP: Cardiff, 1990).

¹¹⁰ G.E. Jones (1990) op. cit., p. 27

¹¹¹ *ibid.*, p. 26. In England there were only 25 free secondary schools.

¹¹² *ibid.*, p. 26.

¹¹³ *Education in Rural Wales Being the Report of the Departmental Committee Appointed by the President of the Board of Education of to Inquire into the Public System of Education in Wales and Monmouthshire in Relation to the Needs of Rural Areas* (HMSO: 1930).

¹¹⁴ G.E. Jones, (1990) *ibid.*, p. 27. There were over double the number of free schools places in Wales, 19.33 percent compared to 9.58 percent in England.

¹¹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 27. 61 per cent in Wales compared to 44.6 percent in England.

¹¹⁶ G.E. Jones, (1982) op. cit., p. 144.

¹¹⁷ B. Simon, (1974), op. cit., p. 346 in G.E. Jones, (1982), op. cit., p. 145.

The plans for reorganisation after the Education Act 1918 varied considerably. Labour controlled Glamorgan County Council, for example, submitted an ambitious plan to create thirty three new senior schools across the county and advanced instruction in some elementary schools until further re-organisation would allow them to be absorbed into the senior system.¹¹⁸ Rhondda LEA's scheme¹¹⁹ was complicated by the fact that the authority was made up of two valleys with no natural access points between them. Consequently "centralisation is reduced in its applicability and a certain amount of duplication is necessary in consequence of geographical difficulties and this leads to an increased cost of administration."¹²⁰ The scheme that was produced proposed that ten selective central schools and five junior technical colleges would be added to the four secondary schools. This would increase the number of pupils receiving higher level education to twelve per cent of the child population. There would be continuation schools for up to four thousand pupils attached to the central schools. Attendance would be for one day a week so that it did not interfere with the operation of the "winding gear at the pit head."¹²¹ In addition the minutes show there was a plan to provide nursery education and to establish a Montessori model school to train infant school teachers so "the spirit and principle of the system"¹²² could be introduced into all schools. The Committee felt so strongly about the establishment of nursery education that it decided that it "should have first call on the rate."¹²³ It also agreed in principle that teaching Welsh should be given priority in infant schools and some schools should be made bilingual to encourage the development of the Welsh language in a highly English speaking area.¹²⁴

In contrast to these progressive Labour led authorities, others chose to ignore the need to re-organise completely or take quite different approaches. Conservative led Cardiff Borough Council quickly realised that in order to implement the requirements of the 1918 Education Act it would need to provide approximately three thousand extra school places in six new central schools. This would cost at

¹¹⁸ GA GC/EDEE/1 Glamorgan Education Committee Minutes, 1920.

¹¹⁹ TRL Outline Plan of Rhondda UDC Reorganisation Scheme under the 1918 Education Act.

¹²⁰ TRL R 9370, RHO Rhondda UD Council Education Act 1918, Scheme of the Rhondda LEA, p. 2.

¹²¹ *ibid.*, p. 16.

¹²² TRL Rhondda UD Council Minute Book 1920-1921, September 1920, p. 4.

¹²³ *ibid.*, p. 4.

¹²⁴ TRL R 9370 *ibid.*, The area was not, during the period, a traditional Welsh speaking area because of the large influx of English speakers. As a result 58.9 per cent of the population spoke only English; 35 per cent were bilingual and 3 per cent monoglot Welsh.

least £100,000 with annual running costs of £18,000 so it was decided that the authority was “not at present prepared to put that part of the Education Act into force which raises the compulsory age for attendance at school to fourteen years.”¹²⁵ Swansea Borough Council was reasonably well provided for with six secondary schools and fifty elementary schools. In 1919, the Higher Education Committee decided to provide more municipal secondary schools¹²⁶ which were outside the remit of the Central Welsh Board.¹²⁷ The committee’s major concern was the discontinuity of management between intermediate and other secondary school provision and it considered that all schools should be under one authority. All Swansea’s secondary schools came under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education and a good working relationship had developed between it and the authority. The Committee was unsure if the Central Welsh Board had the ability to cope with a period of reorganisation because it had not kept up with new educational ideas. It focused only on children who were destined for university rather than the vast majority of children.¹²⁸ These factors had led Swansea Borough Council to develop municipal secondary education “to meet the crying needs of industrial centres: the secondary school with a less academic character than that of an intermediate school.”¹²⁹ In the event Swansea Education Committee undertook minimal reorganisation and by 1939, little had changed.

Carmarthenshire County Council put forward a number of different plans for reorganisation. The first was to provide central classes in some elementary schools followed by continuation classes. The second was for central classes at elementary schools with full time instruction for children aged fourteen to sixteen. The third option, similar to that of Glamorgan County Council, proposed full time secondary education for all children from twelve to sixteen, or to eighteen depending on the needs of the child. There was a general feeling that the second or third alternatives would be most suitable in urban areas, the first would be best for the remainder of the county but the choice would depend on both the number of children and the cost of implementation. There was also a suggestion that in areas where the number of eligible children was small an extension to intermediate schools might be possible.

¹²⁵ GA BC/E/1/19 Cardiff Borough Education Committee Minutes 16th September, 1919.

¹²⁶ Municipal secondary schools were established under the Education Act 1902 and generally did not charge fees. There were twelve in south Wales. See G. E. Jones, (1990) *op. cit.* p. 24.

¹²⁷ WGAS E/SB 71/2/43 Swansea Borough Education Sub Committee, 10th October, 1919.

¹²⁸ WGAS E/SB 71/2/43 *ibid.*

¹²⁹ *ibid.*

The major objection to this option was that the curriculum would not be “sufficiently elastic, and the needs of the young persons intended to be provided for would be better met by a School with a distinct technical, commercial or agricultural bias as the case may be.”¹³⁰ The re-organisation of elementary education in Carmarthenshire proved very challenging. Although there was no apparent political pressure or financial constraints, the local authority faced huge organisational difficulties which were further complicated by a high number of the non-provided schools. In order to illustrate these difficulties, the Committee examined a number of rural areas and gave as an example the area around Caio in North Carmarthenshire which would produce only about sixty-five children of an age to attend a central school, clearly not a viable option. Neither would drawing children from a wider area be an option as this would encounter problems of transport and attendance especially during the winter months. The only possible alternative would be Higher Top classes in some elementary schools and although the curriculum would be limited, this could be offset by centralised facilities for practical subjects.¹³¹ Carmarthenshire Education Committee initially focused its scheme for reorganisation in the industrialised east of the county, where the child population was larger, and left the rural areas largely untouched. In January 1923 the Board of Education wrote to Carmarthenshire County Council to say that while it “viewed with sympathy the proposal to establish Higher Tops in a number of elementary schools”¹³² it suggested that the Local Education Authority should consider a more radical re-organisation which, in the long term would be more cost effective. HMI also proposed that some of the very small schools with poor academic standards and unsuitable buildings¹³³ were closed or merged and that “no permanent appointments to be made to rural schools”¹³⁴ for the foreseeable future.

Carmarthenshire County Council¹³⁵ also proposed that the Part III local authorities of Carmarthen Borough and Llanelli should be absorbed into the County Council to make re-organisation more cost effective. This was promptly rejected and

¹³⁰ CAS CC/ED/1/1/8 Carmarthenshire Education Committee Minutes, 12th June 1919, p. 384.

¹³¹ CAS ED/BK/695/2/4 Llangunnick (Llangynog) Vaughn’s Charity School – Log Book.

¹³² CAS CC/ED/1/1/10 Carmarthenshire Education Committee Meeting 18th Jan 1923.

¹³³ CAS CC/ED/1/1/9 Carmarthenshire Education Committee Minutes. For example at Capel Dewi (18 children) and Alma (37 children) and the situation in the St Clears and Llanedy was to be reviewed for possible closures. There were also a number of schools on the Board of Education Blacklist.

¹³⁴ CAS CC/ED/1/1/9 *ibid.*, 9th March 1921.

¹³⁵ CAS CC/ED/1/1/8 Carmarthenshire Education Committee Minutes 1919-1921 pp. 376 -383.

both local authorities made separate plans for reorganisation.¹³⁶ Carmarthen Borough planned to establish a central school in the town to accommodate about four hundred pupils to add to their establishment of two secondary schools,¹³⁷ as well as a model school to spread good practice. The very small Roman Catholic sector planned to replace their existing elementary school with a new building but had insufficient numbers to establish a separate senior school.¹³⁸ Llanelly Urban District Council pressed ahead with plans for Higher Tops in some elementary schools and for a new central school at Stebonheath to improve its secondary provision.¹³⁹ A continuation school and a municipal secondary school were also planned to prepare suitable pupils for entry into higher education. This would be made possible because “certain funds provided by manufacturers are available, and scholarships will be offered by the recently established Education Board of the South Wales Manufacturers.”¹⁴⁰

In 1919, discussions about the federalisation of the United Kingdom began, an event which was to have long term influences over Welsh thinking about education.¹⁴¹ There was an initial intention to exclude Wales from the talks and “strong lobbying from Welsh representatives was required”¹⁴² to get Wales included **in the debate**. Sir Robert Thomas¹⁴³ put down an amendment which reminded the House of Commons that

“the little country of Wales was overlooked. The Motion merely deals with Scotland and Ireland, and I think I have a right to claim that the little country to which I belong, gallant little Wales, has every right, when the question of Devolution is discussed, to be considered at least on a level with Scotland and Ireland.”¹⁴⁴

The amendment was accepted, and Welsh representatives including Lord Aberdare were included in discussions. The powers that were to be devolved were wide

¹³⁶ Both local authorities had few schools. Carmarthen Borough had six including two Church of England and one Roman Catholic. Llanelly had ten schools including one Higher Elementary School, one Church of England and one Roman Catholic.

¹³⁷ CAS Museum 199 Carmarthen Borough Education Committee Minutes, 23rd September 1919.

¹³⁸ CAS Museum 199 *ibid*.

¹³⁹ CAS CC/ED/L/4 Carmarthenshire Education Committee Minutes.

¹⁴⁰ CAS CC/ED/1/1/8 *op. cit.*, p. 386.

¹⁴¹ *Conference on Devolution. Letter from Mr Speaker to the Prime Minister* (HMSO, London, 1919).

¹⁴² Evans, A., *Four Nations and a constitution: the Conference on Devolution 1919-1920* Unpublished pdf document <https://fournationshistory.wordpress.com/2014/10/27/four-nations-and-a-constitution-the-conference-on-devolution-1919-1920/>.

¹⁴³ Member of Parliament for Wrexham.

¹⁴⁴ PP. Hansard HC 3rd June 1919 Col. 1795-1976, Vol. 116.

ranging including all sectors of education. Although the plans for devolution failed, the idea of achieving a separate education system for Wales remained, led by Welsh Members of Parliament and the Federation of Education Committees.¹⁴⁵

National policy and direction, 1926 - 1939

In 1920, the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education was re-established under the chairmanship of Sir William Hadow and produced six very influential reports.¹⁴⁶ In 1926, the Committee began to deliberate about the future of education for older children: how schools should be organised and what testing arrangements would be appropriate.¹⁴⁷ In 1926, arguably the most influential of the Hadow Committee's reports, *The Education of the Adolescent* was published. Its proposals consolidated the terms of the Education Act 1918 and suggested a pattern for secondary education legislation that was to dominate education thinking for the next decades. While its contents were considered to have been a new and exciting proposal for the reform of secondary education,¹⁴⁸ it merely reiterated the contents of Circular 1350 published in 1925, which proposed a tripartite system of secondary education.¹⁴⁹ The report from the Consultative Committee recommended that the current all-age elementary system should be replaced by two phases: primary and secondary which would create a more diverse but equal education system for children over eleven years of age.¹⁵⁰ The curriculum should be differentiated to meet the needs of all children. It would not be vocational but "practical in the broadest sense and brought directly into relations with the facts of everyday life."¹⁵¹ The two types of schools, modern and technical, intended for children who would be leaving school at the age of fifteen, would be run parallel to grammar schools. This would ensure that all pupils would "go forward, though along different paths. Selection by differentiation takes the place of selection by

¹⁴⁵ NLW Minor Deposit 701 Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Federation of Education Committees, (Wales and Monmouthshire).

¹⁴⁶ Reports of the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education: *Differentiation of the Curriculum for Boys and Girls* (1923); *Psychological Tests of Educable Capacity* (1924).; *The Education of the Adolescent* (1926).; *Books in Public Elementary Schools* (1928); *The Primary School* (1931); *Infant and Nursery Schools* (1933).

¹⁴⁷ *The Education of the Adolescent* (HMSO, London, 1926). p. iv

¹⁴⁸ See for example M. Katz, 'From Bryce to Newson: Assumptions of British Educational Reports 1895 – 1963', *International Review of Education*, Vol 11, No 3: (1965), 287-304.; B. Simon, (1974), op. cit.

¹⁴⁹ *The New Prospect in Education* (HMSO: 1928), p. 1; *Primary Education: Suggestions for the consideration of teachers and others concerned with the work of Primary Schools* (HMSO: 1959, p. 4. See also See NA ED 97.

¹⁵⁰ A detailed plan of implementation is contained in *The New Prospect in Education*, ibid.

¹⁵¹ *The Education of the Adolescent*, ibid., p. 175.

elimination.”¹⁵² It was essential, the Report concluded, to consider the needs of the adolescent and identify suitable provision and curricula that would meet the needs of all children, not only the most intelligent.¹⁵³ To ensure that the reorganisation would include a quality curriculum it was recommended that the senior elementary phase should last at least four years and the school leaving age raised to fifteen. This extension of school life would have the added, and very important effect of lessening unemployment during a critical period of depression by not flooding the job market with large numbers of juveniles. The Report recognised that the continuing existence of non-provided elementary education would be extremely detrimental to any future reorganisation. From evidence collected by the Committee, it had been established that Directors of Education were of the opinion that this should be abolished immediately to allow for proper reorganisation.

While the *Education of the Adolescent* promoted an understanding that secondary education would be provided in a variety of schools suitable for children of different abilities, there remained a considerable emphasis on the importance of grammar schools which was “in tune with the wishes of the Board itself.”¹⁵⁴ The proposals were viewed with some distaste by various organisations, the Trades Union Congress and teachers’ unions in particular, who wanted much more parity within the system. It was felt that the proposals perpetuated the idea that grammar schools should be “a lift or stairway to the higher stories of the social structure,”¹⁵⁵ and open to the suggestion that only some pupils should be allowed access. The notion of segregating children at the end of the primary phase caused disquiet and it was widely reported that in the main, teachers associations were against it.¹⁵⁶

These proposals followed earlier demands from the teachers’ unions and the Labour Party to reorganise education for older children, and in 1922, the Labour Party had published a policy document ‘*Education for All*.’¹⁵⁷ This suggested that the only suitable form of education system for a “democratic community”¹⁵⁸ was one

¹⁵² *The Education of the Adolescent* op. cit., p 78.

¹⁵³ *ibid.*, p. 36.

¹⁵⁴ M. Hyndman, Multilateralism and the Spens Report: Evidence from the Archives. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, Vol. 24: (1976), 242-253, p. 243.

¹⁵⁵ Sir Eustace Percy, Hansard 15th July 1932 in O. Banks, *Parity and Prestige in English Secondary Education* (Routledge and Kegan Paul: 1955), p. 124.

¹⁵⁶ *Times Educational Supplement*, 30.3 1929, p. 145 in M. Hyndman, (1976) op. cit. p. 243.

¹⁵⁷ R. H. Tawney, (1922) op. cit.

¹⁵⁸ *ibid.*, p. 1.

organised in two stages continuously until the age of sixteen. The primary sector should end at eleven years of age and be preparatory to the “education of the adolescent” which would last until children reached sixteen years of age. It proposed increasing the number of free places in grammar schools to enable more working class children greater opportunity and access to this prestigious sector. It has, however, been suggested that this illustrated the conflicting views about education within the Labour Party as it “set the educational system in the midst of the struggle to replace a divided materialistic society with one properly attuned to intellectual and spiritual values.”¹⁵⁹ While Tawney’s ideas were well promoted there was a fundamental understanding in certain sectors of the Labour Party that his proposals were not sufficiently radical. They were merely a more generously funded extension of the existing secondary system and there was no serious proposal to change the *status quo* in education to an egalitarian system. Small alterations were considered sufficient and there was little enthusiasm for any major reform.¹⁶⁰

By the time *The Education of the Adolescent* was published the Conservative Party was back in Government and another debate about the philosophy of education began. For the Conservative Party the main stumbling block was raising the school leaving age. The President of the Board of Education, Lord Eustace Percy,¹⁶¹ “announced that he had no intention of upsetting the long term plans of the local authorities based as these were already based on the assumption that most children would leave school at fourteen.”¹⁶² Percy’s rejection of raising the school leaving age was centred on his belief that education was not a social service for unemployed juveniles but an investment in the future of the most able children.¹⁶³ His reputation as President rested completely on his defence of secondary education for the brightest and best pupils. However, there is some evidence that he was ambivalent about the matter as he had also written that “I have never contemplated ... the ‘segregation of different types of boy and girl minds’ in different schools.”¹⁶⁴ Regardless of this, the plans laid out for the future of secondary education in *The Education of the Adolescent*, were strictly along tripartite lines.¹⁶⁵

¹⁵⁹ R. Barker, op. cit., p. 43.

¹⁶⁰ B. Simon, (1965), op. cit.

¹⁶¹ Lord Eustace Percy was a British diplomat, Conservative Member of Parliament for Hastings.

¹⁶² R. Barker, *ibid.*, p. 57.

¹⁶³ *The Times* 1st Jan, 1927; *H C Deb* 5 s. 1061, 16 Feb, 1927 in R. Barker, *ibid.*, p. 57.

¹⁶⁴ *Times Educational Supplement* 30.3 1929, p. 145 in M. Hyndman, (1976), op. cit., p. 243.

¹⁶⁵ The details of the organisation plan are laid out in *The New Prospect in Education* op. cit.

Education development in south and south west Wales after 1926

In 1924 there were one thousand, nine hundred and eight all age elementary schools in Wales¹⁶⁶ accommodating just under half a million children between five and fourteen years of age. There were also one hundred and thirty nine secondary schools, with 32,273 pupils.¹⁶⁷ This difference between the two sectors was a major concern and meant there were few opportunities for children from elementary schools to progress into the secondary sector. This was despite the fact that the intermediate sector continued to grow.¹⁶⁸ There was an increased demand for secondary school places, which put the system under enormous pressure: in terms of accommodation and, eventually in terms of finance at a macro and micro level, in terms of grant funding and in free places. In spite of this level of demand there was also a high element of early leaving with more than fifty percent of boys and girls leaving before their sixteenth birthday. This, according to G.E. Jones, “was the main self-regulating mechanism in the system.”¹⁶⁹

There had been a number of organisational and financial problems which had limited the implementation of the Education Act 1918 in Wales, and as a result, all-age elementary schools provided education for the vast majority of children. Schools varied considerably in size with a preponderance of small schools in rural areas. Many school buildings were in poor condition lacking the basic facilities of running water, outside space and suitable equipment. All schools, but especially those in rural areas, were dogged by poor attendance due to adverse weather conditions and were subject to frequent and lengthy closures because of repeated epidemics of infectious disease.¹⁷⁰ HMI Reports for the period generally paint a dismal educational picture. In a visit to Llangennech Church of England Elementary School, HMI Mr G.E. Williams found that

“The conditions under which work is carried out are highly detrimental to the welfare of both children and staff since they depress staff and weary the children ... It appears that no measure of repairs or reconstruction can secure any real improvement on account of the unsatisfactory nature of the site and the extreme difficulty of the building ... It is recommended, in

¹⁶⁶ Education in England and Wales being the report of the Board of Education for the school year 1924-25, 1926 (Cmd. 2695), p. 90.

¹⁶⁷ *ibid.*, p. 108.

¹⁶⁸ G.E. Jones. (1982), *op. cit.*, p. 63.

¹⁶⁹ *ibid.*, p. 71.

¹⁷⁰ Details of school closures because of infectious diseases can be found in the Medical Officer of Health Reports for each Local Education Authority. See CAS WWH/2/2 for example.

support of the SMOH's conclusion that the school should be closed as soon as arrangements can be made to move all of the children."¹⁷¹

While this is an extreme example, criticisms of elementary schools were common and HMI found conditions and academic standards of great concern. Staffing in rural elementary schools was perceived as a major problem especially when unqualified teachers were observed teaching large mixed age groups.¹⁷² A second major difficulty was the fact that it was common for teachers who could not speak Welsh to be employed in monoglot Welsh speaking areas. It was also reported that many head teachers were incompetent. This was a long term problem and at Brooke Non Provided School the "Head has too many 'colds' ... couldn't attend Gardening Course ... in danger of developing into a 'happy fireman' type of head."¹⁷³ Another head teacher, at Myddfai Non Provided School was criticised as "unkempt in person and clothes. He has already been warned about his duties during my visit three months ago."¹⁷⁴ A special report on Llanllwni Church of England School in 1919 was particularly damning:

"Most of the work of the School, especially that of the upper standards is very unsatisfactory and the children are extremely backward in practically every subject. There was a very striking disparity between their written work ... problems have answers correct but had the working entirely wrong ... it is clear that copying is very prevalent."¹⁷⁵

HMI found the organisation of the school was wholly inadequate and considered that the head teacher should show "more activity and interest in the children."¹⁷⁶ It is interesting to note that by 1922 the situation at the school had reversed. The SMO for Carmarthenshire reported that a Soup Kitchen Committee had been set up there to supply the seventy two children with a mid-day meal of Welsh Broth. Ingredients were paid for by Lady Mansel of Maesyrcrugiau Manor and prepared by the school caretaker. The School Medical Officer reported that "The headmaster is emphatic that the attendance has improved at the school and the general health of the children has greatly improved since the scheme has been introduced."¹⁷⁷ In the industrial

¹⁷¹ CAS ED/BK 4, HMI Reports for Carmarthenshire 1921-1924.

¹⁷² Although no breakdown by local authority is available across Wales about 60 percent of teachers were qualified. Report of the Board of Education for the year 1923-24, 1924-25 (Cmd. 2443).

¹⁷³ CAS ED/BK 400 HMI Report Brooke School 15th September 1941.

¹⁷⁴ CAS ED/BK 402 HMI Report Myddfai Non Provided School 27th June, 1939.

¹⁷⁵ CAS CC/ED/1/1/8 Minutes 1919-1921. Education Committee Meeting Minutes 13th June, 1919.

¹⁷⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁷⁷ CAS WWH/2/2 Annual Report of the School Medical Officer for year ending 31st December, 1922.

areas although the schools were generally larger it is apparent that the standards were equally as poor. For example, the 1925 HMI report on Ynyslyd Council School¹⁷⁸ in Aberdare, showed that standards in all areas of the curriculum, but particularly in English and reading, were poor. There was a complete lack of thoroughness in teaching and children were frequently distracted by the noise from the adjacent main road and railway. These factors had resulted in only six pupils passing the County Scholarship examination in five years.

In south and south west Wales local authorities plans to implement the recommendations of *The Education of the Adolescent* were affected by the same organisational and financial problems that they faced in 1918. The plan to divide all age elementary schools into primary and secondary sectors was further complicated by the plan to raise the school leaving age. This re-organisational model necessitated the closure of elementary schools and to gather sufficient children to form viable primary schools, as well as three types of secondary schools. In rural areas small schools and low pupils numbers made this very difficult and even in urban areas where the child population was larger and schools closer together, there were high cost implications especially if the practical curriculum advised by Hadow was to be successfully delivered. Despite these difficulties the overall response to the proposals was very positive although the cost of any kind of reorganisation was immediately seen as prohibitive. A Carmarthenshire LEA representative at conference reported:

“The financial aspects of the problem are a matter of extreme importance. The whole question hinges around this one. All the other difficulties and questions can be overcome if the financial hurdle can be negotiated.”¹⁷⁹

The Federation of Education Committees was of the opinion that it might be possible to raise the school leaving age to fifteen in Wales by 1931 as long as the Board of Education would provide one hundred percent grants for the necessary additional school buildings, and that satisfactory maintenance allowances were paid to older children remaining at school.¹⁸⁰ This proposal was not met with any enthusiasm at the Board of Education and officials offered a counterproposal of a fifty percent grant

¹⁷⁸ GA EA/26/5 HMI Inspection Report Aberdare.

¹⁷⁹ CAS CC/ED/1/1/14 Carmarthenshire Borough Education Committee Minutes 10th November 1927.

¹⁸⁰ NLW Minor Deposit 701, *Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Federation of Education Committees (Wales and Monmouthshire 29th July 1929.*

towards the service of loans that would be needed to facilitate expansion. This, however, was considered “totally inadequate to meet the needs of Wales and particularly the distressed areas.”¹⁸¹ A second major factor that mitigated against reorganisation was the demographic shift in child population which made long term planning complicated and difficult. In Merthyr Tydfil, for example, the school population almost halved over a period of ten years, leaving expensive empty accommodation unevenly spread across the borough.¹⁸² While this is an extreme example of depopulation it was a common to other areas and, as it was also accompanied by a fall in the birth rate, the child population profile of many local authorities changed dramatically. Cardiff Borough Council, for example, predicted that while there was a decline in the number of infant school pupils there was a large bulge in the junior school population which would affect the secondary sector in years to come. Similarly, in Carmarthen, in 1929, pressure from the Board of Education to reduce class sizes identified the same imbalance of numbers. However, the reduction in child population did have the interesting consequence of offering a “remarkable increase in opportunity for entry to a Welsh Secondary Schools.”¹⁸³

The dual system once again proved a major obstacle to reorganisation because it was either unable or unwilling to reform. This was due to a number of complex factors: lack of capital funds and an unwillingness to relinquish schools on religious grounds. It became clear that any reorganisation of the elementary sector could only take place with the total co-operation of the non-provided sector, and even then only with substantial financial support from central and local government. Although there was a willingness on the part of Government to financially support the sector, the idea of funding non-provided schools from the rates in return for representation on the board of Managers remained abhorrent to local authorities, nonconformist churches and Labour Party affiliated groups despite the fact that, in Wales especially, attitudes had begun to soften.¹⁸⁴

The implementation of the recommendations of the Hadow Report in south and south west Wales was slow and the Board of Education began to put covert

¹⁸¹ NLW Minor Deposit 701 18th October 1929.

¹⁸² GA BMT/1 /49 *Merthyr Tydfil Education Committee Minutes* 1932.

¹⁸³ G. E. Jones, (1982), *op. cit.*, p. 172.

¹⁸⁴ NLW SD/ED 7-10, *Church in Wales Diocesan Education Minutes* 1937.

pressure on the local authorities. Carmarthenshire LEA was closely questioned about the accuracy of its reporting and in March 1929 the Board of Education invoked Circular 1397.¹⁸⁵ Returns to the Board had indicated that the establishment of teachers was insufficient to meet the needs of the schools and enquired what steps the local authority intended taking to immediately eliminate classes of over sixty children. The LEA's response was that the Board had been misinformed about the number of oversized classes because head teachers had completed the returns incorrectly. The consequence of this was that head teachers were instructed to manipulate class sizes so as not to show any classes above fifty.¹⁸⁶ In September the Board of Education again wrote to Carmarthenshire LEA asking when the authority planned to eliminate classes with over fifty pupils¹⁸⁷ and head teachers were again told to alter the figures on the returns. The matter of class size was very difficult in many areas. Education Committee Minutes record that in some schools, classrooms were too small to accommodate two teachers with classes of forty children each, and in others the total accommodation was not sufficient for the number of pupils at the school.

In 1931, local authorities began to consider how they would reorganise elementary education. Carmarthenshire LEA proposed a three year staged process of reorganisation. The first part of the scheme proposed a reorganisation to provide primary and secondary schools in the more populous east of the county around Garnant. In rural areas, elementary education would continue with some schools providing advanced instruction in higher tops.¹⁸⁸ Instruction Centres for practical subjects would be widely established across both rural and industrial areas to support the all age elementary schools.¹⁸⁹ Even these small changes would entail a widespread redistribution of head teachers and teachers, and the LEA was doubtful if the Board of Education would accept the plan as it was expensive "at such a time, in view of economies adopted by the Government."¹⁹⁰ It proposed, once again, that the two Part III local authorities of Llanelly and Carmarthen Borough be incorporated into the County. There was a suggestion that because the population of both

¹⁸⁵ NA ED 22/180 Circular 1397 Raising of school leaving age.

¹⁸⁶ CAS CC/ED/1/1/16 Education Minutes 1929.

¹⁸⁷ CAS CC/ED/1/1/16, *ibid.*, show that there were 6 classes of over 70 children and 31 classes with between 50-60 pupils.

¹⁸⁸ At Carway, Gwynfryn, Trimsaran, Five Roads, Mynydd Cerigg, Tumble, Glanamman, Tygroes and Nantygroes See CAS CC/ED/1/1/18 Education Minutes 12th February, 1931.

¹⁸⁹ CAS CC/ED/1/1/18, *ibid.*

¹⁹⁰ CAS CC/ED/1/1/22 Education Committee, 1934.

authorities fell below the required levels to be a Part III authority they should both relinquish their responsibility for education.¹⁹¹ Integration of the three authorities would mean a much more cost effective system and one which would allow cross border catchments and easier reorganisation.¹⁹² The proposal was not accepted by either Part III authorities and by 1934 the Carmarthenshire LEA was discussing whether the Board of Education would contemplate any reorganisation at all in view of the “economies adopted by Government.”¹⁹³

There is no evidence that the Diocese of St Davids made any plans for the reorganisation of their schools in Carmarthenshire, but HMI M.H. Davies put forward some tentative ideas for non-provided senior education to Carmarthenshire County Council. He recognised that the siting of any new schools would be critical and took as an example the area around St Clears. There were six non-provided schools in the immediate vicinity with an approximate child population of four hundred which could provide a viable secondary school with the necessary facilities. This idea was transferred to Llandovery and a number of other areas although some schools would be very small.¹⁹⁴ The proposals were not met with any great enthusiasm by Carmarthenshire LEA and were not accepted as it planned to delay a complete reorganisation because of the organisational difficulties it faced. Although Carmarthenshire established four central schools during the early 1930s, two hundred and thirty one all-age unreorganised elementary school remained catering for thirty thousand school children.¹⁹⁵

Glamorgan LEA adopted a very proactive approach to the “Centralisation of Schools”¹⁹⁶ and planned a radical reorganisation which included converting the five new elementary schools under construction into central schools. The curriculum of central schools would be secondary in nature with a rural, industrial or commercial bias depending on the location of the school. However, selective secondary education would be expanded wherever possible. Despite these proposals the economic situation slowed the reorganisation process considerably and was still

¹⁹¹ The population of Llanelly Urban District was 38,416 with a child population of 6,474. Carmarthen Borough population was 10,310 with a child population of only 1,494.

¹⁹² CAS CC ED/1/1/22 Education Committee Meeting 12th April 1934, p. 3471.

¹⁹³ CAS CC/ED/1/1/22 *ibid.* Twenty nine centres were proposed in all.

¹⁹⁴ NLW SD/ED 7-10 Diocesan Education Minutes Some Notes For Consideration and Discussion on Reorganisation In Carmarthenshire, M. H. Davies HMI 3rd June 1937.

¹⁹⁵ NLW SD/ED 7-10, 3rd June 1937, *ibid.*

¹⁹⁶ GA GC/EDEE/4 Glamorgan Education Committee Minutes, 15th January 1929.

underway place in 1939.¹⁹⁷ There was no suggestion that voluntary schools were to be absorbed into the state school system as the Education Committee felt that this would be “regressive in character.”¹⁹⁸

Cardiff LEA was very reluctant to make any changes to provision,¹⁹⁹ and because of this, was put under considerable pressure by the Board of Education. It was instructed to reduce the cost of elementary education which was considered excessive compared to other neighbouring local authorities and told the Board would be prepared to review the question of grant when it received the authority’s proposals for savings.²⁰⁰ In 1929, in common with other local authorities, Cardiff was faced with having to reduce class sizes in accordance with Board of Education Circular 1397 to a maximum of forty at senior level and to fifty at primary level, which would produce difficulties in the supply of teachers and accommodation across the city.²⁰¹ To complicate matters still further, the inconsistency of pupil numbers and the raising of the school leaving age to fifteen would mean a shortfall in accommodation of almost two thousand places. In 1929, secondary accommodation in Cardiff consisted of six secondary schools, one technical school; the Smith Junior Nautical School and a number of continuation schools. In line with the local authority’s policy of selective senior education, in February 1930, it decided to erect two new secondary schools with accommodation for one thousand seven hundred pupils and to find temporary accommodation for the remainder.²⁰² There does not appear to have been any intention of establish a central school sector in the city and as late as 1939 there was only one, at Whitchurch, which was actually under the management of Glamorgan County Council.

In 1929, Cardiff LEA questioned the wisdom of raising the school leaving age because, as it had not actually been placed on the statute book, it was not a legal requirement.²⁰³ This attitude prompted the Glamorgan branch of the National Union of Teachers to put pressure on the Labour administration of 1930 to include a proposal in their manifesto to make raising of the school leaving age a statutory

¹⁹⁷ GA GC/EDEE/7 Glamorgan Education Committee Minutes, 1939.

¹⁹⁸ GA GC/EDEE/4 *ibid.*

¹⁹⁹ GA BC/E/1/30 *ibid.*, 10th November 1929.

²⁰⁰ See GA BC/E/5/26 Education Committee Minutes, 1929.

²⁰¹ GA BC/E/1/30 Cardiff Borough Council Education Minutes, *op. cit.*

²⁰² GA BC/E/1/30 *ibid.*

²⁰³ *ibid.*, 10th November 1929.

obligation “to allay the uncertainty that now exists.”²⁰⁴ The situation in Cardiff remained almost unchanged until after the Education Act 1944 with the majority of children attending all-age elementary schools. The large Roman Catholic school sector in Cardiff found reorganisation difficult but by 1938 had planned to provide “accommodation for 1,620 children in four new schools”²⁰⁵ at a cost of £56,665. There is no evidence that the Church in Wales Diocese of Llandaff planned a similar reorganisation of their schools.

The economy of Merthyr Tydfil Borough Council was badly hit during the interwar years and this affected its ability to reorganise elementary education. The crisis began in 1927 as pupil numbers fell dramatically and although the Board of Education grant remained the same, it was offset by the fact that the reduction in pupil numbers meant that the cost per pupil rose substantially. The LEA became very short of money, and although funds did not run out completely, the rise in teachers’ salaries in 1927 made this a close run thing. No money was available to maintain buildings, and a further drain on finances was the fact that the local authority was servicing loans that it had previously used to build new schools. Conversely, the school leaving age began to rise almost by default, as large numbers of pupils remained in both elementary and secondary schools beyond the school leaving age as there was no local employment for juveniles. The fact that education in Merthyr was free and the local authority provided meals, milk and medical services was very beneficial to children whose parents were unemployed or on low wages. This situation continued throughout the 1930s and in 1938 a large percentage of children over fourteen years of age remained at school. The Juvenile Committee of the local authority actively sought work for children both locally and further afield and representatives from the *Hornsey and District SOS Committee for Merthyr* visited the schools to encourage school leavers to consider working in the London Boroughs. In spite of the difficult financial situation, welfare schemes for children continued and reorganisation took place slowly.²⁰⁶

Although Rhondda Urban District Council had suffered badly during the depression years it had established a reputation for providing high levels of free secondary education and was ready to reorganise all its elementary schools. Its

²⁰⁴ GA UDR/E/1/13 Rhondda UD Education Committee Minutes, April 1930.

²⁰⁵ *Catholic Herald*, 12th August 1938.

²⁰⁶ GRO. B/MTE/1/1/11, Merthyr Tydfil Borough Council Education Minutes, 1938-1939.

communications with the Board of Education suggest that it was prepared to raise a loan to facilitate the construction of new schools as these would be essential. The Rhondda Education Minutes²⁰⁷ reflect the difficulties involved and show that a number of head teachers would have to be made redundant or their salaries reduced when schools were downgraded during reorganisation. Despite this, in a letter to Rhondda Education Committee, the National Union of Teachers expressed their concerns that any reorganisation would not be radical enough. It pointed out that there was a danger in opening new schools that “perpetuated the existing secondary school type, and holds that this tendency is contrary in spirit and intention of the Hadow Report.”²⁰⁸ The letter also suggested that the curriculum planned for any new schools should be broad and flexible especially as it would be largely experimental in character.²⁰⁹

In south and south west Wales elementary education remained largely untouched by reorganisation. *The Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Anti-Tuberculosis Service in Wales* voiced concern for the health of the children who spent large parts of their lives at rural schools. It commented that parents and local authorities were too ready to accept poor, unhygienic conditions and especially “primitive and most objectionable sanitary arrangements.”²¹⁰ The report also points to the fact that, although HMI frequently condemned the condition of school buildings, their recommendations were ignored by the Board of Education and the local authorities.²¹¹ The long term effect of poor school accommodation, poor diet and lack of the provision of school meals was perceived as very injurious to the health of the school child.

Education: National policy and direction before 1936

In 1929 with the return of a Labour administration, Sir Charles Trevelyan, President of the Board of Education, was assured that he would be able to realise Labour’s election manifesto pledge of raising the school leaving.²¹² This had been central in its policy statement *Labour and the Nation* which had been committed to

²⁰⁷ TRL Rhondda UDC Minute Books, 1926-1939.

²⁰⁸ GA UDR/E/1/13 op. cit.

²⁰⁹ GA UDR/E/1/13 ibid.

²¹⁰ *The Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Anti-Tuberculosis Service in Wales and Monmouthshire* (HMSO: London, 1939), p. 191

²¹¹ ibid., p 191.

²¹² B. Simon, (1974) op. cit., p. 153.

“equal educational opportunity for every child.”²¹³ Trevelyan was aware that the recommendations of the Consultative Committee were not being used effectively²¹⁴ and were certainly not totally in accord with Labour’s thinking. The secretary²¹⁵ of the Labour Education Advisory Committee suggested that Trevelyan consider a draft document: ‘*A unified system of post primary education*’ in an effort to bring Board of Education policy into line with that of the Labour party. The document was highly controversial and included a common code for secondary education. It was not well received and Maurice Holmes pointed out that if any form of common scheme was established there would be a consequential loss of income to the direct grant and endowed sector. This might mean that they would choose to leave the state sector which would be damaging to the reputation of the Board. He also pointed out that this would be contrary to the Hadow scheme, which suggested that there should be different types of secondary schools “to suit the varying capacity of pupils and their varying after careers’ – more a Board principle as stated, perhaps, than the Hadow philosophy.”²¹⁶ There was a general consideration at the Board of Education that the “proposals were ‘dangerous’.”²¹⁷ Additionally, the minority Labour administration of 1929 had more important issues to deal with than education. Unemployment and depression were at a record high and overshadowed any other matter, especially as Ramsey MacDonald was implacably opposed to raising the school leaving age, believing that it would cause dissension across the political spectrum. There was a high degree of negativity from the Chancellor²¹⁸ about any extra spending on education.²¹⁹ In spite of this many Labour party members wanted radical action but were warned in no uncertain terms that some sections of the party, employers in particular, would not countenance the removal of cheap labour from the work place.²²⁰

The idea of a common school was not new and was becoming widely used in the United States of America,²²¹ and there were similar and growing demands for

²¹³ B. Simon, (1974) op. cit., p. 154.

²¹⁴ *ibid.* p 154.

²¹⁵ Barbara Drake, secretary to the Labour Education Advisory Committee and niece of Beatrice Webb.

²¹⁶ NA ED 24/1651 in B. Simon, (1974) *ibid.*, p. 155.

²¹⁷ *ibid.*, p. 155.

²¹⁸ Philip Snowden, Member of Parliament for Colne Valley.

²¹⁹ B. Simon, (1974), *ibid.*, p. 154.

²²⁰ R. Barker, (1972) op. cit., pp. 58 – 59,

²²¹ D. Rubenstein and B. Simon, *The Evolution of the Comprehensive School 1926-1972* (Routledge and Kegan Paul: 1973), p. 4.

equality in secondary education in Germany and France.²²² There were also elements of this thinking in the Bryce Commission Report which was critical of the parallel system of elementary and secondary schools.²²³ It recommended that “All children should be educated together ‘and thus enjoy in their youth common interests and pursuits as the children of one country’.”²²⁴ In 1925, the Association of Assistant Masters²²⁵ and the National Association of Labour Teachers²²⁶ both suggested that a common secondary sector would remove social class barriers and meet the many different needs of a school population. In 1934, the Trades Union Congress presented evidence to the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education²²⁷ in support of multilateral schools, a proposal which may have been influenced by Welsh members who had had experience of attempts at reorganisation in rural areas. Morgan Jones²²⁸ had argued the case for multilateral schools in Wales for many years²²⁹ and in 1939, William Cove,²³⁰ reflecting on the Spens Report, suggested that they would be a “microcosm of real democracy.”²³¹

The 1936 Education Act

By the middle of the 1930s there was renewed agitation for a complete reform of elementary education. The social observations of Caradog Jones²³² and others²³³ acknowledged the poverty that existed in sections of the community and the lack of opportunity for advancement within the education system. Other research²³⁴ identified that, because of the low quota of free secondary school places allowed by the Board of Education, there was little chance of elementary school children gaining a place. As a result: “the relation between ability and opportunity was low indeed”²³⁵ which resulted in a lack of an educated skill base and this was perceived as

²²² Through the Einheitschule in Germany; the École Unique in France. D. Rubenstein and B. Simon op. cit.

²²³ Royal commission on secondary education, 1895 (Cmd 7862) (Bryce Commission).

²²⁴ Unreferenced in B. Simon, (1965) op. cit. in D. Rubenstein and B. Simon, (1973) *ibid.*, p. 126.

²²⁵ The A.M.A. Journal of the Incorporated Association of Assistant Masters January 1925, *ibid.*, p. 15

²²⁶ Education: A Policy. (National Association of Labour Teachers: 1930) in R. Barker, op. cit., p. 66

²²⁷ TUC Memorandum of Evidence to the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education, Trades Union Congress Annual Report 1934, pp. 144-5 in R. Barker, *ibid.*, p. 70.

²²⁸ Member of Parliament for Caerphilly, and Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education.

²²⁹ PP. Hansard, HC 17th June 1935.

²³⁰ Labour member of Parliament for Aberavon.

²³¹ PP. Hansard HC 15th February 1939 in R. Barker, op. cit., p. 73.

²³² D. Caradog Jones ed, *The Social Survey of Merseyside Vol 1* (UPL, Hodder and Stoughton Ltd: 1934).

²³³ For example J. Hanley, *Grey Children* (Methuen: London, 1937).; J. Boyd Orr, *Food Health and Income* (Macmillan: London, 1936).

²³⁴ By the London School of Economics and published J. L. Grey and Pearl Moshinsky, *Sociological Review*, Vol XXVII, No 5: (1935) quoted in B. Simon, (1974) op. cit., p. 254.

²³⁵ B. Simon, (1974), *ibid.*, p. 254.

damaging to the future prosperity of Great Britain. There was also a growing perception that the secondary sector overall was not providing the leadership or a high level of technological skills which were required in a rapidly changing world. It was clear that this situation had to change.

The British economy had begun to stabilise slowly, and by 1935 “national income was up by as much as £386 million.”²³⁶ There was a growing feeling that there was no longer a need to impose severe financial restrictions on education unless it was with “a fixed intention to confine working-class children to a minimum of elementary schooling under predominantly bad conditions.”²³⁷ The reluctance to spend on education had been ongoing and in fact Ernest Evans²³⁸ noted in a debate that the only time that education was discussed in the House was when estimates were being discussed and even then these were “very limited in their scope.”²³⁹ Progress had been at a standstill for years and an article in *Education*²⁴⁰ pointed out that “it is certain that the thumb-print of the Treasury is to be found on every page of every regulation issued by the Board of Education during the last four years.”²⁴¹

While there had been some reorganisation of elementary education in England and Wales this had not always been in the best way. For example many nursery and infant schools had been combined with junior departments to save money and this was not in the interests of younger children.²⁴² However, in Wales, the number of schools on the Board of Education’s blacklist had almost halved²⁴³ and new schools were being built, despite the fact that pupil numbers were dropping significantly.²⁴⁴ The demand for secondary education was high and in 1936 over twenty two percent of children attended secondary schools in Wales, double the figure in England.²⁴⁵ Most Welsh secondary education was either completely or partially free of charge²⁴⁶ and local authorities had won the battle with the Board of Education over this part of grant funding. The reputation of secondary schools

²³⁶ B. Simon, (1974) op. cit., p 197.

²³⁷ *ibid.*, p 226.

²³⁸ Member of Parliament for Cardiganshire and later the University of Wales.

²³⁹ Hansard HC 17th June 1935 Vol 303 Column 90.

²⁴⁰ *Education* 14th June 1935.

²⁴¹ Hansard HC *ibid.*

²⁴² Hansard HC *ibid.*

²⁴³ *Education in 1935 being the report of the Board of Education and the statistics of public education for England and Wales., 1935-36 (Cmd. 5290).*

²⁴⁴ In Wales there was a 3 percent fall in pupil numbers in 1935 and 4 percent in 1936.

²⁴⁵ B. Simon, (1974) *ibid.*, See Table 4, p. 365.

²⁴⁶ This equated to 77.9 per cent of the secondary school population. 1935-36 (Cmd. 5290) *ibid.*

remained very high and there remained a consensus that central schools provided an inferior education. Morgan Jones pointed out that, in his view, there were two types of child: one academically minded the other vocationally inclined and the best way to cater for both kinds of children would be in a “multi-bias school.”²⁴⁷

The discussion at Cabinet about the whole issue of education reform acknowledged that there was “some measure of discontent in some quarters as regards the Government’s educational policy”²⁴⁸ and an awareness that the Hadow Report recommendations had not been as influential as had been hoped. It was recognised that the next step forward was to raise the school leaving age and after meetings between Government and the School Leaving Age Council it was agreed to widen the discussion to all interested groups. The problems of funding non-provided sector reorganisation emerged once again and “it had been made abundantly clear that, unless they could be assisted by a building grant, the denominations would not be able to play their proper part.”²⁴⁹ Government were very reluctant to increase the grant as there was a feeling that if the non-provided sector were more liberally funded it would make further financial demands after the school leaving age had been raised. The President to the Board of Education,²⁵⁰ put forward four possible suggestions for inclusion in future legislation. The first was to raise the school leaving age to fifteen without exemptions for employment and with maintenance allowance, and the second proposed raising the school leaving age to sixteen with exemptions and no maintenance. This would revive the earlier Labour Party idea of removing low paid juveniles from the workforce at a time of continuing high unemployment. The last two returned to the proposals of the 1918 Education Act and included continuation schools but these were discarded as being impracticable. There were also major difficulties involved with implementing the first two. Even if accepted, the ‘appointed day’ for raising the school leaving age would have to be delayed until 1939 or 1940 to allow the local authorities to prepare. Additionally, the costs were considerable, in excess of £2.5 million a year, much of which would fall on council rate. The question of allowances was greeted with hostility by Government supporters, as was removing the exemption clause. There

²⁴⁷ PP Hansard 17th June, 1935 *ibid.*

²⁴⁸ NA Cabinet Memorandum. Educational Policy Committee 2nd Report. Memorandum by the President of the Board of Education, 15th July 1935 p. 39.

²⁴⁹ NA Cabinet Memorandum. Educational Policy Committee, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

²⁵⁰ Oliver Stanley, Conservative Member of Parliament for Westmorland serving in the National Government.

was general agreement that many parents would not accept the fact that children were being denied employment at fourteen years of age.

The Cabinet, after lengthy discussion, agreed that the proposal to raise the school leaving age with exemptions for employment should be included in the election manifesto.²⁵¹ This was not met with unanimous approval even within Cabinet. The Chancellor of the Exchequer reserved the right to intervene both on the question of financing the scheme and the date for implementation as there were beginning to be competing claims on resources from other departments. The Prime Minister, Ramsey MacDonald,²⁵² reluctantly agreed that the Board of Education should consult on the matter. There were lengthy discussions between the interested groups which were both damaging and delaying as the agricultural industry and the Federation of Master Cotton Spinners' Association were vociferously opposed to any changes in legislation. In spite of these difficulties, by 1936 there was an intention to introduce a new Education Act that would raise the school leaving age to fifteen. There would however be an exemption clause for 'beneficial employment' and this drew widespread criticism since, at the time, cheap juvenile labour was in high demand. The 1936 Education Act was therefore generally regarded "as a con."²⁵³

The Education Act 1936 had few recommendations that would improve the elementary sector and it remained very much below the standard of secondary education.²⁵⁴ Although there was increased grant aid to enable the building of new school accommodation this was to be delayed for three years and the appointed day for raising the school leaving age was to be 1st September 1939. By 1938, even the inadequate measures included in the Act began to be considered too expensive, and there was discussion in Government as to whether the appointed day for should be postponed. In the event the declaration of war on 1st September 1939 pre-empted that decision.

²⁵¹ NA Cabinet 38 (55) Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet 18th July 1935.

²⁵² Member of Parliament for Seaham, County Durham

²⁵³ B. Simon, *Education and Social Order 1940-1990* (Lawrence and Wishart: London, 1991), p. 28.

²⁵⁴ By 1938, only 63.5 per cent of all children over eleven years of age were in reorganised 'modern' schools'. C .L. Mowat, (1968) op.cit

The Spens Report

In 1933, contiguous with the demands for change in elementary education, the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education under the chairmanship of Will Spens²⁵⁵ was tasked with investigating the organisation and curriculum of the secondary sector.²⁵⁶ Its most important role, however, was “to press for the rationalization of a school system riddled with contradictions.”²⁵⁷ The matter of secondary education remained largely unresolved and local authorities had established a variety of schools interpreting education legislation as they saw fit. Although the “Hadowism and its elaboration to classical tripartism”²⁵⁸ of the 1920s remained, there was a growing agitation for a consideration of multilateralism. This had been on the educational agenda for many years and the Trades and Labour Councils pointed out that differentiation should only be on educational grounds “and not social, marking merely different grades of social rank.”²⁵⁹ Agitation for change had continued through the 1920s and the Trades Union Council made repeated demands for a review of equality in education. This was to be revisited in the Spens Report.

The nineteen members of the Spens Committee came from very varied backgrounds and from this membership a number of sub-committees were selected.²⁶⁰ One of the most important of these was the ‘code committee’²⁶¹ which dealt with the mass of evidence produced by witnesses and most particularly what effect the Hadow Report, *The Education of the Adolescent*, had had on secondary sector reorganisation. The Committee examined a number of issues and the classical curriculum was central to these. This had gradually evolved into a “general liberal curriculum, which was vaguely conceived as affording a preparation for the

²⁵⁵ Vice Chancellor of Cambridge University.

²⁵⁶ *Report of the Consultative Committee on Secondary Education with Special Reference to Grammar Schools and Technical High Schools* (HMSO; London, 1938) (Spens Report), p. iv.

²⁵⁷ J. Simon, The Shaping of the Spens Report on Secondary Education 1933-38 An Inside View Part I. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, Vol 25, No 1: (1977) 63 – 80, p. 64.

²⁵⁸ M. Hyndman, Multilateralism and the Spens Report: Evidence from the Archives. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, Vol 24: (1976), 242-253, p. 243.

²⁵⁹ D. Rubenstein and B. Simon, (1973), op. cit. p. 5.

²⁶⁰ Membership included Lady Sheena Simon, Member of Manchester Education Committee; William Brockington, member of the Burnham Committee and Director of Education for Leicestershire; T. J. Rees, Director of Education, Swansea Borough Council; Rev Professor Joseph Jones, Moderator of the Free Church Council, member of Breconshire County Council and the Federation of Education Committees; Doctor Dorothy Brock, head teacher of the Mary Datchelor School.

²⁶¹ J. Simon, op. cit., p. 65.

liberal professions.”²⁶² Clearly this was not a suitable preparation for employment for children who left school at fifteen or sixteen years of age. The situation had led to demands for a different curriculum that would include technical and vocational elements taught, perhaps, in a multilateral school. There was considerable support for this, particularly from some sectors of the teaching profession who saw it as a means of stopping segregation at eleven years of age. The Consultative Committee recognised that the tripartism of the Hadow Report was not unconditionally accepted, and re-examined the idea of a multilateral secondary sector. The Spens Report stressed in its introduction, that the Hadow Report never actually ruled out multilateral schools but rather recommended grammar and modern schools because there almost no experience of a multilateral system. However, it was under a “moral obligation at least to consider in its reports the merits of a multilateral form of secondary education.”²⁶³ Evidence to the Committee indicated that there were considerable differences of opinion about multilateral schools.²⁶⁴

The Association of Headmistresses, the Association of Headmasters and the Welsh Secondary Schools Association presented a variety of arguments against segregation at eleven years of age and were strongly in favour of multilateral schools. Other teachers’ unions were divided in their opinions and those working in central or technical schools were adamantly opposed as they might be personally affected in any reorganisation. While English local authorities and HMI wanted to retain a tripartite system, Welsh local authorities were very enthusiastic about multilateralism. They, like the members of the Welsh Secondary Schools Association, saw it as an answer to the many organisational problems in Wales. However, influential groups such as the Association of Directors and Secretaries for Education were ambivalent. Although they agreed with the idea of increased parity, they could not countenance multilateral schools mainly because there was a strong argument that the curriculum and traditions of the grammar school “under heavy criticism as it was”²⁶⁵ would overpower any new innovation in education.

In spite of the strength of support for multilateralism, the Consultative Committee finally decided that all post primary schools should continue to follow the

²⁶² *Report of the Consultative Committee on Secondary Education* op. cit., p. 350.

²⁶³ M. Hyndman, (1976), op. cit., p. 243.

²⁶⁴ M. Hyndman, *ibid.*, gives considerable detail of the opinions of various educational groups.

²⁶⁵ J. Simon, (1977) op.cit. p. 71.

tripartite system. The only exception to this could be in rural areas where the child population was small and a multilateral school might be considered. The Consultative Committee relied heavily on the evidence provided by their earlier report *Psychological Tests of Educable Capacity*²⁶⁶ when they made their decision. This had pointed out that it was possible to predict children's general intelligence from an early age and "if justice is to be done to their varying capacities, require types of education varying in certain important respects."²⁶⁷ This was strongly linked to curricular differentiation and the need to provide appropriately for each group of children. However, the Report did note that the classical curriculum of secondary schools, reinforced by an examination system, had not taken into account the growing educational demands for technical education.²⁶⁸ This was in contrast to the curriculum of the elementary sector where reorganisation had taken place and LEAs had been able to introduce curricula "of high educative value on non-academic lines with a certain bearing, more or less direct, on industry, commerce, and agriculture."²⁶⁹ The Report concluded that the secondary curriculum should be broadened and "thought of in terms of activity and experience rather than of knowledge to be acquired and facts to be stored."²⁷⁰

The Board of Education was unenthusiastic about these conclusions. Maurice Holmes wrote in the preface of the Spens Report that the Consultative Committee had had to deal with a very complex subject and if the recommendations were accepted it would involve considerable change. The suggestions to make all secondary education free was firmly discounted and the equalisation of 'modern' schools with other types of secondary education was considered too expensive and would disturb the arrangements for the existing prestigious grammar school sector.²⁷¹ The recommendation of the Spens Report aroused little interest outside the world of education. *The Times* reviewed it unenthusiastically, especially as it suggested fundamental educational change during a period of national uncertainty. There was however, an acknowledgment that while the world had moved on, education had stood still.²⁷² The recommendations were generally welcomed by the

²⁶⁶ *Psychological Tests of Educable Capacity*, (HMSO, 1924.)

²⁶⁷ Report of The Consultative Committee, (1938) (Spens), pp. 123-25, quoted in D. Rubenstein and B. Simon, op. cit., p. 17.

²⁶⁸ Report of The Consultative Committee, (1938) *ibid.*, p. 350.

²⁶⁹ Report of The Consultative Committee, op. cit., p. 352.

²⁷⁰ *ibid.*, p. 363.

²⁷¹ B. Simon, (1974), op. cit., p. 267.

²⁷² 'The Right Schooling' *The Times* Dec 30 1938.

Labour Party which was keen to bring all secondary schools under one umbrella. In contrast, the Trades Union Congress soon realised that, although the Report advocated raising the school leaving age, the three types of schools it promoted would continue to segregate children at eleven years of age and this would not increase parity in education or equality in later life.²⁷³ It strongly advocated multilateralism as the only way forward.

In February 1939, in a debate that called for better technical and vocational education the divisions in educational philosophy between the political parties emerged. Annesley Somerville²⁷⁴ suggested that the local authorities should be consulted urgently to determine how the recommendations of the Report could be included in their plans. He suggested that the Board look to the example of rural endowed grammar and independent schools which were developing more diverse curricula and suggested that some of these ideas could be transferred into the state sector. William Cove responded that Somerville had spoken “in the spirit of enlightened Toryism and he did it in such a way as to safeguard what I might call the historic preserves of the Tory party.”²⁷⁵ He suggested that the Consultative Committee had ultimately turned away from multilateral schools because they were “a microcosm of real democracy,”²⁷⁶ and as a result they had to find a compromise solution. Cove noted the contradictions in the report. He referred to the fact that the Report suggested that the number attending grammar secondary schools should be only fifteen percent of the total child population and recommended a levelling of places throughout England and Wales. This would mean that the number attending secondary schools in Wales would be drastically cut:

“Let them try it on in Wales. Let any Government try the levelling down of our secondary places in Wales, and they will find the popular front stronger than they have ever seen it in this country.”²⁷⁷

The outbreak of war meant that the proposals of the Spens Report were shelved along with the 1936 Education Act only to emerge as the central plank of the Education Act 1944.

²⁷³ TUC Minutes, unreferenced in B. Simon, (1974) *op. cit.*, p. 266.

²⁷⁴ Conservative Member of Parliament for Windsor and a former master at Eton College.

²⁷⁵ Hansard, HC 2nd February 1939, *ibid.*

²⁷⁶ *ibid.*

²⁷⁷ Hansard, HC 2nd February 1939 *op. cit.*

Conclusions

The inter war period was one full of the promise for education. The sacrifices made by the people during the First World War had led them to believe that there would be a better life and standard of living at its end and the Education Act 1918 offered some promise of this. There would be reform and greater access for elementary school children to a new central school secondary sector which, it was hoped, would offered greater parity of opportunity. Unfortunately this was not to be and for education the interwar period was generally one of stagnation. Although the Education Act 1918 offered a huge opportunity for reorganisation economic circumstances conspired to delay progress. During the interwar period education was subject to continual austerity measures from the Geddes, May and Ray committee which delayed development and had a devastating effect on many aspects of the service. It is clear that the cuts made to education finance reflected the low priority placed on it by Government and this, together with the social and political obstacles put in the way of reform confirmed the way education, and especially the elementary sector, was regarded. Throughout the period, the Board of Education made every effort to protect the prestigious secondary sector from the worst effects of the economic downturn to ensure that it remained intact and unaffected. The result of the economic downturn in England and Wales was that the reorganisation of the elementary sector proposed in the Education Act 1918 and the later *Education of the Adolescent* were seriously delayed in most areas and it remained a poor provision for the majority of children.

This was especially the case in south and south west Wales where structural unemployment had devastated the economy. Most LEAs planned to make some changes after the Act but these were frequently thwarted by extrinsic factors that prevented implementation. The HMI Reports for south and south west Wales show a dismal picture of elementary education with poor standards, inadequate facilities and poor trained teachers. This situation was further complicated by the large numbers of non-provided schools which added to the problems of reorganisation after both the Education Act 1918 and the publication of the Hadow Report in 1927. The LEAs found it almost impossible to reform the elementary sector without full control of all schools because there were insufficient pupil numbers to organise viable primary and secondary sectors. Similarly neither the Church in Wales nor the

Roman Catholic church had the funds or pupil numbers to reorganise effectively. Planning for reorganisation was also badly effected by the demographic shift in population caused by unemployment and this had the additional effect of greatly reducing rate income. In contrast, the secondary sector continued to flourish and expand as far as the economic situation of the period would allow. Although the sector in south and south west Wales remained selective it was mostly free to all pupils and this remained the case despite strong opposition from the Board of Education. LEAs came under enormous pressure to change their policies but they resisted this throughout the period. In much the same way some, like Merthyr Tydfil, offered children free meals and healthcare during the depression years which helped unemployed parents significantly.

Although the economic circumstances of the period were significant it becomes clear that the differences in political philosophy about education was undoubtedly a major factor for the delays to the reorganisation of the elementary sector. The Conservative party clung to its philosophy of *laissez faire*, the prestige of the endowed and independent sectors and its determination to retain the subsets of education. Labour presented a far more ambiguous position. In general terms it sought parity and equality of opportunity through better provision, and championed the idea of bilateral or comprehensive schools. However, it also showed a strong inclination to retain the prestigious grammar schools clearly indicated in Tawney's Labour party policy document. These different political standpoints accompanied the increasing power of the Labour party at a local level in south and south west Wales and it becomes clear from primary sources that Labour controlled local authorities were far more likely to implement progressive education change than were Conservative run authorities.

While the influence of the Board of Education was considerable it lacked the statutory powers to enforce change, and as a result it covertly used the influences of the Reports of the Consultative Committee to try to do this. Certainly these prefaced legislation and established a purposeful ideal for future proposals. It has also been suggested that the Reports published during the period were manipulated by the political parties in ways which best suited their educational ideas and philosophy. The legislation of the period although designed to substantially improve elementary education failed because it was intrinsically inadequate and allowed

local authorities to prevaricate over implementation. Consequently, for education, the dismal interwar years were “A period of lost opportunity, a period of effective enquiry followed by ineffective action, a period of singular sterility.”²⁷⁸

²⁷⁸Sir Percy Watkin. Permanent Secretary of the Welsh Department of the Board of Education in J. A. Davies *Education in a Welsh rural County. 1870-1973* (UWP: Cardiff, 1973), p. 186.

Chapter 4 Evacuation 1939 – 1945

“That social cyclone, the second world war, not only destroyed homes; it also swept millions of children from the school environment in which they were being taught.”¹

This chapter examines the effects that the Second World War had on education in England and Wales. The Second World War came at the end of a very problematic time in the history of education as the austerity measures of the interwar years had been at odds with the planned reforms. Elementary education remained in an uneasy middle ground, hindered on one hand by the prestigious secondary schools, and the difficulties of reorganisation on the other. During the five years from 1939 to 1945 over a million children were evacuated or displaced in some way and their education suffered accordingly. This important period in education history is often overlooked despite the fact that evacuation has long been considered by some historians as one of the most influential factors in the drive towards post-war social reconstruction. This has been a matter for debate but it is certainly true that education came under close scrutiny during the war time period and there were continuing demands from the Labour Party, teachers’ unions and other organisations for reform. Evacuation revealed, in particular the state of elementary education, and it became evident that changes would need to be made.

Planning for Evacuation

The bombing of London during the First World War had altered official perceptions about how a future armed conflict would affect the civilian population.² As a result, in 1925 a decision was made that, in the event of another war, “*les bouche inutiles*”³ should be evacuated from London and other large metropolitan areas. It has been suggested⁴ that these plans arose principally out of an understanding of how difficult it would be to protect schools from aerial bombardment as the provision of suitable Air Raid Precautions⁵ in schools would be

¹ T. Brosse, *War Handicapped Children, Report on the European Situation* (Publication No 439 of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization: Paris, 1950).

² See N. Hanson, *First Blitz* (Transworld Publishers: London, 2009) for an account of the bombing of London and particularly the destruction of Upper North Street School, Poplar in which a number of children were killed pp. 134-136. This incident did much to raise concern over the welfare of children in the event of another war.

³ NA CAB/24/175 Report of the Sub Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence 29th Oct, 1925, p. 13 and translated as ‘unproductive useless mouths’.

⁴ G.A.N. Lowndes, *The Silent Social Revolution* (OUP: Oxford, 1969).

⁵ From now on abbreviated to ARP.

both difficult and expensive. It was agreed⁶ that the easiest solution would be to completely abandon the education service in vulnerable areas and evacuate all at-risk groups.⁷ This would have the added advantage of lessening demands on local services; allow school buildings to be used for other purposes and release education staff for war work.

Planning for ARP and evacuation began in secret, and this lack of inter departmental discussion led to later problems. Lowndes suggests that it was inexplicable, although he points out that there was a perception that the British public would not accept the idea of another war. Certainly, he believed that the frightening scenario being depicted by the Air Ministry and other government departments would have dented public confidence had details been released. Lowndes felt that the estimates of bombing and consequential damage were exaggerated, and had the information produced by the bombardment of Barcelona during the Spanish Civil War been used by government, much of the huge disorganization that followed would have been avoided.⁸ Added to this was the widespread pacifism present in British society which was at its height in 1935. This was supported by both non-conformists⁹ and Anglicans¹⁰ and reinforced by popular fiction.¹¹ A number of different movements were established to support peace¹² and the Labour Party had a deep, though muddled, commitment to peace and internationalism.¹³ Similarly, the Welsh Nationalist Party had strongly pacifist views which could be traced back to the First World War and continued after 1939.¹⁴

⁶ NA CAB/24/175 op. cit.

⁷ These included unaccompanied school children, the elderly, mothers with young children and the handicapped and disabled. The reasons for the evacuation of vulnerable groups have been well documented and are of no immediate interest to this research. See R. M. Titmuss, *Problems of Social Policy* (HMSO: London, 1950); N. Gärtner, Administating 'Operation Pied Piper' - how the London Council prepared for the evacuation of its schoolchildren 1938-1939. *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, 42, 1: (2010) 17-32; M. L. Parsons, *"I'll Take That One" Dispelling the Myths of Civilian Evacuation 1939-1945* (Beckett Karlson: Peterborough, 1998).

⁸ G.A.N Lowndes, (1969) op. cit., pp. 192-194.

⁹ R. Pope, *Building Jerusalem: non-conformity, Labour and the social question in Wales, 1906-1939* second edn (UWP: Cardiff, 1998) p. 165.

¹⁰ S. Parker, 'Blessed are the Pacifists': E. W. Barnes of Birmingham and Pacifism 1914 -45. *Midland History*, Vol. 34 No 2: (2009) 204-219.

¹¹ C. L. Mowat, *Britain Between The Wars* (Methuen: London, 1968) p. 537.

¹² Peace Pledge Union established in 1936 by Canon Sheppard; Anglican Pacifist Fellowship established in 1937 for example.

¹³ A. Marwick, *Britain in the Century of Total War. War Peace and Social Change 1900-1967* (Penguin: Harmondsworth, 1970) p. 103.

¹⁴ D. H. Davies, *The Welsh Nationalist Party 1925-1945 A Call to Nationhood* (UWP: Cardiff, 1983) pp 112-114.

The Evacuation Scheme was overseen by the Ministry of Health which, in turn, handed the responsibility to local councils, some very small “with a solicitor as part-time clerk, a typist and an office boy or two”¹⁵ which would not have had experience of critical organisational tasks. Billeting, the central issue in evacuation, was further devolved to the Housing Departments of local authorities. By 1938, planning for this logistically complicated operation was still incomplete, a fact attributed to a lack of information about shelter provision, without which, little progress could be made.¹⁶ Gosden suggests that many of the criticisms of the evacuation scheme would have been avoided had the Board of Education been in charge of arrangements as

“They would clearly have entrusted preparations to the LEAs instead of the Housing Authorities, many of which were too small and inadequately staffed to deal with a problem concerned primarily with children.”¹⁷

Although it was clear that the Government was planning for a lengthy war¹⁸ little consideration was given to the effect that this might have on education and neither the Air Raid Precautions Act, 1937 nor the Civil Defence Act, 1939¹⁹ made any direct reference to schools. The Ministry of Civil Defence initially refused to pay for air raid shelters in schools,²⁰ and the direct result of this was the decision to evacuate. The relationship between these two was critical because unless the provision of suitable air-raid protection could guarantee the safety of school children then evacuation was the only, and preferred, option.²¹ As a result a decision was made in early 1939, that in the event of the outbreak of war all schools in evacuating areas would close immediately and all education provision would cease.²² There is no evidence that any use was made of the experiences of evacuation gained during the Spanish Civil War and “the Anderson Committee made no reference to or sought the advice from the members of the community who had actually been involved in the evacuation scheme in Cambridge.”²³ This earlier evacuation had coloured public perception to

¹⁵ R. M. Titmuss, (1950) op. cit. p. 144.

¹⁶ PP. Hansard House of Commons, 14th April and 28th April, 1938, Vol 334, col, 1296 and vol 335,

¹⁷ G.A.N. Lowndes, (1969) op.cit. p. 205.

¹⁸NA ED 136/112, *Long term policy: evacuation arrangements. Question of compulsory evacuation, compulsory registration of school children in the special evacuation towns.*

¹⁹ Civil Defence Act 1939 2 & 3 Geo 6 Ch 31

²⁰ Hansard HC 8th March, 1940, Vol. 358, Col. 733.

²¹ Later in the war the Board of Education did begin to pay for ARP in schools but only after a number of children and teachers had been killed. See P.H.J.H. Gosden, *Education in the Second World War* (Methuen: London, 1976).

²² LMA EO/WAR/37 Board of Education, Air Raid Precautions in Schools, Circular 1467, 27th April 1939.

²³ M. L. Parsons, (1998), op. cit., p 12.

the British evacuation, provoked antipathy towards evacuees and drew objections from landlords about housing evacuees in their property.

The initial planning for evacuation divided England²⁴ into three: neutral,²⁵ reception and evacuation areas.²⁶ During this early phase Wales, in its entirety, and some of the English counties²⁷ were excluded as reception areas, but by 1939 all were included in the Scheme. This classification of areas caused considerable discussion and

“Two hundred local authorities in England and Wales²⁸ graded as reception asked to be ranked as neutral and another sixty wanted to be scheduled for evacuation. It is significant ... no authority asked to be a reception area.”²⁹

Llanelly Borough Council, for example, wrote to the Ministry of Health in 1940 making representation that its status as a reception areas should be reclassified because of its industrial activities.³⁰ The response from the Ministry was “that it is not possible to make piecemeal alterations while the present evacuation arrangements are being prepared and that the Council’s representation would be considered.”³¹

In August 1939, Neville Chamberlain issued a statement confirming the urgency of evacuation as a sudden attack from the air was expected. The main concern was that it would be impossible to evacuate large numbers of mothers and children once hostilities had begun.³² Local authorities were warned that they would

²⁴ Scotland and Northern Ireland had their own and different evacuations plans

²⁵ Some urban areas such as Cardiff, Swansea, Bristol, Nottingham and Plymouth were designated as neutral, classified as not suitable as reception areas but not considered to be targets for bombing attacks

²⁶ London, Newcastle, Gateshead, Leeds, Bradford, Sheffield, Hull, Liverpool, Manchester, Salford and Birmingham. See Report on Committee of Evacuation with a covering memorandum by the secretary of state for the Home Department 1937-1938 (Cmd 5837).

²⁷ The English counties that were excluded were Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Dorset, Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Shropshire and Herefordshire. 1937-1938, (Cmd 5837) Appendix C, *ibid.*, p. 42.

²⁸ Scotland and Ireland both had separate evacuation plans

²⁹ R. M. Titmuss (1950) *op.cit.*, p 32.

³⁰ CAS AC 446/34 Llanelly Borough Council Committee Minutes. 1940 Meeting 1st April 1940. Burry Port and Kidwelly local authorities were also asked to join this action. School log books from Llanelly report that there had been numerous small tip ad run bombing raids in the area by this time although these incidents are not mentioned in the Committee Minutes. See also Hansard, HC 25 May, 1939, Vol 347, Col 2488-90, for a discussion about the status of Llanelly.

³¹ CAS AC 446/34 *ibid.*

³² NA ED 136 /112 *op. cit.*, Secret Statement – Evacuation, Neville Chamberlain, 25th August, 1939.

be expected to put the evacuation plan into action at short notice,³³ and a BBC broadcast announced that all schools in evacuating areas would be opened to explain the procedures to children.³⁴ On 1st September 1939, evacuation began. The logistics of the scheme was very simple and it was this simplicity that was caused so many of the later problems. The idea of putting large groups of evacuees on mainline trains and accommodating them *en route* was logistically astute but failed in that it did not take into account of “the makeshift measures in the evacuation areas where facilities were barely adequate for the local population.”³⁵ The other criteria used was the level of accommodation in reception areas estimated on surveys undertaken by the Housing Departments.³⁶ These were often inaccurate and led to some evacuees being placed in squalid or dangerous billets.³⁷ Although little is known about the quality of accommodation in south and south west Wales, *The Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Anti-Tuberculosis Service in Wales and Monmouthshire*³⁸ clearly records the unacceptable condition of housing in many reception areas. While rural areas came in for particular criticism there was considerable overcrowding in industrial towns and often “The conditions are sad in the extreme ... evidence of great poverty ... a great many of houses are quite unfit for human habitation.”³⁹

The difficulty in finding suitable and sufficient accommodation for evacuees was compounded by misinformation from the Ministry of Health about the numbers planned for reception areas. For example, in 1939, the *Western Mail*⁴⁰ reported that that although a large number of evacuees from London and Birmingham were expected, few actually arrived.⁴¹ This kind of confusion was a common occurrence

³³ NA ED 136 /112 op.cit., copy of a confidential letter issued on 30th August 1939 to all evacuating and receiving local authorities.

³⁴ *ibid.*, copy of Broadcast Instruction, issued on Saturday, 26th August, 1939.

³⁵ N. Middleton and S Weitzman, *A Place for Everyone, A history of education from the eighteenth century to the 1970s* (Gollancz: London, 1978) p. 203.

³⁶ This was generally undertaken by teachers, health visitors or others with a connection to the community. Parsons makes reference to a report written by the Medical Officer of Amlwch Urban District Council expressing concern about the suitability of visitors who “may be regarded as unwelcome visitors ... especially if their qualifications are inadequate.” *North Wales Chronicle*, 10th February, 1939, p. 13 cited in J. Wallis *North Wales: A Case Study of the Reception Areas under the Government Evacuation 1939-1945* Unpublished thesis p. 63, Flintshire Record Office in M. Parsons, (1998) op. cit., p. 51.

³⁷ M. Parsons, (1998) *ibid.*, p. 51.

³⁸ *The Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Anti-Tuberculosis Service in Wales and Monmouthshire* (HMSO: 1939).

³⁹ *The Report* (1939 *ibid.*, p. 185.

⁴⁰ *Western Mail*, 1st September 1939.

⁴¹ Carmarthen and Glamorgan received only a very small percentage of the expected evacuees. See GA RDC/6/1/64 Cardiff RD Council were led to believe that they should plan to receive approximately 4,500 evacuees. In the event only 81 unaccompanied children arrived in 1939. Some mothers and children did also

and in many instances this led to evacuees being billeted inappropriately and to Titmuss commenting that

“the indiscriminate handing round of evacuees ... inevitably resulted in every conceivable kind of social and psychological misfit. Conservative and Labour supporters, Roman Catholics and Presbyterians, lonely spinsters and loud-mouthed, boisterous mothers, the rich and the poor, city bred Jews and agricultural labourers, the lazy and the hard working, the sensitive and the tough.”⁴²

This crude method of distribution revealed the underlying religious and racial intolerance in England and Wales. Certainly, in some areas Jewish and Roman Catholic evacuees faced varying levels of discrimination.⁴³ The anti-Semitism present in Great Britain during the interwar years was “part of the social dislocation in Britain”⁴⁴ and “can be seen as synonymous with racism.”⁴⁵ These attitudes were commonplace and Professor Tanner,⁴⁶ speaking at a conference in 2008 pointed out that “David Lloyd George made anti-Semitic remarks although one of his closest friends was a Jew. That was part and parcel of the way people spoke in society.”⁴⁷ There is a perception that that anti-Semitism was less of a problem in Wales than in the rural evacuation areas of England, although some instances were recorded in the northern counties.⁴⁸ Anti-Catholicism, however, was “endemic in Wales,”⁴⁹ and in the industrial areas and larger towns it remained as an aftermath of the Irish immigration of the nineteenth century. It was kept alive by Nonconformist ministers with “sermons of fire and fury.”⁵⁰

arrive but no data is available for these. At Llanelly for example “Preparations had been completed for receiving double the number that actually arrived.” See NA ED/134/378 Report No 2 p. 1.

⁴² R. M. Titmuss (1950), op. cit., p. 112.

⁴³ See T. Kushner, *Horns and Dilemmas: Jewish Evacuees in Britain during the Second World War. Immigrants and Minorities*, Vol 7: (1988) 273- 291; S. Parker, *Faith on the Home Front: Aspects of Church Life and Popular Religion in Birmingham 1939 – 1945* (Peter Lang: Bern, 2005).

⁴⁴ R. M. Titmuss, (1950), *ibid.*, p. 112 in T. Kushner, (1988), *ibid.*, p. 279.

⁴⁵ W. Gallagher, *Anti-Semitism: What it means to you* (Communist Party of Great Britain: London, 1971) in C. Knowles, *Labour and Anti-Semitism in R. Miles and A. Phizacklea eds, Racism in Political Action In Britain* (Routledge and Kegan Paul: London, 1979), p. 50.

⁴⁶ Professor Duncan Tanner, director of Research and professor of History at Bangor University.

⁴⁷ R. Clark, *Discovering the troubled history of Jews in Wales. Western Mail*, March 12th, 2008 quoted at a conference, *Jewish Life in North Wales*, held at Bangor University in March 2008.

⁴⁸ J. Wallis, *A Welcome in the Hillside? The Merseyside and North Wales experience of Evacuation 1939-1945*, (Avid Publications, Merseyside, 2000) p. 151.

⁴⁹ T. O. Hughes, *When was Anti-Catholicism? A Response. Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol 36 No 2: (2005), 326 -333, p. 306.

⁵⁰ *ibid.*, p. 316.

From the historiography, it becomes apparent that there were disturbing, entrenched attitudes in reception areas: deep rooted racial prejudice, inbuilt class snobbery, bigotry and social Darwinism.⁵¹ Crosby points to the wide and influential membership of the eugenic groups⁵² and considers that the ideas promoted by them were subtle and pervasive with even medical conferences “increasingly dominated by the eugenic debate.”⁵³ These influences were widespread but had no consistent ideology. Freedden suggests that eugenics could be shown to be considered to be “an exploratory avenue of social reformist tendencies of early twentieth century British political thought”⁵⁴ which also exemplified the complexities of new ideologies. The influence of the eugenics school of thought was both reflected in *Our Towns: A Close Up*,⁵⁵ and in the commonly held views in some sections of society. Harris suggests that these influences related mainly to the research of Booth and Rowntree which confirmed the inner core of self imposed poverty caused by alcohol and character weaknesses and a larger outer core caused by illness, lack of financial resources. She believes that these “perspectives were increasingly reflected in public debate”⁵⁶ and were particularly prevalent during the first wave of evacuation in rural reception areas.

A second obstacle to successful evacuation was the rigid observance of the class system in Great Britain that was an “historical legacy”⁵⁷ unlike that in other industrialised societies.⁵⁸ Since the First World War attitudes had changed somewhat but the class divisions remained and were revealed starkly during evacuation.⁵⁹ The surveys⁶⁰ that were carried out during the period made much of this, and the social mores of the working classes were widely denigrated. The

⁵¹ T. L Crosby, *The Impact of Civilian Evacuation in the Second World War* (Croom Helm: 1986), p. 3.

⁵² These included for example Cyril Burt, Neville Chamberlain, Richard Titmuss and George Auden who was appointed Senior Medical Officer for Birmingham in 1908 in T. L. Crosby, *ibid.*, p. 4.

⁵³ T. L. Crosby *ibid.*, p. 4; M. Freedden Eugenics and Progressive thought: A study in ideological affinity. *The Historical Journal*, 22 3: (1979) 645-671, adds to this cross party and cross culture membership by including R. M. Titmuss; Sidney Webb, L.T. Hobhouse, D. Caradog Jones and Harold Laski. See also Parker, S., ‘Blessed are the Pacifists’: E. W. Barnes of Birmingham and Pacifism 1914 -45. *Midland History*, Vol. 34 No 2: (2009), 204-219.

⁵⁴ M. Freedden, *ibid.*, p. 645.

⁵⁵ Hygiene Committee of the Women’s Group of Public Welfare, *Our Towns: A Close Up* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1943).

⁵⁶ J. Harris, *Private Lives, Public Spirit: Britain 1870-1914* (Penguin: Harmondsworth, 1993) p. 205.

⁵⁷ A. Marwick, *Class, Image and Reality in Britain, France and the USA since 1930* (Collins: 1980) p. 30.

⁵⁸ J. Stevenson, *British Society 1914-1945* (Penguin: Harmondsworth, 1984) p. 340.

⁵⁹ R. McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures: England 1918 -1951* (O U P: Oxford, 1998) p. 229.

⁶⁰ *Our Towns A Close Up* (1943), *op. cit.*

reactions to evacuees in some reception areas was, in many cases, extreme. Almost without exception, there was criticism of their physical condition and behaviour which was not limited to any particular reception or evacuation area. The outcry, initially in the press, was immediate and vociferous⁶¹ and there were constant complaints. In a debate in the House of Commons in September 1939, Members of Parliament raised a number of issues about the way the evacuation scheme had been managed. The lack of proper organisation was central to the debate and there were very strong criticisms of the Government Departments involved. Sir Henry Fiddes,⁶² for instance, expressed his amazement at the complacency of the Minister of Health towards evacuation.⁶³ The ongoing criticisms and “stories much enhanced in the telling”⁶⁴ drew public attention not only to the Evacuation Scheme but restarted the debate about education provision.

Apart from a few neutral areas, the whole of Wales was designated as a reception area and, although evacuation there did not promote the same levels of resentment as it had in some areas of England, in Oxfordshire and Herefordshire for example,⁶⁵ it did arouse strong nationalist feelings that continued at some level throughout the war.⁶⁶ At the centre of the dissent was the Welsh National Party which became a vociferous opponent of evacuation. The Party had a strong pacifist policy and objections to evacuation was seen as part of this, as well as being a threat to the Welsh identity. This was primarily due to the fact that Wales was to be used as a reception area for English local authorities, to the apparent detriment of Welsh tradition and society.⁶⁷ Saunders Lewis⁶⁸ went a step further and said that “Welsh villages would become English barracks so that the RAF could bomb Berlin and Munich in the knowledge that the children of England were safe.”⁶⁹ This general trend continued when the Nationalist Party complained to the Ministry of Health about English evacuees being sent to Wales but was told that the nationality of children was irrelevant. There was an attempt to get the neutral areas of Newport,

⁶¹ See for example BRL. Schools and Education File, *Birmingham Post*; LRL. *Llanelly Star*,

⁶² Member of Parliament for Dumfriesshire.

⁶³ PP. Hansard House of Commons, 14th September 1939, Col 745-886 Vol 351.

⁶⁴ J. Macnicol, *The Evacuation of Schoolchildren*, in H.L. Smith (Ed) *War and Social Change: British Society in the Second World War* (MUP, Manchester, 1986), p. 6.

⁶⁵ See T. L. Crosby, (1986) op. cit.; M. L. Parsons, (1998), op. cit.

⁶⁶ NLW Does Wales know there's a war on? *Western Mail* Sept 21st, 1944.

⁶⁷ *The Welsh Nationalist*, February 1939 p. 3, in J. Wallis, (2000.) op. cit.

⁶⁸ Saunders Lewis, 1893 –1985 was a poet, historian, and political activist. He was a founder of Plaid Genedlaethol Cymru (National Party of Wales) which became Plaid Cymru.

⁶⁹ D. H. Davies, *The Welsh Nationalist Party 1925-1945 A Call to Nationhood*, (UWP: Cardiff, 1983) p. 231.

Cardiff and Swansea changed to evacuation areas and the children evacuated into safer Welsh areas. The National Party wrote to local authorities asking for their support but this was overwhelmingly refused.⁷⁰ Ultimately it was proposed that Wales should welcome evacuees and ‘Welshicise’⁷¹ them through kindness.

Evacuation to south and south west Wales

There was an expectation in 1939 that local authorities in south and south west Wales would receive large numbers of evacuees but, initially at least, this failed to happen. The largest contingent, of just over one thousand adults and school children from Liverpool, was evacuated to Llanelly⁷² in 1939 although preparations had been made to accommodate far more.⁷³ The *Llanelly Star* reported:

“Llanelly has always enjoyed an enviable reputation for extending a cordial and hospitable welcome to ‘strangers within the gate’ and now that citizens are having to be evacuated ‘Sospanville’ is playing a part nobly in various directions.”⁷⁴

The unaccompanied children came from both elementary and secondary schools and HMI immediately identified differences between the two groups. It was noted that it was far easier to billet secondary school children than those from elementary schools as many of the latter were verminous and had to be sent to the Hostel for Destitute Girls for cleansing.⁷⁵ The question of these unclean children was discussed at local authority level although it is apparent that the School Medical Officer had withheld detailed information about the extent of the matter in Llanelly. One elected member asked why the fact that many evacuees were “verminous and filthy”⁷⁶ was being kept a secret when it was being openly discussed in the House of Commons.⁷⁷

⁷⁰ CAS AC 446/34 Llanelly Borough Council Committee Minutes, 1940.

⁷¹ NLW Plaid Cymru Records, Letter, Gwynfor Evans to J. E. Jones, 2nd September, 1939 in D. H. Davies, op. cit. p. 233.

⁷² NA RG 26/76 Evacuation of school children: Ministry of Health schedules of movements by area under the Government evacuation scheme, p. 59.

⁷³ NA ED 134/378 Llanelly,

⁷⁴ LRL *Llanelly Star* Saturday, September 9th, 1939.

⁷⁵ NA ED 134/ 378 HMI Report, No 2, p. 1.

⁷⁶ LRL. *Llanelly Star*, September 23rd, 1939.

⁷⁷ See for example Hansard House of Commons 14th September 1939 Col. 745-886 Vol. 351.

Almost as soon as the evacuees had settled in Llanelly, the 'drift back' to Liverpool began. Numbers decreased steadily, and by January 1940 only a third of those evacuated remained.⁷⁸ HMI reported that it was a common practice for a group of Liverpool parents to pay for one mother to visit Llanelly to collect a group of children, despite the fact that many did not want to return.⁷⁹ This drift back of evacuees was common to all reception areas throughout the evacuation period. It was of particular concern and was "perhaps the harshest verdict on the government's preparations."⁸⁰ An approximate estimate is that of the 29,167 evacuated to Wales in 1939 only 14,755 remained by January 1940, a decrease of forty nine per cent.⁸¹ This situation was repeated throughout Great Britain and by February 1940 only 477,000 remained in the reception areas out of the three million originally evacuated.⁸² By the middle of 1940 the pattern of evacuation had changed as, during the early part of the year, there had been a re-distribution of evacuees from the coastal areas of south east of England and the Medway towns⁸³ "as a prelude to the second big move."⁸⁴ The *Western Mail* reported in May that a very large number of evacuees had arrived in the valley towns and were made very welcome.⁸⁵ The majority of evacuees were secondary school children who had been already been evacuated to the south east of England but were now being redistributed to safer areas. By August 1940 there were a total of 47,465 unaccompanied school children billeted throughout Welsh local authorities⁸⁶ with over five thousand in Carmarthenshire and seventeen thousand in Glamorgan. Some areas were completely overwhelmed and there were difficulties in finding accommodation for this new wave of evacuees especially as many householders made every effort to avoid billeting if they had had evacuees billeted with them previously.⁸⁷

⁷⁸ Only 285 unaccompanied children remained. There is no data for adult evacuees See Appendix 4. There was a small trickle of evacuees in this four month period but the number still remained very low.

⁷⁹ NA ED/134/378 Evacuation Report Llanelly Borough, 1939.

⁸⁰ J. Macnicol, *The Evacuation of School Children* in H.L. Smith ed, *War and Social Change* (MUP: Manchester, 1986) p. 14.

⁸¹ NA RG 26/76 op. cit.

⁸² NA HLG 10/247 Memo of ARP Co-ordinating Committee, 12 April, 1940, in J. Macnicol, op. cit., p. 14.

⁸³ For example the LCC Folkestone School Group moved into Glamorganshire and became the LCC Tredegar School Group after they moved there in May 1940. The schools were spread over a wide area from Radyr in Cardiff to Newport and into the valleys as far as Abertillery and Tonypany, LMA LCC/GE 11132.

⁸⁴ R. M. Titmuss, (1950) op.cit. p. 355.

⁸⁵ NLW 7000 Child Evacuees Come to Wales *Western Mail*, 18th May 1940: p. 5.

⁸⁶ NA RG /26/27, op. cit. Table 4.

⁸⁷ See GA RDC/6/1/64 Government Evacuation Scheme Committee, 17th March, 1940; GA. RDLL/T/38/GES.

In September 1940, when the bombing of London began in earnest, the Ministry of Health was ready to begin a second evacuation. The first wave had depended to a large extent on the fact that it was organised around an intact school system which no longer existed. This caused a number of problems not least the fact that there were no central collection points for children and it was planned to group elementary school children with teachers from the same area.⁸⁸ There had been lengthy discussions with teaching associations about this second evacuation and they had been warned that the process “would be much more difficult and nothing like as tidy and orderly as in 1939.”⁸⁹ The second wave was carried out over a much longer period and although there was generally a poor uptake, forty eight thousand unaccompanied children were moved out of London alone, followed by a ‘trickle’ of almost fifteen thousand during the following year.⁹⁰ Large numbers also left Birmingham⁹¹ and Liverpool⁹² but neither city evacuated⁹³ such a large percentage of their school population as London or Kent. This second evacuation amounted to over a million in all,⁹⁴ but the numbers were very fluid. In the Rhondda area for example it has been suggested that “At varying times 33,000 mothers and children were officially billeted in the area.”⁹⁵ This figure cannot be verified but in September 1941 there was a total of 9,046 evacuees there.⁹⁶ In the second wave, mothers with children outnumbered unaccompanied school children, and by October 1940, there were a total of over sixteen thousand mothers and children billeted in Glamorgan.⁹⁷ In Carmarthenshire Rural District there was a total of over five thousand mothers and children as well as a large number of unaccompanied school children. This would have put a considerable strain on the local infrastructure,

⁸⁸ LMA LCC/EO/WAR/1/098 Plan IV 2nd. Large Scale Evacuation Plan. Reference Paper ER, 28th May 1940. This also happened in Birmingham. MLPJ Private Archive, Interview with Mrs B. Loveluck, evacuated teacher from Birmingham.

⁸⁹ LMA LCC/EO/WAR/1/098 *ibid*, Memorandum to Mr Clayton from Mr Rich, 28th May 1940.

⁹⁰ NA RG 26/76 *op. cit.* December, 1942.

⁹¹ NA RG 26/76 *ibid*, December 1942. There were 22,113 unaccompanied children from Birmingham. See also E. Hopkins, Elementary Education in Birmingham during the Second World War. *History of Education*, Vol 18: (1989) pp. 242-255.

⁹² NA RG 26/76 *ibid*. There were 11,718 unaccompanied children from Liverpool.

⁹³ Very few of the children from Birmingham or Liverpool came to either Carmarthenshire or Glamorgan during this evacuation. The majority of Liverpool children were sent to the counties of North Wales although there was some overspill into Cardiganshire and north Carmarthenshire. The majority of Birmingham children were evacuated into Monmouthshire.

⁹⁴ R. M. Titmuss, (1950) *op.cit.* p. 355.

⁹⁵ RCL. Petition for a Charter of Incorporation, (1952) p. 40 in E. D. Lewis, *The Rhondda Valleys* (Phoenix House: London, 1959) p. 261.

⁹⁶ NA RG 26/76 - this total was made up of 4,543 unaccompanied children with 568 teachers, helpers and other adults. There were also 1,434 mothers with 2,483 children under five.

⁹⁷ NA RG 26/76 the majority were in Merthyr Tydfil and the Rhondda

especially when put in the context of school accommodation⁹⁸ as large numbers of children were being billeted in areas where schools were, in many cases, insufficient and inadequate for local children. These difficulties were exacerbated by the blitz on Swansea⁹⁹ and Cardiff¹⁰⁰ when, in its aftermath, large numbers of children were evacuated to safer areas in Carmarthen and Glamorgan. It was inevitable that the first large scale evacuation in September 1939 caused the most controversy and discussion. Later evacuations were much smaller;¹⁰¹ better organized and, because of the changing circumstances of war, accepted as necessary

During the early part of 1941, invasion was considered a strong possibility and the Board of Education issued directives to all local authorities about what they should do if this took place. At Swansea, the Director of Education wrote to all head teachers reminding them of his expectations in the event of a critical emergency. The role of teachers would depend on whether schools were open or closed: all teachers should ensure that, if open, the work of the schools was to continue but if closed “there will be many tasks to which teacher can usefully put their hands, such as visits to children’s homes, organising some sort of home tuition, using their influence to combat rumours and to allay any signs of panic.”¹⁰² Schools should not be closed except in the gravest local emergencies and parents should be advised that children must attend school as normal. Arrangements should be made for secondary school pupils to attend their nearest school and head teachers should ensure that they were provided with enough homework to allow them to continue their education in the short term.

Air Raid Precautions in Schools

The legislation put in place by the Civil Defence Act 1939,¹⁰³ allowed the requisition of any buildings deemed suitable for defence purposes without reference to the owner. It also allowed material alterations to buildings to make them fit for purpose. Responsibility for the decisions regarding Air Raid Precautions were

⁹⁸ See for example CAS ED/BK/695/2/4 Llangunnick (Llangynog) Vaughn’s Charity School.

⁹⁹ The worst attack was in February 1941 although there had been sporadic raids throughout 1940.

¹⁰⁰ Cardiff was subject to bombing attacks throughout the war but the most intensive raids were in 1941.

¹⁰¹ Ministry of Health statistical data is not available for all evacuation waves. See however, R. M. Titmuss, (1950), *op. cit.*, See Appendix 9 Government Evacuation Scheme p. 562.

¹⁰² WGAS E/S 31/4/5 Letter from Director of Education, Swansea Borough Council to all Head teachers.

¹⁰³ Civil Defence Act 1939, 2 & 3 Geo 6 Ch 31.

controlled by the civilian Police Forces who were responsible for national security. While there had been no intention to provide ARP in schools there had been one to use school buildings to support the war effort. In urban areas where the risk of attack was greatest the majority of school buildings were well situated and generally provided with all the basic amenities required by military and civilian personnel. The extensive material damage done to school buildings in all areas of England and Wales is generally overlooked as a factor in the deterioration of education provision and elementary schools in particular, were overwhelmed by the harm done by requisition. There are no reports of similar damage to secondary schools, although the use of some parts of the buildings had an adverse effect on the curriculum as gymnasiums and domestic science rooms were of particular interest to the groups involved in ARP.¹⁰⁴ In south and south west Wales, despite the fact that there did not appear to have been any immediate threat of attack, some schools were partially or completely requisitioned by civilian or military defence personnel for the duration of the hostilities.¹⁰⁵ In September 1939, in Glamorgan alone, thirty four schools were identified as First Aid Posts, and Wardens' Posts were set up at a further thirty two others. In Pontypridd, for example, one school was wholly taken over as a recruiting depot and much of Mill Street Central School as a First Aid Post.¹⁰⁶ HMI considered that this kind of event did not necessarily interfere with the smooth running of a school¹⁰⁷ although it was reported that in many instances extensive irreversible structural damage was done to school buildings without reference to "either the Director of Education or myself,"¹⁰⁸ but which had apparently been sanctioned by the Chief Constable.

While large school buildings might have been able to cope with the loss of accommodation this was not the case at small schools. At the three classroom St Athan Council School the local authority was presented with a "*fait accompli*"¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁴ At Albert Road Girls Schools Penarth the CDS. Room was taken over as a mess room for ARP. NA ED 134/372 p. 3.

¹⁰⁵ For example Penybont Boys and Girls Schools at Bridgend and Albert Road Boys and Infants Schools in Penarth were closed for the duration and children were forced to work double shift systems at other schools. Seven schools in Cardiff were also requisitioned by the ARP. NA 134/372.

¹⁰⁶ NA ED 134/203 Evacuation Section, Pontypridd UD, 27th April, 1940.

¹⁰⁷ NA ED 134/372, *ibid*.

¹⁰⁸ NA ED 134/368 Report No 3, 6th September, 1939. HMI reports that troops were using "the lavatory basins and WC's" in Carmarthen Girls Grammar School.

¹⁰⁹ NA ED 134/372 Glamorganshire p. 4. ¹⁰⁹ At Albert Road Girls Schools Penarth the CDS. Room was taken over as a mess room for ARP. NA ED 134/372 p. 3.

¹⁰⁹ For example Penybont Boys and Girls Schools at Bridgend and Albert Road Boys and Infants Schools in Penarth were closed for the duration and children were forced to work double shift systems at other schools. Seven schools in Cardiff were also requisitioned by the ARP. NA 134/372.

when the two classrooms were taken for a First Aid Post and Depot and it proved impossible to find other school accommodation. This disrespectful attitude to schools was common and the newly built Morfa Infants and Nursery School at Llanelly was requisitioned by the Medical Officer of Health and the children housed in poor temporary accommodation¹¹⁰ while classrooms were re-fitted as a casualty station. HMI Mr M. H. Davies wrote in September 1939 that

“I have all along urged the LEAs to point out to the ARP people how essential it is to retain school accommodation for school purposes, but it does not seem to have had effect. However I shall keep these places under observation and may submit formal reports in due course.”¹¹¹

It is clear that education in war time was a very low priority for Government departments and this is reflected locally in the lack of co-operation between the various organisations. There was a recollection that the service had recovered from the disruption of the First World War and there appeared to be no doubt in the minds of officials that it would again. The Board of Education Circular¹¹² published in 1938 clearly placed responsibility for negotiating ARP arrangements in the hands of the Local Education Authorities and that “the primary consideration must be for the children’s safety rather than their education.”¹¹³

Education in Reception Areas

When planning for war began there was a clear underlying principle at the Board of Education that education provision in reception areas should remain intact to provide services during evacuation. While this was the case, it was continually disrupted by evacuation matters and air raids. The continual arrival and departure of evacuees caused organisational problems to schools as class sizes changed and space had to be found for evacuated groups. There was considerable drift back during the whole evacuation period but there appears to be some evidence¹¹⁴ that,

¹⁰⁹ NA ED 134/203 Evacuation Section, Pontypridd UD, 27th April, 1940.

¹⁰⁹ NA ED 134/372, *ibid*.

¹⁰⁹ NA ED 134/368 Report No 3, 6th September, 1939. HMI reports that troops were using “the lavatory basins and WC’s” in Carmarthen Girls Grammar School.

¹⁰⁹ NA ED 134/372 Glamorganshire p. 4

¹¹⁰ NA ED 134/368 Carmarthenshire *ibid*.

¹¹¹ NA 134/368 Carmarthenshire.

¹¹² Board of Education Circular 1461, (3 Jan 1938.) in P.H.J.H. Gosden, (1976.) *op. cit.* p. 8.

¹¹³ P.H.J.H. Gosden, *ibid*, p. 8.

¹¹⁴ See for example in *Our Towns, A Close Up*, *op. cit.*

while in general, secondary school children tended to stay evacuated, elementary school children returned home wherever possible. It has been suggested that this was because the scheme was drawn up by “minds that were military, male and middle class”¹¹⁵ who underestimated working class attitudes towards children although others propose that it was due to a more complex set of factors. Research into returning London evacuees show that the greatest proportion were from the poorer East End of the city and suggest that “Economic and educational poverty, and a strong sense of family solidarity”¹¹⁶ were key factors. Added to this was the fact that elementary school children were frequently widely dispersed throughout rural areas and it was difficult for them to have any group cohesion.

Secondary school children on the other hand had much better support mechanisms. They were usually evacuated as a whole school and because of the nature of their curriculum and examination system, were retained as far as possible as a unit with their own specialist teachers.¹¹⁷ All the evidence shows that they had a much better educational chance than elementary school children. The prestige attached to the sector meant that much more effort was made to match them with suitable partner schools because their “particular needs could probably only be met by arranging affiliations with schools of the same type and sex in the receiving area.”¹¹⁸ The relatively high number of secondary schools in south and south west Wales made it an obvious reception area. Special schools¹¹⁹ and overseas secondary schools¹²⁰ were also evacuated in their entirety and remained so throughout the war. The need for a higher level curriculum was implicit for secondary schools but not for the elementary sector. Circular 1474¹²¹ made suggestions and comments about the education of evacuated children and made a clear distinction between the facilities needed for the two different sectors. There was an assumption

¹¹⁵ M. Cole, How Evacuation Miscarried *Time*, 2nd Sept 1940: <http://www.time.com>

¹¹⁶ E. H. Bernert and F. C. Iklé, Evacuation and Social Cohesion of Urban Groups. *The American Journal of Sociology*, Volume 58 No 2: (1952) 133-138, p. 135.

¹¹⁷ See *The Story of the Mary Datchelor School 1877-1977* (Hodder and Stoughton: London, 1978).

¹¹⁸ P.H.J.H Gosden, (1976) op.cit. p. 9.

¹¹⁹ A number of Special (and Approved) Schools were sent to Carmarthen and Glamorgan. GA. DX 631/1 Cardiff Rural District Council Minutes 8th July 1940 “and calling attention to the mentally defective children due to arrive at Taffs Wells Station on the day of evacuation who are to join others at the Social Services camps at Ogmere (42 boys) and Rhoose (21 girls).770 children arrived from Birmingham. Medway Children’s home was evacuated in its entirety to private accommodation in Glamorgan GA PA 20/41 Administration of the Government Evacuation Scheme. 1939-1946

¹²⁰ The Czech Government in exile established a State school for refugees at the Abernant Lake Hotel in Llanwrtyd Wells for children from 11-18.

¹²¹ *Schooling in an Emergency: Suggestions for the Education of Children Transferred to the Reception Areas* (HMSO: Board of Education, London, 1939).

that elementary school children would be kept busy with extra curricula activities and their time: “would be best spent on such subjects as can be taken in an ordinary classroom without special apparatus ... this means in elementary schools ‘The Three Rs’.”¹²² Conversely, it was thought that secondary schools, because of the importance of the curriculum, “will probably suffer greater loss than elementary schools in the absence of specialised equipment which is normally accepted as indispensable.”¹²³ This Circular, contemporary newspapers and many HMI reports¹²⁴ make a clear distinction between the two sectors and, in some instances, the attributes of children who attended the different types of schools. There was a certain deference given to secondary school children that conferred on them a status that reflected their position in the social strata of the period. For example, in 1939 at Llanelly, unaccompanied school children came from both elementary and secondary schools and HMI immediately identified differences between the two groups as the later “were of a good type and the billeting of them has been an easy matter.”¹²⁵ This sometimes extended to admiration for secondary school members of staff and the head teacher of a Llanelly central school reported “Attended Rotarian lunch in honour of Dr Brook, head of Mary Datchelor School.”¹²⁶

Some major difficulties were encountered by evacuated secondary schools. First was finding a partner school with sufficient accommodation that would enable the evacuated school to retain its identity, and allow teaching a full curriculum to examination level. The retention of school identity was seen as vital because it affected the position of teachers and in the case of Roman Catholic schools, their ability to offer denominational teaching in provided schools. Some thirty grammar, county, central or technical schools were evacuated into south and south west Wales,¹²⁷ and even though there were a considerable number of secondary schools in the area, they were often oversubscribed and this inevitably led to overcrowding. The second problem was finding sufficient billets to accommodate large number of

¹²² *Schooling in an Emergency* op. cit., p. 12.

¹²³ *ibid.*, p 9

¹²⁴ For example a local newspaper recorded the arrival of Coloma Convent School Croydon: “The evacuees included a superior lot of girls who were in the Secondary Schools of the London County Council.” Unreferenced <http://www.llandeilo.org/catholic3.php>.

¹²⁵ NA ED 134/378 HMI Report No 2 p 1.

¹²⁶ CAS ED BK 566/2 Llanelly Girls Central School Log Book, 26th July, 1941. Dr Brock was a member of the Fleming Committee: *The Public Schools and the General Educational System. Report of the Committee on Public Schools appointed by the President of the Board of Education in July 1942* (HMSO: 1944).

¹²⁷ See Appendix 1. Schools evacuated to Carmarthen and Glamorgan. This is not a complete list as the names of evacuated schools were often omitted from records. It also may be noted from this Appendix that some schools were moved or split during the time they were evacuated.

children in close enough proximity to a school to allow daily attendance. This became more problematic as the war lengthened because of the contraction of safe reception areas as the enemy changed tactics. There was also competition for accommodation between the Ministry of Health to house evacuees, and the Ministries of Labour to house employees involved in industrial production. Juxtaposed against these difficulties was the opposition in reception areas, some of which were actively hostile to any further billeting of unaccompanied children. Cardiff Rural District Council, for example, was forced to threaten to invoke their statutory powers and introduce compulsory billeting because the initial response was so low. In the event, and after much coercion accommodation was found for over a thousand evacuees in 1940.¹²⁸ Billeting Tribunals were common,¹²⁹ especially amongst the middle classes of Carmarthen Borough and Cardiff. It became increasingly difficult to billet long term evacuees as some householders became weary with the extra responsibility.

The arrival of Sir Roger Manwood's School¹³⁰ in Carmarthenshire is an example of these difficulties. The school was first evacuated to Penclawdd in 1940 but the village was found to be too small and isolated to be a permanent base for the school. The boys were then moved to Pibwrlwd Farm Institute but, from 1943 onwards, were billeted in private houses.¹³¹ The head teacher later wrote:

"Billeting was the biggest headache of all, for it is 'very much a human problem, bristling with psychological questions of personal tastes, attitude, feelings, adjustments, and the boys and billetters who found themselves mutually compatible were very lucky.'¹³²

HMI wrote in 1940 that there were not sufficient educational resources in Carmarthen Borough for the six hundred evacuees who were billeted there because it was already being used by the Army who had commandeered parts of schools and a number of houses.¹³³

¹²⁸ GA RDC/6/1/64 Government Evacuation Scheme Committee 28th March 1940.

¹²⁹ For example in Carmarthen Borough. CAS. Carmarthen Borough 231 Evacuation Box; GA RDC/6/1/64 Cardiff Rural District.

¹³⁰ An endowed grammar school from Sandwich, Kent.

¹³¹ There were a number of Billeting Tribunals in regard to evacuees. CAS 231 Carmarthen Borough Minutes.

¹³² J. Cavell and B. Kennett *A History of Sir Roger Manwood's School, Sandwich, 1563-1963 : with a life of the founder* (Published for the Governors by Cory, Adams and Mackay: 1963) p. 150.

¹³³ NA ED 134/199 Carmarthenshire Memo to Inspectors, E 426 Reception Area – Carmarthen.

When the Sir Roger Manwood's School was billeted in Carmarthen it shared the premises of Queen Elizabeth Boy's Grammar School. The Minute Book reveals that in August 1940, the Clerk to the Governors wrote to the Carmarthen Education Authority protesting about the fact that the Sir Roger Manwood's School was evacuated to the school without any consultation. The Governors instructed the Clerk to enquire into the financial aspects of Sir Roger Manwood's occupation of the school especially in regard to the wear and tear on laboratories and other specialist equipment. The same enquiry was made about the evacuation of the Addey and Stanhope School from Lewisham, and Governing Body Minutes make it clear that it was making a contribution to the County school's finances and had settled well into the school community.¹³⁴ In other areas the attitudes towards sharing school premises were quite different. In 1940 the Amman Valley County School was joined by sections of Roan Girls and Boys School from North London and amicable arrangements were made, both for financial arrangements and sharing facilities.¹³⁵

By the middle of 1940, as a result of Plan IV,¹³⁶ large numbers of elementary school groups were moved into the reception areas. It was planned that they would be sent to rural areas where there was billeting which had not been used for evacuation previously. Unfortunately billeting did not always match with school accommodation and HMI reported that eight hundred children were due to be evacuated to the Newcastle Emlyn area and thought this number

“excessive for the available school account. The schools are scattered, and small and the premises, water and sanitation of many of them are unsatisfactory. The area is intensely Welsh, so that the amalgamation of small groups of children in the classes of the local schools is not desirable if the linguistic policy of the schools is to be maintained.”¹³⁷

One London County Council Group was housed in Graig Vestry and included evacuees from “babies upward” and one senior boy who was in receipt of a secondary special place.¹³⁸ Children from a number of evacuating areas were sent to the area¹³⁹ and provided with makeshift education in schools at Pencader, Brynhir

¹³⁴ NA ED 134/199 op. cit., p. 144.

¹³⁵ CAS ED BK 48 Amman Valley County School Governing Body Minute Book 6th November, 1942

¹³⁶ LMA. LCC/EO/WAR Records of the London County Council Education Officer's Department relating to emergency wartime measures, including evacuation. Plan IV was the second wave of evacuation.

¹³⁷ NA 134/199 Memo to Inspectors E 426 Reception Areas – Carmarthenshire.

¹³⁸ CAS ED/BK 400.

¹³⁹ CAS ED/Bk/647/2/5/5, New Castle Emlyn Group of LCC School No. 63845 Pencader Section – Mixed and Infants, November 1940 - September 1941.

and Tabernacle Vestry. For most of the period they lived in The Beeches, the old grammar school hostel at Pencader.¹⁴⁰

School Log Books record typical school routines during the period.¹⁴¹ At the rural Parkmill Mixed and Infants on the Gower Peninsular, for example, there were no Air Raid Precaution arrangements and during the second half of 1940 day time bombing raids on Swansea were very frequent. This meant that in addition to the disruption of continual air raids there was a constant trickle of unofficial and official evacuees arriving unannounced at the school. In October 1940 the head teacher wrote that “This was the Day of Days. We had everything except an air raid warning.”¹⁴² A party of forty eight evacuees arrived from London which made total of one hundred and sixty two children in a school which had accommodation for ninety five. HMI made attempts to find additional school accommodation but none was available in the isolated and rural area and the head teacher was instructed by the Director of Education not to accept any more evacuees. The eventual and unsatisfactory solution was for the school to work on a shift basis with evacuees, and by 1941 the school had become home to two hundred and ninety five children. This situation continued for almost a year until the raids on Swansea eased and the London County Council evacuee groups could be were dispersed to other schools.

It was inevitable that the influx of large numbers of children and teachers would cause some problems. In Mountain Ash for example, there had been an almost complete breakdown in relations between the evacuated schools and the Local Education Authority. The Kent local inspector reported that there was

“a failure of the two races to understand each other. This is observable elsewhere, but nowhere so clearly as in this rather isolated and very self-centred community. It is unfortunate that, especially in the depressed mining areas such as Mountain Ash, a feeling of antagonism in general has grown up in recent years, and incoming teachers have had the full benefit of this.”¹⁴³

¹⁴⁰ <http://www.pencader.org.uk/Two> and MLPJ Archive. Two young brothers were evacuated from Liverpool and were housed in the hostel for some time. They remained in Pencader for the remainder of the war. They did not see their mother for five years and although they were kindly treated, the eldest especially was very angry that his education had been neglected. Both returned to Liverpool speaking Welsh fluently.

¹⁴¹ WGAS E/W 25 1/3 Parkmill Mixed and Infants Logbook; WGAS E/ PT 3 1/1, Sandfields Girls Council School Log Book; WGAS. E/S/12/1/1, Manselton Girls Council School Log Book for example.

¹⁴² WGAS. E/W 25 1/3, Parkmill Mixed and Infants Logbook.

¹⁴³ KHLC C/E 14/7/3 Visits to Elementary Schools in Reception Areas – Mountain Ash visited 16th and 17th December 1940.

The Inspector held an unsatisfactory meeting with Sheerness head teachers¹⁴⁴ and later told the Director of Mountain Ash Local Education Authority that there was much antipathy towards evacuated teachers, and difficult interpersonal relationships had developed between individual teachers from local and Kent schools.¹⁴⁵ This kind of situation was not unknown, as some evacuated teachers considered themselves to be far more advanced, in educational terms, than their colleagues in reception areas.¹⁴⁶ An element of this perceived superiority is apparent in a report to the Director of Kent Local Education Authority about Merthyr Tydfil Borough Council. It was pointed out that this small authority which had different standards to those in Kent and its officers were “quick to take offence, prone to be suspicious, inclined to magnify their office at the expense of the teaching staff.”¹⁴⁷ In other areas the situation was quite different and good relationships developed. Secondary school head teachers reported that their schools had been warmly welcomed and the facilities were good.¹⁴⁸ These comments reflect the very mixed reception evacuated schools received and the Kent inspector wrote after a visit to Glamorgan LEA that, in general, “where difficulties exist they are local in character. It is no use expecting South Wales to be in perfect step with Kent.”¹⁴⁹

Opinions on Evacuation.

In 1941 the Commission of the Churches complained that it had not been consulted “at any stage”¹⁵⁰ about evacuation plans and commented on the fact that out of the “20,000 elementary schools in the country, nearly half rank as church schools: 9,000 Church of England; 1,300 Catholic.”¹⁵¹ The main complaint was that no account had been taken of the religious needs of evacuees, either at school or in the community. While there would have been suitable places of worship to meet the religious needs of most children, this was not the case for either Jewish or Roman Catholic evacuees. There was large Jewish Community in south and south

¹⁴⁴ KHLC C/E 14/7/3 *ibid* Report to Director Kent LEA 14th November 1940.

¹⁴⁵ At Pontypridd for example the Chatham County School for Girls was not given a very cordial welcome by the Head Mistress of Treforest County School. KHLC C/E 14/7/2 Report to the Director Visits to Secondary etc Schools in Reception Areas 27th November 1940.

¹⁴⁶ For example G.A.N. Lowndes, (1969) *op.cit.* p 206; P.H.J.H. Gosden, (1976) *op.cit.*

¹⁴⁷ KHLC C/E 14/7/2 Report of South Wales and Monmouth Kent Evacuated Parties 25th - 31st Oct 1941.

¹⁴⁸ KHLC C/E 14/7/2 *ibid.*

¹⁴⁹ KHLC C/E 14/7/2 *ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ Evacuation Reviewed: Why the Churches were not consulted. *Catholic Herald*, 28th March 1941.

¹⁵¹ *Catholic Herald*, 1941 *ibid.*

west Wales¹⁵² and the Welsh Jewish Project¹⁵³ notes that many Jewish refugees arrived in Wales during the 1930s both to study and set up businesses. While some Jewish children encountered problems during evacuation¹⁵⁴ there is no evidence of overt discrimination in south and south west Wales. There are however many examples of a lack of understanding of the faith. A number of children from the Kindertransport were placed with both Jewish and Christian families throughout the area and although many were able to retain their faith, others were placed in homes where they “were subjected to conversion attempts.”¹⁵⁵ The log books for Cardiff schools offer a few additional details and note that special arrangements were made for the welfare of Jewish children in the city where there was a large Jewish community.¹⁵⁶

Roman Catholic evacuees had a very different experience and were put under considerable pressure from the Roman Catholic church to retain their faith at all costs. Archbishop Hinsley was adamant in his letters to the Board of Education that Catholic schools should not be evacuated to areas where there was no suitable church.¹⁵⁷ There had been clear guidance in the Encyclical on Christian Education¹⁵⁸ that could not be ignored. There was a belief “that education was not complete unless it allowed for religion to permeate the whole of a child’s life,”¹⁵⁹ and Archbishop Hinsley had met with the President of the Board of Education to insist that this should be the case.¹⁶⁰ In view of this advice there had been some instances¹⁶¹ where the parish priest from an evacuated parish put pressure on parents of evacuated children to ensure their swift return home so they would not be exposed to other religions or practices. There was a real concern that the

¹⁵² There were approximately 20 small Jewish communities although these had declined in number during the depression years. www.jewishgen.org/jcr-uk/wales.htm

¹⁵³ <http://welshjewishheritage.tumblr.com>

¹⁵⁴ See J. Welshman, *Churchill’s Children: The Evacuee Experience in Wartime Britain* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2010). Welshman recounts the experiences of a Jewish head teacher evacuated with her Stoke Newington school to Shefford in Bedfordshire; T. Kushner, (1988), op. cit.

¹⁵⁵ <http://welshjewishheritage.tumblr.com>, *The Second World War, 1933-1945*.

¹⁵⁶ K. Strange, *Cardiff Schools and the age of the Second World War: The Log Books, - a documentary history* <http://resources.hwb.wales.gov.uk/VTC/ngfl/history/> April 1939, Cardiff Education’s Secondary Schools Committee recommends ‘that arrangements be made for Moritz Wagschal and Siegfried Wagschal, Jewish refugee children, to be admitted to Canton High School for Boys...and that ...in view of the special circumstances of these cases, the Committee decided to excuse payment of the school fees’.

¹⁵⁷ NA ED 134/204 Rhondda.

¹⁵⁸ Encyclical of Pope Pius XI on Christian Education to the Patriarchs, Primate, Archbishops, and other Ordinaries in Peace and Communion 31st December 1929. http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_31121929_divini-illius-magistri.html

¹⁵⁹ T. O Hughes, (1999) op. cit. p. 131.

¹⁶⁰ NA ED 134/204 Rhondda Unreferenced letter from Board of Education 24th May 1940.

¹⁶¹ NA ED 134/378 Llanelly.

religious needs of Roman Catholic could not be met in the reception areas. This was a particularly difficult situation in south and south west Wales where there were few Roman Catholic churches or schools and it was almost inevitable that some sort of incident would take place.

In response to a letter from the Board of Education, the Director of Rhondda Local Education wrote that it would be impossible for him to carry out Cardinal Hinsley's request to find school places for Roman Catholic evacuees in Roman Catholic schools. The Director pointed out that there was only one small Catholic school in the authority and this could not possibly accommodate the two schools that had been evacuated.¹⁶² The schools would have to share premises but would be able to retain their separate identity, and children would be billeted near one of the four Catholic Churches wherever possible. However, this was not the end of the matter. In September 1941, an evacuated teacher from a Cardiff school "raised at N.U.T. meetings the question of the legality of R. C. and other 'non-provided' pupils receiving their own distinctive form of religious instruction in Council School premises."¹⁶³ In addition, a rate-payer also contacted the Local Education Authority raising the matter of the legality of this situation. The Director wrote to all schools explaining that a decision had been taken by the School Management Committee that teachers of non-provided evacuated schools would be allowed to give denominational religious instruction on Council school premises. There were however real concerns that if this decision became public knowledge it would be very damaging and this would have unfortunate repercussions.¹⁶⁴ Sir Wynn Weldon wrote to give the Board of Education's view on the "objections raised by some busybody,"¹⁶⁵ and the decision taken by Rhondda Education Committee. He pointed out that while it was clear in education legislation that no denominational religious instruction could be given on Council school premises, the conditions of evacuation had not been envisaged. Schools that preserved their identity when on Council premises would not be regarded as public elementary schools and in these circumstances denominational religious instruction could be given. The Director agreed that this advice would prevent any further objections and the recorded

¹⁶² NA ED 134 /204 Letter from Director of Education Rhondda LEA to the Secretary Welsh Department Board of Education 25th May 1940.

¹⁶³ NA ED 134 /204 Letter from T. H. Lewis HMI to Sir Wynn Weldon 22nd September 1941.

¹⁶⁴ NA ED 134/204 Letter. 22nd September 1941 op. cit.

¹⁶⁵ NA ED 134/204 Letter, Sir Wynn Weldon to W. Morris Jones Director, 24th September 1941.

evidence suggests that head teachers of Catholic schools were generally happy with their treatment during evacuation.¹⁶⁶

Teachers and their role in Evacuation.

Teachers were the mainstay of the evacuation scheme¹⁶⁷ and were totally responsible, *in loco parentis*, for many thousands of children during a very dangerous and unpredictable period. One teachers' union journal summed up their new role suggested that they were performing a national service, as great as any other, as they were ensuring the safety of evacuated children so that parents could continue with war work.¹⁶⁸ It has been estimated that during the first wave of evacuation in 1939 ninety thousand teachers and helpers were evacuated with unaccompanied school children.¹⁶⁹ This number fluctuated throughout the course of the war as circumstances in the reception areas changed. By September 1944, about seven thousand teachers and helpers remained evacuated with over a quarter of million children.¹⁷⁰ While this reduction was due in part to the fall in the number of evacuees, it was also the result of the assimilation of evacuated children into classes in local schools. Strict war time economies were also exercised by the Board of Education and a memo told HMI to remind LEAs that the pupil : teachers ratio met the agreed formula.¹⁷¹ They were also reminded that class sizes could not be reduced in neutral areas to make supervision easier when there were air raids.¹⁷² These restrictions were not only needed because of economic reasons, but because there was a severe shortage of teachers. This was due in part to conscription but complicated by the fact that when provision was expanded in evacuated areas many teachers were still needed in reception areas. There was constant disruption to staffing as teachers were called up for active service and had to be replaced by uncertificated, inexperienced staff, by married women returners or, as in some areas of Carmarthenshire, by student teachers. In addition staff were

¹⁶⁶ NA ED 134/378 Llanelly.

¹⁶⁷ Times Educational Supplement, 14th September, 1940 in H. C. Dent, *Education in Transition: A Sociological Study of the impact of war on English Education* (Kegan Paul: London, 1944) in M. Lawn and G. Grace (Eds), *Teachers: The Culture and Politics of Work* (Falmer Press: Sussex, 1987) p. 50.

¹⁶⁸ Schoolmaster and Woman Teacher's Chronicle, cxxvi/1577, 31st August, 1939, in P. Cunningham & P. Gardiner 'Saving the nation's children': teachers, wartime evacuation in England and Wales and the construction of national identity,' *History of Education*, 1999, Vol 28, p. 327.

¹⁶⁹ P. Cunningham and P. Gardner, (1999) op. cit., p. 28.

¹⁷⁰ R. M. Titmuss, (1950) op. cit. p. 562.

¹⁷¹ NA ED 22/228 Memo to Inspectors Wales No 551 17th April 1940, p. 1.

¹⁷² NA ED 22/228 ibid p. 1.

frequently absent to attend ARP courses and other war related events although some, strangely, were given leave of absence to spend an exchange year in the United States of America.¹⁷³

While there was a drive to reduce the numbers of teachers some latitude was given in reception areas with a 25:1 ratio of teachers to pupils to account for extra responsibilities and the constant change in the numbers of evacuees.¹⁷⁴ This was also considered essential for evacuated elementary groups because teaching space was scarce and groups frequently had to be split to fit any available accommodation. The deployment of secondary school teachers appears to have been much less problematic. The records of the Mary Datchelor School¹⁷⁵ evacuated to Llanelly show that when a home school was re-established in London the two branches were maintained simultaneously, and some staff returned home while others remained with evacuated pupils. It was common that once education provision in evacuated areas was increased, teachers were withdrawn from reception areas and HMI advised that if LEA found difficulty in retrieving their teachers from reception areas they should be informed.¹⁷⁶ The contractual difficulties faced by teachers were complex and those who were left unemployed by the closure of schools in September 1939 were deployed to other work, such as running rest and emergency feeding centres. It has been suggested that while teachers responded to the demands of war time they also found them “tiring and demoralising”¹⁷⁷ as they

“were loaded down with new civilian duties, such as fire watching, and the duties that coalesced around teachers ... The school day was often indeterminate in length and holidays became another kind of work, entertaining and minding children.”¹⁷⁸

In 1941 the Ministry of Labour asked the Board of Education to force all schools to remain open in the holidays to look after the children of working mothers and to care for evacuees. Teacher Unions were vociferous in their objections, especially as it was doubtful whether many elementary children would attend schools during the

¹⁷³ GA E/MT/17/3 Pen Garn Du Council School Log Book shows that Grace Owen, head teacher was given leave of absence to visit schools in America in September 1939. She returned to duty in March 1941.

¹⁷⁴ WGAS E/S 32/1/1 Swansea Evacuated Children; WGAS E/S 32/1/2, Manselton Group. In 1941, in Carmarthen and Glamorgan there were 602 evacuated teachers with 26,506 unaccompanied children.

¹⁷⁵ *The Story of the Mary Datchelor School 1877-1977* (Hodder and Stoughton: London, 1977).

¹⁷⁶ NA ED 22/228 Memo to Inspectors Wales No 551 17th April 1940 p. 1.

¹⁷⁷ M. Lawn, What is a Teacher's Job: Work and Welfare in Elementary Teaching in M. Lawn and G. Grace (Eds), *Teachers: The Culture and Politics of Work* (Falmer Press: Sussex, 1987) p. 61.

¹⁷⁸ M. Lawn, *ibid* p. 61.

holidays.¹⁷⁹ Where schools remained open, teachers worked a shift system with colleagues to ensure that they had some holidays.¹⁸⁰ There are suggestions however that these arrangements were not necessary for secondary age children as they “preferred to spend their time as they chose.”¹⁸¹

Teachers made every effort, through their unions,¹⁸² to negate the effect of evacuation and the war time period generally. London teachers,¹⁸³ were heavily involved in the planning of the first and subsequent evacuations,¹⁸⁴ and requests were made to the authority to be evacuated with husbands, wives or friends or preferably not to be evacuated at all. They complained of their isolation in reception areas and many found themselves in unusual and lonely situations.¹⁸⁵ There were no standard billeting allowances for teachers and they were often in straitened circumstances, especially as many had families and children who they wanted to visit regularly but found the cost prohibitive.¹⁸⁶ A letter from the Secretary of the London School Masters Association to the Board of Education pointed out that no evacuated teacher chose his or her destination, some of which were very isolated, and it was very difficult for them to travel home.¹⁸⁷

Although some of the contemporary surveys referred to teachers in glowing terms this was not a complete or accurate picture of their attitudes during evacuation.¹⁸⁸ HMI reports record instances of personality differences between evacuated teachers who appeared to consider themselves superior to local teachers.¹⁸⁹ It was inevitable that under these circumstances there would be resentment between the groups. In Glamorgan, the Kent local inspector records the many problems caused by the head teacher at Three Crosses, and where

¹⁷⁹ NA ED 11/238 I.A.A.M. to Board, in P.H.J.H. Gosden, *The Evolution of a Profession*, (Basil Blackwell: London, 1972) p. 118.

¹⁸⁰ CAS ED/BK/695/2/4 Llangunnick (Llangynog) Vaughn’s Charity School – Log Book.

¹⁸¹ NA ED 134/203 Replies to Memo to inspectors M.S. No. 225, (General).

¹⁸² In general terms the teachers of different sectors of education were represented by different unions e.g. National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers represented secondary school teachers and the National Union of Teachers represented elementary teachers.

¹⁸³ LMA LCC/EO/WAR/01/083 Consultations with teachers’ associations. The first evacuation from London was code named ‘Operation Pied Piper.’

¹⁸⁴ LMA LCC/EO/WAR/01/083 *ibid*.

¹⁸⁵ LCC WAR/5/5 List of LCC Evacuated Schools, 1939 shows that female teachers were frequently billeted in public houses in the South Wales valleys.

¹⁸⁶ S. Isaacs, *The Cambridge Evacuation Survey* (Methuen & Co: London, 1941) p. 185.

¹⁸⁷ LMA LCC/ED/WAR/01/083 Consultations with teachers’ associations.

¹⁸⁸ For example S. Isaacs, *op. cit.*; Barnett House Study Group, *London Children in War-Time Oxford*, (OUP: London, 1947).

¹⁸⁹ See for example G.A.N. Lowndes, (1969) *op.cit.*

evacuated teachers had behaved unreasonably.¹⁹⁰ There were as many instances of disagreements between teachers as there were instances of teachers working well together. These experiences undoubtedly played a significant part “in the forging of a more homogenous post war professional identity.”¹⁹¹

The responsibilities of teachers during the period cannot be underestimated and unfortunately there were a number of instances of very serious illness and death amongst evacuated teachers.¹⁹² This was also the case amongst evacuated children: some had serious accidents, some died and illness was a constant threat to welfare. For example, the head teacher of the evacuated Sandwich Grammar School was preoccupied by the fact that diphtheria was prevalent in the area.¹⁹³ Diphtheria was widespread at the time and school closures because of it were very frequent.¹⁹⁴ It was clear that Kent children¹⁹⁴ had not been vaccinated before evacuation,¹⁹⁵ but, by 1941, the majority of local authorities in south and south west Wales¹⁹⁶ had instigated vaccination programmes and evacuated children were included in these.¹⁹⁷

Standards of Education and Examinations

Standards in education during evacuation are hard to measure because few records were kept. However, it is clear that what was expected of elementary and secondary school children, in terms of learning outcomes, was quite different. In the secondary sector, entrance arrangements, the curriculum and examination system continued remained almost intact. In contrast, the education of elementary school children, whether evacuated or not, was considerably effected by a lack of

¹⁹⁰ KHLC C/E 14/7/3 Report to the Director Visits to Elementary Schools in Reception Areas, 16th November 1940.

¹⁹¹ P. Cunningham and P. Gardner, (1999) op. cit. p. 334.

¹⁹² KHLC C/E/4/7/3 Memorandum to Director November 1940.

¹⁹³ Evacuated to the Swansea area.

¹⁹⁴ *The Health of the School Child. Report of the Chief Medical Officer of the Ministry of Education for the years 1939-1945* (HMSO: 1945) Chapter V indicates that there were high levels of infectious diseases: diphtheria, scarlet fever, measles and whooping cough, for example throughout the war years. WGAS E/S/12/1/1 Manselton Girls Council School Log Book reports on 13th September 1940 at the same time as it was receiving serious daily air raids that it has been closed for a week because of a Diphtheria outbreak; See also CAS. C/ED/L 16 Llanelly

¹⁹⁵ KHLC C/ E 14/7/2 Kent Evacuated Parties 31st October 1941.

¹⁹⁶ CAS WWH/2/2 Annual Report of the School Medical Officer for year ending 31st December 1939;

¹⁹⁷ KHLC C/E 14/7/2 Kent Evacuated Parties, 31st October, 1941; CRO. WWH/2/2, Annual Report of the School Medical Officer for year ending 31st December 1939; In Swansea for example WGAS E/SB 71 /2/63 Education Health Committee 8th Jan 1940.

equipment and accommodation.¹⁹⁸ As a result, “the war increased the proportion of children who got very little and the proportion of those who got a great deal,”¹⁹⁹ and elementary school children from disadvantaged families were most affected. It is difficult to establish the extent of educational retardation because little testing was carried out during the period but when London County Council tested 3,000 thirteen years olds in 1943, comparative results from 1924 showed delay of about one year.²⁰⁰ Similarly the results of a survey carried out in 1941 at Southend on non-evacuated and evacuated returners showed that there:

“was a very marked loss among the non-evacuees amounting to an average retardation of several months more than the actual period that had been spent without schooling. On the other hand evacuees had not only maintained the rate of progress ... but had shown a marked improvement.”²⁰¹

These results, although not scientific, appear to show that children who had benefited from a stable education in reception areas did better than those who had had disrupted provision at home. In 1946, tests carried out by the Armed Forces on men who had spent their last three years at school in the period between 1939 1942 showed a drop in standards and there was a significant increase in men classified as educationally backward.²⁰²

Evacuation presented a number of pedagogical difficulties for elementary school teachers, particularly the need to adjust the curriculum to accommodate individual school circumstances. There has been some discussion about whether the circumstances of evacuation led to a more child centred curriculum²⁰³ but this is generally thought untrue. Parsons²⁰⁴ suggests that curricula changes were enforced by circumstances and geography, and not by any altruistic efforts on the part of staff to improve teaching and learning. The teacher union journals²⁰⁵ provided guidance in developing a curriculum for elementary school children, and oral evidence suggests that the circumstances of teaching when evacuated was extremely

¹⁹⁸ P. Gardner, ‘The Giant at the Front: young teachers and corporal punishment in inter-war elementary schools, *History of Education*, Vol 25 1996 p 144.

¹⁹⁹ E. Hopkins, (1989) p. 242.

²⁰⁰ P.H.J.H. Gosden, (1976.) op. cit. pp. 73-74.

²⁰¹ *ibid.*, p. 74.

²⁰² P.H.J.H. Gosden, (1976) op cit. p. 74.

²⁰³ For example G.A.N. Lowndes, (1969) op.cit.

²⁰⁴ M. Parsons, *War Child: Children Caught in Conflict*, (Tempus: Stroud, 2008) p. 50.

²⁰⁵ *The Schoolmaster & Woman Teacher’s Chronicle – the Organ of the National Union of Teachers*, for example.

difficult.²⁰⁶ There were problems associated with sharing a classroom with a local teacher and trying to provide quiet written activities was extremely difficult. Long nature walks were the obvious answer when the weather permitted, an activity often suggested in Board of Education advice to teachers.²⁰⁷

Secondary school teachers did not have these problems, as the curriculum was circumscribed and centred round the examination system. The whole question of entrance into secondary schools and payment of fees during the period of evacuation was problematic, and a matter of great concern to the Directors of Education in Wales.²⁰⁸ At the start of evacuation it had already been agreed by the Board of Education²⁰⁹ that no child should be deprived of a secondary school place because they had been evacuated. It is clear however, that this was not always the case, especially when a child held a free place outside the receiving local authority.²¹⁰ This acceptance of the right to a secondary education was complicated by the fact that the entrance examination system was extremely complex. For example Cardiff Local Education Authority and other local authorities set their own examinations, marked their own papers and arranged placements in schools in either reception or evacuated areas.²¹¹ This lack of commonality was very difficult to manage for evacuated local authorities, and evacuated teachers were very concerned about having to train pupils for examinations they felt were less rigorous than those in their home areas.²¹² In Carmarthenshire, where there were many small groups of evacuees scattered widely across rural areas, the evacuated local authorities of London, Croydon, Essex, East Ham, West Ham, Kent, Middlesex, Surrey and Great Yarmouth decided to hold a common entrance examination and jointly wrote to the Director of Education asking for assistance in gathering evacuees together and finding a space for them to sit the examination.²¹³ Children sat a common special place examination during the four years of evacuation in over two

²⁰⁶ MLPJ Private Archive, Interview with Mrs Betty Loveluck. Teacher evacuated from Birmingham to the Vale of Glamorgan

²⁰⁷ *Schooling in an Emergency, suggestions for the education of children transferred to the reception areas*, Circular 1474 (HMSO: 1939).

²⁰⁸ NLW Minor Deposit 701 Executive Committee of Directors and Secretaries of Education (Wales and Monmouthshire) Minutes 20th October, 1939.

²⁰⁹ ED 138/58 Board of Education Administrative Memorandum 205.

²¹⁰ PP. Hansard House of Commons 27th February 1940 Col 1861-2034 Vol. 357.

²¹¹ Some schools in evacuated areas were reopened after 1941 although many parents chose to allow their children to remain evacuated. For example the Mary Datchelor School reopened in Camberwell to be able to offer places to new entrants even though the senior pupils remained evacuated in Llanelly

²¹² KHLC C/E 14/7/3 Visits to Elementary Schools in Reception Areas, Report to the Director 14th Nov 1940.

²¹³ CAS CC/ED/1/1/29 Education Minutes 18th December 1941 p. 14.

hundred local authority areas in England and Wales.²¹⁴ The examination system was particularly disadvantageous to elementary school children evacuated into rural areas as many who had obtained a scholarship to a secondary school frequently found it impossible to find a place.²¹⁵

Education in Neutral Areas

While evacuation has been considered to have been the most disruptive element to education in wartime, other factors were equally distracting. In spite of the fact that south and south west Wales did not experience bombing raids to the same extent as some other areas, it was still badly affected. The neutral areas of Swansea and Cardiff, in particular, came under both prolonged day and night time raids over long periods and intense bombing over short periods.²¹⁶ In both areas day time raids resulted in constant interruptions to the school day and night time raids mean that children were frequently tired and fretful. Inadequate ARP provision²¹⁷ in most elementary schools meant that children were dispersed to their homes during air raids. When schools did have air raid shelters, they were damp and unpleasant and inappropriate places for children to be for long periods.²¹⁸ Over the course of the war large numbers of children were evacuated, both officially and unofficially from neutral areas which inevitably added to the disruption of provision.²¹⁹ Bombing raids on Cardiff began in the summer of 1940, and although there does not appear to have been any damage to schools there was a constant disruption to routines and very low attendance.²²⁰ The raids usually involved only a

²¹⁴ LMA LCC/ED/EO/WAR/01/238.

²¹⁵ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar>. Lyn Jenkins spent much of the war as a private evacuee in Nantgaredig. She had passed the entrance examination to a Middlesex Grammar School but was unable to find a suitable school place in Wales. She said "One of my achievements as an evacuee was learning to knit. However, it was a very disturbing time for me as a child and my education did suffer." This is not uncommon and a Liverpool boy evacuated to Llanybydder told MLPJ at interview that he deeply resented his lack of educational opportunity during evacuation. He had spent more time helping the local farmer than at school.

²¹⁶ WGAS E/PT 3 1/1 Sandfields Girls Council School Log Book; CAS Ed Bk 566/2 Llanelly Girls Central School.

²¹⁷ The majority of schools with ARP were secondary schools. See CAS ED/BK 48 Amman Valley County School – Governing Body Minute Book.

²¹⁸ WGAS E/ PT 3 1/1 *ibid*.

²¹⁹ NA RG 26/76 Government Evacuation Scheme. Normal population of evacuation Areas and the Number remaining in these areas at the First of October 1941. Cardiff CB: 28,106 – 24,756; Swansea CB: 25, 803 – 20,000; Newport CB: 13147 – 12,597. A large number of children under five years of age were also evacuated, 2,500 from Swansea alone.

²²⁰ "At a meeting of Cardiff's Education Committee 'The Director reported that since 15th July, 1940, air raid warnings had been sounded during thirty school sessions causing a total loss in school time of nearly eighteen hours' CCL, Cardiff, *Education*, 1939-40, p 264 in K. Strange, *op. cit*.

few aircraft but bombing and machine gun strafing caused wide spread panic. During the early period of the war Cardiff was bombed more frequently than any other area of England and Wales, and members of national Civil Defence organisations visited to see how the city was coping.²²¹ In January 1941, the first major night time raids caused damage to forty one elementary schools.²²² The Primary HMI, Captain T.J. Evans, wrote to Sir Wynne Weldon,²²³ to report that although Cardiff children were back at school, attendance was very low, affected by heavy night time bombing and very bad weather.²²⁴ He also stated that the repairs at two worst damaged LEA schools²²⁵ would cost approximately £19,000.²²⁶ In the aftermath of this raid, twenty six per cent of Cardiff parents decided to have their children evacuated.²²⁷

Many parents had already made their own private arrangements and it was thought that six hundred and seventy one children had been unofficially evacuated but "This is probably an understatement."²²⁸ Bombing continued throughout the spring of 1941 and caused further destruction, including the total loss of Marlborough Street Boys' and Girls' Council Schools. A further eleven schools were bombed during May 1943 and serious damage was done to many more. At Howard Gardens High School for Girls, the damage was so severe that pupils were sent home and only recalled when notices were placed in the local press.²²⁹ Metal Street National School Boys' Department was completely burnt out and the Girls' Department was severely damaged by water. During this raid six children were killed and eleven injured. After each major raid all schools in the Borough were closed and children from damaged schools were diverted with their teachers to other schools which caused further disruption to provision.

In Swansea the situation was very similar and the head teacher of Manselton Girls Council School²³⁰ reported endless air raids between July 1940 and July 1941

²²¹ D. Morgan, *Cardiff: A City at War*(1998) p. 47.

²²² NA ED 134/247 Cardiff.

²²³ Permanent Secretary to the Welsh Department Board of Education.

²²⁴ NA ED 134/247 Cardiff, *ibid.* Permanent Secretary to the Welsh Department Board of Education.

²²⁵ Kitchener Road Infants and Canton High School.

²²⁶ NA ED 134/247 Cardiff.

²²⁷ GA D/DX 504/19 – 1941 Notes about the evacuated Cardiff children to Afan Valley area: Glyncoirwg, Abergwynfi Cymmer and Dyffryn Afan. See also a list of evacuated Cardiff schools and their destinations in K. Strange, *op. cit.*, pp 109-111.

²²⁸ NA ED 134/247 Cardiff Report on Air Raid January, 1941.

²²⁹ NA ED 134/247 Cardiff Report of Air Raid on Cardiff 17th-18th May 1943.

²³⁰ WGAS E/S/1 Manselton Girls Council School Log Book.

as well as three nights of very heavy raids in May 1941. During this period the school day did not start until eleven o'clock and finished early during the winter months because of the blackout. There were attempts to maintain some normality but it is clear that the constant disruption was taking its toll on the attendance levels of children. Staff were also frequently absent.²³¹ While the education system was dislocated during this intense bombing, log books report that children themselves were not overtly effected by air raids or other disruption and considered them "charming little episodes" – a break in school life monotony."²³²

By June 1941 Swansea parents decided to have their children evacuated and a mixed group of children were sent to rural Carmarthenshire. The Log Book²³³ for the evacuated section of Manselton Girls School offers a very valuable insight into the demands and conditions of evacuation. It records that eighty children from a number of Swansea schools accompanied by eight teachers were divided between eight schools on the Carmarthen-Pembrokeshire border around Trelech. Children of all ages were evacuated and stayed for varying periods. Some were collected immediately by parents while others stayed for five or six months. The details included in school log books give an indication of the constant disruption to education by factors such as lack of resources; staff movement; child related incidents and visits by parents. As the number of evacuees decreased so did the number of teachers. This necessitated constant reorganisation, and children were frequently moved between teachers and schools. The two log books, one from the evacuated from Manselton Girls School and one from the home school, gives an interesting insight into war time education and it is clear that both parts of the school were badly affected by the conflict.²³⁴

The End of Evacuation

The Evacuation Scheme lasted for the duration of the war and considerable numbers of unaccompanied children remained in the reception areas throughout the period. It functioned "as a kind of disguised welfare agency from about 1941

²³¹ This was noted frequently in both HMI reports and school log books. Some teachers were absent on a regular basis with trivial illnesses.

²³² K. Strange, op. cit. p. 59.

²³³ WGAS E/S 32/1/2 4th October 1941 – 23rd September 1942.

²³⁴ WGAS E/S 32/1/2.

onwards”²³⁵ as there was always a need for short term accommodation for vulnerable groups. By 1942, a weariness had developed in the reception areas and there was a clamour to end evacuation but there was also a perception that there were too many risks remaining to do this. Plans were in place for D-Day but there was still no obvious end to the war so the scheme remained in place. The end of the war in Europe brought some relief but it is clear that education remained very disrupted and disorganised. The General Purposes Sub Committee of the London County Council reported on the condition of schools there.²³⁶ and estimated that for the first three years of the war the majority of secondary school pupils were in reception areas²³⁷ but this number altered dramatically as the attacks on London lessened. In 1944 over eight thousand London County Council secondary school children remained evacuated although some secondary schools had been reopened to cater for the lower forms as younger un-evacuated children passed scholarship and needed school places.

By early 1944, the number of evacuees in England and Wales had dropped considerably²³⁸ but the flying bomb attacks on London in July reversed this situation. *Operation Rivulet*²³⁹ was put into action and unaccompanied school children and mothers were sent out of danger zones into any area where accommodation could be found. It has been estimated that 307,000 mothers and children and a further 552,000 unofficial evacuees left London and the south east, supported by Government free travel vouchers and billeting certificates. While Mass Observation reported that this was the most successful evacuation²⁴⁰ it does not appear to have been the case in Wales. In Carmarthenshire, for example, the one hundred and sixty six mothers with young children, two hundred and eighty unaccompanied school children; a boys’ secondary school with eight masters, and one hundred and seventy one elementary school children proved difficult to accommodate.²⁴¹ There were instances where “children had been sent down without teachers”²⁴² as was the case

²³⁵ R. M. Titmuss, (1950) op.cit. p. 425.

²³⁶ LMA LCC/EO/WAR/ 01/210 Criticisms of Evacuation General Purposes Sub Committee 20th June 1945

²³⁷ In 1940 for example out of 16,025 secondary school children only 901 remained in London. Over 5000 had already sought private evacuation before the outbreak of war in 1939

²³⁸ In March 1944 only 123,000 unaccompanied children; 130 mothers and children and 55,000 other adults remained evacuated in England and Wales R. M. Titmuss, *ibid*, p. 42.

²³⁹ LMA LCC/EO/WARJ 1/194 gives a full account of Operation Rivulet that took place during that year.

²⁴⁰ Mass Observation Bulletin, Dec 1944-Jan 1954 in T. Kushner, (1988) op. cit. p. 281.

²⁴¹ CAS CC/ED/1/1/31 Education Minutes August 1944.

²⁴² NLW 170,000 Women and Children Evacuated. *Western Mail* July 21st 1944.

at Vaughn's Charity School.²⁴³ In Llandeilo, the local authority had to find accommodation for four hundred mothers and children despite the fact that they were already billeting large numbers of evacuees.²⁴⁴ Under these circumstances, the Billeting Officer decided to inform the Welsh Board of Health that they could house unaccompanied children, but not mothers because there was "a big event coming on at Llandebie, the Welsh National Eisteddfod."²⁴⁵

In Glamorgan "throughout July 1944 thousands of official and unofficial evacuees of all ages poured into Pontypridd and the Rhondda Valleys from the London area.²⁴⁶ Operation Rivulet only lasted a few weeks²⁴⁷ but despite this it drew almost as much criticism as did the first in 1939. The focus of criticism was on the organisation of the scheme itself, and this was reported widely in local and national press. London newspapers were extremely vociferous about the treatment that evacuees had apparently received in some areas.²⁴⁸ At Pontardawe, for example, billeting volunteers were accused of "hawking children from house to house,"²⁴⁹ although this was refuted by the Welsh Board of Health. Accusations of unfriendliness were strongly denied and the Chairman of the London County Council expressed his satisfaction about the treatment that children had received in Port Talbot²⁵⁰ and evacuated head teachers recorded similar views.²⁵¹ While the third evacuation did not last long it was extremely disruptive and local services was once again put under extreme pressure.

The Ministry of Health had been planning the end of evacuation for some time and in many ways it was as logistically difficult as it had been at the beginning.²⁵² Elementary school children had been scattered widely over reception areas and secondary school children preparing for examinations would need to

²⁴³ CAS ED/BK/695/2/4 Llangunnick (Llangynog) Vaughn's Charity School – Log Book.

²⁴⁴ NLW Saturated with Evacuees Protest. *Western Mail* July 17th 1944.

²⁴⁵ NLW *Western Mail* *ibid*.

²⁴⁶ D. Powell, *Pontypridd at War: the Second World War at Home* (Merton Press: Cardiff, 1999) p. 138.

²⁴⁷ NA ED 134/203 Replies to Memo to Inspectors MS No 225 (General). At the end of June 1944 there were 479 evacuees in the Pontypridd areas. By the beginning of September there were 2,200.

²⁴⁸ The Clapham Observer published "a long letter from ex-Capt J. E. Tillard of St Dogmaels Cardigan in which the writer made very scathing comments about Wales and the Welsh people among whom he came to live six years ago" in NLW Does Wales know there's a war on? *Western Mail* Sept 21st 1944. The letter further commented on the fact that St Dogmaels Workhouse had been used to house evacuees.

²⁴⁹ NLW. Evacuees: Volunteer Staff Vindicated *Western Mail* July 24th 1944,

²⁵⁰ NLW London Pleased with Warm Hearted Welsh *Western Mail* September 6th 1944,

²⁵¹ NLW Llanelly's Evacuees: Answer to Critics *Western Mail* September 6th 1944.

²⁵² R. M Titmuss, (1950) *op. cit.* p. 431.

remain evacuated. There were other considerations as many homes in the evacuation areas had been damaged or destroyed by bombing and would need to be inspected before evacuees could return; parents had been killed and home circumstances had changed. In 1945 *The Times* reported that "Evacuees number hundreds of thousands and even when the moment comes to give the final 'all clear' timetables will have to be fixed and other final arrangements made."²⁵³ Local authorities were sent precise instructions about the transfer of children back to the evacuation areas. Mothers and children still billeted in Rhondda Urban District began to leave on special trains in June 1945 although many evacuees remained as they had either been made orphans or had no suitable accommodation to return to. These children were passed into the care of the local authority under the terms of the Ministry of Health Circular No. 225/45 with all costs being met by the authority.²⁵⁴ Evacuees and refugees from Belgium, the Channel Islands, Eire and Northern Ireland were given permission to return²⁵⁵ but Children's Overseas Reception Board evacuees return was delayed until 1946 although many of these remained evacuated to complete their education.²⁵⁶

The final event of evacuation in south and south west Wales was in 1946 when Rochester and Chatham Councils invited children from the reception areas for a week long official visit "as an expression of gratitude for the great kindness shown to the Rochester and Chatham children during the war years."²⁵⁷

Conclusions

The historiography of evacuation clearly shows that its primary intention was to ensure the physical safety of all vulnerable groups, and undoubtedly it did serve this purpose well. Unfortunately it also had the unintended consequence of seriously damaging education provision in England and Wales and it is clear that there was a total disregard on the part of the Government for the education and welfare of

²⁵³ *The Times* 4th April 1945.

²⁵⁴ TRL Rhondda Urban District Council 1945-1946 Government Evacuation Scheme. School Management Committee 18th June 1945 p. 1253.

²⁵⁵ The last file in the evacuation series for Glamorgan Education Authority contains copy letters and circulars about these transfers. GRO GD/E/16/7.

²⁵⁶ P. Y. Lin, National Identity and Social Mobility: class, empire and the British government overseas education of children during the second world war. *Twentieth Century British History*, Volume 7 Issue 3 (1996) 310-344, p. 329.

²⁵⁷ TRL Rhondda Urban District Council 1945-1946 (1945) op. cit. Education Committee.

millions of school children. The lack of planning for evacuation immediately before the outbreak of the Second World War led to a series of very damaging events which took a number of years to rectify. It has been clearly identified that no consideration was given to the aftermath of the events in Spain and the evacuation of many unaccompanied school children to Great Britain that followed. It is also the case that the Ministry of Health, which was in charge of the process, had clear priorities. These focused mainly on the evacuation of hospitals, the elderly and infirm and mothers and children, and it is clear that there was interest or understanding of the needs of unaccompanied children, especially in terms of education and welfare. Their haphazard billeting in 1939 is evidence of this, and undoubtedly this was instrumental in the animosity towards evacuees in many areas.

The effect that evacuation had on education cannot be understated and many factors were detrimental to the service in some way. Although it does not directly impact on this research perhaps the most important was the complete closure of schools in evacuating areas. This had serious consequences for non-evacuated children and early returners as well as on the working lives of teachers, many of whom were deployed to other work and were lost to the profession. Even after a partial service was resumed in evacuated areas there was a very high level of absenteeism; one and a half million children received no education at all, and the lack of resources and lack of attainment added to “all the traumas of the complete disruption.”²⁵⁸ In the reception areas while circumstances were quite different, they were equally as damaging and disrupted.

Education in south and south west Wales had experienced the full effects of the depression during the 1920s and 1930s and was still largely unreorganised. There were many small rural schools where poor standards were the norm and which provided a very inadequate environment for many thousands of unaccompanied evacuated elementary school children. These evacuees were the most likely to return home almost immediately and primary resources and anecdotal evidence indicates a number of issues. Although Lowndes, for example, chose to paint an idealistic picture of evacuee’s life in the countryside it is abundantly clear that this was not a true reflection of its reality. Many were taught an unsatisfactory curriculum, in over crowded and poorly resourced all-age elementary schools, and

²⁵⁸ R. Lowe, ed (1992), *op. cit.*, 1992) p. 9.

education for the vast majority was meagre. They had restricted educational lives and it was frequently the case that they had no opportunity to transfer to a secondary school as there were often no places available locally. This affected their future life chances and led to a sense of personal deprivation.

Conversely, children from secondary schools had a much better chance of receiving a high standard of education. In general, they were evacuated as a whole school with familiar teachers and continued to follow an appropriate curriculum. Although, evacuated secondary schools generally had to share premises with local schools they had access to the necessary resources for teaching and learning, science laboratories for example. They also had the advantage of remaining as a cohesive group with a substantial support mechanism. This was very advantageous and it was the case that secondary school children were the least likely to be early returners and many remained in reception areas to take their final examinations after evacuation had ended. They were also treated with a degree of approbation that appears to mark their place in society. Certainly, the more affluent circumstances of the sector allowed it to protect its educational environment as well as provide better social care to pupils.

It is unfortunate that there is little detailed primary evidence about education during evacuation both because of the decision to reduce the amount of record keeping kept by schools, and as Parsons reflects evacuation was largely removed from the public consciousness. It is clear however, that almost all evacuated children led severely dislocated lives and although this aspect is not discussed in the research the anecdotal evidence of evacuees indicate that this was commonplace. However, it is also doubtful that evacuation alone precipitated educational change but it was influential in that it raised an awareness of the inequality within the education system. It is ironic that alongside the turbulence and disruption of evacuation the Board of Education was planning for substantial change. Jones refers to this and suggests that

”as with the First World War any analysis of the impact of the war of 1939-1945 must centre around the disruption caused and the movement for reconstruction. The permanent loss of opportunity for many individuals has to be balanced against opportunities for rethinking fundamental educational policies.”²⁵⁹

²⁵⁹ G. E. Jones, *Controls and Conflicts in Welsh Secondary Education*, (UWP, Cardiff, 1982.) p. 179.

Chapter 5 – Reconstruction

“It has been remarked that the periods of great educational activity have synchronised with wars and the Second World War was no exception.”¹

This chapter examines the construction of the Education Act 1944. The time period runs consecutively with that of the previous chapter which examined the effects that evacuation had on education during war time. The disruption of the education system at the start of the Second World War was a turning point in public opinion, and new aspirations brought about by the hardships of war began to emerge. There was a growing realisation that it would be impossible to return to “the stagnant, class-ridden society of the 1930s”² after the end of the war. Dent, writing in the *Times Educational Supplement* began to identify the weaknesses in the education system, and why it was unable to meet the changing demands of society. He suggested that if there were to be significant change in this situation there would have to be far more equality in education provision at the end the war.³ These views collectively “put an end to any immediate prospect of continuing the efforts of mild reform which had been apparent in the last four years of the interwar period”⁴ and promoted a groundswell of antipathy towards Government education policy. This became even more urgent in the early months of the war when the inadequacy of planning for education in war time was realised. The criticism was intense. The haphazard evacuation of thousands of children into reception areas where provision was barely adequate for local children was, in many cases, disastrous. The planning for ARP had been focused solely on the protection of life, and the social and educational implications of evacuation were of little consequence to Government planners. This chapter examines the criticisms of evacuation, the loss of education in war time, and the first attempts by the Board of Education to introduce a purposeful new Education Act. It also considers the role played by R.A. Butler, the President of the Board of Education, in the negotiations with the organisations that had an interest in education. Additionally, the chapter scrutinises the implications of the planned changes to education in Wales, and the ongoing efforts by some Welsh groups to achieve devolution for the service.

¹ Education 1900-1950. The report of the Ministry of Education and the statistics of public education for England and Wales for the year 1950 (Cmd 8244). p. 9.

² B. Simon, *Education and Social Order 1940-1990* (Lawrence and Wishart: London, 1991), p. 35.

³ *ibid.*, p. 36.

⁴ P.H.J.H Gosden, *Education in the Second World War* (Methuen: London, 1976), p. 237.

Overview

During the first month of the war over one million adults and children from England and Wales were evacuated, and of these approximately half were unaccompanied school children.⁵ Many children quickly returned to their home areas where education provision had been abandoned. It soon became apparent that “many thousands of children in our large towns are running wild”⁶ and this placed the Board of Education and local authorities in an invidious position. The urgent need to retain children in the reception areas had to be balanced with providing a service for the large number of children returning to the evacuating areas. However, if the decision was made to reopen schools it might indicate to parents that evacuation was no longer necessary. This would anyway have been very difficult because in evacuated areas a considerable amount of school accommodation had been acquired by the civil and armed forces, and there was a shortage of teachers. This combination of factors made reopening schools very difficult and was further complicated by the continuing waves of evacuation, shortly followed by the sporadic return of evacuees. The unpredictability of pupil numbers, especially in heavily evacuated areas, made planning for education almost impossible.

LEAs in different regions came under different pressures. Some Part III local authorities in evacuated areas were very badly affected as they lacked the “administrative resources to cope with emergency situations”⁷ and Margate, for example, was without any education provision for over a year. In heavily bombed areas such as Portsmouth and Liverpool the night time ‘trekking’⁸ meant that children were too tired to take advantage of any education on offer. It was, however, the lack of activity by London County Council which most coloured public perceptions towards education and made it a focus for close examination. It soon became evident that there was no education provision in London for the many returning evacuees,⁹ and large numbers of children were ‘running loose’ around the

⁵ NA RG 26/76 Evacuation of school children: Ministry of Health schedules of movements by area under the Government evacuation scheme, 1939-1942

⁶ Running Wild. *The Times*, 25th October, 1939. p. 9.

⁷ P.H.J.H Gosden, (1976), op.cit., p. 41.

⁸ *ibid.*, p 49.

⁹ Estimated at 1,600 during weeks of heavy bombing. NA ED 138/26 Savage to Holmes in P.H.J.H. Gosden (1976), op. cit., p 49.

streets.¹⁰ The LEA came under considerable pressure to reopen schools, and by July 1940 an “emergency service had become well established.”¹¹ However, provision was inconsistent, generally part-time¹² and attendance fluctuated wildly. By August 1940, officials at the Board of Education began to consider that the London County Council was “too defeatist in its attitude ... It was thought that the attitude of certain local officials was that elementary education in London was of little importance and hardly worthwhile.”¹³

Criticism of war-time education was widespread and few House of Commons Sittings passed without a question or comment about some aspect of provision. Sir Percy Harris¹⁴ pointed out that, while the quality of education had been poor before the war, it was now disgraceful: “education has been an afterthought, one of the last subjects to be discussed ... I say that the last six months were the worst period for education than any other.”¹⁵ Sir Percy suggested that the Board of Education showed lack of vision and had not recognised problems when they had arisen. He commented that although “The real criminal was Herr Hitler”¹⁶ the Board had done nothing to prevent children missing at least six months of education. William Cove¹⁷ was equally condemnatory, pointing out that “the Department has neglected its duty since the war broke out.”¹⁸ He reacted to a trivial comment by Chuter Ede¹⁹ about the rosy glow that evacuated children had acquired in the country and asked whether the Board of Education actually knew the condition of schools in the reception areas or the fact that very young children, in all areas, were habitually being used in menial employment. He also referred to the large numbers of damaged schools that were not being repaired or replaced because building materials were not being released, despite the fact that there were high levels of unemployment amongst builders. There was a growing perception that the Board of

¹⁰ NA ED 136/116 Report of Inter-Departmental Committee on Compulsory Evacuation, 28 Nov 1940, in P.H.J.H Gosden, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

¹¹ *ibid.*, p. 41.

¹² The Board of Education estimated that the majority of children received little education as full time actually equated to one three hour session a day and part time only an hour and a half.

¹³ P.H.J.H. Gosden, *ibid.*, p. 42.

¹⁴ Liberal Member of Parliament for Bethnal Green West.

¹⁵ HC Sitting, 5th March 1940, Col. 173-354, Vol. 358.

¹⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁷ Labour Member of Parliament for Aberavon.

¹⁸ Hansard HC 5th March 1940, *ibid.*

¹⁹ Labour Member of Parliament for Mitcham. Member of the National Union of Teachers. Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education

Education had accepted “with equanimity”²⁰ the fact that the education of a generation of children was lost because it had failed to make adequate arrangements for education in war time. Cove recalled that in November, 1939, the Board had been given a clear mandate to ‘get on with the job’ but that it had allowed other Government departments, such as the Ministry of Health, to interfere and dictate policy: “This is so serious that the Board of Education should wake up and give some sense to the country that they are guiding the ship of education.”²¹ This kind of comment was common and, in April 1940, the National Union of Teachers, sent a deputation to the Board of Education with a very critical document: *Education in Wartime*. This commented on all aspects of the service: the appropriation of schools by the military authorities; the housing of children in inadequate and dangerous alternative buildings; the retention of schools in dangerous areas and the way teachers were being treated. The National Union of Teachers pressed strongly for the reintroduction of “full time education of the highest standard.”²²

There were also other criticisms not directly associated with the quality of education provision. These stemmed from a growing perception that the influence of religion in society had diminished considerably since the start of the twentieth century. Industrialization and urbanisation²³ have been put forward as causal factors in this decline, but “the erosion of the network of Church involvement in the communal life of English society”²⁴ is also considered to have been significant. Regardless of the reasons for this developing secularisation, the influence of religion on education was, to a large extent, maintained. Cannon points out that this was two fold. There was an “influence of religion in the schools themselves,”²⁵ as well as a strong religious presence in policy making. By 1940, however, there was a view from both the Roman Catholic Church²⁶ and the Church of England that “England

²⁰ H. C. Dent, *Education in Transition: A Sociological Study of the impact of war on English Education* (Kegan Paul: London, 1944), p. 7.

²¹ Hansard HC 5th March 1940, op. cit.

²² ‘War-Time Educational Deficiencies: N.U.T. Deputation to the Board.’ *The Schoolmaster Woman Teacher’s Chronicle*. 18th April, 1940.

²³ R. Pope, R. *Building Jerusalem: non-conformity, Labour and the social question in Wales 1906-1939*, second edn (UWP: Cardiff, 1998) for example.

²⁴ S. Parker, *Faith on the Home Front: Aspects of Church Life and Popular Religion in Birmingham 1939 – 1945* (Peter Lang: Bern, 2005), p. 17

²⁵ C. Cannon, The Influence of Religion on Educational Policy, 1902-1944. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 12 (2): (1964) 143 – 160, p 143.

²⁶ K. Elliott, Between two worlds: the Catholic educational dilemma in 1944. *History of Education*, Vol 33 No 6: (2004), 661-682.

was in danger of becoming an irreligious country.”²⁷ A leader in *The Times* reported that large numbers of children were completely ignorant of any religious matters, a fact that was perceived to be related both to a decline in Sunday school attendance, and to the fact that in some schools, religion was not taught as part of the curriculum. It was argued that it was essential that a country which was “professedly Christian”²⁸ should re-examine the teaching of religion in the state education system.

The place of religion in society had already been brought to the fore in December 1939, when Pope Pius XII addressed the College of Cardinals²⁹ to outline the Five Points for Peace which he considered essential to bring a sense of well being back to the world. In 1940, these points were augmented by others devised by the Roman Catholic Church, the Free Churches and the Church of England which emphasised the importance of the family as a social unit, and the need for all children to have equal opportunities in education to meet their own particular needs.³⁰ A series of letters to *The Times* from religious leaders³¹ and the National Society³² accompanied demands for increased religious teaching in schools, supported by the publication of a number of pamphlets which were widely advertised in *The Times*.³³ These events firmly established the church’s position in regard to any changes in education provision that were already being planned. In August 1941, R. A. Butler, President of the Board of Education, met a deputation from the Anglican and Free Churches to discuss the Five Points for Peace.³⁴ This marked the start of a series of extensive discussions with faith groups to try to reach an agreement over the position of denominational education in England and Wales. The most frequent meetings were with the Church of England but those with the Roman Catholic, Free Churches and Jewish organisations were much less frequent.³⁵ Although discussions were generally cordial “there was a hint of the old

²⁷ S. J. D. Green, The 1944 Education Act: A Church –State Perspective. *Parliamentary History*, Vol 19, Issue 1: (2000), p. 152.

²⁸ Religion and National Life, *The Times* Feb 17, 1940: p. 7 in S. J. D. Green, *ibid.*, p. 152.

²⁹ Address (in questo giorno) of Pope Pius XII to the Sacred College of Cardinals on Christmas Eve 1939. The Catholic Truth Society. <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/publication/80002234>.

³⁰ Cosmo Cantuar, Cardinal Hinsley, Walter H Armstrong, William Ebor. Foundations of Peace; A Christian Bias: Agreement among the Churches, *The Times* Dec 21 1940: p. 5.

³¹ Richard Southwark, Religion and the Nation: the present obstacles, *The Times* Feb 23rd 1940.

³² Caroline B Bridgeman, The United Front, *The Times* Feb 27 1940

³³ CofERC NS/10/5/15 Pamphlets in Education, Vol 15, No 30 *Christian Education.*; NS/10/5/15 Pamphlets in Education, Vol. 15, No 28, *Evangelism through Education, Opportunities for Advance in Time of War.*

³⁴ Cosmo Cantuar, Archbishop of Canterbury; Cardinal Hinsley Archbishop of Westminster; Walter H. Armstrong, Moderator Free Church Council and William Ebor, Archbishop of York There was no representation from the Church in Wales or the Jewish faith at this meeting

³⁵ BodL CPA RAB 2/1 Outline of How Educational Reconstruction Grew 1944, p. 2.

animosity”³⁶ between the different religious organisations when, for example, Dr Scott Lidgett³⁷ commented that there were “submerged rocks”³⁸ in the way of progress.

The condemnations of state education reached a climax in 1941. There was a quite remarkable consensus for reconstruction and a real perception that there could be no return to pre-war education or standards. Despite this, there was no unanimity of policy about a new structure and each of the influential groups put forward their ideas, based loosely around their identifying ideologies of education. Agitation by the Labour Party for education reform had continued unabated throughout the interwar years although there was little consistency in their demands. Tawney’s ‘*Secondary Education for All*’³⁹ was their agreed position but the actual shape proposed for secondary education was unclear. However, during the mid-1930s, the Labour Party had entered a period of “reinvigorated left wing revivalism.”⁴⁰ The militant National Union of Labour Teachers suggested the complete removal of the existing education structure and its replacement with ‘common’ secondary schools with different curricula to meet the needs of all children. Barker suggests that “This proposal was both totally egalitarian, and in the context of educational values then current in the party, totally utopian.”⁴¹ Labour Party thinking at the time remained in favour of selective grammar schools although, at the same time, was looking for parity within the system. Multilateral schools were seen as a solution to this dilemma, and some Members of Parliament, including George Tomlinson,⁴² considered that it had a “practical air about it”⁴³ as well as electoral advantages. However, there was little unanimity within the Labour Party about education and it continued to vacillate both about policy and implementation.

³⁶ BodL CPA RAB 2/1 op. cit., p. 1.

³⁷ Theologian and Minister of the British Methodists. Alderman of the London County Council. Vice Chancellor of the University of London.

³⁸ BodL *ibid.*, p. 1

³⁹ R. H. Tawney, *Secondary Education for All: A Policy for Labour* (The Education Advisory Committee of the Labour Party: London, 1926)

⁴⁰ R. Barker, *Education and Politics 1900-1951 A Study of the Labour Party* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1972), p. 66.

⁴¹ *ibid.*, p. 67.

⁴² George Tomlinson, Member of Parliament for Farnworth, Lancashire. He was appointed as Minister of Education in 1947 in the Labour administration after the death of Ellen Wilkinson..

⁴³ R. Barker, *ibid.*, p. 73.

The Conservative Party, on the other hand, was determined that any change to the system would be minimal and the “sub sets”⁴⁴ of elementary and secondary education would remain. It had presided over the Geddes Committee cuts to education during the 1920s as well as those of the May⁴⁵ and Ray⁴⁶ Committees in the 1930s, and while these had had little effect on secondary schools the elementary sector had suffered considerably. The Conservative party was implacably opposed to raising the school leaving age, influenced by the lobbying of industrialists, in order to maintain a supply of cheap labour. However, the advent of war and the need for political parties to work co-operatively gave the Labour Party an opportunity to put pressure on the Conservatives, and the Coalition government “proved to be the greatest reforming administration since the Liberal government of 1905-1914.”⁴⁷ Although the Coalition Government was overwhelmingly Conservative “mostly of the old-fashioned sort,”⁴⁸ there was also a small group who were more progressive in terms of reform. These, together, with strong Labour influences⁴⁹ resulted in a new political middle ground⁵⁰ that reflected a popular demand for reform but which ultimately could not conceal or overcome the deep divisions between the parties.⁵¹

Agitation for reform in Parliament was accompanied by a series of pamphlets from different interest groups which laid out their philosophy and ideas for reconstruction. The first report of the Conservative Central Committee on Post-War Problems: *Looking Ahead: Educational Aims*⁵² stood apart from the other published analysis of education provision “by virtue of being almost wholly a philosophical treatise.”⁵³ It stressed that the role of the State in education provision should ensure that future citizens would understand and be intellectually fit to fulfil their obligations

⁴⁴ B. Simon, (1991), op.cit., p. 25.

⁴⁵ The Committee on National Expenditure (May Committee) was set up to suggest ways the government could curb expenditure. It was chaired by Sir George May. It recommended, in 1931, extensive public sector spending cuts, including cutting unemployment benefit, and increased taxation. See B. Simon, (1974), op. cit., pp. 171-178

⁴⁶ Report of the Committee on Local Expenditure (England and Wales) 1932 (Cmd 4200). This recommended aggressive cuts to the education budget particularly in respect to teachers’ pay. See B. Simon, (1974.) *ibid.*, pp. 187-192.

⁴⁷ P. Addison, *The Road to 1944: British Politics and the Second World War* (Pimlico: 1994), p. 14.

⁴⁸ B. Simon, *The 1944 Education Act: A Conservative Measure? History of Education*, (1988), 31-43, p. 41.

⁴⁹ B. Simon, (1988) *ibid.*, p. 42.

⁵⁰ P. Addison, *ibid.*, p. 14.

⁵¹ K. Jefferys, *British Politics and Social Policy during the Second World War The Historical Journal*, Vol 30: (1987), 123 - 144.

⁵² *Looking Ahead: Educational Aims* The First Interim Report of the Conservative Sub-Committee on Education. Central Committee on Post War Re-construction (Conservative and Unionist Party: 1942).

⁵³ H. C. Dent, (1944), op. cit., p. 185.

to society.⁵⁴ It questioned the diminishing role that religion played in British life and drew attention to the fact that the Conservative Party favoured the Church of England above other denominations.”⁵⁵ However, the document also suggested that the State should be even handed to all religious groups by recommending that a common syllabus for religious education was used in all schools. The Report was fulsome in its praise of the independent school sector, which it believed had contributed greatly to the development of leadership in Great Britain, and should be retained at all costs. *Looking Ahead: Educational Aims* was severely criticised by some members of the Conservative party “who according to their particular brand of conservatism variously described it as “‘pale pink slosh’ or ‘undiluted Fascism!’”⁵⁶ Dent however, suggests that the views the report put forward “were essentially sound”⁵⁷ and unlike other memoranda on education published during the period “analyses and seriously grapples with fundamental issues.”⁵⁸ Its major failing was, however, to fully understand the relationship between the state and the individual within education provision.

While the Conservative Party presented a somewhat negative philosophy, other groups concentrated on developing a new structure for secondary education and raising the school leaving age. The actual shape of the structure was less clear, but multilateral education was beginning to emerge as the front runner for provision. Raising the school leaving age was a unanimous aim across a spectrum of educational groups and the political parties to the left of centre.⁵⁹ At the 1942 Labour Party Conference, Harold Clay moved a Resolution that demanded education provision that centred on the child, not on parents ability to pay school fees.⁶⁰ The focus of Clay’s proposals was equality, and he demanded that local authorities should be forced to ensure that all children received the same level of provision.⁶¹ While the Resolution was seconded, the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen delegate moved an amendment that the school leaving age should be raised to sixteen instead of fifteen even if attendance in the last year was part-time. There were demands that Government should be pressed to deal

⁵⁴ *Looking Ahead*, op. cit., p. 38.

⁵⁵ *Looking Ahead*, *ibid.*, p. 26.

⁵⁶ H. C. Dent, (1944) op. cit., p. 188.

⁵⁷ *ibid.*, p. 188.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

⁵⁹ B. Simon, (1991), op.cit., p. 50.

⁶⁰ PHM *Labour Party Conference Report* (Transport House: 1942), p. 140.

⁶¹ *Labour Party Conference Report*, *ibid.*, p. 140.

immediately with the anticipated problems of shortages of accommodation and teachers, “because practically every Party believes in increasing the school leaving age at present.”⁶²

In 1942, the Trades Union Council produced a pamphlet, *Education After the War*,⁶³ outlining its proposals for post-primary education. It presented the long held aspirations of the Labour Party, ‘*Secondary Education for All*’ with the proviso that this should be provided in multilateral schools. The school leaving age should be raised immediately with no exemptions, with a definite date set for raising to it to sixteen, and continuation schools should cater for the post sixteen age group who were not in full time education. These latter would provide a general curriculum

“but the aim should be to create in each student a social awareness, a sense of citizenship, and a true sense of his own responsibility for the full development of his own capabilities as a human being.”⁶⁴

The undated memorandum *Britain’s Schools* laid out the proposals of the Communist Party and although not offering any radically different proposals for reform, stressed that “The war has shown the need for an educational system free from class privilege, providing greater technical and scientific knowledge, and including improved welfare service.”⁶⁵ In common with demands from other groups, the Communist Party insisted that the school leaving age should be raised immediately and all education should be free, with maintenance allowances paid to all pupils without any means testing “so that financial considerations have no influence in shaping a child’s career.”⁶⁶ A major Communist Party aim was the establishment of a school welfare service which would provide nursery education, free meals, milk and medical treatment as these would remove the inequalities of home circumstances.⁶⁷

The Association of Directors and Secretaries of Education, although supporting change, was less ambitious in its aims and proposed “adapting and

⁶² PHM Labour Party Conference Report op. cit., Cllr T. P. Riley (Litchfield D.I.P), p. 143.

⁶³ *Memorandum on Education after the War*, (Trades Union Council, 1942.)

⁶⁴ *ibid.*, Paragraphs 27-28.

⁶⁵ *Britain’s Schools* (Communist Party of Great Britain), p. 1.

⁶⁶ *Britain’s Schools*, *ibid.*, p. 17.

⁶⁷ *Britain’s Schools*, *ibid.*, p. 17.

expanding the educational system to meet post war needs.”⁶⁸ It recognised that the current system of elementary and secondary education reflected the “British character rather than our democratic ideals”⁶⁹ and to change this, all schools, including the independent sector, should be merged into one free system. In the short term, there should be a concerted effort to reclaim and repair school buildings and to improve and extend teacher training to provide sufficient staffing to deal with the raising of the school leaving age. Although there were some differences in ideas and philosophy between the groups “there was a widespread and common determination on a rapid and major thrust forward”⁷⁰ in terms of reconstruction of education provision.

The Green Book: *Education After the War*, 1941 – 1942

Pressure for education reform was constant during the first few years of the war and widely reported in the press. *The Times Education Supplement* demanded, through editorials and articles, that Government implement educational change as soon as possible.⁷¹ Similarly, the *Schoolmaster & Woman Teacher’s Chronicle* included editorials which suggested that the experiences of evacuation, and the problems encountered by teachers made reform and change an imperative.⁷² The events of the war, Dunkirk, followed by the Battle of Britain appeared to show that, for Great Britain, anything was possible.⁷³ The feeling of war time co-operation reinforced this and the climate of optimism in the country led to “a passion for making social reconstruction plans ... Education was very much to the fore.”⁷⁴

The pressure for reform did not go unnoticed at the Board of Education, and in November 1940, Maurice Holmes⁷⁵ wrote a Memorandum⁷⁶ for internal circulation, which set out some ideas for the future of education. He considered that

⁶⁸ *Education: A Plan for the Future*, (The Association of Directors and Secretaries of Education OUP: Oxford, 1942), p. 2.

⁶⁹ *Education: A Plan for the Future*, *ibid*, p. 3.

⁷⁰ B. Simon, (1991), *op.cit.*, p. 51.

⁷¹ *Times Educational Supplement*, 25th Aug 1940, p. 319; 2 Nov 1940, p. 427, in P.H.J.H Gosden, (1976), *op.cit.*, p. 237.

⁷² Dr H. G. Stead, A Better Education Becomes Imperative, *Schoolmaster & Woman Teacher’s Chronicle* 2nd May 1940.

⁷³ N. Middleton and S. Weitzman, *A Place for Everyone: A history of education from the eighteenth century to the 1970s* (Victor Gollancz: London, 1976), p. 206.

⁷⁴ N. Middleton and S. Weitzman, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

⁷⁵ Permanent Secretary to the Board of Education.

⁷⁶ Entitled *Education After the War* – this was never published externally.

in view of the continuing agitation from unofficial sources that it was important for the Board of Education to lead and not follow in the matter of reconstruction. While there was a possibility that Government might, in the future, set up an official committee to consider the matter, it was important that the Board should be clear in its own mind what would be needed for education post war, and that in this instance, a formal committee with terms of reference would be “a mistake.”⁷⁷ An internal collective discussion, which also considered outside ideas and proposals, would be most effective. The main focus was however, towards change and there was a clear view that half-hearted measures in reconstruction would not be sufficient. As a result, The *Committee of Senior Officers on Post-war Educational Reconstruction* was set up in 1940.

The fact that many Board of Education staff had been evacuated to Bournemouth, and their work load reduced offered a hiatus and the opportunity to reflect on the “the educational problems which may arise when the war is over.”⁷⁸ Maurice Holmes asked senior officials to consider what these might be and to suggest some solutions. He proposed that the five Principal Assistant Secretaries of the Board of Education⁷⁹: together with HMI⁸⁰ and a representative from the Welsh Department⁸¹ meet unofficially and offer provisional suggestions on reconstruction of the service. He insisted that they should plan for the long term and work co-operatively “because only confusion will result if each branch thinks about its own problems in isolation.”⁸² He also suggested that officials should take account of the opinions about education reconstruction that were being published by “less official authorities.”⁸³

The correspondence between the unofficial committee in Bournemouth and the remainder of the Board of Education officials based in London indicates that there was a continual interchange of ideas with other Government departments. Central to these was the proposal to change the way education was administered.

⁷⁷ NA ED 136/212 Private Office: Files and Papers (Series II). Education After the War – Green Book Drafting Papers Preliminary papers Internal Memorandum from Maurice Holmes. Post War Education Reconstruction, 5th November, 1940.

⁷⁸ NA ED 136/212 Undated Memorandum from Maurice Holmes Permanent Secretary to the Board of Education.

⁷⁹ G. G. Williams, W.C. Cleary, H. B. Wallis, S. H. Wood and N.D. Bosworth Smith.

⁸⁰ F. R. G. Duckworth, R. H. Charles, W. Elliott and Miss Hammonds.

⁸¹ Wynn Weldon, Permanent Secretary for the Welsh Department.

⁸² NA. ED 136/212 Undated Memorandum.

⁸³ NA ED 136/212 Undated Memorandum.

This would entail the removal of Part III local authorities and create larger units, at county and borough council level which would oversee all aspects of education. It was considered that this added power would “obviously appeal to the vanity and self-importance of the L.E.As.”⁸⁴ D Du B Davidson,⁸⁵ pointed out that there were arguments for and against larger Local Education Authorities but that “the low average level of Directors of Education at present does not particularly encourage one to accept the idea.”⁸⁶ R. S. Wood⁸⁷ wrote reminding Holmes of the “partnership” that had developed between the Board and the Local Education Authorities and while at the start of the relationship the Board was the senior partner the local authorities had become confident and now jealously guarded their powers.⁸⁸ As a result the Board had become less influential and Wood suggested that the time had come for the Board to take control and the lead on policy.⁸⁹ He also suggested that teachers’ organisations should be a third partner in the relationship and should be involved in any planning processes. HMI should link the three groups.

The *Committee of Senior Officers on Post-war Educational Reconstruction* began their discussions by reviewing the terms of the Education Act 1936. Continuation schools, although these had never proved viable or popular, were central to their thinking and were to be improved and followed by

“some form of national service, less military, would be determined by the circumstances and national temper of the time. This will go a long way to breaking down class misunderstandings, and give us a real basis of national unity.”⁹⁰

The elementary sector would be redefined. It would be divided into two, primary and secondary as recommended in *The Education of the Adolescent*⁹¹ and the school leaving age raised to fifteen There were lengthy discussion between the Assistant Permanent Secretaries about what shape post primary education might take in the future. It appears that Griffiths G. Williams, head of the secondary branch, and William Cleary, head of the elementary branch had quite different ideas. Williams

⁸⁴ NA ED 136/212, op.cit., Memorandum, D Du B D to unofficial Committee, November 1940.

⁸⁵ Accountant General at the Board of Education.

⁸⁶ NA ED 136/212.

⁸⁷ Deputy Secretary to the Board of Education.

⁸⁸ NA ED 136/212 Letter from R. S. Wood to Maurice Holmes, 8th November 1940.

⁸⁹ NA ED 136/212 *ibid.*

⁹⁰ NA ED 136/212 Education Reconstruction note Deputy Secretary R. S. Wood.

⁹¹ *The Education of the Adolescent* (HMSO: London, 1926).

considered the protection of the endowed grammar schools critical and wanted to make them even more academic and selective.⁹² Cleary, on the other hand, favoured multilateral schools which he saw as “politically essential,”⁹³ as well as the solution to many of the existing organisational problems. He suggested a two-year common curriculum for all pupils with decisions about placement in either the secondary, technical or modern options delayed until a child was thirteen. The issue over the age of transfer to secondary school was an important one. One idea was that all children should attend at modern school from eleven to thirteen when selection would take place and “when a child’s own wishes were then clearer and his parents were less likely to force an unsuitable career on him.”⁹⁴ HMI representatives considered this impractical as it would not allow sufficient time to complete any worthwhile course of study. A further objection was that unless transfer was made at eleven it would be very difficult to implement the proposal to eliminate the Part III authorities because, it could be argued, that elementary education would still remain in place. In addition, if the break was later than eleven it would complicate the organisation of secondary schools and not allow enough time for implementation of examination based curricula, particularly in languages. It was predicted that a late transfer would cause a major problem in Wales where there were “a large number of very small elementary schools and it is not easy to face with equanimity a prospect of leaving boys and girls between eleven and thirteen years of age to the tender mercies of many of the women head teachers often working in premises which are inadequate.”⁹⁵ The eventual arbitrator over the process was Maurice Holmes, who claimed that he spoke for the President, and decided that transfer from primary schools at eleven years of age would be most appropriate. There is no evidence to suggest that this was in fact the case, and it is generally thought that Holmes was presenting his personal views about the structure of education.⁹⁶

In December 1940, R. S. Wood wrote to colleagues in Bournemouth that reconstruction planning was to include only politically acceptable elements.⁹⁷ He

⁹² R.G. Wallace, The Origins and Authorship of the 1944 Education Act. *History of Education*, Vol 10, No 4: (1981) 283-290, p. 283.

⁹³ P.H.J.H. Gosden, (1976), op. cit., p. 247.

⁹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 256.

⁹⁵ NA ED 136/212 Break in School Life.

⁹⁶ R. G. Wallace, (1981) *ibid.*; K. Jefferys, British Politics and Social Policy during the Second World War. *The Historical Journal*, Vol 30: (1987) 123 – 144.; B. Simon, (1988), op. cit.

⁹⁷ NA ED 136/212 Policy and Planning for Post-War Education, p. 1.

suggested that “there are straws to be found in Cabinet papers and elsewhere which indicate which way the wind is blowing.”⁹⁸ This assumed that after the war, reconstruction would need to be radical and “the order will still be ‘Forward March’, not ‘As You Were’.”⁹⁹ Wood pressed officials to be bold but not to abandon all the old ideas and practices as there should be harmony between them, and new thinking.¹⁰⁰ He also pointed out that drawing up an outline plan was relatively easy and based on the existing legislation of primary, secondary and further education. His personal thoughts was that raising the school leaving age to sixteen would allow for the completion of a variety of courses planned to meet the needs of both pupils as well as the locality in which they lived. It would be necessary to give thought to the organisation of secondary schools in sparsely populated areas and that these might be multilateral. Key to the success would be that all schools should be under one set of regulations and have parity of accommodation and staffing.

In January 1941, George Crystal¹⁰¹ requested that Maurice Holmes provide some ideas for education reconstruction after the war.¹⁰² There was already criticism about lack of progress, especially as “the anaesthetic effect of the Battle of Britain and the concentrated night air raids”¹⁰³ had begun to dissipate. He was anxious to discuss what was already being done, and any proposals there might be for reorganisation.¹⁰⁴ Holmes’ response was that although a great deal of work had already been completed, nothing had been decided but there had already been consultation with local authorities and teachers unions.¹⁰⁵ In 1940, the unofficial committee of became the *Committee of Senior Officers on Post-war Educational Reconstruction*. By the following May, it was ready to present memoranda published as a Green Book: *Education After the War*¹⁰⁶ for discussion. This was, in essence, a mix of new ideas combined with retention of some previous legislation and earlier recommendations. It was divided into thirteen sections and it became apparent, during the discussions that followed that some were far more controversial than

⁹⁸ NA ED 136/212 Policy and Planning for Post-War Education, *ibid.*, p. 1.

⁹⁹ *ibid.*, p. 1.

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*, p. 1.

¹⁰¹ Permanent Head of the Ministry of Health and Chair of the Cabinet Reconstruction Committee

¹⁰² N. Middleton and S. Weitzman, *op. cit.*, p. 209.

¹⁰³ BodL Conservative Party Archive RA. Butler Personal Files on Education 2/1 Personal Education File, September 1943-May 1945: *Outline of How Education Reconstruction Grew*, 1944.

¹⁰⁴ NA ED 136/212, Sir George Crystal to M. Holmes, 22nd January 1941.

¹⁰⁵ NA ED 136/212, Holmes to Crystal, 24th January 1941.

¹⁰⁶ N. Middleton and S. Weitzman, *ibid.*, Appendix p. 390.

others. The forward of the document recognised that previous legislation had not enabled education to reach

“the social ideal which the Prime Minister has set before us of ‘establishing a state of society where the advantages and privileges, which have been enjoyed only by a few, shall be far more widely shared by men and youth of the nation as a whole’ ”¹⁰⁷

One of the major problems of previous legislation had been that it was not mandatory, and as a result allowed local authorities to implement it as they saw fit.¹⁰⁸ The Green Book proposed changing the Board of Education to a Ministry which would have far greater powers. It would also have full responsibility for all the matters to do with children that were currently administered by different Government Departments. There was also an intention to place responsibility for all education in the hands of County or Borough local authorities. This rationalisation had been proposed in the Hadow Report; in the recommendations of the May Committee¹⁰⁹ and was in line with proposals of other Government Departments.¹¹⁰ There would be a considerable simplification of organisation as, at the time, there were three hundred and fifteen local education authorities in England and Wales and the Green Book proposed that this number should be reduced to one hundred and forty six. However, any restructuring of local administration had the potential to be difficult as it soon became clear that Part III authorities had no intention of surrendering their control of education without a fight.

The main plank of the Green Book’s plan for reconstruction was that all age elementary provision would be replaced with primary and secondary schools. The plan was that the secondary sector should be tripartite, and grammar, ‘modern’ and technical schools which would offer individual children “the education from which he is best capable of profiting.”¹¹¹ However, if this reorganisation was to take place, a solution had to be found for the problem of the non-provided sector which had effectively prevented earlier education reforms. Although fewer in number, non-provided schools were still numerous, and in 1938 catered for about thirty percent

¹⁰⁷ N. Middleton and S. Weitzman, *op.cit.*, p. 391.

¹⁰⁸ Education Act 1918. 8 & 9 GEO. 5. CH. 39.

¹⁰⁹ P.H.J.H. Gosden, (1976), *op.cit.*, p. 295. For example. Middlesex had 12 Part III authorities and Lancashire 27.

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*, p. 296,

¹¹¹ N. Middleton and S. Weitzman, *op. cit.*, p. 393.

of children educated in England and Wales.¹¹² Only a small percentage of these pupils were in reorganised senior schools¹¹³ and none were in Wales. While “sectarian and political interests”¹¹⁴ had been instrumental in supporting these schools during the interwar years it was not always acknowledged that the close association between the Anglican Church and the Conservative Party or between the Non-conformist churches and the Labour Party had played a significant part in the ongoing problems. It was clear that a solution to this would have to be found if there was to be “any measure of large scale reform”¹¹⁵ as the problem was politically sensitive. Delicate negotiations would be needed if they were to be overcome.

The Green Book proposed a solution of the problems of the non-provided school system that was reasonably straightforward and largely financial. In simple terms the local authorities would take over the management of all non-provided primary schools but would be able to close any which were unviable or deficient. If church authorities objected to this they would have to bring their school stock up to a required standard. If religious groups chose to build their own secondary schools they would have to finance these themselves and be responsible for all future maintenance. There was no requirement for the LEAs to fund aided or endowed grammar schools but if they chose to do so they could demand greater control over their governance. The main bone of contention between the provided and non-provided sectors remained the place of religious education in the curriculum. While non-provided schools focused on denominational teaching, the state sector offered a non-sectarian religious curriculum. It was proposed that an Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education would be taught in all primary schools with a conscience clause for staff and pupils.¹¹⁶ If any part of the non-provided sector refused to accept an Agreed Syllabus it would remain outside local authority control and lose funding for new schools. One major change would be in the new responsibilities of local authorities in the appointment and dismissal of teachers in all primary schools, and in agreement with the appointment of Governors at secondary level. The only

¹¹² There were 10,533 voluntary schools in England and Wales catering for 1,374,000 children compared with 10,363 council schools with 3,151,000 pupils. N. Middleton and S. Weitzman, *op. cit.*, p. 225.

¹¹³ In 1935 there were 2,774 reorganised elementary schools in England and Wales. Of these 259 were Church of England and 82 in Roman Catholic schools. Education in 1935 being the report of the Board of Education and the statistics of public education for England and Wales 1935-36, (Cmd 5290), p. 39.

¹¹⁴ N. Middleton and S. Weitzman, *ibid.*, p. 442.

¹¹⁵ M. Cruikshank, *Church and State in English Education* (Macmillan: London, 1964), p. 139.

¹¹⁶ S. G. Parker, R. Freathy and Jonathan Doney, The professionalisation of non-denominational religious education in England: politics, organisation and knowledge. *Journal of Beliefs & Values: Studies in Religion & Education*, Volume 37, Issue 2: (2016), 201-238, pp. 26-27.

exception to this would be that reserved¹¹⁷ teachers would be appointed by the Managers but appointments would have to be approved by the local authority.

Maurice Holmes was determined that the document, *Education After the War*, should remain confidential and disseminated only to educationalists. Politicians and the public, 'the amateurs',¹¹⁸ would be excluded from discussion until a policy had been decided¹¹⁹ as it was in no way a final document.¹²⁰ The circulation list was long,¹²¹ and in the event, it was "distributed in such a blaze of secrecy that it achieved an unusually high degree of publicity."¹²² The distribution list omitted a number of significant religious bodies: the Roman Catholic Church, the Jewish Community and the Church in Wales. The Bishop of St Asaph,¹²³ pointed out that although he had heard that there was an intention to introduce a new Education Bill, the Church in Wales had not been consulted.¹²⁴

Despite the attempts at secrecy, in early 1941 Herwald Ramsbottom¹²⁵ began promoting the, as yet unpublished, ideas for reconstruction telling the Workers' Education Association and the National Union of Teachers that "The Board was planning a new testament of education which would include raising the school leaving age."¹²⁶ A month later he was reported as saying that continuation classes would be a key element in any new legislation.¹²⁷ These comments made educationalists suspicious that the Government was planning, not reconstruction,

¹¹⁷ Those teachers with special training to teach denominational catechisms of a particular faith.

¹¹⁸ R.G. Wallace, (1981) op.cit., p. 283.

¹¹⁹ *ibid.*, p. 283.

¹²⁰ NA ED 136/212 Minute, M. G. Holmes, 13th May, 194.

¹²¹ Hansard HC. Written answers Thursday, 31st July, 1941. Columns: 1540-1570 Volume 373: **Local Education Authorities' representatives.** Association of Education Committees. County Councils' Association. Association of Municipal Corporations. Federation of Welsh Local Education Authorities. London County Council. Association of Directors and Secretaries. Federation of Part III Education Committees. **Teachers' representatives.** National Union of Teachers. Association of Head Masters. Association of Head Mistresses. Association of Assistant Masters. Association of Assistant Mistresses. Headmasters' Conference. Association of Principals of Technical Institutions. Association of Teachers in Technical Institutions. Association of Technical Institutions. National Society of Art Masters. Tutorial Classes, Joint Advisory Committee. Joint Standing Committee of the Training College Association and Principals of Training Colleges. Universities, Consultative Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals. Association of Principals of Recognised Training Colleges of Domestic Subjects. National. Froebel Foundation. **Churches.** National Society. Catholic Education Council. National Free Church Council. **Other Associations.** Central Welsh Board. Workers' Educational Association. Trades Union Congress. British and Foreign Schools Society.

¹²² W. O. Lester Smith, To whom do the Schools Belong. (1942), p. 155 in R.G. Wallace, *ibid.*, p. 286.

¹²³ Chair of the Education Committee of the Church in Wales.

¹²⁴ NLW SD/ED 22-30 Minutes of the Education Committee of the Governing Body of the Church in Wales 9th July 1942.

¹²⁵ President of the Board of Education.

¹²⁶ School Till 16, *The Times* Feb 19th 1941.

¹²⁷ Education after the War, *The Times* March 17th 1941.

but a return to the legislation of previous Education Acts. Certainly, it was thought that as soon as conditions allowed the Education Act 1936 would be reinstated and that raising the school leaving age would be replaced by the continuation classes that dated from the Education Act 1918. However, the memorandum: *Outline of How Educational Reconstruction Grew* suggests that Ramsbottom's interventions were a deliberate ploy "to steady public opinion, to raise morale in the educational world and incidentally, to help the Department's prestige."¹²⁸

The limited circulation of the Green Book caused a storm of controversy. Articles in the educational press suggested that the secrecy surrounding the Green Book was mystifying, and it was in everyone's interest that its content was made public as 'this country does not favour reform by cabal or in camera.'¹²⁹ Ramsbottom's response was that it included embryonic views and had been published only for discussion. Details would only be released when the Board was ready to do so.¹³⁰ This veil of secrecy continued even after R.A. Butler was appointed as President in July 1941. He came under enormous pressure to release the contents of the document to a growing number of interested and irritated organisations. However, it was clear that the Board of Education officials wanted to retain the high ground and not publish their ideas until they were certain of a good response. While the name of R. A. Butler is synonymous with the Education Act 1944, his appointment as President to the Board of Education came after the publication of the Green Book and he was not involved with its original philosophy and ideas. These, apart from aspects of non-provided legislation, went forward almost unchanged to the White Paper of 1943 and the Education Act in 1944. Butler's role was principally in diplomatically resolving the many difficulties that arose the proposals for reconstruction.

Towards the White Paper, Education Reconstruction, 1942 – 1943

R.A. Butler was faced with a number of major obstacles in introducing new legislation. Education had assumed a low priority and Churchill was determined that nothing should detract from the war effort. However, the many criticisms of provision during the first year of the war had forced Government to accept that change was

¹²⁸ Bod L CPA RAB 2/1.

¹²⁹ In the *Times Educational Supplement* for example, in P.H.J.H Gosden, (1976), op. cit., p. 266.

¹³⁰ *ibid.*, p. 266.

inevitable. This was despite the fact that the coalition government was dominated by “the old fashioned traditional Tory type,”¹³¹ whose attitudes to education published in two reports¹³² were “more akin to fascist ideology than democratic reform.”¹³³

The Green Book, *Education after the War*, identified three issues for change: the reorganisation of the administration of education; the changes to the non-provided sector and the proposed tripartite scheme for secondary education. As a result, Butler was faced with a three pronged attack which began in 1942 and lasted until 1944. Changes to non-provided provision were the most controversial of all the proposals and the only one that underwent major changes before the publication of the White Paper¹³⁴ in 1943. It appears that some efforts were made to diffuse the difficulties that surrounded this as officials did their utmost to give it “a tactical lack of prominence.”¹³⁵ In much the same way other controversial issues “were removed from the official discussions by the President’s device of appointing special enquiries.”¹³⁶ After Butler’s appointment there was a period of intense discussion between him and denominational groups.¹³⁷ Briefing notes indicate that solutions to the deep seated divisions were being sought to try to prevent any reawakening of old religious animosities during a period when the nation should be fully focused on the war effort. The Government needed to find a middle ground between the Trades Union Congress and non-conformists who were demanding a secular system; the Bishops of the Church of England who wanted denominational teaching in all schools, and the Roman Catholic hierarchy who wanted the state to fund the building of all their new schools.¹³⁸

Over the course of the next few years Butler had long and extensive discussions with various organisations in an attempt to reach an agreement over the position of non-provided schools. The majority of these took place after the

¹³¹ B. Simon, (1991), op. cit., p. 66.

¹³² The two from the Conservative Sub-Committee on Education were *‘Looking Ahead’ Educational Aims* 1942 and *A Plan for Youth*. See footnote B. Simon, *ibid*, p. 84. See also J. Harris Political ideas and the debate on State welfare, 1940-1945 in H.L. Smith, ed *War and Social Change* (MUP: Manchester, 1986).

¹³³ B. Simon, (1991.) *ibid.*, p. 66.

¹³⁴ *White Paper: Educational Reconstruction* (HMSO: 1943).

¹³⁵ BodL CPA RAB 2/1 Memorandum Outline of How Educational Reconstruction Grew, p. 2.

¹³⁶ BodL CPA RAB 2/1 *ibid.*, p. 2. These were The Norwood Report 1943; the Fleming Report 1944; the McNair Report 1944 and the Wolfenden Report 1944.

¹³⁷ BodL CPA RAB 2/1 Memorandum *ibid*.

¹³⁸ BodL CPA RAB 2/1 The Dual System Review of the Situation in the Light of Discussions, Sept. 1942.

publication of the White Paper: *Educational Reconstruction*, but preliminary talks began as soon as Butler became President of the Board of Education. The meetings were generally cordial¹³⁹ but this cordiality did not extend to the negotiations with the Roman Catholic Hierarchy. Negotiations between it and the Board of Education were very difficult,¹⁴⁰ and initially delayed because of the Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Hinsley, objections to all proposals.¹⁴¹ As an example of this, at a meeting with Cardinal Vance,¹⁴² Butler remarked on Cardinal Hinsley's "intemperate language"¹⁴³ in a letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in which he referred to the Green Book as "a shame, an iniquity."¹⁴⁴ The lengthy exchanges between Butler and the Roman Catholic Hierarchy that followed, indicate that the problem lay, not so much in the proposed changes, but in a determination by it to force Government to build and maintain their schools. It wanted a return to the terms of the Education Act 1936 where there was an intention to give grant aid to the non-provided sector to build new schools and the Roman Catholic Church had made substantial plans to take advantage of this generous offer.¹⁴⁵ Even then, the Catholic Education Council had been concerned that the Act was damaging because it had "made a great incursion into the dual system in that it provided for syllabus instruction only in voluntary schools where parents desired it."¹⁴⁶ Catholic demands for new legislation were simple: hundred per cent grant for the erection of new school buildings and absolutely no interference in denominational religious education in their schools. Butler believed that it was important to be able to divorce the Church's determination to obtain funding from the settlement of the dual system and that the large numbers of

"Catholics in England should be carried along with us and should, at any rate understand what we have in mind and not have meetings with the Bishop ... complaining of the vindictive attitude in Government which does not exist."¹⁴⁷

At the same time as the Roman Catholic Hierarchy was demanding a high level of state funding it had a fall back position. This was to try to persuade the Board

¹³⁹ BodL CPA RAB 2/1, *ibid.*, p. 1.

¹⁴⁰ AAW BO 1/189.

¹⁴¹ See AAW BO 1/189 and BO 1/190 Archbishop Griffin Papers.

¹⁴² Cardinal Vance had special responsibilities for education in the Diocese of Westminster.

¹⁴³ NA ED 136/271 Memorandum R.A. Butler 19th November, 1941, p. 1.

¹⁴⁴ NA ED 136/271, Memorandum 1941, *ibid.*, p. 1

¹⁴⁵ The Church of England submitted proposals for 230 new schools, the Catholic Church for 289. D. Gillard, (2011) www.educationengland.org.uk/history.

¹⁴⁶ NA ED 136/271 Interview Board of Education and Roman Catholic Deputation 26th June 1941.

¹⁴⁷ NA ED 136/271 Memorandum to President 25th June, 1941.

of Education to adopt the model of denominational education similar to that of the Education (Scotland) Act 1918 when all denominational schools were transferred to the local authorities. All teachers were 'reserved' teachers and the religious ethos of the school automatically assumed that of the majority children. It was pointed out that this scheme could not work in England and Wales, because in Scotland there was no ban on denominational religious education in provided schools and there were anyway very few non-provided schools. The reverse was true in England and Wales and "there is not the slightest hope of the Scottish solution being acceptable to the majority of English opinion: politically it is simply off the map."¹⁴⁸ However, regardless of denominational and funding difficulties, the Green Book proposals made it clear that reconstruction would take place whatever the circumstances. This presented a major difficulty to the non-provided sector as over five hundred of their schools were on the Board of Education's Black List,¹⁴⁹ and Managers were unable to find sufficient funds to bring them up to "modern standards of hygiene, ventilation and the like"¹⁵⁰ without substantial financial support. The proposed solution to this was that the Managers hand all responsibilities for their schools to the Local Education Authorities who would either bring them up to standard or close them.

The second issue for debate was the place of religious teaching. The proposals put forward in the Green Book was that all grant funded schools should teach an Agreed Syllabus. The teaching of religious education and the position of reserved teachers was complex and greatly affected the teaching profession. The National Union of Teachers had not previously indicated their position in discussions, but in January 1942, Butler met with Sir Frederick Mander¹⁵¹ to discuss his member's views on the dual system. It appears that the general consensus of teachers was that while they favoured expansion of religious education teaching in state schools, they disliked the continuing attitude the Churches, which they saw as an obstacle to progress. They were particularly keen that religious instruction in all schools should be non-denominational and treated like all other areas of the curriculum with a nationally Agreed Syllabus inspected by HMI. They were totally opposed to the clergy's demand for right of entry into any school to inspect the

¹⁴⁸ NA ED 136/271 op. cit.

¹⁴⁹ NA ED 138/22 Preliminary draft and notes; copy of *Green Book Education after the War*. In all, 753 schools remained on the Board's Black List of schools. 541 are non-provided schools. In Wales there were 115 black listed schools in total. NA ED 136/677 Education in Wales, Miscellaneous Papers.

¹⁵⁰ NA ED 138/22 op. cit.

¹⁵¹ General Secretary of the National Union of Teachers.

teaching of religious education and implacably opposed to the abrogation of the Cowper-Temple Clause. This became a matter for deep and searching debate after the publication of the White Paper when the detail of reconstruction began to be examined more closely.

The White Paper- *Educational Reconstruction*¹⁵²

Opposition to the proposals of the Green Book was widespread. The teachers' unions "would have preferred a more drastic revision of the existing system, the restriction of denominational responsibilities ... the right to consultation on the appointment of reserved teachers."¹⁵³ The Trades Union Congress suggested that the non-provided sector should be arbitrarily removed; all religious education should be from an Agreed Syllabus and denominational teacher training colleges should be closed.¹⁵⁴ The reactions of the various faith authorities were mixed, although in general terms, they disliked the fact that in order to gain any financial settlement they would have to relinquish a considerable amount of control over their schools. The Church of England gave the proposals a "favourable though not an enthusiastic reception"¹⁵⁵ but other non-provided groups were adamantly opposed. There was particular opposition to the changes in the appointment and role of reserved teachers and the alterations to the Cowper–Temple Clause.¹⁵⁶ This was so strong that R. A. Butler decided that the latter "was still regarded as the ark of the covenant by sections of the public too strongly convinced to be persuaded or ignored."¹⁵⁷ As a result of these adverse comments it was decided to look for new solutions to the problem of the non-provided sector which would be a definitive solution and would go forward to eventual legislation.

The contents of the Green Book passed into the White Paper *Educational Reconstruction* largely unchanged. The exception to this was the section on the dual system of provided and non-provided schools. This was totally re-written by Chuter Ede,¹⁵⁸ presented as a White Memorandum and recirculated to all the organisations

¹⁵² *White Paper: Educational Reconstruction* (HMSO: London, 1943).

¹⁵³ M. Cruikshank, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

¹⁵⁴ Memorandum on Education August Trades Union Congress 1942 in M. Cruikshank, *ibid.*, p. 149.

¹⁵⁵ M. Cruikshank, *ibid.*, p. 149.

¹⁵⁶ The Cowper-Temple clause in section 14 of the Education Act 1870 barred the teaching of religious catechism or religious formulary which is distinctive of any particular denomination in the board schools.

¹⁵⁷ Unreferenced in M. Cruikshank, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

¹⁵⁸ Permanent Secretary to the Board of Education.

on the Green Book list. It offered the non-provided sector a number of options. In single school areas there would be a compulsory hand over of all non provided schools to the local authorities. In return, the local authority would be responsible for all costs incurred in the transfer but there would be no denominational teaching or reserved teachers in these schools. The church authorities would have use of the school on Sundays or when they were not in educational use. The second proposal in the White Memorandum was to offer the non-provided sector a fifty percent grant towards the cost of alterations, but not for the building of new accommodation, and the local authority would retain rights of appointing and dismissing staff and control denominational teaching. In addition, the Cowper-Temple Clause was extended to grammar schools.”¹⁵⁹ Once again, the proposals were met with substantial criticism. Although the Free Churches were very much in favour of the removal of the single school area status Anglicans were “aghast.”¹⁶⁰ Butler was warned that the National Society would object in the strongest terms: “The Church ‘had only got five minging points and was being made to give up all her schools.”¹⁶¹ The arguments continued and by the time the White Paper was ready for publication an uneasy compromise had been reached.

The agitation over denominational education had, to some extent, masked the most controversial element of reconstruction: the structure of secondary education. There had been clear indications throughout the Green Book that a tripartite secondary system would be the preferred model, although the White Paper pointed out that the conclusions of the Norwood Report¹⁶² would influence decisions in this respect.¹⁶³ The White Paper also referred to the fact that secondary education in Wales, under the Welsh Intermediate Education Act, 1889, had developed into a system that offered free and accessible provision and this aspiration was now within the reach of all English pupils.¹⁶⁴ This was in accord with Butler’s own philosophy as his priorities were the same as those of Wales: equality of opportunity for all children.¹⁶⁵

¹⁵⁹ M. Cruikshank, op. cit., p. 150.

¹⁶⁰ *ibid.*, p. 150.

¹⁶¹ *ibid.*, p. 150, quoted from telephone conversation between Lord Selbourne and R. A. Butler.

¹⁶² *The Report of the Committee of the Secondary Schools Examination Council on Curriculum and Examinations in Secondary Schools* (HMSO: 1943).

¹⁶³ Board of Education. *Educational reconstruction, 1942-43* (Cmd 6458) p 4.

¹⁶⁴ *ibid.*, p. 31.

¹⁶⁵ G. E. Jones, *Controls and Conflicts in Welsh Secondary Education 1889-1994* (UWP: 1982), p 192.

The White Paper drew particular attention to the place of the Welsh language:

“The policy of the Board has now been disassociated from the views about the Welsh language expressed by the Commission of Inquiry in 1846. It is now hoped that the encouragement of studies which are traditional in Wales will not be developed so as to form a barrier between Wales and its neighbours.”¹⁶⁶

On the 16th July 1943 the *White Paper Educational Reconstruction* was distributed to Members of Parliament and a House of Commons debate followed at the end of July. In his introduction to the debate R.A. Butler explained the proposals put forward in the Paper and that while he had had many discussions with religious and political groups his main preoccupation had been focused on the needs of children. He hoped that Members of Parliament would do the same in the discussions that would follow.¹⁶⁷ He focused on the two most contentious issues: the reform of secondary education and a new approach to the non-provided sector. This would ensure that there was choice within an “organic whole.”¹⁶⁸ He suggested that the present system of education was outdated and that the Hadow¹⁶⁹ recommendations had only been partly successful. As a result there should be “a radical reconstruction”¹⁷⁰ which offered choice through three types of secondary schools: senior, secondary and technical. He did not rule out experimentation with multilateral schools and suggested that all schemes should be tried to see which worked best. Butler also pointed out that the quality of some state education was now so high that it was overtaking the popularity of independent schools and many parents were abandoning these in favour of state secondary schools.

Butler spent some time explaining his thoughts on the non-provided sector and reminded the House of the importance of religious organisations and the significant role they had had in the development of education.¹⁷¹ His first point was concerned with the teaching of religious education.¹⁷² Under the new proposals all schools would teach an Agreed Syllabus that had been drawn up and agreed by all denominations. It presented no particular doctrine and because of this did not affect

¹⁶⁶ (Cmd 6458) op. cit., p. 31.

¹⁶⁷ Hansard HC Sitting, 29th July 1943, Volume 39, Columns 1753-1928.

¹⁶⁸ Hansard HC Sitting, 29th July 1943, ibid.

¹⁶⁹ *The Education of the Adolescent*, (HMSO: 1926).

¹⁷⁰ Hansard HC Sitting, 29th July 1943, ibid.

¹⁷¹ Hansard HC Sitting, 29th July 1943, Volume 39, Columns 1753-1928.

¹⁷² Hansard, ibid.

the Cowper-Temple Clause.¹⁷³ Butler returned to the problem of the dual system explaining that over half the schools in England and Wales were denominational and this had largely prevented earlier reorganisations. In addition, in some areas they provided the only education which had caused considerable resentment amongst Nonconformists. It was clear that this situation had to change. Butler explained the solutions he was offering, and the debate that followed offered a variety of opinions. Professor Gruffydd,¹⁷⁴ suggested that all voluntary schools, perhaps with the exception of the Roman Catholic sector, should be abolished

“because they will be unnecessary and undesirable. Completely cut them out. Take over all schools and make them fully provided council schools. Pay their back debts and set them on their feet again.”¹⁷⁵

Colonel Sir John Shute¹⁷⁶ pointed out the many problems of the Roman Catholic sector. Reorganisation under the Hadow Report recommendations had been impossible because there had been no additional funding to help implement them. He reminded the House that in 1935 all political parties had promised to give more financial aid to the non-provided sector and although the Roman Catholic sector had submitted a number of plans for new senior accommodation under the provisions of the Education Act 1936 these had failed to come to fruition because of the outbreak of war. The debate reflected the differing points of view within the House but in general terms there was little concerted opposition to the White Paper. After the debate Butler received cautious plaudits. Leo Amery wrote from the India Office “I only hope the Government will have the courage to get on with your proposals without undue delay. To my mind the best chance of the Coalition holding together in the gap between the German collapse and the end of the war with Japan lies in its doing big things boldly and seizing the imagination of the country.”¹⁷⁷

Selby Bigge,¹⁷⁸ who had been instrumental in drawing up the Education Act 1918, wrote that the smooth reception of the White Paper had been due in no small part to Butler’s diplomacy and during the process.¹⁷⁹ Butler had had a great deal of covert support from the Archbishop of Canterbury who advised him privately how to deal with the various church bodies, especially the *National Society*. After

¹⁷³ Hansard, 29th July 1943, op. cit.

¹⁷⁴ Member of Parliament for the University of Wales,

¹⁷⁵ Hansard HC Sitting, 29th July, ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Member of Parliament for Liverpool Exchange

¹⁷⁷ BodL CPA RAB 2/2 Letter from L. Amery to R. Butler, 25th June 1943.

¹⁷⁸ Permanent Secretary to the Board of Education 1911 -1925.

¹⁷⁹ BodL CPA RAB, 2/2 Letter, ibid.

the debate a letter from the Archbishop explained his position and asked Butler not to offer him any public thanks for his advice as he was already being regarded “as a Quisling.”¹⁸⁰

This support was a prelude to criticism. The National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations passed a resolution at their Central Council meeting that suggested that the proposals on religious education were inadequate and that Government should be more generous to the non-provided sector.¹⁸¹ Tawney voiced concerns that the payment of fees in Direct Grant Schools would perpetuate the social class divide in education.¹⁸² The Labour Party, the Trades Union Congress, the Workers Educational Association and the National Union of Teachers were of the opinion the White Paper included many good ideas but the time had come for action.¹⁸³ The greatest dissention, however, came from the non-provided sector – the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches.

Reform of the Dual System – the battle with the Churches

The reactions to the proposals for the non-provided sector were very different. The denominational organisations aligned themselves on one side, and educationalists, the Association of Directors and Secretaries for Education and the Association of Municipal Corporations on the other. The latter were the power brokers in education and their influence was paramount in any decisions that were made at a local authority level. They were acutely aware that many of the problems of non-implementation of education legislation during the interwar years had been caused by the non-provided sector and they were anxious that a solution should be found. However the views of religious groups in England and Wales were somewhat different. While the Church in Wales was dis-established and was less influential in some geographic areas, the Church of England remained the Established church with a long history of power and influence over political and social affairs in England. Its Bishops, unlike those of the Church in Wales, sat and made decisions in the House of Lords. Their support in education reconstruction was therefore vital. Somewhere between these two powerful groups were the teacher associations

¹⁸⁰ BodL *ibid.*, Letter William Cantuar Archbishop of Canterbury to R.A. Butler, 3rd August 1943.

¹⁸¹ Bod L CPA RAB 2/2 WP/43 Letter, Conservative & Unionist Association to R.A. Butler, 16th Nov. 1943.

¹⁸² BodL CPA RAB 2/3 Bill 12 Letter to R.A. Butler from R. H. Tawney, 21st December 1943.

¹⁸³ B. Simon, (1991), *op. cit.*, p. 67.

which were all capable of raising serious objections, especially at a local level. For the most part, however, they were ambivalent about the non-provided sector and were quite amenable to an Agreed Syllabus as long as there was no denominational interference.¹⁸⁴

The position of non provided education in Wales was, anyway, substantially different from that in England. The level of sectarian differences had diminished considerably¹⁸⁵ since the The Welsh Church Act 1914,¹⁸⁶ and there were far fewer Church in Wales schools.¹⁸⁷ While there was still animosity from non-conformist groups but there was an opinion that even if the non-provided sector was not removed by legislation, it would eventually disappear as schools fell into disrepair and Managers could not finance maintenance.¹⁸⁸ Sir Wynne Weldon¹⁸⁹ pointed out that lack of Church funds had already reduced the number of non-provided schools in Wales but if additional public funds were made available to them this might give “a new lease of life to a system which is slowly dying, and might well be allowed to die.”¹⁹⁰ Weldon also suggested that the local authorities would have closed more Church in Wales schools¹⁹¹ if they had had the funds to do so.¹⁹² He pointed out that if the primary sector was to be reorganised effectively, many Church in Wales schools would need to be closed or improved, but this must be done without forcing local authorities to spend money on non-provided schools which would remain the property of the Church.¹⁹³ One of the problems of these non-provided schools was that they were frequently the only provider in a single school area. It was suggested that, in these circumstances, attractive offers attached to voluntary transfer to the state sector, should be made. The position of the Roman Catholic schools was far

¹⁸⁴ See NA ED 136/465 for details of the negotiations between the Board of Education and the NUT in regard to the safeguards that were put into place about teachers’ conditions of service.

¹⁸⁵ See NA ED 136/677 Briefing Note, Wales and the Dual System, 25th March 1941. Unsigned but initialled, probably from Sir Wynne Weldon.

¹⁸⁶ It also changed the position of Church of England non-provided schools in Wales. See NA ED 92/23 Effect of Welsh Church Act 1914 on Church of England Schools in Wales.

¹⁸⁷ In 1935 there were 573 non-provided schools in Wales. Although there is no breakdown into denominations it may be assumed that the majority would have been Church in Wales schools. Education in 1935 being the report of the Board of Education and the statistics of public education for England and Wales, 1935-36 (Cmd. 5290) p. 85.

¹⁸⁸ NA ED 136/220 Memorandum Sir Wynn Weldon Wales and the Dual System, 25th March 1941.

¹⁸⁹ Permanent Secretary of the Welsh Department of the Board of Education.

¹⁹⁰ NA ED 136/220 *op. cit.*, p. 3.

¹⁹¹ Under Section 29 (2) (d) of the Education Act 1902. This allowed local authorities to remove or acquire non-provided schools that had fallen into disrepair.

¹⁹² NA ED 136/220, *ibid.*, p. 3.

¹⁹³ *ibid.*, p. 3.

less problematic as they had generally been established in industrial areas where they were never the sole provider of education.

There were other problems in Wales. Although education legislation applied equally to England and Wales it is clear that some aspects, for example bilingualism, made education in Wales very different. This similarly applied to the Intermediate sector as it was overseen by the Central Welsh Board not the Board of Education and was funded differently. As a result, some aspects of the new legislation would have to be changed to make it viable for Welsh LEAs.¹⁹⁴ In fact Holmes, in a response to R.A. Butler, remarked that while his predecessor Sir Amherst Selby-Bigge had a notice on his desk that read 'Don't Forget Wales' he kept this at the forefront of his mind.¹⁹⁵ The Association of Directors and Secretaries of Education had already laid out their ideas for education reform in a pamphlet *Education: A Plan for the Future*.¹⁹⁶ This indicated that the current organisation of education was not fit for purpose and much too closely aligned with social class.¹⁹⁷ It commented on the disparity of provision between the state and independent sectors and suggested that the latter should be merged into the state system so there was parity of opportunity. As an example, it pointed to the undue advantages offered to children who attended independent schools, in terms of university entrance for example. The Association had strong views on the non-provided sector and suggested that unless it was removed reconstruction would be almost impossible.¹⁹⁸ This was not based on any hostility to religion but to the fact that its existence was an obstacle to progress.¹⁹⁹

Although the proposals to alter the position of the non-provided sector had been substantially modified, Butler encountered strident opposition to funding proposals and denominational teaching. The most important of these was how the non-provided sector could fund new school buildings but still retain control over the management of denominational teaching in their schools. Disagreements about the validity of an Agreed Syllabus, together with the issue of the reserved teachers

¹⁹⁴ NA ED 136/677 Memorandum Holmes to Butler, 18th December 1941.

¹⁹⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁹⁶ The Association of Directors and Secretaries of Education, *Education: A Plan for the Future*. (OUP: Oxford, 1942).

¹⁹⁷ *ibid.*, p 5.

¹⁹⁸ The Association of Directors and Secretaries of Education, *Education: A Plan for the Future* (OUP: Oxford, 1942). p 15.

¹⁹⁹ *ibid.*, p 17.

developed into a major problem. This intensified when officers of the Board of Education suggested that the number of reserved teachers should be strictly limited and that head teachers should be excluded completely from reserved status. It was, however, accepted that all the problems connected with the non-provided sector had to be resolved so that reorganisation could take place swiftly and the Board could get on with their primary role of educating children.²⁰⁰

After the publication of the White Paper, Butler had lengthy discussions with denominational groups. The Church of England was divided about the proposals and while it could see some advantages, their greatest concern was how they would be able to finance reorganisation. In a letter, Lord Grey pointed out that although the Anglican Church did not have an inexhaustible supply of funds it was determined to retain as many schools as possible. The major anxiety was how an individual group of Managers would be able to raise the loan to pay for improvements especially when the Local Education Authority would retain a controlling interest in the school building. A second concern was what would happen if the Managers defaulted on the loan especially as some were “not all competent and efficient business heads.”²⁰¹ The points raised in the letter were discussed at the Board of Education. The question of obtaining loans was generally dismissed with the comment that the Roman Catholics had no problems in this respect “and their credit is surely no better than the Anglican Church.”²⁰² This interchange was followed by a meeting between Butler and members of the National Society who had similar views to those of the main body of the Anglican Church towards reconstruction. The same arguments were produced. The Society could not afford to pay for any reconstruction although it wanted to retain as many schools as it could. Butler reminded them that the White Paper was the result of prolonged negotiations and that their representatives had been involved in these. He also pointed out that the non-provided sector had been unable to fund previous reorganisations. The Government could not therefore make it easy for the sector to opt for aided status but would encourage it to maintain a smaller number of schools and “do a really worthwhile job on them.”²⁰³ There was an ongoing and often inconsequential discussion but Butler and the Board remained steadfast in their determination to win the battle with the non-provided

²⁰⁰ BodL CPA RAB 2/1 The Dual System A Review of the Situation in the Light of Discussions to Mid-September, 1942.

²⁰¹ NA ED 136/462 Church of England Representatives, Letter from Lord Grey to Butler, 7th January 1944.

²⁰² NA ED 136/462 op. cit.

²⁰³ NA. ED 136/462, National Society Minute Paper, 12th January, 1944.

sector. There were objections from the Church in Wales, particularly in regard to the Agreed Syllabus, but Butler responded by saying that if the Church in Wales was given preferential treatment this “might lead a revival of the difficulties which were met in the past.”²⁰⁴

The responses from the Church of England were very mixed. The Bishop of Gloucester, for example, launched a scathing attack on the proposals. He suggested that children should only be educated to fit their station in life. For most, he suggested, it was a waste of time for them to remain at school after fourteen years of age. There was no point to training a boy to be a clerk when he was destined to be a farm labourer. The Bishop considered that “Education is something essentially spiritual. It means the influence of mind on mind, and the provision of too ample funds and excessive equipment, materialises and degrades it.”²⁰⁵ He likened some of the proposals to Nazism, especially any suggestion that education should be unified and the non-provided sector removed. While these kind of objections were not uncommon, Butler received considerable support from other clergy. Canon W. J. Brown, in a long letter to the *Yorkshire Post* suggested that it was very easy to be carried away by some of the detail of the White Paper and to lose sight of its “full worth.”²⁰⁶ The Bishop of Butler’s own constituency of Saffron Walden gave endless encouragement,²⁰⁷ as did the Archbishop of Canterbury. In January 1944 he wrote to Butler:

“I will try to see what can be done in the direction in which you feel that help is specially needed. You will remember the anxiety which I am in of showing enough sympathy with the die-hards on our side to secure waverers from going over to their ranks.”²⁰⁸

At the Church Assembly, the Archbishop came under personal attack because of his support for reconstruction.²⁰⁹ The Bishop of London moved a resolution that suggested that non-provided secondary schools should be funded in the same way as county schools. The debate that followed was generally highly critical of the cost to the Church but the main issue for the majority of representatives at the

²⁰⁴ NA. ED 136/462 op. cit., Response to the National Society from the Board of Education.

²⁰⁵ NA ED 136/677. Arthur C. Headlam, Bishop of Gloucester. *The Task of the Christian Church: an address to the Gloucester Diocesan Conference*. Undated.

²⁰⁶ NA ED 136/462 Fault-Finders and the Education Bill: Its religious side deserves more appreciation, *Yorkshire Post*, 16th January 1944.

²⁰⁷ BodL CPA RAB 2/3.

²⁰⁸ NA ED 136/462 Letter from William Cantuar to R.A. Butler, 31st January, 1944.

²⁰⁹ *ibid.*, Report of the Proceedings of the Church Assembly, February 1944.

Assembly was how they would be able to maintain their denominational teaching if the proposals of the White Paper were accepted.²¹⁰

While there was considerable infighting between the different groups within the Anglican Church there was a general acceptance of the terms of the White Paper. This was not the case for the Roman Catholic Church which offered concerted, vociferous and adamant objections to any suggestions that it should renounce denominational teaching in its schools or hand any of them to the LEA. It remained intransigent and when the proposals for reconstruction became clearer its reactions were intense. In a letter to *The Times*, Cardinal Hinsley voiced his concern about the proposals which he saw as an attack on Roman Catholicism.²¹¹ He pointed out that there could be no equality of educational opportunity for a minority who were faced with a crushing financial burden because of their religious beliefs. In early 1943, a Committee representing a range of Catholic views led by the Archbishop of Liverpool, met with Butler.²¹² It became clear that the Catholic Hierarchy was not interested in any offer which included an Agreed Syllabus, and was adamant that all teachers in their schools should be practising Roman Catholics.²¹³ It would be unable to raise the fifty per cent of the cost of bringing all their schools up to standard and the Bishop hinted that Government should provide one hundred percent interest free loans. If this was possible they would welcome the new Bill and do their best to remove the problem of single school areas. It was pointed out that over the years the Catholic Church had provided large numbers of school places, in areas like Liverpool, at no cost to the Government. In return the Church was now asking the Government for help. Butler response was clear. The Roman Catholic sector would not be treated any differently from any other, and while he respected the fact that the Church intended protecting their doctrine, his major concern was that all children received a good quality education. The sector would reform in the same way as the rest of the schools. There would be a fifty per cent grant towards improving existing accommodation and he might again return to the provision of the Education Act 1936 which allowed for a seventy-five percent grant to build new schools. This offer however was time limited. The deputation was concerned with this, as planning for reorganisation would be difficult as some areas

²¹⁰ NA. ED 136/462, Report of the Proceedings of the Church Assembly, February, 1944

²¹¹ Church Schools, Letter to the Editor, *The Times* Nov 1st, 1943.

²¹² BodL CPA RAB 2/9 Board of Education. Memorandum, Discussions on the Dual System, p 1.

²¹³ *ibid.*, Memorandum Remarks by Archbishop of Southwark, p 1.

had been badly affected by bombing during the war, but Butler pointed out that he could make no distinction between Roman Catholics and other faiths. The Bishop of Lancaster responded that the deputation would have to consult with the Hierarchy “who would, he feared, consider that the community were being asked to face an impossible burden under the proposals put before them.”²¹⁴ He also asked how the Government thought that the Church would be able to shoulder this enormous financial burden. Butler replied that, bearing in mind the timescale, the actuarial evidence he had seen as well as the generous grants the Government were offering, he had no doubt that it was possible.²¹⁵ The objections from the Committee remained, but the Roman Catholic Church was left with two choices: it could either accept the grants on offer and the accompanying intervention by the LEAs or, if it chose to remain as an autonomous sector, would have to fund reorganisation itself.

Both the Roman Catholic and Anglican Church put Butler under considerable pressure in a variety of ways, but especially through their support in Parliament. Each group had supporters with considerable influence who lobbied to get a better settlement. It was generally recognised, however, that the non-provided sector would have to agree to the proposals. After the publication of the Education Bill²¹⁶ Butler wrote to a number of newspapers thanking them for their support. The owner of *The Times* responded:

“You are certainly well over the first hurdle and you are unlikely, I imagine to encounter any insuperable difficulty in the House ... I do not believe that the RCs mean to do more than bargain very hard indeed.”²¹⁷

Attitudes to education reforms in Wales

Although Welsh local education authorities had been included on the distribution list for the Green Book, the Church in Wales had not. In 1942, the Bishop of St Asaph, told a Governing Body Committee meeting that while he was aware that negotiations with other denominations were taking place but the Church in Wales had not been invited to take part in these.²¹⁸ The comments made by the

²¹⁴BodL CPA RAB 2/9 Memorandum *ibid.*, p 7.

²¹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 8.

²¹⁶ Education, A bill to reform the law relating to education in England and Wales, 7 & 8 Geo 6. 1943-44 (4).

²¹⁷ BodL CPA RAB 2/8 Letter from R.M.B.W, 31st January 1944.

²¹⁸ NLW SD/ED/3-6, Minutes of the Education Committee of the Governing Body of the Church in Wales Diocesan Education Minutes Dioceses of St David’s, 9th July, 1942.

Bishop of St Asaph are somewhat misleading because there was a definite involvement of the Church in Wales in negotiations.²¹⁹ While there was no longer any direct administrative connection between it and the Church of England, there was certainly a close relationship between the two, and it is clear that the Archbishop of Canterbury was anxious to include Wales in negotiations.²²⁰ Butler met with the Archbishop of the Church in Wales in 1942, and the letters that passed between them after this meeting indicate the issues that were discussed. Butler reiterated that there would be an obligation on Managers of non-provided schools to implement new legislation “rapidly and nationwide,”²²¹ and that he expected the education service to make progress.²²² The Archbishop passed on this information to the Diocesan Education Committees for discussion but kept Butler’s comments confidential:

“I carefully omitted any reference to you, and I concluded with this statement: ‘You will recognise that it will be very difficult for you or me, at this moment, to quote any authority for my statements, but I have very strong ground for making them, and your Committee had better assume the high probability of their correctness.’”²²³

The Representative Body of the Church in Wales meetings that followed requested Diocesan Education Committees “to consider with urgency”²²⁴ the Archbishop’s advice. There was some debate about this and the Honorary Secretary, A. G. Whitehead, pointed out that no documentation had been received from the National Society so it would be impossible to comment on their proposals. As a result the National Society was asked to clarify their position on a number of matters.²²⁵ There is no evidence of the outcomes of these discussions, but it must be assumed that the Church in Wales agreed with the proposals.²²⁶

²¹⁹ CofERC ALW/2/4 Title Papers relating to the Watching Committee and the education bill, 1943-1944,

²²⁰ NA ED 136/237 Letter R.A. Butler to Archbishop of Canterbury, 1st October 1942.

²²¹ *ibid.*, Undated draft letter, R.A. Butler to Archbishop Church in Wales, 19th October 1942.

²²² *ibid.*

²²³ NA ED 136/237 *op. cit.*, Letter, Archbishop Church in Wales to R.A. Butler.

²²⁴ CinWA Representative Body of the Church in Wales Provincial Education Committee Meeting, 20th November 1942.

²²⁵ CofERC ALW /2/4 Papers relating to the Watching Committee and the Education Bill. There is very little available evidence about the relationship between the Church in Wales and other religious organisations but it is known that Mr Whitehead was later invited to represent the Church in Wales on the Watching Committee of the Church of England.

²²⁶ See NA ED 136/462 for details of these discussions.

The circumstances surrounding the non-provided sector was slightly different in Wales. The political discord that had accompanied the Education Act 1902 had not been forgotten, but while non-conformity remained embedded in Welsh society there are suggestions that it was becoming less antagonistic. There had been cordial meetings between the Governing Body of the Church in Wales and Welsh non-conformist groups, and there was a growing perception of a distinct change in relations between the two. There were new opportunities for closer co-operation, especially over the Agreed Syllabus, and: "The eagerness and readiness of the one side to see the point of view of the other have been most marked."²²⁷ Regardless of this, the Federation of Education Committees was almost unanimously agreed²²⁸ that the non-provided system in Wales should be removed.²²⁹ As a result of this, in August 1943, after the publication of the White Paper, the Bishop wrote to R. A Butler to report that he was aware that meetings were being held to try and remove Wales completely from the new legislation.²³⁰ He indicated that the Church in Wales would strongly resist these proposals²³¹ because "Churchmen were of the opinion that if autonomy was granted there would be a wholesale and ruthless dis-establishment of the Church Schools in Wales."²³²

The Federation of Education Committees (Wales and Monmouthshire) was made up of representatives of all local education authorities and was exceptionally influential and powerful. It had overseen the discussions about reorganisation during the interwar years; presided over the abolition of secondary school fees in Wales, and the proposals to raise the school leaving age in 1936. In 1941 it set up a sub-committee to consider the proposals of the Green Book.²³³ The Federation, chaired by Sir William Jenkins,²³⁴ felt very strongly that needs of Wales were not being fully considered. Its main concern was the removal of the non-provided sector and that

²²⁷ CinWA Representative Body of the Church in Wales Governing Body Education Meeting 20th July 1944.

²²⁸ There were some objections. Cardiff Education Authority for example suggested that "that in the national interest the present time is importune to consider the question of the dual system." NLW Minor Deposit 701. Executive Committee of the Federation of Education Committee (Wales and Monmouthshire) Minutes, 27th July 1943.

²²⁹ *ibid.*, 28th January 1943.

²³⁰ NA ED 136/237 Wales - Discussions with Archbishop of Wales, Bishop of St. Asaph, Sir William Jenkins, M P. and the Central Welsh Board. Letter Bishop of St Asaph to Butler, 23rd August 1943.

²³¹ *ibid.*,

²³² *ibid.*,

²³³ NLW Minor Deposit 701 op. cit., 11th November 1941.

²³⁴ Member of Parliament for Cymmer, Glamorgan, Chair of the County Council Association of England and Wales and the Federation of Education Committees.

“all the Local Authorities in Wales would offer a most strenuous resistance to any proposal to adopt for Wales any plan generally likely to extend and perpetuate the system.”²³⁵ It was acknowledged that unless this happened Local Education Authorities would, once again, be unable to reorganise.²³⁶

It was very annoyed that it had not been fully consulted about reconstruction, and this annoyance was intensified by the fact that Butler had received “favourable reactions”²³⁷ to the new proposals from other organisations.²³⁸ When this became known, Butler’s personal assistant, Sylvia Goodfellow, wrote to Sir Wynn Weldon and suggested to him, that because of this, and to give “fair dues”²³⁹ to the Federation that Butler should meet them confidentially to explain the revised contents of the White Paper. Butler met with the Federation privately in Cardiff²⁴⁰ and explained that no compromise on the non-provided sector could be reached unless there was co-operation between all those with vested interests. He stressed that the consultations he was undertaking were to try to reach a compromise which could only be reached through negotiation. He recognised that the problems of the non-provided sector in Wales was substantially different to those of England because there were far fewer non-provided schools.²⁴¹ He went on to point out that whatever the difficulties, reorganisation was going to take place promptly as there would be a statutory obligation on local authorities and Managers to ensure that it did. At the end of the meeting the Federation appeared to be satisfied with the new proposals for the non-provided sector. This, however, was not a correct assumption as in a later letter to Butler, the Executive Committee suggested that Wales should be allowed to find its own solution to the non-provided sector through complete devolution of power over education.²⁴² This suggestion was completely refuted by Weldon and he pointed out that the problems of the non-provided sector were largely historical and any solution must have regard for this.²⁴³

It was unfortunate that Sir William Jenkins chose to reveal the contents of Butler’s private conversation with the Federation in a speech to the Glamorgan

²³⁵ NLW Minor Deposit 701 *ibid.*, 28th January 1943.

²³⁶ *ibid.*, 15th July, 1941,

²³⁷ NA ED 136/237 Letter, 10th October 1942,

²³⁸ The Church of England; the Roman Catholic Hierarchy; the Chief Rabbi; the NUT and the Free Churches for example.

²³⁹ NA ED 136/237 Wales - Discussions with Archbishop of Wales, Bishop of St. Asaph, Sir William Jenkins, and the Central Welsh Board, Letter Sylvia Goodfellow to Sir Wynn Watkins, 10th October 1942.

²⁴⁰ On October 23rd 1942.

²⁴¹ NA ED 136/237 Minutes of Meeting Discussion on the Dual System, 23rd October 1942, p 1.

²⁴² NA ED 136/237 Letter Federation of Education Committee to Butler, 9th December 1942.

²⁴³ *ibid.*, Memorandum Weldon to Butler, 7th December 1942.

Education Authority. Sir Wynn Weldon wrote to Jenkins to say that “The President feels he is entitled to reproach Sir William for referring publically to a private and confidential communication and in so doing he has, no doubt unwittingly, misled his Committee.”²⁴⁴ Butler himself met with Sir William and told him that he could not understand why the contents of his reported speech which he thought were “pretty hot,”²⁴⁵ differed so much from the conversations they had had in Wales. Jenkins suggested that he had had to alter the contents of his speech to suit his audience who wanted the non-provided sector removed completely. Sir William then asked Butler if, because of the religious difficulties, he would consider leaving Wales out of the 1944 legislation altogether. Butler was adamant that this would not happen because if it did

“Wales would remain exactly as it was now. I thought they would be far worse off under this arrangement and I thought Sir William had taken a heavy responsibility on himself in sending me so negative reply.”²⁴⁶

It is indicative of the underlying tensions that Butler refused to attend another meeting in Wales. In January 1943, Butler wrote again to Sir William Jenkins about the Federation’s ongoing objections to the non-provided sector, especially as deominational schools could make use of the second alternative suggested in the White Memorandum. While Butler acknowledged that Federation’s views were of some importance, he also questioned their attitude to the question of Welsh education:

“I should be glad to establish clearly the full significance of the plea made in your letter for special treatment for Wales. I can hardly believe that this means Wales would contemplate being excluded from the benefits of any Bill which the Government decide to lay before Parliament in the near future. I assume that Wales would wish to share in the benefits of any Bill which may be forthcoming.”²⁴⁷

The Federation was not alone in its pleas for Welsh automony. The Central Welsh Board was equally determined to put forward its point of view when it became apparent that it would probably lose its power after reorganisation. It issued a pamphlet²⁴⁸ in response to letters it had received from the Board of Education, and its main focus was educational autonomy for Wales. This was not a new proposal

²⁴⁴ NA ED 136/237 op. cit., Draft letter Weldon to Jenkins, 4th December 1942.

²⁴⁵ *ibid.*, Butler Meeting with Jenkins, Minutes, 10th December 1942.

²⁴⁶ *ibid.*

²⁴⁷ NA ED 136/237 Letter, Butler to Jenkins, 13th January 1943.

²⁴⁸ *Education After the War* (Central Welsh Board

but had been part of the debates in the aftermath of the Education Bill 1902, and had been much discussed at local authority conferences in the following years. In 1919, a Departmental Committee was set up to examine the organisation of secondary education in Wales and reported in 1920 in favour of a Council for Wales which would oversee all forms of education.²⁴⁹ However, by 1942, the Central Welsh Board was drawing attention to the fact that there was already a separate education system in Wales and that “therefore no mere appendix to an English scheme can adequately meet the needs of the Wales of the future.”²⁵⁰ It suggested the next logical step would be autonomy for Welsh education which had considerable and ongoing support.

The Education Bill

During 1942 Board of Education officials began to draft an Education Bill and a few sentences announcing the presumption of an Education Act were included in the King’s Speech. This resulted in the White Paper – *Educational Reconstruction* and the Education Bill being drawn up simultaneously. In December 1942, Butler presented a Memorandum²⁵¹ to the War Cabinet outlining his proposals which included new proposals for the non-provided sector. He pointed out that the months of discussion had brought about some agreement and he had substantial support from religious and educational organisations. After further discussion at the Lord President’s Committee, Butler began the drafting process. By April 1943, the draft was ready to be presented to the Prime Minister for his approval. Although Churchill was not convinced about some aspects, he gave approval. The non-provided sector once again came under the spotlight but “The Prime Minister felt that the Roman Catholics were well treated already: ‘it was a case of Rome on the rates and Rome on the taxes’.”²⁵² There was an agreement that Butler could publish the White Paper for debate in the House of Commons. The acceptance of this “marked the point at which the wartime coalition government publically adopted what was probably its most comprehensive single piece of post-war social policy.”²⁵³ The Bill

²⁴⁹ Board of Education. Report of the Departmental Committee on the Organisation of Secondary Education in Wales, 1920 (Cmd. 967), p. 86-87.

²⁵⁰ NA 136/237 *ibid.*, p. 4.

²⁵¹ BodL CPA RAB 2/6 Confidential Papers Secret Memorandum to the War Cabinet. Lord President’s Committee, December 1942.

²⁵² P.H.J.H. Gosden, (1976), *op. cit.*, p. 313.

²⁵³ *ibid.*, p. 313.

was drawn up in consultation with other Government Departments as their agreement was necessary if the Board of Education was to assume control of all children's services. Central to these changes was the Exchequer, because as a Memorandum pointed out, any changes in education provision would bring accompanying increases in costs, in addition to the rise in the cost of living that would inevitably follow the end of the war. The cost of the reorganisation of education in England and Wales would be considerable and currently estimated at approximately £123 million, with the cost of school meals and milk adding a further £15 million.²⁵⁴

In May 1944, Butler introduced the Bill²⁵⁵ to the House of Commons with an explanatory memorandum about the changes that had been made to the White Paper.²⁵⁶ It was divided into five sections which would come into legislation at different times. The first, the establishment of the Ministry of Education and the creation of the post of Minister, would take place immediately. The other most contentious clause, the raising of the school leaving age, was to be implemented by 1st April 1945. The imprecise legislation of the Education Act of 1918 was removed and it is clear that local authorities and other organisations would be compelled, not only to observe the new legislation, but had statutory responsibilities for its implementation. The Bill²⁵⁷ caused considerable dissent. The Conservative and Liberal parties objected because of the cost which might lose them the support of landowners, who were the major tax payers, and non-conformists objected to state funds being used to support the non-provided sector. Despite these objections the Education Act 1944 successfully passed through the House of Lords and, in August 1944, received Royal Assent.

²⁵⁴ BodL CPA RAB 2/2 Education Reconstruction. The Financial Implications of the Proposals Memorandum. There was estimated to be about a 30 percent rise from the costs in 1939 in spite of the considerable Government subsidies

²⁵⁵ HC Deb 12 May 1944 vol 399 col 2193-267.

²⁵⁶ Board of Education. Education Bill explanatory memorandum by the president of the Board of Education. 1943-44 (Cmd. 6492).

²⁵⁷ Education. A bill to reform the law relating to education in England and Wales 1943-1944 (4).

Conclusions

The Education Act 1944 was the only piece of major social legislation that passed onto the statute book during the Second World War, a fact which perhaps marks its importance in the planning for reconstruction. However, new legislation was long overdue and the circumstances of war, particularly during evacuation, had revealed an education system that was not fit for purpose. There had been ongoing demands for education reform throughout the interwar period and the Act was an attempt to draw together the recommendations of the Consultative Committees of the Board of Education and to re-establish much of the failed education legislation of 1918 Education Act. It contained few new ideas and was a missed opportunity to establish a fair and egalitarian education system in England and Wales. Instead, it continued to promote the existing, class dominated provision that had been in place since before the start of the nineteenth century. It also retained the dual system of provided and non-provided schools which proved so problematic in earlier plans for reorganisation.

While there is a view that the Education Act 1944 was “construed and constructed in an atmosphere of consensus and conciliation”²⁵⁸ synonymous with a shared vision for better education in England and Wales, this was clearly not the case. The objections to its terms marked the divisions in society; socially, politically and most obviously with continuing denominational rancour. This latter, in many ways, emphasised the ongoing political and social divide and the strong links between The Church of England and the Conservative Party and the Labour Party and non-conformity. Conversely, while Roman Catholicism had roots in both political parties it had an absolute determination not to abrogate its religious beliefs for the sake of education reform. Negotiations with these groups were intense and the role played by the President of the Board of Education, R.A. Butler, in taking the Act to the statute book should not be overlooked.

The pressure from the Church of England and the Conservative Party dominated events. Although James Chuter Ede, was instrumental in advising on policy, there is little of the fundamental philosophy of the Labour Party in its final

²⁵⁸ R. Aldrich, *Lessons from History of Education: The Selected Works of Richard Aldrich* (Routledge: London, 2005) p. 69.

form, and certainly its much vaunted aims for equality appear to have been lost in the process. It has been pointed out that Labour, had it chosen to do so, could have finally have removed “the snobbishness built into the system”²⁵⁹ by abolishing the public school sector. This, at that time, was in a very poor position and would have “expected little mercy at the hands of a Labour Government.”²⁶⁰ However, it is also recognised that many Labour politicians, who themselves had attended independent and endowed schools, were reluctant to maximise on the opportunity to make significant change which could have guaranteed equality of provision.

The religious tensions during the discussions overshadowed the most fundamental issue, the shape of secondary education after reconstruction. During the interwar years there had been a move towards the concept of common secondary provision which would offer parity, as well as solve some organisational difficulties, especially in rural areas. The Conservative Party, however was determined to retain grammar schools, and their control over events, especially in the House of Lords, ensured this. There was a considerable amount of manipulation by Board of Education officials to influence opinion in this direction. The recommendations of the Norwood Report, in particular, and the later Fleming Report suited this purpose very well.

By 1944, secondary education in Wales was already well advanced and most local authorities provided a high ratio of free places in the Intermediate sector. The few grammar schools, were of little account in the general scheme of things. The main objection to reconstruction in non-conformist Wales remained the non-provided sector. This had caused animosity and tension since the Education Act 1902 and there was a determination that it should be completely removed from Welsh provision. A major, and long standing aim was to achieve devolved powers for education but this was, once again, unsuccessful in 1944. In spite of the efforts of some politicians, educationalists and public figures, the secondary sector that emerged from reconstruction was still associated with social class and dominated by religious influences. It remained tripartite and highly selective and despite the

²⁵⁹ B. Simon, The 1944 Education Act: A Conservative measure? *History of Education*, Volume 15, Issue 1: (1986) 31-43, p. 42.

²⁶⁰ *ibid.*, p. 42.

fact that after 1944, there was 'secondary education for all, it was "the old order in a new disguise."²⁶¹

²⁶¹ B. Simon, (1986) op. cit., p. 41.

Chapter 6: Implementation

“In the youth of the nation we have our greatest asset. Even on the basis of mere expediency, we cannot afford not to develop this asset to the greatest advantage.”¹

This Chapter examines the reconstruction of education in the years following the Education Act 1944. It reviews how Labour Party policy on education changed when it was in Government from 1945 to 1951 and how it abandoned the idea of parity through multilateralism in order to retain the socially stratified tripartite system. The LEAs in south and south west Wales responded to planning for change after 1944 in different ways. Some accepted the tripartite system with equanimity, while others did their best to maintain the philosophy of equality by planning for comprehensive schools. The battle between the Ministry of Education and the local authorities was long and complex, made more so by the involvement of the non-provided sector and its continuing attempts to retain denominational authority over education.

Overview

For education the five years from 1939 to 1944 were complex and often difficult. They encompassed the evacuation scheme which resulted in severe disruption to provision; the three major reports from the Consultative Committee for Education² that signposted the way forward; and a Green Book, which was the preamble to the Education Act 1944.³ This latter, was the only major piece of social legislation to go on to the statute book during the Second World War, and its passage through Parliament accompanied some of the most important events of the war, its second reading, for example, accompanied the D-Day landings.⁴ The Education Act 1944 made significant changes to the organisation and administration of education in England and Wales. The all-age elementary sector was replaced by primary and secondary schools and the school leaving age raised to fifteen. It gave

¹Education Reconstruction 1942-42 XI (Cmd 6458), p. 3ff in A Marwick, *A Century of Total War: War Peace and Social Change 1900 -1967*, Penguin Harmondsworth. 1968. p. 318.

² *Curriculum and Examinations in Secondary Schools* (HMSO: 1943) (The Norwood Report); *Teachers and Youth Leaders* (HMSO: 1944) (The McNair Report); *The Public Schools and the General Educational System* (HMSO: 1944) (The Fleming Report).

³ Education Act 1944 7 & 8 Geo 6 Ch 31.

⁴ G. McCulloch, *Education Reconstruction: The 1944 Education Act and the Twenty First Century* (Woburn Press: Essex, 1994).

the newly established Ministry of Education new powers which enabled it to force Local Education Authorities to plan for, and to implement reorganisation. The structure at a local level also changed. The Part III authorities were removed and all educational matters passed to the County and County Borough Councils. This streamlined system was intended to make re-organisation much more straightforward. The plan for the secondary sector, although not included in legislation but implicit in discussion, and the Reports of Consultative Committee, was that this should be on tripartite lines: grammar, modern or technical based on pupils' ability. In fact, the Education Act 1944 "had nothing to say"⁵ about the structure of secondary education and this appears to have been a decision made solely at the Ministry of Education.

Politics and the Education Act 1944

In 1945 the Labour Party swept to power, but the reality of the situation in post war Britain made implementation of the war time plans for reconstruction and the Party's manifesto pledges very difficult. Its commitments were enormous: to nationalisation, implementation of the Beveridge Report, the establishment of a National Health Service as well as educational reform through the Education Act 1944. Major problems faced Government, not least the post war economic problems, internal Party disagreements,⁶ and these combined, made reconstruction problematic. For education, despite the almost unanimous war time calls for reform, there was an immediate loss of impetus and, as had been the case after First World War, it once again faced marginalisation.

Education had not initially been a focus for the war-time Labour Party but by 1941 there was a consensus that "We have to plan for a new world."⁷ There had been widespread discussion in the educational press and Herbert Morrison⁸ agreed that an Advisory Committee⁹ should review and advise on the reform of education

⁵ D. Crook, *Local Authorities and Comprehensivisation in England and Wales 1944-1974. Oxford Review of Education*, Vol 28, No 2/3: (2002) p. 247.

⁶ K. O. Morgan, *Labour in Power 1945-51* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1984) Chapter 2, The Framework of Politics 1945-1951, in particular.

⁷ *Labour in the Government: A Record of Social Legislation in War-Time*. Speech by Clement Atlee at Tonypany, 16th February 1941, (Labour Party), p. 5 in R. Barker, *Education and Politics 1900-1951 A Study of the Labour Party* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1972), p. 75.

⁸ Member of Parliament for Hackney and Home Secretary in the war-time coalition government.

⁹ The Committee included Barbara Drake, George Tomlinson and R. H. Tawney.

after the war. The discussions were as inconclusive and confused as Labour policy on education had always been. The Committee was quite interested in the idea of the common school or multilateralism, but there was no clarity of interpretation of this provision.¹⁰ Between 1943 and 1945, the views within the Labour Party had become polarised. A small number of left of centre members proposed that common schools both advanced the traditional values of the Party and were a viable alternative to the tripartite system. Others wanted to maintain the grammar school sector and expanding access to them. The main focus, however, was raising the school leaving age and this commitment was embedded in the document '*Let Us Face the Future*' which became part of Labour's 1945 election manifesto.¹¹

In contrast to the Labour Party's somewhat fragmented philosophy, the Conservative Party's ideas were clear. After Herwald Ramsbottom's¹² early ideas that envisaged "nothing more than a generous restoration of the *status quo ante*"¹³ came under pressure, from the Workers Education Association for example, the appointment of R.A. Butler led to only slightly more progressive views. The views on the non-provided and the endowed grammar school sectors remained almost unchanged. The tripartite system of secondary education anticipated in Circular 1350 of 1925¹⁴ and the later Consultative Committee report *The Education of the Adolescent* remained the model of choice.

Two issues exacerbated the reorganisation of education after 1944. Firstly, the composition of the Labour Party in the House of Commons changed and was substantially different from its pre-war structure. In 1945 there were two hundred and forty four new Labour Members of Parliament,¹⁵ a massive majority¹⁶ which would assist in carrying out reconstruction. However, the pre-war working class profile of the Party changed to one which included large numbers of Members who had attended public or grammar schools and had had a university education.¹⁷ This

¹⁰ R. Barker, *op.cit.* p. 77.

¹¹ *Let Us Face the Future* (Labour Party: 1945) in R. Barker, *ibid.*, p. 80.

¹² Conservative Member of Parliament for Lancaster, President of the Board of Education in Chamberlain's government.

¹³ R. Barker, *ibid.*, p. 75.

¹⁴ Jones, G. E., *Controls and Conflicts in Welsh Secondary Education 1889-1994* (UWP: 1982), p. 115.

¹⁵ J. F. S. Ross, *Elections and Electors: Studies in Democratic Representation* (Eyre & Spottiswood: London, 1955), Table 53 p. 375.

¹⁶ Labour 399; Conservative 215; others 14 in J. F. S. Ross, *ibid.*, p. 375.

¹⁷ 85 percent Conservatives as compared to 23 percent Labour. Overall 44 percent of Members of Parliament had attended schools that belongs to the Headteachers' Conference. This meant that 44.5 percent of the Members had attended public school. J. F. S. Ross, *ibid.*, Table 67 and Table 71 p. 405, 407.

changed the Party's perspective on education, and particularly what secondary education should be like. The interwar ideal of 'secondary education for all,' interpreted as grammar school education for all, was slowly replaced by a structured differentiated model with grammar schools the preserve of only a very small percentage of children. The remainder would have access to updated elementary provision: in modern schools or if they had aptitude, to a technical school. In essence the changes to the Labour Party meant that it was generally less "susceptible to the romantic Socialism of the 1920s."¹⁸

Secondly, the appointment of Ellen Wilkinson¹⁹ as Minister of Education presented added difficulties. Although Wilkinson was an experienced Member of Parliament and had been a Junior Minister in the Coalition Government, she knew nothing of education or the politics that had surrounded the drawing up of the Education Act 1944. Most crucially, she was grammar school educated and has been said to embody "Labour's instinctive faith in the grammar schools, the bright working class child's alternative to Eton and Winchester."²⁰ Her early political beliefs were decidedly radical but, during the war years, these had been largely abandoned and she had moved towards the centre of Labour Party philosophy. As a close friend of Herbert Morrison, Wilkinson had developed a more circumspect view on domestic policies. There was no mistaking her intentions to implement the terms of the Act and make changes to education provision²¹ but unfortunately her political background had not equipped her with an understanding about how this should be done. She had not been involved in any of the early discussions about the shape of secondary education at the Labour National Executive Council nor with any of the pressure group such as the National Union of Labour Teachers or the National Union of Teachers. She had, however, been chair of the Labour Party in 1945 when Conference accepted Harold Clay's 1942 proposals that "that newly built secondary schools were to be multilateral wherever possible."²²

It was inevitable that Wilkinson would come under criticism for her management of education, and there was a perception amongst some Members of Parliament that progress was unnecessarily slow. This was despite the fact that it

¹⁸ J. Morgan, *The Backbench Diaries of Richard Crossman*, p. 270 in K. O. Morgan, (1984) *op. cit.*, p. 174.

¹⁹ Member of Parliament for Jarrow.

²⁰ K. O. Morgan, (1984) *ibid.*, p. 174.

²¹ B. D. Vernon, *Ellen Wilkinson 1891-1947* (Croom Helm: London, 1982), p. 204.

²² B. D. Vernon *ibid.*, p. 203.

was clear that she, and the officials at the Ministry had developed a three year plan which had “two main priorities”²³ both related to raising the school leaving age and to secondary education for all. These, the supply of teachers and school buildings as well as the expansion of the supply of school meals, were seen as critical to reorganisation.²⁴ The main bone of contention, however, was the Ministry of Education pamphlet, *The Nation’s Schools: Their Plan and Purpose*²⁵ which clearly identified tripartite secondary education as the ideal scheme for reorganisation. There is some uncertainty about the origins of this document but Simon suggests that it was written when R. A. Butler and Chuter Ede were responsible for education, and published on May 6th 1945.²⁶

It suggested that while the reorganisation of primary schools was reasonably straight forward, the organisation of the secondary sector was far more complicated. Although there would be common goals the curriculum would be provided in three types of secondary schools. There would be no increase in the number of grammar school places as it was considered doubtful whether many more children could benefit from an academic education.²⁷ The majority of pupils would attend a modern school intended for children “whose future employment will not demand any measure of technical skill or knowledge.”²⁸ Technical schools were intended to fall somewhere between grammar and modern schools and generally intended for training boys in skills for different trades. There would be different types of technical schools; trade; commercial, nautical and art which would cater for the regional needs of the future employment of pupils. This was an echo of the recommendations of the Norwood Report²⁹ and appeared to be the preferred option of Ministry of Education officials and Members of Parliament. However, the adoption of the tripartite system was by no means a foregone conclusion and there had been considerable pressure from organisations such as the National Union of Teachers that multilateral secondary schools should be the preferred option. The pamphlet, *The Nation’s Schools*, offered the advice that in sparsely populated areas there

²³ PP. Hansard House of Commons 1st July 1946, Vol. 424, Col. 1806.

²⁴ It was envisaged that by September, 1948 there would 390,000 extra children in education and they would require 13,000 more teaching staff, *ibid.*

²⁵ *The Nation’s Schools, Their Plan and Purpose*, Ministry of Education Pamphlet No. 1, (HMSO: 1945).

²⁶ B. Simon, *Education and Social Order 1940-1990* (Lawrence & Wishart, London, 1991.) p. 104

²⁷ *The Nation’s Schools*, *ibid.*, p. 16.

²⁸ *ibid.*, p. 17.

²⁹ *The Report of the Committee of the Secondary Schools Examination Council on Curriculum and Examinations in Secondary Schools* (HMSO: London, 1943).

might be the “judicious experiment”³⁰ of combining the three types of schools in one building but this need not necessarily be “The extreme measure ... of the multilateral school.”³¹ While the pamphlet expressed the view that this type of school had some appeal as it allowed children to be selected for the different sectors later in their school life it also had a number of disadvantages. The “parity of esteem”³² that the multilateral school promised would require considerable change in the attitudes from both educationalists and society before it could be properly accepted. It was also pointed out that this type of school would need to be large and as a result would lose the traditional intimacy provided in the grammar schools which engendered leadership skills amongst pupils. Wilkinson’s views and those included in the pamphlet were, however, hotly contested. Parity of esteem became the watch word of reorganisation.

Technical education was perceived as the most difficult sector to be included in any secondary school reorganisation. In March 1946 during a debate in Parliament, Leah Manning³³ pointed out that it was wrong to think that intelligent children would not be interested in technical education and, to meet their needs this would be most appropriately taught in a common or multilateral school.³⁴ This argument was contradicted by Benn Levy³⁵ who suggested that technical education could never replace the humanities, and that while it might improve the skills of manual workers it would not develop “fuller and more perceptive human beings.”³⁶ George Thomas³⁷ retaliated to this comment by pointing out that this old fashioned point of view was one that had prevented the development of technical education in the past. This debate on technical education ranged back and forth until stopped by William Cove³⁸ who launched a ferocious attack on the recent publication of *The Nation’s Schools* and suggested that it should be withdrawn immediately as it was:

³⁰ *The Nation’s Schools*, op. cit., p. 23.

³¹ *ibid.*, p. 23.

³² *ibid.*, p. 23.

³³ Member of Parliament for Epping. Manning was also instrumental in the evacuation of Basque children to Britain during the Spanish Civil War.

³⁴ Hansard HC Sitting, 22nd, March 1946, Vol. 420, Col. 2155-436.

³⁵ Member of Parliament for Eton and Slough

³⁶ Hansard HC Sitting 22nd March, *ibid.*

³⁷ Member of Parliament for Cardiff.

³⁸ Member of Parliament for Aberavon.

“a profoundly reactionary document. There we have the three tiers, the stratification, of our children laid down as the official policy of the Ministry (and) I want the Minister of Education to take it and burn it, and start afresh.”³⁹

Cove questioned whether it was right that a socialist Minister of Education should be promoting the idea of grammar schools in spite of the fact that Party policy was parity and class free education.

The arguments over *The Nation's Schools* continued, directed mostly by the representatives of the teacher unions and its contents came under fierce attack in the education press,⁴⁰ At the Labour Party Conference⁴¹ Ellen Wilkinson was confronted “violently by W. G. Cove”⁴² about her part in drawing up the document and he managed to get a resolution passed demanding that it was withdrawn. The disagreement continued in the House of Commons.⁴³ Wilkinson denied that she had been involved in the writing of *The Nation's Schools*, and Cove and others, Leah Manning⁴⁴ and Margaret Herbison⁴⁵ for example, asked why she would not withdraw it. It was clear, according to Cove, that Wilkinson believed in the contents of the pamphlet as HMI were visiting schools in south Wales to suggest that tripartite secondary provision was the preferred model. These proposals, he suggested, were completely out of step with earlier Labour Party decisions on education. Wilkinson pointed out that she had never thought that one type of school was suitable for all children and different schools were needed to meet all different needs. She refused to withdraw *The Nation's Schools* but it was never reissued.⁴⁶

The first part of the Act to be implemented was raising the school leaving age. Wilkinson began to raise this matter in Cabinet in 1945. She pointed out that the legislation of the Education Act 1944 provided for the school leaving age to be raised to fifteen on 1st April 1945 unless the Minister considered that there was an insufficient supply of teachers or accommodation. If this was the case “he was

³⁹ Hansard HC Sitting 22nd March, op. cit.

⁴⁰ G.C.T. Giles, Secondary Education for All. Times Educational Supplement; H. Dent, Times Educational Supplement, 15th July 1945 in B. Simon, (1991) op. cit., p. 105.

⁴¹ Labour Party Conference Report, (1946), 189-95 in B. Simon, (1991) ibid., p. 105.

⁴² K. O. Morgan, (1984) op. cit., p. 176.

⁴³ HC Debate 1st July 1946, Vol. 424, Cols. 1759-1922.

⁴⁴ Labour Member of Parliament for Epping.

⁴⁵ Labour Member of Parliament for North Lanarkshire.

⁴⁶ B. Simon, (1991), p. 105.

empowered to defer the order ... to a date not later than 1st April 1947.”⁴⁷ Wilkinson determined after examining the levels of school accommodation and staffing that there would be no possibility of raising the school leaving age before 1947.⁴⁸ She pointed out that a decision had to be made quickly as the Local Education Authorities could not plan until they had been given a definite decision, and this needed to be made in Cabinet in conjunction with the Man-Power Committee. Chuter Ede, then Secretary of State at the Home Office, “argued that postponement would dishearten progressive LEAs, and convince the less adventurous that ROSLA⁴⁹ could be postponed indefinitely.”⁵⁰ In August 1945, Cabinet agreed that the school leaving age would be raised on the 1st April 1947, and in September a memorandum from the Lord President of the Council, Herbert Morrison, indicated that this proposal should be upheld as it:

“will be generally regarded as a test of the Government’s sincerity and that for political reasons we must stick to the date provided in the Education Act 1944 if it is humanly possible to do it.”⁵¹

He further indicated that if the Ministry of Education was prepared to accept lower standards of accommodation, labour could be released to complete a building programme although some materials, such as asbestos, might be in short supply. The other main concern he expressed was how to manage the anticipated shortages of staff⁵² and suggested that the Minister appealed to older and women teachers to remain in service until the Emergency Training Scheme was producing sufficient teachers.⁵³

In spite of Morrison’s apparently firm decision, there were further calls for postponement because of the poor economic conditions and the shortages of teachers and equipment.⁵⁴ Stafford Cripps, Chancellor of the Exchequer, had already voiced his concerns about the cost of the scheme but the most serious attack came in January 1947 from the *Ministerial Committee on Economic Planning*. The Economic Survey for 1947 had revealed the grave financial situation facing

⁴⁷ NA CAB 129/1/17 16th August 1945.

⁴⁸ NA CAB 129/1/17 op. cit..

⁴⁹ ROSLA - an abbreviation for Raising of the School Leaving Age.

⁵⁰ B. D. Vernon, (1986) op.cit., p. 207.

⁵¹ NA CAB 129/1/17, Raising the School Leaving Age Memorandum by the Lord President of the Council.

⁵² These had already been identified in The McNair Report in 1944 and some preliminary planning for expansion of teacher training had already begun.

⁵³ NA CAB 129/1/17 Raising the School Leaving Age: Memorandum by the Lord President of the Council.

⁵⁴ R. Aldrich, *Lessons from History of Education, The Selected Works of Richard Aldrich* (Routledge: London, 2005), p. 69.

Great Britain. There was large and increasing gap between the needs of the country and production, and there was growing realization that some projects would need to be postponed.⁵⁵ Raising the school leaving age fell into this category. The arguments put forward by the Committee were persuasive. Stafford Cripps recommended to Cabinet that raising of the school-leaving age should be delayed. The reasons given for this were two fold. Firstly it would mean that more children would be available for employment, and secondly a postponement of five months would allow accommodation and other preparations for be much further ahead.⁵⁶ Wilkinson argued against this as it “would produce great social and educational hardship for very little economic advantage.”⁵⁷ She pointed out that the loss of a year’s education for a large number of children could also have long term economic disadvantages as employers were looking for a skilled workforce⁵⁸ and many were already refusing to employ children of less than sixteen years of age. Consideration also had to be given to the fact that public pledges had been given and should not be broken. In Wilkinson’s opinion delaying raising the school leaving age could not be justified on education grounds as it would “deprive 150,000 children of a whole year’s education, and the children to suffer would be precisely those whose education had been most seriously interrupted by the war.”⁵⁹ She assured Cabinet that by April 1947 sufficient teachers would be trained and accommodation ready. By then the local authorities would also have completed their initial planning especially as there was a belief that the school leaving age would be raised on 1st April. If the Government changed its mind, there was a possibility that the education authorities would also delay their planning for reform. After lengthy discussions the Chancellor of the Exchequer agreed not to press for postponement, mainly because of Wilkinson’s strong views on the matter. This was almost the last battle Wilkinson had over the implementation of the Education Act 1944. She died in February of 1947 and was succeeded as Minister for Education by George Tomlinson.

At a local level the Education Authorities had begun to draw up Development Plans. This enormous task was complicated by the fact that they had been given

⁵⁵ NA CAB 129/16/25 Economic Survey for 1947, Report from the Ministerial Committee on Economic Planning 10th January, 1947, p. 1.

⁵⁶ *ibid.*, p. 4

⁵⁷ NA CAB 128/9/8 Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet 10th January 1947, p 50.

⁵⁸ NA CAB 128/9/8 Conclusions of a Meeting of the Cabinet 16th January 1947.

⁵⁹ *ibid.*

some very mixed messages about the preferred shape of secondary education. There was a clear intention in the phrasing of the Act that there should be some freedom in the way local authorities planned for reorganisation but it was also apparent from the early discussions at the Ministry of Education and in the recommendations of the Norwood Report⁶⁰ that a tripartite system of secondary education was most favoured. The political view in this matter also appeared to have changed and the interwar Labour Party's demands for progressivism and equality appears to have been modified by the terms of the new Education Act. It has been suggested that "the 1945 Labour Government was failing to act as a socialist party, which might be expected to have acted at this time in history."⁶¹

There had been considerable support for the ideas of a common school during the interwar years from the various teacher and trade unions as well as from educationalists. The National Association of Labour Teachers had totally opposed the Education Act 1944 as "reactionary and doctrinaire"⁶² and together with the Labour Party had lobbied R.A. Butler to omit the prescription of the type of secondary in the legislation. In much the same way, the Labour Party Conferences of 1943 and 1945 had supported the idea of multilateral education but once it had been elected to Government, the attitude of the party, in this respect, appears to have changed. The main source of opposition came from Transport House and Herbert Morrison who supported grammar schools, and not the idea of multilateral education.⁶³ It has been suggested that Ellen Wilkinson also supported this view.⁶⁴ However, tripartite secondary education did not appear to be an attractive option at local level and Fabian Society research, published in 1945, indicated that out of the fifty four LEA Development Plans that had already been submitted, only eighteen had decided on a tripartite system of education. The remainder had put forward a variety of schemes most of which included at least ten percent of multilateral schools.⁶⁵ However, Wilkinson discarded these and the early Labour Party support for multilateralism, "Instead she led the troops in an entirely different direction,

⁶⁰ *The Report of the Committee of the Secondary Schools Examination Council on Curriculum and Examinations in Secondary Schools* (HMSO: 1943).

⁶¹ C. Benn, Comprehensive School Reform and the 1945 Labour Government. *History Workshop*, 10: (1980), 197-204, p. 197.

⁶² Editorial *Modern Education*, October 1946 in C. Benn, *ibid.*, p. 199.

⁶³ J.D. Burgevin, Politics and Education: A case study of a pressure group, the national association of Labour Teachers 1927-1951, PhD Dissertation, Syracuse University, (1969) in C. Benn, *ibid.*

⁶⁴ D. Rubenstein, Ellen Wilkinson Re-Considered. *History Workshop*, No. 7: (1979), 161-169, p. 1979.

⁶⁵ Unreferenced in D. Rubenstein, *ibid.*, p. 165.

insisting it would be 'folly to injure' the grammar schools, which were the 'outstanding achievement' of the state educational system."⁶⁶

Planning for Change in south and south west Wales

In his presidential address to the Welsh Federation of Education Committees, Sir William Jenkins remarked that the Education Act 1944 "would change the complexion of Wales. It was a great step forward and a completely new set up."⁶⁷ The Welsh Education Committees were well aware of the terms of the Act and the apparent latitude it allowed them in terms of curriculum and organisation and, as a consequence, they made interesting, and often very different decisions about reconstruction. Their decision-making and planning was, however, hampered by a number of issues. They had to make difficult choices about the shape of the secondary sector and there was continuing, but less extensive, organisational difficulties caused by the non-provided schools. Added to these problems, was the fact that in some local authority areas no reorganisation had taken place during the interwar years, and as a consequence total reform would be very expensive and demanding. There was often insufficient accommodation to reorganise into primary and secondary schools and many authorities were still trying to get possession of school buildings that had been requisitioned by the military authorities during the war. Accommodating the planned extra year of provision without any other reorganisation would be problematic but head teachers, "those who would have most influence in carrying it out,"⁶⁸ were convinced that it could be done.

The ideas and philosophy laid out in *The Nation's Schools: Their Plan and Purpose* came rather too late for some LEAs who had already begun to put sophisticated Development Plans in place which generally included some element of multilateral schools. The Plans were a requirement under the terms of the Education Act 1944 and had to contain details of reorganisation for primary and secondary sectors, including provision for non-provided schools and for children with special educational needs. In south and south west Wales the two largest authorities Carmarthenshire and Glamorgan County Councils produced very similar

⁶⁶ *Education*, November 9th: (1945) in D. Rubenstein, op. cit., p. 165.

⁶⁷ GA BMT/E/7/4 Merthyr Tydfil Education Committee Minutes 1944-1945, Report of the Annual Meeting of the Welsh Federation of Education Committees.

⁶⁸ G. E. Jones, *Controls and Conflicts in Welsh Secondary Education 1889-1994* (UWP: 1982), p. 193.

plans which were a mixture of tripartite and multilateral schools. Swansea Borough Council's Development Plan focused entirely on the establishment of six new multilateral schools and the abandonment of all existing education provision. The two remaining Borough Councils, Cardiff and Merthyr Tydfil planned a complete reliance on the tripartite system. It is impossible to establish whether there was any cross fertilization of ideas between the authorities but there does appear to be some elements of this in the resulting plans.

Cardiff Borough Council

Before the start of World War Two there were one hundred and twenty five elementary schools, with 30,070 pupils and ten High Schools with 3,816 pupils in the Cardiff.⁶⁹ During the war many schools had been bombed, damaged or destroyed and children had been evacuated. The task of reorganisation was therefore considerable and the Development Plan that was drawn up followed simple logical principles.⁷⁰ It does not contain any explanation of its rationale but is reasonably detailed and includes proposals for the primary and secondary sectors as well as special education and nursery provision. Although not required, it includes a scheme for the feeding of school children as this was considered "an integral part of the Authority's proposals."⁷¹ In spite of its simplicity and adherence to the recommended tripartite system, City of Cardiff's proposals were not received with any enthusiasm by the Welsh Department of the Ministry of Education. The main cause for concern appears to have been both an underestimation of pupil numbers and the actual organisation of schools. The Welsh Department comments point out that:

⁶⁹ The figures for the elementary schools, based on statistics from January 1943, were presented in April 1945 to a sub-committee considering the reorganisation of the City's schools following the 1944 Education Act. The secondary figures are based on returns for January 1943. CCL Cardiff, Education 45, (Re-organisation of Schools) Sub-Committee, 18th April 1945, pp. 164 -170 and CCL Cardiff, Education 1942-43, Higher Education Committee, 12th February 1943, p. 87. The exact number of elementary schools cannot be given with certainty as my research has revealed that the numbers given in the report of April 1945 are in some cases inaccurate. For example, all eight Roman Catholic elementary schools are listed as having Boys', Girls' and Infant Departments and yet six of them only had Mixed and Infant schools. See K. Strange, *Cardiff Schools and The Age of the Second World War – The Log Books: A documentary history*. Undated unpublished pdf document, p. 4. resources.hwb.wales.gov.uk/VTC/ngfl/history/cardiff_schools/

⁷⁰ GA Lib/C/198 City of Cardiff Education Committee: reorganisation scheme for Elementary Council, Church in Wales and Roman Catholic schools

⁷¹ NA BD 7/14 City of Cardiff Education Committee Development Plan Report on the Development and re-organisation of Education within the Terms of Section 11 of the Education Act 1944.

“In many cases the total accommodation of individual Departments bears little or no relation to the requirements of the Building Regulations ... and it is not clear how the Authority contemplates that the Departments in question could be organised with due regard to both efficiency and reasonable economy.”⁷²

There were also comments about the proposed siting of some primary schools and the inadequacy of play grounds and fields. Thirteen single-sex senior schools were planned in the catchment areas of existing elementary schools and would, wherever possible, be situated away from the city centre. This arrangement, unfortunately, meant that there would often have to be considerable movement of pupils over quite long distances. Primary reorganisation was equally problematic and complex. As an example, three elementary schools, Gladstone Road, Crwys and Allensbrooks were situated in neighbouring areas of the city but on different sides of the River Taf. Six hundred children over eleven were to be transferred to Gladstone Road School. Children from seven to eleven would attend Crwys School and Infant children would be based at Crwys and Allensbrooks. Similar arrangements were made for other areas with the most suitable school for an age groups converted for use.

The scheme was to include Church in Wales and Roman Catholic schools. There were lengthy discussions with Managers who asked for the maximum benefits in terms of financial aid and staffing.⁷³ The Church in Wales plan, because of the fall in pupil numbers in some parishes, was to concentrate senior pupils in two Central schools near the city centre. The Managers agreed that they would be able to meet their portion of building costs and have all accommodation ready for occupation by 31st August 1949. The Roman Catholic sector plan intended building four new senior schools and convert a fifth elementary school for secondary use. The LEA agreed to the demands of the non-provided sector so that reorganisation would be able to take place although it advised that it was in the Ministry of Education’s gift to agree with the establishment of any new schools.

Many aspects of the City of Cardiff plan, including that for the non-provided sector, came under intense scrutiny from the Ministry of Education. There were thirteen Church in Wales schools in the city but their pupil population was small. Four schools had less than fifty children on roll, and the Ministry of Education

⁷² NA BD 7/14 Letter H.E. Weston to Cardiff Education Authority, 10th January 1948.

⁷³ GA Lib/C/198, op.cit.

questioned whether these were appropriate “in terms of efficiency” and why the authority had not had discussions with the Mangers about possible closure. The small number of pupils over eleven years of age were insufficient to warrant a separate senior school, but despite this, the Church in Wales planned for two single sex grammar schools in the Llandaff area of Cardiff to accommodate pupils from across the City. In contrast the Roman Catholic sector had eight schools in Cardiff with a substantial child population of almost three thousand with about a third of these being over eleven years of age. It planned to establish two single sex senior schools and expand its primary sector although the exact plan was not completed because there were some difficulties in finding suitable sites.

The Minister also had reservations about the planning for local authority secondary schools and it was suggested that there was insufficient surplus accommodation in modern schools for any rises in birth rate or population movement. Conversely, grammar school provision was too generous: “This would enable rather more than 25 per cent of the children to proceed to the grammar schools. Such provision would appear to be too liberal.”⁷⁴ The Development Plan for Cardiff LEA was finally approved in 1952. Unfortunately, little is known about the details of the process of implementation or any protests that surrounded it as the file of proceedings remains closed until 2043.⁷⁵

Carmarthenshire County Council

In 1939 there were one hundred and sixty six elementary schools in Carmarthenshire⁷⁶ and of these, one hundred and twenty two had less than forty children on roll.⁷⁷ There were also a number of small non-provided Church in Wales schools⁷⁸ and two Roman Catholic schools, one in Carmarthen and one at Llanelly. There were also two Part III authorities; Carmarthen Borough Council and Llanelly Urban District Council, which would need to be assimilated before reorganisation could begin. Carmarthen Borough Council, had few schools and a very small child

⁷⁴ NA BD 7/14 Letter, op. cit.

⁷⁵ NA ED 216/434 Welsh County Boroughs, Cardiff, General papers and correspondence.

⁷⁶ There were also four Central Schools, four Junior Instruction Centres, eleven County/Secondary and Art Schools, two Mining Institutes and a number of Grammar Schools.

⁷⁷ See NA BD/7/5, p. 3. There were 78 schools with less than 78 pupils; 59 with less than 30; 28 with less than 20 and 17 schools with 1 less than 15 on roll.

⁷⁸ NLW SD/ED/7-10 Church in Wales Representative Body of the Church in Wales, Diocese of St Davids. The number of non-provided schools is difficult to assess but it is thought there were about forty in all.

population and by September 1944 had been included in the Carmarthenshire Scheme as a Divisional Executive.⁷⁹ However Llanely Urban District Council, raised strong objections to becoming assimilated. It applied to the Ministry of Education for exempted status as “the Council were of the opinion that Llanely could by itself function economically as an excepted district.”⁸⁰ This was immediately turned down on population grounds and it became a Divisional Executive of Carmarthenshire LEA.

The problems facing Carmarthenshire were complex. The primary sector proved particularly difficult to reorganise and it was impossible to plan a strategy for secondary education before decisions were made about this. It was recognised early in the discussions that in order for primary provision to be efficient a number of small schools, provided and non-provided, would have to be closed.⁸¹ There was a commitment to incorporating community facilities into both primary and secondary schools and where village schools were closed, and the buildings suitable, they would be converted for community use. During the autumn of 1944 the Director of Education convened a Reorganisation Sub-Committee, and begun negotiations with the Managers of non-provided schools. The position of Church in Wales schools in the area had already been discussed at length at meetings of the Governing Body of the Church in Wales but out of the six diocese, only St Davids had refused to consider handing any of its schools over to the local authority.⁸² Many Church in Wales schools in Carmarthenshire were very small, some were Blacklisted,⁸³ and inspection reports had indicated that many were in poor condition.⁸⁴ Very few useful Diocesan Education Committee Minutes remain, but it is apparent that there was a national determination on the part of the Church in Wales to retain as many of their schools as possible. However, circumstances in Carmarthenshire were quite different to other areas, Cardiff for example, and it became obvious that a number

⁷⁹ CAS CC/ED/1/1/31 Carmarthen County Council Education Committee Minutes.

⁸⁰ CAS CC/ED/1/1/33 County Education Committee Minutes, October 18th 1944.

⁸¹ CAS ED/BK/188 Carmarthen Education Committee Education Act 1944 Development Plan Carmarthen Borough.

⁸² CinWA Representative Body and Governing Body of the Church in Wales, Minute Book, October 1942-September 1945; Minutes of the Meeting of the Provincial Education Committee, 27th January, 1944.

⁸³ NLW Carmarthenshire County Council Report on Reorganisation of Schools, September 1929. These were at Felinfoel; Tycroes, Cwmamman, Llandebie, Llanstephan, Capel Cynfab, Myddfai, St Clears, Laugharne Parish, Llangunnon and Llangunnock. The position of these schools had not changed substantially during the intervening years although Llangunnock Vaughn’s Charity School had been substantially used for large parties of evacuees.

⁸⁴ For example Inspection Reports: Llanedy NP School and Vaughn’s Charity School at Llangunnock. NLW SD/ED 7-10 Diocesan Education Minutes.

of small schools would have to be closed. In spite of its early resolve to retain all its schools the Diocesan Education Committee appears to have agreed to retain only those which were viable and give up the rest. In spite of the generally good relationships between the Church and the Education Committee misunderstandings did occur. At Cilycwm for example, the local authority decided that the non-provided school was inadequate and would need to be rebuilt on a new site. The Managers, however, wanted it to retain it but did not understand that they would be responsible for rebuilding costs which amounted to approximately £5,600. Eventually, because of the Managers inability to pay, Carmarthenshire Education Committee took over the running of the school.⁸⁵ There were lengthy discussions about school closures and it was agreed that schools in remote areas, where there was no community would be closed, as would non-provided schools in a community which was served by two schools. However “No hard and fast rules have been applied; each case has been carefully considered on its merits.”⁸⁶ Carmarthenshire County Council closed sixty three schools, of which eight were non-provided. In addition a number of Church in Wales were handed over to the local authority during the years that followed when further reorganisation took place.⁸⁷

The circumstances in Carmarthenshire made the reconstruction of secondary education very difficult. The Development Plan indicates that a great deal of thought had been put into reorganisation, and consideration given to geographical and social conditions as well as the character of the existing secondary schools.⁸⁸ The result was a mixture of tripartite, bilateral and multilateral secondary schools based on their suitability for different geographical areas of the County. It is evident from the notes in a memorandum to the Education Committee⁸⁹ that their aim was two-fold: to retain the existing grammar schools and to establish a high level technical sector throughout the county. This was not new as agricultural education had always been a key priority.⁹⁰ Although there would be one very large agricultural technical school,⁹¹ technical education would be provided mostly in a bilateral

⁸⁵ NA ED 216/164 Carmarthenshire Development Plan Protests. Letter to Welsh Department of Ministry of Education from Carmarthen County Council, July 31st 1947.

⁸⁶ NA BD 7/5 Carmarthenshire Education Authority Education Act Section II Development Plan (Section I) (Primary and Secondary Education), December 1946, p. 3.

⁸⁷ See CA ED/BK 188 for example at Llandefeilog and Llanstephan.

⁸⁸ CAS ED/BK 188 *Carmarthen Education Committee Secondary Education*

⁸⁹ CAS ED/BK 188 *ibid.*

⁹⁰ CAS CC/ED/1/1/8 Education Committee Minutes 1919-1921, June 13th 1919. For example, boys attending Llandilo County School studied chemistry to prepare them for agricultural degrees at Aberystwyth

⁹¹ CAS ED/BK 188 *ibid.*, p. 2.

system attached to either the grammar or modern schools. It was stressed that there should be opportunities for pupils to study agricultural technology at a high level, which would best provided at a grammar school. Industrial technology was also a focus, and engineering and building, because of the smaller numbers involved, might need to be concentrated in the industrial areas of the county, Llanely and Ammanford for example.⁹² However, in areas where the catchment was small, multilateral schools would be established.

The Authority divided the county into a number of Divisional Executives and based their plans for reorganisation around these although “it was difficult to devise a completely satisfactory scheme of secondary education”⁹³ in the large and thinly populated areas. At Llandilo, for example, there were insufficient pupil numbers to be able to have a secondary school “sufficiently large to be efficiently and economically staffed and well equipped.”⁹⁴ It would be necessary to draw pupils in from the surrounding areas which would mean either long travelling distances or the provision of boarding accommodation. The Llandysul area would share facilities with Cardiganshire with three mixed Modern Grammar Schools: at Llandysul, Newcastle Emlyn and Lampeter. In the Amman Valley two multilateral schools were envisaged, but this needed the co-operation of Glamorgan County Council because of the large numbers of cross border children. The grammar schools in Carmarthen would be retained, but with a technical stream in both boys’ and girls’ schools. In addition, there would be a three form entry mixed modern technical school and a mixed rural modern school near the town. There was an initial plan to convert the Pibwrlwyd Farm Institute for this purpose but it was decided that it would be too large and the Committee asked for a costing on the rent for Golden Grove Mansion.⁹⁵ In the Gwendraeth Valley there would be one Grammar Technical School and two Modern Technical Schools. In the Llandilo and Llandovery area two multilateral schools were planned with an additional rural modern mixed school at Llansawel. Llanely retained its existing school system of two single sex grammar schools and six modern technical schools. Whitland retained its grammar school and a new rural modern school would be built at St Clears.

⁹² CAS CC/ED/1/1/8, *ibid.*, May 8th 1919.

⁹³ CAS ED/BK/188 Carmarthenshire Education Committee Education Act 1944 Secondary Education, p. 1.

⁹⁴ CAS ED/BK/188 *ibid.*, p. 1

⁹⁵ CAS CC ED/1/1/32 Wales Circular 2, December 21st 1944, Education Act 1944, The Welsh Intermediate Schools.

The position of the Intermediate schools and grant aided grammar schools added to the difficulties of reorganisation and the funding of these schools had to be taken into consideration. Intermediate schools were funded by the Central Welsh Office and aided by the various Local Education Authorities on a deficiency basis but would not automatically become non-provided schools. The Governing Bodies of each school had to decide whether it would become either a Controlled or Aided school and apply to the Ministry of Education for permission. Carmarthenshire County Council advised these schools to delay their submission until the Development Plan had been finalised and the full proposals became evident. In the interim period, intermediate schools could be supported by the local authority with the permission of the Minister of Education. The schools that chose to become controlled would be known as County schools under Section 9(2) of the Education Act 1944. The remainder which were managed by school Governing Body and as such would become aided schools. This latter group could be transferred to the local authority if the Governing Body agreed but after 1st April 1945 they would not be eligible to any funds from the local authority.⁹⁶ All the intermediate schools in Carmarthenshire became controlled schools. The position of grant aided grammar schools was equally complex. Grammar schools maintained by the local authority would automatically become county schools but grant aided grammar schools would not automatically become voluntary schools.

Despite the intelligent way in which Carmarthenshire County Council planned to use its existing provision and resources to develop secondary education the Ministry raised strong objections. The response to the Development Plan was very negative, and although the Minister apparently understood the many difficulties in reorganisation the County faced he felt that the authority should reconsider its proposals.⁹⁷ It was suggested that some subjects must be treated technically rather than academically, and that in selective secondary schools this could only be justified in areas where there were large numbers of pupils because otherwise the cost of providing facilities would be too great. It was suggested that the technical element should be dropped and secondary schools should be all be classified as either grammar or modern. The idea of multilateral schools was regarded as unsatisfactory because some would be too small to offer sufficient curriculum

⁹⁶ CAS CC ED/1/1/32 op. cit.

⁹⁷ NA BD 7/5 Letter from H.E. Weston to Carmarthenshire County Council, June 2nd 1948.

options. Other alternatives should be considered such as a new grammar school at Llangattock to serve the Llandilo and Llandovery districts and modern schools established in the two towns. The general consideration was that if the authority preferred to retain the multilateral option it would need to transfer children over larger areas to make bigger and more viable schools. There was some concern over cross border provision with Pembrokeshire and Cardiganshire. It was suggested that children who required a grammar school education in the Llandysul area should attend a shared school and similarly in the Whitland district the Narbeth Secondary School should become a modern school and Whitland Grammar School retained with cross border co-operation.⁹⁸

There were a number of objections to the Development Plan. Some were relatively straightforward. The Town Clerk of Kidwelly Borough Council wrote to the Ministry of Education requesting that a secondary school was built in the Borough as he felt that the decisions made by Carmarthenshire County Council was “not in the interest of the children or the Ratepayers.”⁹⁹ Other objections from the two non-provided sectors: the Church in Wales and the Roman Catholics, were far more serious as it was felt that the Development Plan proposals for the sector was inadequate. The largest Roman Catholic community was in Llanelly and the Roman Catholic Diocesan Education Committee of Menevia pointed out that there had been lengthy discussions over the future of the all age elementary school there, which was to become a primary school. This would leave the town with no Roman Catholic school for secondary age pupils. As a result, the Dioceses asked that the Minister approve the establishment of a secondary school to serve the needs of Llanelly and the surrounding area. It had recently purchased the Richard Thomas Institute and considered it might be suitable to be converted into a secondary school.¹⁰⁰ In 1952 the Minister instructed Carmarthen County Council that: “A one form entry Roman Catholic Secondary Modern School at Llanelly should be included in the Development Plan.”¹⁰¹ The position of the secondary Church in Wales sector is unclear, but it does appear that by 1950 a Diocesan high school had been established in Carmarthen.¹⁰² There is also evidence that in the 1960s the Church

⁹⁸ NA BD 7/5 op. cit.

⁹⁹ NA ED 216/164 Letter Town Clerk Kidwelly Borough Council to Minister of Education, March 4th 1947.

¹⁰⁰ NA ED 216/164 Letter Menevia Diocesan Education Authority to Minister of Education, 12th August 1950.

¹⁰¹ NA BD 7/5 Carmarthenshire LEA: Special Educational Treatment; Development Plan, Letter D. E. Lloyd Jones Welsh Department to Carmarthen County Council, 8th April, 1952.

¹⁰² NLW SA /ED 7-10 1/1 Church in Wales Diocesan Education Minutes.

in Wales and the Roman Catholic Church planned to build a joint faith secondary school at Haverford West but nothing came of this.¹⁰³

The main focus of the Development Plan¹⁰⁴ was to devise a scheme which would create sufficient primary and secondary schools based on better catchment areas. This in turn would produce more efficient schools with fewer large mixed age classes. In all, Carmarthenshire LEA planned to retain two hundred and nineteen primary school departments in buildings which would either have to be adapted or rebuilt in order to meet the requirements and specifications of the Education Act 1944.¹⁰⁵ The restructuring of education in Carmarthenshire provided modern and technical education alongside the traditional grammar schools with a high level of Welsh medium education.

Glamorgan County Council

Glamorgan County Council made an early start drawing up a Development Plan¹⁰⁶ but before it could make much progress it had deal with the assimilation of the Part III local authorities¹⁰⁷ as after 1st April 1945 they would cease to have any responsibility for education. A number of these¹⁰⁸ applied for exemption under the terms of the Education Act 1944, but the Clerk to Glamorgan County Council pointed out that it very difficult “to set up a convenient administration for the County as a whole”¹⁰⁹ if this would happen. The application from Aberdare Urban District Council, for example, did not “afford the slightest evidence of any special circumstances to support the Council’s claim to be an exempted district.”¹¹⁰ Barry Municipal Borough Council put forward a very strong case for exempted status citing its excellent record in education development.¹¹¹ However, in January 1945 the

¹⁰³ NLW SD/ED 22-30 Church in Wales Diocesan Education Minutes.

¹⁰⁴ NA BD 7/5 Carmarthenshire Education Authority Education Act Section II Development Plan, (Section I) (Primary and Secondary Education), December, 1946.

¹⁰⁵ For example in Carmarthen Borough the “existing Pentrepoeth site ((0.93 acres) is according to the Building Regulations, not quite adequate for a three class school (46-75 children). At the moment the Pentrepoeth premises houses just over 600 children.” CAS ED BK 188 Carmarthen Education Committee Education Act 1944 Development Plan – Carmarthen Borough.

¹⁰⁶ Framing Glamorgan’s Education Scheme, *Western Mail & South Wales News*, 15th September 1944

¹⁰⁷ See Appendix 1

¹⁰⁸ Aberdare Urban District Council, Barry Municipal Borough Council, Pontypridd Urban District Council and Mountain Ash Urban District Council. Barry’s Education Claim Fails. *Barry Daily News*, 26th January 1945.

¹⁰⁹ GA GD/E/1/107 Outgoing letters, mainly from the Clerk of Glamorgan County Council to the Board, later Ministry of Education.

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*

¹¹¹ GA BB/E/1/44.

Barry Daily News printed a letter from R.A. Butler to Cyril Larkin¹¹² which pointed out that in order to avoid assimilation, Part III local authorities would have to put forward a very strong case.¹¹³ Butler wrote that the four claims that he received from the Part III authorities in the area were insufficient and would not be considered.¹¹⁴ The letter pointed out that Barry was not as large as other areas seeking exemption and although it was quite isolated geographically, did not have any special attributes that would qualify it to be an exempted authority. Butler hoped that Glamorgan County Council would be able to devise a suitable arrangement for divisional administration and that if there were any concerns in this direction, that Barry or any other Part III authority, would have the right of appeal to the Ministry.

One of the remaining Part III authorities, Rhondda Urban District Council, held a unique position as when it was established it had been given devolved statutory powers for both elementary and secondary education.¹¹⁵ It had reorganised after the 1918 Education Act, with the exception of a few 'difficult spots'¹¹⁶ and offered a considerable range of educational facilities including intermediate, municipal and higher elementary secondary education. In November 1943, Rhondda Urban District Council received a letter from the *Federation of Part III Authorities* which voiced concerns over the proposals in the White Paper and urging all members to "urgently express their opposition"¹¹⁷ to the planned changes. By January 1944, a subcommittee had been set up and authorised to take all possible steps to bring: "to the attention of the Board the unique position of Rhondda and its progressive record as an LEA administering both Elementary and Higher education."¹¹⁸

The two local Members of Parliament, W. H. Mainwaring¹¹⁹ and Will John,¹²⁰ met with the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education¹²¹ to discuss Rhondda's educational importance and urged him to exempt it from assimilation.

¹¹² Member of Parliament for Barry.

¹¹³ Barry's Education Claim Fails, *Barry Daily News*, 26th January 1945.

¹¹⁴ Barry's Education Claim Fails, *ibid.*, 1945.

¹¹⁵ TRL R (370) RHO Rhondda Urban District Council Education Act 1918 Scheme of the Rhondda LEA.

¹¹⁶ GA UDR E/ 45/1/ Report Director of Education to The Chairman and Members of the Committee appointed to consider the Rhondda Development Plan, November, 1946. Only five all are elementary schools remained in the Borough in 1945.

¹¹⁷ TRL Rhondda Urban District Council Minutes 1943-1944, November 1943, p. 600.

¹¹⁸ TRL *ibid.*, p. 1203.

¹¹⁹ Labour Member of Parliament for Rhondda East.

¹²⁰ Labour Member of Parliament for Rhondda West.

¹²¹ Maurice Holmes.

This application was refused and a letter from the Ministry indicated that: "In the view of the County Council the position of Rhondda is no different to that of other Divisional Executive Committees in the County."¹²² The objections continued and in May 1945, the Sub-Committee again wrote to Maurice Holmes querying its position as a Divisional Executive under the terms of the Government Act 1933. Rhondda's objections ultimately paid off and, after long arguments, the Ministry agreed to it not being assimilated.¹²³ Although it retained autonomy its position was still ambiguous. It was able to draw up its own Development Plan but this needed to be approved by Glamorgan Education Authority which led to long delays.

Rhondda had been a very generous local authority, but this had caused it a number of problems.¹²⁴ In 1946, the Director wrote that the number of pupils attending secondary schools was over thirty five percent which far exceeded the percentage recommended in the Ministry of Education Circular 73. He admitted that this was "particularly generous"¹²⁵ and the four grammar and two intermediate schools were now all overcrowded. He also had reservations that the quality of some pupils "are educationally not really suitable to pursue a Grammar school course leading to a School Certificate, and the proper place for these pupils would be in a modern school."¹²⁶ Despite this the Director suggested that it would be inappropriate to drastically reduce the annual intake and a more suitable alternative would be to offer a less demanding course at the grammar schools so that the nature of the existing schools would change to "grammar/modern schools under the 1944 Act."¹²⁷ The intake into technical schools was very low and he suggested reducing the numbers in grammar schools education by selecting about eighty boys each year to attend technical schools. By November 1946, the Director had drawn up a number of proposals for the Education Committee to discuss, including the position of the one non-provided Roman Catholic school in the authority area. He noted that the condition of the later was not up to the standard and in terms of secondary provision "notice had already been given by the Arch-Diocesan Schools Committee for the Roman Catholic Arch-Diocese of Cardiff to provide (inter alia) a modern school."¹²⁸

¹²² TRL Rhondda Urban District Council Minutes 1944-1945, 2nd May 1945, p. 79.

¹²³ Rhondda Local Education Authority became the only exempted authority in Wales

¹²⁴ GA UDR E/ 45/1/ Report Director of Education

¹²⁵ *ibid.*, Report of the Director of Education, 17th July, 1947.

¹²⁶ *ibid.*, 17th July 1947.

¹²⁷ GA UDR E/ 45/1/ Report Director of Education, 17th July 1947.

¹²⁸ GA UDR E /45/1 Director's Memorandum to the Rhondda Urban District Education Authority, November 1946.

In March 1947 he put forward suggestions for reorganisation of the whole secondary sector. He suggested that he had no educational objections to multilateral schools but felt that geographically they would be difficult to organise and would mean leaving relatively new existing buildings empty.¹²⁹ After lengthy discussion the Education Committee decided on a tripartite system utilizing as far as possible existing secondary schools. The completed the Development Plan was eventually approved by Glamorgan County Council but the Ministry of Education was less accommodating, and it was heavily criticised. A Minute Sheet from the Ministry of Education to HMI pointed out a number of failings. This included an objection to the high level of nursery provision¹³⁰ and the Ministry official pointed out that “I don’t think that we need to do more than to say that we think the provision proposed is on the generous side ... Agree?”¹³¹ The second main cause for concern was the apparent lack of understanding of planning for the secondary sector. There was apparently “muddled thinking”¹³² over catchments and the numbers of pupils that were in each. The child population¹³³ of the area had declined sharply and that meant that too many secondary schools were being planned with too much surplus accommodation. The hybrid schools that were being planned, for example a modern school with a technical stream, had no substance. and some schools were badly placed and that would involve high transport costs.¹³⁴

Glamorgan County Council was by far the largest provider of education in south and west Wales and regardless of the economic downturn of the interwar period was the most prosperous¹³⁵ and highly populated.¹³⁶ Despite this, the changes in its responsibilities, including the assimilation of the Part III authorities, placed it under considerable financial pressure. The proposed reconstruction of education would be expensive, and in 1945 the County Council reluctantly approved

¹²⁹ GA UDR E /45/1 op. cit., Director’s Memorandum to the Rhondda Urban District Education Authority, 17th March 1947.

¹³⁰ Rhondda UDC had provided a very high level of nursery education especially during the war years. GRO. URE/ 45/1/, Report Director of Education.

¹³¹ NA ED 216/291 Minute Sheet BS to HMI E.G. Lewis, 23rd December 1953, p. 1.

¹³² NA ED 216/291 *ibid.*, p. 2.

¹³³ The child population figures referred to in Development Plan were those of 1945 which was 22,952. In the years that followed it had dropped by 14 per cent to 19,958. NA ED 216/291 Undated Minute Sheet to Mr Toomey.

¹³⁴ NA ED 216/291 *ibid.*

¹³⁵ Total income into Glamorgan in 1937 was £4,457,375 as compared to that of Carmarthenshire £1,154,503. J. Williams, *Digest of Welsh Historical Statistics Volume 2* (The Welsh Office Cardiff: 1985) p. 183.

¹³⁶ Population of Glamorgan in 1937 was 1,159,400. J. Williams, *ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 51.

a £4 million education scheme.¹³⁷ The County rate rose quite considerably, mainly due to increases in salaries but also to a large increase to the education budget because of the assimilation of the Part III authorities.¹³⁸ Glamorgan had begun to reorganise during the interwar years and although this was still incomplete, of all the local authorities it was probably in the best position to restructure provision. Its Development Plan appears to have been a balance between tradition and innovation. It retained grammar schools but also introduced the idea of multilateral schools in areas where there were a number of senior schools and their combination would be more efficient and cost effective. There was considerable opposition to this especially from the assimilated Part III local authorities. In Aberdare for example, the head teachers of the intermediate schools and their joint teaching staffs wrote to the Minister for Education,¹³⁹ about the planned secondary school reorganisation. Their main complaint was that if multilateral schools were established, children would be allocated to them on a catchment and geographical basis, rather than on ability. This, they considered, was contrary to the terms of the Education Act 1944 and recent Guidance¹⁴⁰ the placement of children “should be related to the abilities and aptitudes of the pupils.”¹⁴¹ In addition, the proposal that all pupils follow a common curriculum until thirteen years of age would make it impossible for head teachers to plan courses of five or six years duration. The Glamorgan Plan, in their opinion, was not flexible enough and conflicted with the idea that “all local authorities must have arrangements which make it possible without difficulty to transfer them (the misfits) at any stage ... from one type of secondary education to another.”¹⁴² There was concern that there had been no consultation with either parents or teaching staff over reorganisation. While there was no educational opposition to multilateral schools in theory, they were untried, and until more was known about them the tripartite system should be maintained.

The Glamorgan Development Plan was organised around Divisional Executives. Before any final approval was given by the Ministry of Education a critical overview was made of each area by HMI; recommendations were passed to the Local Education Authority for revision and the planning process would start

¹³⁷ Framing Glamorgan’s Education Scheme. *Western Mail & South Wales News*, 15th September 1945.

¹³⁸ Glamorgan County Rate up by 2/11. *Western Mail*, 7th March 1945.

¹³⁹ George Tomlinson.

¹⁴⁰ *The New Secondary Education*, (Ministry of Education: 1947).

¹⁴¹ NA ED 216/292, County development plan: protests 1946-1957. Letter to George Tomlinson, Minister of Education from Aberdare group of heads, 25th June 1947.

¹⁴² NA ED 216/292, op. cit., Letter

again. This was a lengthy and time consuming, made more complicated by the fact that different HMI were responsible for different aspects of the plan.¹⁴³ The Plan had already been altered substantially since it was first submitted but the matter of comprehensive education was continually being revisited. The time lapse between submission and a change in Government administration appears to have lessened the opposition to some proposals. Despite this, it was clear that Ministry officials were keen not to indicate that there had been any change in policy “propounded by our predecessors ... to start offering criticisms now which conflict with our previously expressed views may well irritate the Authority.”¹⁴⁴ Despite this, Glamorgan Education Authority planned to convert, over time, all their existing secondary school provision to a comprehensive school system.¹⁴⁵ There were concerns about this and while “clearly the principle of such schools cannot be challenged, our letter to the Authority will ask them to remember that these schools are by way of being an experiment.”¹⁴⁶ There was also concern about bilateral schools, although they had become common all over Wales, especially in the Roman Catholic sector “and we do not wish to discriminate.”¹⁴⁷ There were a number of objections to the Glamorgan Plan from teacher’s groups¹⁴⁸ who were concerned about two matters: the reorganisation of catchment areas and the possibility of the establishment of multilateral schools. The question of an almost complete absence of single sex provision also came under scrutiny but there was a general consensus that this might be an unnecessary concern.

As in Carmarthenshire, the reorganisation of primary education in Glamorgan was a major problem. Mr A.G. Pryse Jones HMI, who was attached to Pontypridd and Llantrisant Divisional Executive pointed out that no reforms of primary education could be undertaken until Glamorgan’s secondary school reorganisation had been approved. There was an added concern that the authority appeared to be over concerned about erecting new buildings without need which meant that there was

¹⁴³ For example for the Primary sector and the Special Education

¹⁴⁴ NA ED 216/289 County development plan, with plans. 1946-1959, Minute Sheet.

¹⁴⁵ It must be noted that this different terminology denoted a significant difference in terms of curriculum. The multilateral school was intended to provide a common curriculum for the first two years after which pupils would be allotted to different streams according to intelligence or in the case of the technical stream on preference. In the comprehensive school the decision on placement was generally done before entry and the curriculum was specific to the ability of pupils.

¹⁴⁶ NA ED 216/289 op. cit., Minute Sheet.

¹⁴⁷ *ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ For example The Association of Assistant Teachers; Incorporated Association of Assistant Masters of Secondary Schools; and individual schools i.e. Gowerton Girls County School. See NA ED 216/289.

an uneven distribution of primary schools. In Neath, for example, there was “an unwarranted overprovision for primary pupils”¹⁴⁹ but in the west of the county the reverse was true and a number of isolated schools were planned for closure.¹⁵⁰

The matter of Church in Wales schools in Glamorgan was no less difficult than in other local authorities even though there were substantially fewer. In 1947, the Llandaff Diocesan School Association launched a fierce attack on the Glamorgan Plan. In a letter to the Welsh Department it suggested that the Authority had not honoured either the legislation or the spirit of the Act, especially Section 11 (3).¹⁵¹ The Church in Wales’ main concern focused on the fact that the Development Plan discriminated against the non-provided sector as there was a plan to close or amalgamate a number of small village schools and replace them with larger Council schools.¹⁵² Two meetings were held between representatives of the Association and Glamorgan LEA to discuss the Development Plan proposals. At the first, representatives were given the opportunity to make their own suggestions but at the second meeting, “they were informed that the Authority was not prepared to change their proposals.”¹⁵³ The Association had not been allowed to see the completed Plan and they were told that Education Authority was “under no legal obligation “¹⁵⁴ to disclose it. The most difficult problem encountered was the position of the Roman Catholic schools. There had been a number of objections by the Catholic Education Council to the proposals for their schools in the Glamorgan Development Plan. There were also objections from the local authority to the demands of the Roman Catholic authorities. These were discussed in an internal memorandum at the Ministry of Education and were twofold. It was apparent that there was an:

“implacable dislike on the grounds of religion and principle to the concept of denominational schools in general and R. C. schools in particular. However strongly this view is held there is no validity in it (and) the Second an argument may be that the Authority is wedded to large comprehensive schools.”¹⁵⁵

¹⁴⁹ NA ED 216/289, Minute Sheet D. E. Lloyd Jones 10th August 1950.

¹⁵⁰ NA ED 216/289, op. cit., Minute Sheet. Closures at Rhiwfawr and Oxwich for example.

¹⁵¹ Education Act 1944 7 & 8 Geo 6 Ch. 31 Part 11 (3. Subject to any directions given by a local education authority under the foregoing provisions of this section and to the requirements of any enactment other than this Act or the regulations made thereunder, the occupation and use of the school premises of any voluntary school shall be under the control of the managers or governors thereof.

¹⁵² NA ED 216/292 *ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁵³ NA ED 216/292 County Development Plans Protests. Glamorgan Letter Llandaff Diocesan Schools Association to the Permanent Secretary Welsh Department Board of Education, 15th July 1947, p. 1.

¹⁵⁴ NA ED 216/292 Letter, *ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁵⁵ NA ED 216/289 Minute Sheet, 18th September, 1950.

The Roman Catholic authorities had two main complaints. Firstly, that although it accepted, in the main, the proposals for primary education, it found that the Authority had consistently underestimated the number of pupils who wanted to attend these schools. The question of pupil numbers was a constant during the negotiations between the Roman Catholic Church and all local authorities. It appears that there was always an overestimation in demand to ensure the provision of a school in a particular area. The second complaint was over secondary education, again with pupil numbers were the major concern. The Archdiocesan Education Committee originally proposed five Roman Catholic modern-technical secondary schools, which was later revised on the advice that all pupils wishing to follow a technical curriculum would have to attend a County Secondary school because of the provision of suitable facilities. The numbers put forward for each school came into question and the Ministry asked for new, accurate figures. The lack of consultation between the two groups was an ongoing problem, and in 1950 the Archdiocesan Education Committee wrote to the Welsh Department complaining that they were still waiting for a decision from Glamorgan County Council on their proposals for five schools. It had been discovered that the local authority had already acquired a site for a senior Roman Catholic school in Port Talbot area without any consultation with the Archdiocese.¹⁵⁶ It asked the Welsh Department to intercede with the local authority on their behalf as it was impossible that the local authority should “proceed with their own plans to the eventual exclusion of our proposals.”¹⁵⁷

By 1947, the Development Plan received tacit approval from the Minister but this was subject to a detailed review. There was some agreement that multilateral schools could be established in new housing areas as long as grammar schools were retained elsewhere. The only major concern that remained was the position of the non-provided sector and over the protests that had been received from Managers. After a promising start, reorganisation progress in Glamorgan was extremely slow and by 1954 plans had still not been ratified by the Ministry. The comments made at a meeting between Ministry officials and the Glamorgan Education Committee indicated the irritation felt by both sides. The main objection to the proposal was against the establishment of comprehensive schools in areas

¹⁵⁶ NA ED 216/289 Letter, Archdiocesan Education Committee to Welsh Department Ministry of Education, 2nd May, 1952.

¹⁵⁷ NA ED 216/289, op. cit., Letter.

where there were established grammar schools. Alderman Llewellyn Heycock¹⁵⁸ voiced his surprise at the continuing objections as the Development Plan had already been revisited after discussion with the Ministry, and the present proposals were based on the agreement reached with the Ministry in September 1948.¹⁵⁹ He also pointed out that the intention of the Development Plan was to establish eight comprehensive schools to work alongside the eighty eight existing grammar schools in the area and that the Ministry should allow this level of experimentation.

Merthyr Tydfil Borough Council

The interwar years had affected the population of Merthyr Tydfil considerably. The loss of its industrial base and unemployment meant that there had been high rates of outward migration with a consequential drop in the child population which had resulted in unstable education provision. The Borough had been heavily used as a reception area for evacuees during World War Two and the comments from visitors and HMI about the conditions in schools, and the attitude of the LEA raised a number of questions. The local authority was financially poor and there was a great deal to be done not only in terms of educational reorganisation but also in slum clearance and rebuilding.¹⁶⁰ This meant that long term strategic planning would be needed if reconstruction was to be adequate and successful. This was recognised by the LEA in the preface to its Development Plan and indicated that two new housing estates were to be built in the Borough.¹⁶¹ It was estimated that, in view of these plans, the secondary sector would need to accommodate approximately four thousand pupils. The most significant problem was in finding suitable sites for new schools in an area substantially 'undermined' and because of the large number of slag and coal tips.

The Merthyr Tydfil Development Plan rejected the ideas of both tripartite and multilateral reorganisation and planned a scheme based on bilateral secondary schools: grammar and modern combined. The structure of the Plan was based on two principles. Firstly was the fact that children could be successfully divided into two groups at the age of eleven on the grounds of "general intelligence, educational

¹⁵⁸ Later Llewellyn, Lord Heycock of Taibach. <http://wbo.llgc.org.uk/en/s7-HEYC-LLE-1905.html>.

¹⁵⁹ NA ED 216/289 op.cit. Notes of meeting with Glamorgan, 11th October 1954.

¹⁶⁰ NA BD 7/15 County Borough of Merthyr Tydfil Education Committee Development Plan for Secondary Schools Approved by the Education Committee, 28th August, 1947, p. 1

¹⁶¹ NA BD 7/15, op. cit., p. 1.

attainments and certain aspects of character”¹⁶² and placed in either grammar or modern streams. The second principle was that all children “should be educated in the same general environment.”¹⁶³ The LEA made the decision to provide grammar schools for about twenty five per cent of the school population with the remainder attending modern schools but both types of school would provide an element of technical education post thirteen years of age. It was anticipated that within ten years the school leaving age would be raised to sixteen for children attending modern schools and to eighteen for grammar school pupils and as a consequence, the local authority began to plan on this basis. It already had a high level of secondary grammar school places;¹⁶⁴ a small technical sector of two hundred and thirteen pupils, with the remainder of pupils in unreorganised elementary schools. The ten-year plan the Borough produced was to accommodate secondary pupils in two grammar and four modern schools which would be strategically placed across the Borough. There was an intention to move some of the existing grammar provision to more appropriate locations and using the redundant buildings for modern schools. These would have a five form entry while grammar schools would have two. The Committee decided that the grammar schools would be run on traditional lines, although there was a suggestion that the curriculum could be extended to include some commercial and technical aspects. The curriculum of the modern schools would be planned “to provide progressively differentiated courses, planned to provide each child with an opportunity of discovering and revealing his interests and aptitudes in his own time.”¹⁶⁵ The annual intake of about nine hundred children would be divided so that about twenty to twenty five per cent would attend the two small grammar schools

The large number of surplus school places¹⁶⁶ made the reorganisation of the primary sector reasonably straightforward. Thirteen schools would be discontinued and the remainder organised into twenty one infant and junior primary departments. The Plan included proposals for the Roman Catholic community and there was an intention to close two small infant schools and centralise provision in one maintained Roman Catholic mixed Infant and Junior school at Dowlais. There was a demand

¹⁶² NA BD 7/15 *ibid.*, p. 1.

¹⁶³ *ibid.*, p. 1.

¹⁶⁴ GA BMT 1/53 Merthyr Tydfil had 21.6 secondary school places per thousand – higher than both Rhondda and Cardiff.

¹⁶⁵ NA BD 7/15 *ibid.*, p. 1.

¹⁶⁶ GA /BMT/1 /49 Merthyr Tydfil Schools 193. Total on elementary roll – 9382; accommodation available - 16,664.

for a Roman Catholic secondary modern school in the area but there were insufficient pupil numbers for one. It was not until 1959 that a realistic proposal was put forward and the Dioceses of Cardiff Education Committee asked the Merthyr Tydfil Education Committee if it would consider including a six form entry bilateral school in its Development Plan. It was clear from this communication that the majority of Roman Catholic children were still attending all age elementary schools as it pointed out that

“there are at the present time 451 secondary modern type children from the parishes of Merthyr Tydfil, Dowlais, Tredegar, Ebbw Vale and Rhumney attending Catholic all-age schools in the area, while 60 children from the same parishes passed the eleven-plus examination last year.”¹⁶⁷

These figures did not include the ninety children from Mountain Ash who were attending all age elementary schools there or the twenty who had passed the eleven plus.

Swansea Borough Council

The discussions about the reorganisation of secondary in Swansea were lengthy and not without controversy. Previously, there had been a marked unwillingness to reorganise, and grammar schools had been the only form of secondary education in the Borough. It was therefore unsurprisingly that in 1945 the Education Committee agreed to introduce modern schools and “recognise two types of secondary schools ... the courses adjusted to a different emphasis on academic and practical interests.”¹⁶⁸ After this initial decision was taken it appears that other influences came into play and the Committee members examined the proposed Development Plan of London County Council.¹⁶⁹ As a result, by December 1946, the Education Committee had begun to plan for a drastically different scheme of secondary education. The Swansea Development Plan was completely re-written; accepted by the Borough Council and sent to the Ministry for approval.

The preface to the Plan stated that there was an intention to ensure that “the development of primary and secondary education in the town will not be haphazard

¹⁶⁷ NA BD 7/15 op. cit. Letter, Dioceses of Cardiff Education Committee to Merthyr Tydfil Borough Council, 19th May, 1959.

¹⁶⁸ WGAS E/SB 71/2/68.

¹⁶⁹ A copy *London County Council Reorganisation of Post-Primary in the Development Plan* is amongst the documents in WGRO. E/Dyn Sec 27/8.

or higgledy-piggledy but in accordance with a master design.”¹⁷⁰ The Development Plan was ambitious and included a proposal to build twenty four nursery schools with the possibility of additional nursery places in some infant schools.¹⁷¹ Primary education would be accommodated, as far as possible by adapting existing elementary schools buildings, although it was recognised that considerable alterations would be needed in order to meet the requirements of the Education Act 1944. The arrangements for secondary education were more complicated. The Development Plan described the options open to the Borough as well the guidance included in the pamphlets issued by Ministry.¹⁷² The choices identified in the preface to the Plan discussed the advantages and disadvantages of a tripartite scheme as well as of bilateral¹⁷³ or multilateral schools. The tripartite system was rejected because it was perceived to rely too heavily on psychological testing at eleven years of age, and this was felt to provide insufficient evidence for selection. It was also felt that there was very little parity between grammar, modern and technical schools and some pupils would be disadvantaged. On the other hand bilateral schools appeared to have some advantages as the separation of children into two groups “on the basis of degree of intelligence”¹⁷⁴ at eleven years of age was seen as reasonably straightforward and also allow a certain latitude in selection. This system could evolve naturally from the existing pattern of schools in the Borough and “there would be no revolutionary change and no lowering of the present standards.”¹⁷⁵ The Education Committee initially decided on a bilateral system but:

“Much controversy ensued after this decision had been reached and ultimately the whole question of secondary school organisation was discussed again from first principles (and) the previous policy was abandoned in favour of multilateral schools.”¹⁷⁶

This decision was based on a number of factors. It would offer of parity of provision and remove examinations which might have led to the wrong classification of pupils at eleven year of age. The Committee also decided that local circumstances allowed

¹⁷⁰ WGAS Dyn Sec 27/8 County Borough of Swansea The Development Plan for Primary and Secondary Education. N.B. There were a number of slightly different editions of the Swansea Development Plan.

¹⁷¹ *ibid.*, Development Plan, p. 5.

¹⁷² *The Nation's Schools: Their Plan and Purpose* Ministry of Education Pamphlet No 1 (HMSO: London, 1945):A Guide to the Educational System of England and Wales Pamphlet No 2 (HMSO: 1945): WGAS ES/31/4/5 Welsh Office Circular 73, December 1945.

¹⁷³ WGAS Dyn Sec 27/8, *op. cit.*, “This contemplates two types of secondary school both offering general education for life, one appropriate to a higher and the other to a lower range of intelligence.” p. 9.

¹⁷⁴ *The Nation's Schools*, *ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁷⁵ *ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁷⁶ WGAS Dyn Sec 27/8 *ibid.*, p. 10.

them to take this option both in view of the damage to schools and housing and the semi-rural nature of the Borough.¹⁷⁷ The calculation that followed revealed that accommodation would be needed for approximately sixteen thousand children. The Development Sub-Committee planned a temporary scheme that included the establishment of some modern schools as a stop gap measure but ultimately it would build six single sex multilateral schools accommodating approximately fifteen hundred pupils in each, as well as a number of separate schools providing for children with special education needs. The total cost of the Swansea Borough Development Plan would be in excess of £3 million over a fifteen year period.

There was a substantial delay in the completion of the Development Plan because of both the prolonged negotiations with the non-provided sector and the internal disagreements within the Authority. It was sent to the Ministry of Education for approval in February 1947 accompanied by a detailed Explanatory Memorandum outlining the proposals, the rationale behind the adoption of “wholesale of the multilateral form of Secondary School organisation,”¹⁷⁸ and a letter from the Director of Education. This explained the reasons for the delays in submission of the plan especially the protracted and fruitless discussion with the non-provided sector. The Director also drew attention to the Memorandum which outlined the main features of the plan but not the

“ding-dong nature of the discussion which took place at certain points ... Since, however, the issues involved are controversial matters, it is right for the Ministry to know that much divergence of opinion was expressed before the final decision was reached on the majority vote.”¹⁷⁹

The planning process had been complicated by a number of factors. Certainly, there was little co-operation from the either of the two Directors of Education who were in post during the period. The second, Mr Elfed Thomas, was totally opposed to multilateral schools. He wrote privately to an elected member of the Council to explain that although he had recommended a policy of tripartite secondary schools it was “not acceptable to certain elements on the Council.”¹⁸⁰ As a consequence the Development Sub-Committee had adopted a policy of

¹⁷⁷ NA ED 136/677 Education in Wales Miscellaneous. In Swansea 9 Council, 3 Non-provided and 1 Roman Catholic schools was deemed incapable of improvement and 42 were built pre 1900.

¹⁷⁸ NA BD 7/17 County Borough of Swansea Development Plan Explanatory Memorandum, p. 3.

¹⁷⁹ *ibid.*, Letter from the Director of Education County Borough of Swansea to the Ministry of Education, 17th February, 1947.

¹⁸⁰ WGAS E/S 31/4/5 Letter from Director of Education to Cllr W.J. Davies, 7th December 1945.

multilateral schools. He was aware of the discussions that had been taking place as he had spoken to the Labour Group on the Council about the whole matter of secondary education, and “I hope I may say ... that I would regard it as unfortunate if Swansea were, at this stage, to embark on any large scale experiment.”¹⁸¹ In January 1946, the Director presented a Memorandum to the Reorganisation Committee which outlined the many problems involved. He had assessed the yearly pupil intake and pointed out that if the Committee decided on a multilateral school system there would need to be six new schools, each with a ten form intake. These would be very large schools and quite out of step with Ministry of Education guidelines as they would eliminate the existing grammar schools. He pointed to Welsh Office Circular 73 which stated that the Minister might approve multilateral schools if these did not prejudice the existence of grammar schools and it was clear that if reorganisation in Swansea was to be on multilateral lines this would be the case.¹⁸² The Director made no effort to hide the fact that he was fundamentally opposed to the removal of the grammar schools which, he felt, had had a positive effect on education in the town. He also inquired what proposals were being made for senior Roman Catholic children as their numbers would not be sufficient to warrant a separate multilateral school; He reminded elected members that information on provision for the non-provided sector must be included in the Development Plan. He suggested that the Education Committee should ask the Ministry whether it could submit a Plan in stages to avoid further delay. In this way a plan for one multilateral school could be completed and submitted before the entire structure was put in place.

It is clear from the Memorandum written by the Director of Education that there was no clarity of understanding of multilateral. He suggested that the Sub-Committee develop a wide ranging plan and put curriculum matters in place when more information emerged: “it is unwise, in my view, for the attack upon problems of the future to be too clear cut, since flexibility and not rigidity is essential to multilateral schools.”¹⁸³ He suggested that there would need to be in-depth discussions with educational professionals in order that curriculum and organisation could be decided. He pointed out that there were several schools of thought on

¹⁸¹ WGAS E/S 31/4/5, Letter, op. cit.

¹⁸² WGAS E/S 71/2/68 Memorandum for the Consideration of the Development Committee, 23rd Jan. 1946.

¹⁸³ WGAS Dyn Sec 27/8 Swansea Education Committee Development Plan. Multilateral Organisation Report from the Director, 5th July 1946.

selection and the ability of children had to be taken into account when curricula were being designed. Although research in the United States of America had discounted this argument, the Director quoted the views of the Principal of Kirkcaldy High School who had had considerable experience of multilateral education and who thought was that “differentiation was needed from the outset.”¹⁸⁴

During 1946 a series of meetings were held between the Development Committee and representatives of the non-provided schools to try to reach an agreement over their status in the Development Plan. The Local Education Authority had decided that only one of the six Church in Wales schools would be retained as a primary school because pupil numbers were so low. The Church in Wales authorities strongly disagreed with this proposal and suggested that it should be given the two new primary schools proposed for the west of the city¹⁸⁵ in place of this one remaining school. It also planned to establish a denominational secondary school. The Development Sub-Committee decided that the primary proposal would be considered and the Church in Wales could apply to the Ministry of Education to build a new secondary school if there were sufficient numbers to warrant it. It would, however, have to do so without any assistance from the Local Education Authority as there would be sufficient surplus secondary places available in the proposed multilateral schools.¹⁸⁶

The relationship between the managers of the Roman Catholic sector and the Development Sub Committee was somewhat mixed. There was agreement that the three existing Roman Catholic elementary schools would be modified and become ‘aided’ primary schools. The managers felt that in addition to these three schools there was a need for another denominational school in the growing housing estate at Townhill but this was refused as there were already sufficient school places available in the area. This request for further Roman Catholic primary accommodation reappeared from time to time during the next few years but the projected pupil numbers never warranted another school. The real disagreement between the Swansea Education Committee and the Catholic Education Council was over the provision of denominational secondary education. The Education Council wanted to build two multilateral schools in the west of the city; one for girls

¹⁸⁴ WGAS Dyn Sec 27/8 op. cit.

¹⁸⁵ At West Cross.

¹⁸⁶ WGAS E/S 71/2/68 Development Sub-committee Meeting, 26th June 1946.

and one for boys. They would need to be segregated as the majority of staff would come from Teaching Orders which would preclude a mixed school.¹⁸⁷ The Local Education Authority were not in favour of this, pointing out that there was sufficient capacity built into the Development Plan to accommodate all Swansea children. It also pointed out that the number of Roman Catholic children living in the area would not be sufficient to provide two viable multilateral schools.¹⁸⁸ The Ministry of Education countered this claim by telling Swansea that if this was the case they would need to provide evidence. The local authority estimated the number of pupils attending the three existing Roman Catholic elementary schools in the Borough at approximately half the numbers provided by the Managers, and was suspicious that they would allow children from neighbouring local authorities to use the schools. All suggestions for non-provided secondary schools were rejected by Swansea Borough Council. A decision was taken that the six multilateral schools include in the Development Plan would be the only providers of secondary education in the Borough but “As both the Roman Catholic and Church in Wales Authorities appear to be dissatisfied with the outcome of the negotiations it is probable that the matter will be re-opened at a later stage at the insistence of the Minister of Education.”¹⁸⁹

It is clear that the Swansea proposals for the non-provided sector gave the Ministry of Education cause for concern. An undated memorandum pointed out that all Diocesan authorities had a right under the Education Act 1944 legislation to have their views heard before the finalisation of any Development Plan, especially when it was felt that the local authority was being unreasonable. It suggested that

“If the Minister is satisfied that a new voluntary school is justified in order to make appropriate provision for the area, is he not also entitled, in fact, bound, to modify the plan to such an extent as to make this possible?”¹⁹⁰

If there was no way of safeguarding the non-provided sector in this way it would mean that “any LEA could block any school for displaced pupils from appearing in the development plan.”¹⁹¹ The advice from the Legal Branch of the Ministry was of the opinion that this was not the case, and it was not within the Minister’s jurisdiction to order that a new voluntary school was established or even to “require it to be

¹⁸⁷ WGAS E/S 71/2/68 Development Sub-committee Meeting, 5th July 1946.

¹⁸⁸ NA ED 216/491 Swansea Development Plan Protests. A projection showed that there were 616 boys and 568 girls between the ages of 11 and 16.

¹⁸⁹ WGAS Dyn Sec 27/8 Development Plan, p. 14.

¹⁹⁰ NA ED 216 /491 *ibid.*, undated Ministry of Education Memorandum, p. 1.

¹⁹¹ *ibid.*, p. 2.

included in the development plan”¹⁹² unless there was a very substantial reason to do so. There were substantial objections from Roman Catholic parents and school Managers in Swansea which led the Minister to reconsider the demands for Roman Catholic secondary education. In 1948, the Minister of Education wrote to approve “in principle for separate Secondary provision for Roman Catholic pupils.”¹⁹³ However, In a letter to the Catholic Education Council he noted that, based on the numbers that had been provided, it appeared that it would be too small to provide an adequate curriculum especially for the three streams, grammar, technical and modern, that had been planned. The news that approval had been given was announced in the South Wales Evening Post and started an immediate protest.¹⁹⁴ The Member of Parliament for Swansea West wrote to the Minister:

“You have set the gorse on fire in Swansea and West Wales by agreeing to the Catholic community having a separate school contrary to the advice of the local Education Authority.”¹⁹⁵

The Ministry of Education was inundated with letters of complaint from the non-conformist section of the Swansea community: the Cyngor Eglwysi Efengylaidd Cymraeg;¹⁹⁶ and the Morryston and District Baptist Churches expressing their displeasure.¹⁹⁷

The unrest about Roman Catholic secondary education was only one small part of the general protests about Swansea Borough Council’s Development Plan. The Swansea Secondary Schools Staff wrote objecting to the proposals, especially as it had not been allowed to put forward any “alternative to the rigid policy of multilateralism and regionalism laid down by the Council of 1945/6.”¹⁹⁸ While its members agreed in principle with the recommendations of the Spens Report “that the multilateral idea should permeate the system of education”¹⁹⁹ it did not believe that the conditions in Swansea were favourable to it being the only kind of secondary education provided across the Borough. The Secondary School Staff pointed out that the siting of the six schools was inappropriate as it effectively split the city in

¹⁹² NA ED 216 /491 op. cit., Minute Sheet 24th March 1947

¹⁹³ NA ED 216 /491 Swansea Development Plan Protests. Letter to Swansea Borough Council from Ministry of Education, 28th June, 1948.

¹⁹⁴ *ibid.*, Separate Roman Catholic School. South Wales Evening Post, 14th July 1948

¹⁹⁵ *ibid.*, Letter Percy Morris to George Tomlinson, 13th July, 1948.

¹⁹⁶ Council of Welsh Evangelical Churches.

¹⁹⁷ NA ED 216/491 Letter from Morryston and District Baptist Churches, 14th July, 1948.

¹⁹⁸ *ibid.*, Letter from Secondary School Staffs to Minister of Education, January 1947.

¹⁹⁹ *ibid.*, Letter

half, and would cause enormous transport problems. It suggested as there were no multilateral schools in Wales to learn from, the Development Plan should be altered to retain the existing grammar schools; establish some modern schools and include an element of multilateralism as an experiment. In this way education provision “should be capable of modification to suit changing conditions.”²⁰⁰ This letter of protest was followed by one from the Welsh Secondary Schools Joint National Committee which agreed with all the points that had been brought up by the Secondary Staff. It deplored any suggestion that the four existing grammar schools should be closed and that multilateral schools would be the only secondary education available to parents. The ongoing and wide spread objections to the Swansea Development Plan were of concern at the Ministry of Education. The size of the proposed multilateral schools and the streaming arrangements, in particular, did not meet the various recommendations of Ministry officials. However it was the Development Sub-Committee’s defence of their plan on purely educational grounds which was most disturbing. A memorandum to Sir Ben Bowen Thomas²⁰¹ suggested that these were “very thin and fail to mask the doctrinaire approach that we have suspected.”²⁰² The Ministry applauded the fact that Swansea were so keen to develop the secondary sector but were perturbed that they “seek to justify the development of a multilateral organisation because of the Cinderella-like reputation hitherto enjoyed by the secondary technical schools.”²⁰³ Overall the Ministry found the attitudes of Swansea Borough Council to be defenceless as:

“they have been less concerned with true educational considerations than they have been to find out what they think will be the totalitarian answers to any parent who may express a wish to be educated at any particular school.”²⁰⁴

In 1948, the Ministry of Education requested that Swansea Education Authority reconsider their Development Plan as it was “not sufficiently ambitious, not sufficiently practical and not sufficiently in accord with the Authority’s ambition for the town.”²⁰⁵ G.E. Jones suggests that there was collusion between the local HMI and the Director of Education who decided “to say and do as little as possible because there were ‘clear signs that many members of the LEA are purposed to

²⁰⁰ NA ED 216/491, op. cit., Letter.

²⁰¹ Permanent Secretary to the Welsh Department of the Ministry of Education.

²⁰² NA ED 216/491 *Memorandum to Sir Ben Bowen Thomas from AEW*, undated.

²⁰³ *ibid.*

²⁰⁴ *ibid.*

²⁰⁵ NA. BD 7/17, *Swansea Education Committee Revised Development Plan*, 1953, p. 2.

think again’.”²⁰⁶ The revised Plan divided Swansea into community areas and identified the education needs of each in terms of primary and secondary education. Secondary provision included the retention of the existing grammar schools and established some secondary modern schools as well. The idea of multilateral education was not abandoned completely and two single sex schools were planned in new housing developments to the north of the town. There was further delay while the Welsh Department considered the new proposals. Objections to the planned multilateral schools were being overridden by the fact that they were already being established in English Local Authorities but in October 1949, the Plan was again sent back for revision. Some parts had been agreed, but with a number of provisos, as it was still considered amongst Ministry of Education officials that multilateral schools could not possibly be successful. The Ministry allowed the Local Education Authority to begin building work but they could only proceed with the express permission of the Welsh Department. In 1950 the primary section of Development Plan was completed and included one Welsh medium primary school although the extensive plans for nursery education were abandoned. The non-provided sector remained unchanged as un-reorganised elementary schools. It was not until 1953 that the whole Development Plan was finally approved. The Authority considered that the new plan was “more practical and more in accordance with the general development of the town. It constitutes a long term plan and not an interim measure.”²⁰⁷

It was not until 1956 that there was some kind of education settlement in Swansea. Two new single sex comprehensive schools were opened in the north of the city, and these mainly served a new, and very large housing estate which was built to replace unfit housing in the borough. The four existing grammar schools were retained and two modern schools were built to take the remaining pupils in the south of the city. There have been suggestions that this substantial retreat by the local authority from its earlier position indicates its weakness, and in common with other authorities, was forced to agree to the views of the Ministry of Education.²⁰⁸ The final outcome of the Swansea plan, like those in other local authorities in south and south west Wales, was not as actually intended, and was a poor outcome to the original anticipation that accompanied the Education Act of 1944.

²⁰⁶ Unreferenced in G.E. Jones, 1944 and all that. *History of Education*, (1990), 235-250, p. 240.

²⁰⁷ NA. BD 7/17, op. cit., p. 4.

²⁰⁸ G. E. Jones, (1990) *ibid.*, p 249.

Conclusions

The implementation of the legislation of the Education Act 1944 in south and south west Wales was complicated, difficult and expensive. The Development Plans, although substantially different in detail, fell into two types: the traditional and the innovative. It is noticeable that the Development Plans which followed the advice of *The Nation's Schools: Their Plan and Purpose* and earlier Reports from the Consultative Committee attracted far less objections, especially from teaching staff, than did those from the Education Authorities which put forward plans that included aspects of multilateral education. It becomes obvious that the tripartite model was the only one to be accepted by the Ministry of Education. This was despite the fact that there had been growing demands throughout the interwar years from some teacher and Labour organisations for more parity through a common school. It was unfortunate for the local authorities in south and south west Wales that once the Labour party assumed power in 1945 all thoughts of equality disappeared. Simon points out that the demands for a common code of secondary education was a critical assumption which would have brought the elementary sector into "the mainstream of restructured education."²⁰⁹ He suggests that the fact that so many local authorities framed their development plans around multilateral schools and the fact that they were summarily dismissed by the Ministry "indicates both a lack of trust in the intentions of the local authorities, and the strength of feeling and indeed unanimity on this issue."²¹⁰ It is apparent that a Development Plan based on a tripartite system was more readily accepted by the Ministry of Education. In south and south west Wales the Plans of Cardiff and Merthyr Tydfil's were accepted with far fewer sanctions and revisions than others. Although some alterations were needed the Plans generally met the criteria expected by the Ministry. Conversely, the Development Plans of Carmarthenshire, Swansea and Glamorgan and, to a lesser extent Rhondda were all heavily criticised. The Ministry of Education placed many obstacles in the way of implementation because they all included some element of common school, either bilateral or comprehensive. Carmarthenshire had considered this type of system since 1926, after the recommendations of the Hadow Report, mainly to try to solve the organisational problems there and the Plan that emerged after 1944, again took account of these difficulties. While a decision was

²⁰⁹ B, Simon, *The 1944 Education Act: A Conservative Measure?* *History of Education*, Volume 15, Issue 1: (1986), 31-43, p. 35.

²¹⁰ *ibid.*, p. 35

made to retain the grammar schools, there was a clear determination to try to meet the many needs of children in this very rural county. Despite this, the innovative plan was rejected, in the same way as earlier Carmarthenshire plans for organisation had been. Similarly, in Glamorganshire the suggestions to include some comprehensive schools in the Development Plan were summarily rejected. It was not until the late 1950s that the Glamorgan Development Plan was finally accepted and comprehensive schools were introduced across the county.

The problems caused by non-provided sectors continued unabated despite the concerted efforts of local authorities in Wales to remove them. This was, however, not an exclusively Welsh demand. There had been “a strong move for its abolition”²¹¹ across England, brought about mainly by the Churches’ inability to reform after the Hadow Report. This failure left the non-provided sector in a weak position but it had very strong support from church authorities and across the political spectrum which allowed it to maintain its position. This is also clear that during implementation of the Education Act 1944 the Ministry of Education gave it considerable support and protection. In south and south west Wales the large numbers of small non-provided schools remained as neither the Church in Wales nor Roman Catholics had sufficient pupil numbers to be able to put forward cogent Development Plans²¹² and there is evidence that the Roman Catholics in particular, manipulated these to try to gain funding.

It becomes clear that the Ministry of Education used its new extended powers to force Education Authorities to implement the Act in a way it regarded as most appropriate. It used delaying tactics to remove opposition and elementary education was still the order of the day until the end of the 1950s. The spirit of excitement and promise of the Education Act 1944 was almost completely lost, as it had been so often in the past, by the delaying tactics of Ministry of Education officials. Although the promised ‘secondary education for all’ was eventually put in place, the emerging secondary modern and grammar school system was merely an imitation of the caste system that had been the norm in England and Wales since the early nineteenth century.

²¹¹ B. Simon, (1986) *op. cit.* p. 36.

²¹² NLW CinWA SD/ED 22-30, Diocesan Education Minutes

Chapter 7 – Conclusions

“The politics of the of the war years are unintelligible without constant reference to the absolute priority accorded by Labour between the wars to the goal of bettering the material conditions of the working class (and) absence of educational opportunity, these were the roots of the Labour passion for amelioration.”¹

This thesis **primarily** examines education in south and south west Wales during the interwar period and until after the planning for the implementation of the Education Act 1944. It sets out to answer a number of questions which interrogate the circumstances and influences of the development of education during the decades between 1918 and 1944. Although the original intention was to examine only this period it proved impossible not to take into account the earlier process of education formation and the influences on its development. It became clear that in Wales the establishment of charitable schools, and the effects of the *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales*² were very significant in the history of Wales. These events altered the perceptions and attitudes of the Welsh people substantially, and as a result, were central to the subsequent development of education.

There has been little substantive academic research into this particular period of education history and McCulloch points out that the history of education written during the first half of the twentieth century generally lacked “historical rigour.”³ It relied on biographies of educational leaders, politicians and Acts and Facts rather than placing education within the wider parameters of society, and the influences that had shaped it. He suggests that it was not until the 1930s when Mannheim and Clarke began to approach the history of education in a different way that things began to change substantially. However, an examination of secondary sources do reveal that a number of historians and educationalists had begun to contribute to the historiography. Birchenough,⁴ Michael Sadler,⁵ and Percy Nunn, for example,⁶ began this process. Clarke appears to have overlooked this small body of work when he suggested in 1943 there was a dearth of history of education in England

¹ P. Addison *The Road to 1944: British Politics and the Second World War*. Pimlico London. 1994) p 16.

² 1847 (870) (871) (872.) *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales*

³ G. McCulloch, *The Struggle for the History of Education* (Routledge: London, 2011).p. 11.

⁴ C. Birchenough, *History of Elementary Education in England and Wales from 1800 to the Present Day* (University Tutorial Press: London, 1920)

⁵ M. E. Sadler, *Our Public Elementary Schools*, (Thomas Butterworth, London, 1926)

⁶ Nunn, T. Percy, *Education : its data and first principles* (1920).

written from a social and cultural perspective.⁷ Nevertheless it is clear that in contrast to other periods of education history, the interwar years was subject to very little review apart from the contributions from Simon⁸ and Barker.⁹ Similarly there is little historiography which focuses solely on education in Wales during the period. It has been suggested that it may have been because there was no “markedly divergent national story of education in Wales.”¹⁰ This has proved to be the case as Welsh education is rarely discussed in any context as part of the history of education in Great Britain. G.E. Jones suggests that this lack of focus was because Welsh writers did not have the confidence to write about “the nature of educational distinctiveness”¹¹ in Wales. It becomes evident from this thesis that this distinctiveness cannot be overlooked.

From the start of this research it became evident that the education system that emerged in Wales was very different from that in England despite the fact that there was shared legislation. This was caused principally by the fact that there were fundamental disparities in beliefs, opinions and attitudes between the two countries. This disparity is similarly apparent across the United Kingdom as different education systems emerged in both Scotland and Ireland. Smelser has pointed out that “For a student of comparisons, Wales holds a special fascination as one of those ‘near cases’ – near to, even an integral part of England in many cultural and social respects, but different in others.”¹² This is partly due to the fact that there was never a central model of education in Great Britain and this is reflected in “the tension between ‘English and ‘British’”¹³ which has never entirely been resolved. It also becomes clear that during the period under review Wales wanted far looser administrative and legislative ties; was vocal in asking for greater devolution of powers over education and, to some extent, complete independence from England. This theme is a low key and elusive influence throughout the interwar period.

⁷ G. McCulloch, (2011) op. cit., p. 33.

⁸ B. Simon, *The Politics of Educational Reform 1920-1940*, (Lawrence & Wishart, London, 1974).

⁹ R. Barker, *Education and Politics 1900-1951 A Study of the Labour Party*, (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1972.)

¹⁰ G.E. Jones, Education and Nationhood in Wales: An Historiographical Analysis, *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, 38: 3. p. 265.

¹¹ G.E. Jones, *ibid*, p. 266

¹² N.J. Smelser, *Social Paralysis and Social Change: British Working Class Education in the Nineteenth Century*, (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1991.) p. 147.

¹³ M. Vlaeminke, *The English Higher Grade Schools. A Lost Opportunity*, (Routledge, London, 2000.) p. 2

This thesis reveals that subtle but significant differences emerged between the education systems of England and Wales which resulted from distinctive political, religious and social influences. While each played important roles, it was unquestionably differences in religious beliefs that emerged as the most significant factor. Although it would be wrong to generalise, Wales was overwhelmingly a non-conformist country, and had been since the mid seventeenth century. It has been suggested that these deeply held beliefs “probably exercised a greater influence on the lives of the people of Wales during the last century than was the case in England or in any other Protestant country.”¹⁴ This factor alone played a significant role in the way in which education developed and was also a contributory factor in ensuring that Anglicanism lost much of its influence in Wales. Non-conformity “became gradually interwoven into the Welsh national consciousness.”¹⁵ This was particularly the case for education where progress and change was directed principally by the long standing hostility between non-conformists and the Church of England. Religious matters became paramount to the way Welsh education developed.

It becomes clear from this research that it was principally the events before the 1918 that shaped education in south and south west Wales, and the interwar years merely marked its struggle for survival. Undoubtedly it was the *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales* especially its criticisms of Welsh society, which became the defining moment for Welsh education. These cemented the existing animosity between non-conformists and Anglicans into a force for change which resulted, in the long term, to a wholly secular system of education. It led to the establishment of a secular university college at Aberystwyth and, after 1889, to a system of secular secondary education through the Welsh Intermediate Education Act. In addition, the elementary sector in Wales became less dominated by denominational schools after the Education Act 1870, and became much more in tune with the needs of non-conformist Wales.

The Welsh Intermediate Education Act 1889 has generally been thought to have been of extreme importance in Welsh social history and brought about significant differences between secondary education in England and Wales. First,

¹⁴ C. R. Williams, ‘The Welsh religious revival, 1904-5’, *British Journal of Sociology*, III/3 (1952 in R. Pope, *Building Jerusalem: non-conformity, Labour and the social question in Wales, 1906-1939*, (2nd Edition, UWP, Cardiff, 1998.) p. 1.

¹⁵ R. C. Allen, D. C. Jones, & T. O. Hughes (Eds) *The Religious History of Wales*, (Welsh Academic Press, 2014).

and perhaps most importantly, it established a wholly secular secondary sector and its legislation set out to provide an advanced curriculum suitable for both the working class and the growing middle class in Wales. Despite this intention intermediate schools soon acquired quasi-grammar school status when a classical curriculum was introduced in order to meet the requirements of university entrance examinations. Secondly, although intermediate schools were selective the majority of Welsh local authorities made them free for all pupils and as a result there were more non fee paying secondary schools in south and south west Wales during the 1920s than in the whole of England. This was “something of a Welsh dimension”¹⁶ and offered a tremendous opportunity to children whose parents might not otherwise have been able to meet the cost of a secondary education.

However, Welsh secondary education came under enormous pressures both before and during the interwar period. The legislation of the Education Act 1902 intended removing the secular status of the sector in Wales to bring it into line with English endowed grammar schools. This was an obvious cause for concern and combined with the fact that there was an intention to force local authorities to support non-provided schools led to widespread non-conformist rebellion against the Act. This was particularly the case in Wales and led to the Carmarthen Revolt which lasted for a number of years. The policy of providing high levels of free secondary education in Wales also came under scrutiny during the interwar years and the recommendations of the Ray Committee Report and Circular 1421 were a devastating blow to the intermediate sector. Welsh LEAs strongly resisted all attempts to charge fees throughout the period and were severely censured by the Board of Education. The differences between secondary provision in England and Wales once again came under scrutiny and it has been suggested that “Wales had to pay once again for being administered as an adjunct of England.”¹⁷ Jones quotes the Women’s Liberal Association who said: “We feel it hard that Wales and Scotland should be held back by the more backward English.”¹⁸

The events after the Education Act of 1902 and throughout the interwar period confirmed the belief that not only should Welsh education should be wholly

¹⁶ G.E. Jones (1990) *ibid.*, p. 26.

¹⁷ G.E. Jones, (1982) *op. cit.*, p. 144.

¹⁸ B. Simon, (1974), p. 346 in G.E. Jones, (1982), *ibid.*, p. 145.

secular but Welsh education should also be removed from English legislation. These demands began in earnest in the early 1920s¹⁹ and continued unabated throughout the period as the calls for devolution of powers over Welsh education grew. These were supported by Members of Parliament, Morgan Jones and William Cove in particular; the very influential *Federation of Education Committees*, which represented LEAs in Wales, and the Central Welsh Board. Scrutiny of the primary resources reveals a determination to remove Welsh education completely from English legislation and this became part of the Federation's demands during the negotiations over the Education Act 1944 and proved to be very controversial. Secularisation of Welsh education was the primary aim during the period and this can be seen as making it significantly different from English education where the non provided sector, and the influences of religious organisations, the Church of England in particular, remained very important.

Much of the changing structure of education during the interwar period in Wales can be attributed not only to religion but also to politics. By the end of the First World War both society and the political landscape had changed considerably particularly in south and south west Wales. The earlier domination of the Liberal Party had been replaced by Labour, and many local authorities became Labour controlled. This changed the dynamics within the education service and attitudes changed considerably at a national level. While Conservative views education philosophy remained intact favouring the old 'sub sets' of education, the Labour Party turned towards the idea of common schools and greater parity in provision. Although these ideas were not universally accepted even within Labour they caused a step-change which began a process of reform. Conservative opinion of education was united and supported by much of the Church of England and the Board of Education which proved problematic when any changes were proposed. This dichotomy of views remained a prominent factor throughout the period and largely dictated the way in which the Education Act 1944 was eventually implemented across England and Wales.

¹⁹ *Conference on Devolution. Letter from Mr Speaker to the Prime Minister* (HMSO, London, 1919); A. Evans, *Four Nations and a constitution: the Conference on Devolution 1919-1920* Unpublished pdf doc.

The Education Act 1918 had signalled change but because its legislation was not mandatory, local authorities were able to implement it in way that suited local needs. This was frequently reflected the views of the political party in power. Research shows that, in general, Labour led local councils in south and south west Wales, such as Glamorgan and Rhondda Urban District Council offered quite expansive plans for development whereas Conservative led councils, Cardiff for example, were very reluctant to make any changes whatsoever. The reorganisation in some LEAs were affected by a number of other complex reasons. Carmarthenshire, for example, found itself in an difficult organisational position because of geographical factors and small pupil numbers, and the fact that there were many non-provided schools in the area.

The unsatisfactory implementation of the Education Act 1918 legislation was compounded by the enforced austerity of the interwar period which effectively halted reorganisation in most LEAs. In addition to the cuts to education finance there was the dramatic fall in rateable income in local authorities in south and south west Wales caused both by unemployment and a demographic shift in population. This had a profound effect on education. In Merthyr Tydfil, for example, the number of pupils on roll almost halved during the 1930s and, while this was extreme example of out-migration, other local authorities suffered similarly. Despite these major financial difficulties, the Education Minutes of the local authorities show that some Labour led councils, such as Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda, went further than could have been expected under the circumstances to provide not only the best possible education service they could, but also increased welfare provision at school in the form of free medical attention, meals and milk. This was very beneficial to unemployed parents and as a result many children stayed on at school much longer than they normally would have.

Research reveals that despite some attempts to improve the circumstances of children, it is fair to say that elementary provision in the region was generally poor. HMI Reports for the period show extremes of impoverished and unhygienic schools, many of which were on the Board of Education Blacklist. Attendance was also low, especially in rural areas during the winter months, and there were frequent school closures due to epidemics of childhood diseases and influenza. Teaching and learning was often compromised in small all-age schools as many teachers were

unqualified and frequently non Welsh speaking in monoglot Welsh areas. It was also significant that the drive towards intermediate education damaged the prospects for elementary school children as few central schools were set up and many children remained in all-age elementary schools. This is in contrast to the situation in England where central schools were the norm in many LEAs and children were generally offered a better curriculum and had more opportunity to remain at school if they chose to do so.

In many ways Chapter 4 – Evacuation is pivotal to this research. Although it might be considered to be generally misplaced within this topic it can also be considered to be central to it. The circumstances of the evacuation period starkly highlighted the many problems and inadequacies of the elementary sector and the deep divide, in educational and social terms, between it and the prestigious grammar school sector in England. The social distinctions between the secondary and elementary sectors emerged as a significant factor in this research. The difference in attitudes and perceptions towards the two sectors was surprising even though attention had been drawn to it in secondary sources. The prestige attached to secondary schools is a constant throughout the research and became even more apparent during evacuation. Grammar school evacuees from London and the south east of England were treated in quite a different and superior way, almost as if the prestige of the sector became attached to the children themselves. They were regarded by HMI as a better class of child, much easier to billet and very clean. The opposite was true of elementary school children, and although there is no evidence that they were treated badly, they were treated differently. This applied particularly in terms of education and the contrast was marked.

A large number of grammar schools were evacuated from London and Kent to south and south west Wales to share secondary school provision. Pupils were retained as school groups and continued to follow examination timetables even to the extent that many remained evacuated after the end of the war to complete their courses. Schools brought their own staff and equipment and very few secondary school pupils returned home early. It became clear that these children's education was highly valued. In contrast, elementary school children, were evacuated haphazardly in large mixed groups to anywhere there was billeting. No thought was given to their education or religious needs and children were placed in already

overcrowded and often poor, all-age elementary schools. Research shows that elementary school children were the most likely to be early returners and in most cases returning to their home areas where all education provision had been abandoned. There are many recorded instances where children were unable to sit secondary entrance examinations, and even if they were able to and were successful, they were frequently unable to find a suitable school place in the immediate area. As the war progressed evacuated elementary children became more isolated as their teachers were recalled to their home areas. In addition, many children had to remain in reception areas after the end of the war because of difficult home circumstances. There is clear evidence that this was damaging, in the long term, to their education.

During the evacuation period it also became apparent that teachers from different local authorities regarded each other with scepticism. This was especially the case in some valley communities, Aberdare for instance, where there was considerable resentment towards evacuated teachers who in turn regarded their local colleagues with contempt. The reports of Kent local inspectors are good examples of this and are scathing in their comments about some provision in south and south west Wales. One of major issues was the quality of local secondary school entrance examinations and it was common that evacuated teachers thought that these were set at too low a level in Wales and would be consequentially injurious to the educational future of their pupils. The overall impression of evacuation to south and south west Wales was that it was both damaging to children's education and to the education service in general.

The end of the Second World War and the Education Act 1944 proposed a significant new dimension to education and this was reflected in the way its implementation was planned in south and south west Wales. The intention of the Act was to reform the elementary school sector and there was an underlying suggestion of latitude on how this should be done. Although there had been discussion over a common system of secondary education during the interwar years, the Hadow, Spens and the Norwood Reports had all showed a distinct leaning towards a tripartite system. Certainly the Board of Education favoured this, although James Chuter Ede later commented that he didn't know why people had had this opinion as there was no suggestion of it in the legislation. This in essence

summed up the confusion over the future of secondary education in south and south west Wales.

This research has shown that the educational views of the interwar Labour party were philosophically biased towards the common school, and because of this it could be assumed that this would have been central in their implementation of the Education Act 1944. However, it was clear from the start of the Labour administration in 1945 that this would not be the case. Added to this was the fact that the old philosophies of Board of Education officials remained when it became a Ministry, and the concept that grammar schools should be preserved at all costs remained paramount. More importantly, perhaps, the Labour Party's education philosophy was substantially altered by the fact that the composition of its Members of Parliament changed from a pre-war working class profile to one where many new members had attended public or grammar schools and had had a university education. This changed the Labour Party's ideal of 'secondary education for all' to grammar schools for a very few, as many new Members were not so "susceptible to the romantic Socialism of the 1920s."²⁰ The appointment of Ellen Wilkinson, as Minister of Education strengthened this as she held grammar schools in very high esteem. As a result the Labour Party in Government dismissed its interwar agenda for education and decided that a tripartite system would be most appropriate for post war England and Wales. This cause disquiet amongst some Labour Members of Parliament who felt that Wilkinson had reneged on the pre-war Labour promise of increased educational equality.

The ambiguity of the wording of the Education Act 1944, like that of the 1918 Act meant that it became a matter of interpretation, and LEAs in England and Wales moved to interpret it as they saw fit. It was also very apparent that there was a distinct lack of understanding on their part that the Ministry was now in charge and had substantial new powers. The evidence from primary sources in south and south west Wales showed an approach to the reconstruction of elementary education which has proved to be extremely interesting. The fact that the Act did not establish any clear guidelines for its implementation led many LEAs to consider this as a means of overcoming the problems that had delayed reorganisation during the interwar period. It was clear that multilateral or bilateral schools would be an ideal

²⁰ J. Morgan, *The Backbench Diaries of Richard Crossman*, p. 270 in K. O. Morgan, (1984) *op. cit.*, p. 174.

solution. This was a common trend across England and Wales and research published in 1945 revealed that only a small proportion of LEAs intended to provide a wholly tripartite scheme.

A variety of models emerged across south and south west Wales and it appears that at least some of the **pre-war** Labour socialist education policy had dissipated at local level in the same way as it had nationally. While it was not unexpected that the largely Conservative led Cardiff City Council would choose a tripartite model, it was very surprising that the Labour stronghold of Merthyr Tydfil would do the same. **Perhaps the most unforeseen and controversial implementation plan came from Swansea Borough Council. This LEA had steadfastly refused to make any changes to either elementary or secondary education during the interwar period but after 1944, the elected members of the local authority decided to plan a wholly multilateral system. The thinking behind this is unclear but a number of factors could be considered. It was clear that residential rebuilding on a large scale would be needed to replace the many war damaged properties. The most appropriate place to build was a large tract of unoccupied land to the north of the city despite the fact that it had no infrastructure of any kind. This offered the opportunity to establish a number of new schools and the LEA proposed making the two planned secondary schools single sex comprehensives. This surprising departure from any previous education provision appears to have been influenced by the London County Council reorganisation plan. The elected members also planned to remove all grammar school provision throughout the city and replace this with a comprehensive model in the face of tremendous opposition from teacher unions, the public and the LEA. The plan was later modified but all new schools were built as comprehensives.**

Carmarthenshire, Rhondda Urban District and Glamorgan LEAs all planned a mixture of secondary provision and there was an intention to retain grammar schools, alongside **new** modern and multilateral schools. **This arrangement would have suited their particular geography and circumstances and was particularly appropriate in the case of Carmarthenshire, where the rural areas had a very small child population and many unviable or non-provided schools. The difficulties of reorganising the elementary sector had proved impossible after the 1918 and the problems remained the same. As a consequence, the LEA planned to develop comprehensive education in areas with low child population and offer a particular**

curricula bias to individual schools. A mix of secondary provision also suited Glamorgan LEA because as well as the highly populated industrial areas it also contained a high proportion of rural areas with commensurately small population. Comprehensive education would have been appropriate in many areas but the first comprehensive school was actually built in the urban Port Talbot to serve the needs of newly built social housing. The absorption of Part III local authorities in both Carmarthenshire and Glamorgan had caused dissention and the matter of reorganisation was a very sensitive issue. Only Rhondda Urban District Council managed to retain its educational status after 1944 and a protracted battle with the Ministry of Education. However, reorganisation there was also difficult as there were many geographic restraints. Although it was a forward looking LEA in many ways, it planned to retain all its grammar schools and build mostly modern schools as part of its post elementary school provision.

There were ongoing objections from the Ministry of Education to the development plans of Swansea, Glamorgan and Carmarthen, and to a lesser extent, Rhondda. This was not only due to the fact that multilateral schools were included in the plans but also to the fact that the non-provided sector, and in particular Roman Catholic schools, had not been sufficiently taken into account. The next five years were absorbed in negotiations between the local authorities, the non-provided sector and the Ministry to try to resolve these difficulties and little progress was made. The antagonism of largely non-conformist south and south west Wales came into play and there was a serious determination to prevent, as far as possible, the expansion of Church in Wales schools. The position of Roman Catholic schools was less contentious as they were far fewer in number and, because of their religious stance, would remain as separate organisations although partly maintained by the local authorities. However, there were some difficulties, in Swansea for example, when the Roman Catholics wanted to open a new school in an area where the LEA considered that there were already sufficient school places. In general and in most LEAs, Roman Catholic reorganisation was problematic both because there were large catchment areas and pupil numbers were small. There are instances, in Swansea and Carmarthenshire for example, where very dubious pupil numbers were put forward in an attempt to get permission from the Ministry of Education to establish secondary schools. These were all unsuccessful, and by the mid-1950s Roman Catholic children were still being educated in all-age elementary schools.

In south and south west Wales the process of reconstruction was very slow and as late as 1954 local authorities in south and south Wales were still in discussion with the Ministry of Education over their plans for reconstruction. In general terms by the time these were accepted, opposition to multilateralism had diminished considerably. Even though the perception before the Education Act 1944 was that reconstruction was urgent it actually took many years, mostly due to the fact that LEAs resisted attempts by the Ministry of Education to force them to install a tripartite system. The intransigence of the Ministry and the consequential lost opportunity to completely restructure education in England and Wales proved damaging. It was unfortunate that the outdated educational doctrines of the first half of the twentieth century were so deeply entrenched and it took many years for the local authorities “to break out of the grip of tripartism”²¹ and inject a measure of equality into education.

It becomes very clear from this research that religion was the most important causal factor that influenced the development of education in the early twentieth century. This was at two levels. Firstly, the influence of the Church of England is apparent from the nineteenth century onwards when it assumed a major role in the development of voluntary education. Over time it becomes clear that it was very reluctant to renounce the control it had over the education system, particularly in terms of denominational schools. In this it was protected by a powerful lobby in both the House of Lords and Commons, and Williams’ assumption of the relationship between the Church of England and the Conservative party appears to have validity.²² It would, of course, be wrong to suggest that all members of the Conservative party were also members of the Church of England but the alliance between the two was very clear during the early 1940s when R A Butler was negotiating the legislation for the Education Act 1944. The opposition to some proposals included in the Act came from all quarters, including the National Society, and had it not been for the support of the Archbishop of Canterbury and some other churchmen, the Act might have had a completely different reception in Parliament.

Secondly, the substantial non-conformist presence in Wales was critical to the way education developed. The decision to make all provision secular is evident

²¹ B. Simon (1974) op. it., p. 331.

²² C. Williams, Labour and the Challenge of Local Government, 1919-1939 in D. Tanner, C. Williams & D. Hopkins, *The Labour Party in Wales 1900 – 2000*, (UWP, Cardiff, 2000). p. 145.

from the 1840s onwards and was a key factor throughout the period. The founding of a secular university at Aberystwyth and the Intermediate Education Act in 1889 created a different kind of education system in Wales. It put down a marker for the future that implied that non-provided denominational provision was not welcome. This was reinforced by the attitudes of politicians at both national and local levels, especially after the 1920s when the Labour party gained influence in industrial areas. These political changes became embedded in local authorities in south and south west Wales and were supported by the powerful lobby of the Executive Committee of the Federation of Education Committees. As a consequence local authorities throughout the area were quite individualistic in their approach to education and had it not been for the consequences of severe austerity and unemployment it can be seen that there was a potential for much earlier expansion and change. Certainly, many of the proposals for reconstruction after 1944 were very surprising and although these were first defeated by the Ministry of Education, they eventually led to a wholly comprehensive system which went some way to achieve the socialist ideal of parity in education. The underlying pressure for a secular system of education continued and as a result few non-provided schools remained after reconstruction.

Throughout this thesis the influence of *Brad y Llyfrau Gleision*²³ can be seen as the defining moment in the development of Welsh education. It came to represent the underlying non-conformist demands for secular education and “marked a period of great advance.”²⁴ Of course, this religious trend was not the only influential factor: socio-economics and politics played an important role. The burgeoning influence of the Labour party introduced a new philosophy which sometimes, but not always, leaned towards equality of opportunity and changed the nature of decision making at a local level. As a result Welsh education developed a distinctiveness which continued after 1944. It eventually led to a mainly secular comprehensive secondary sector that offered much of the parity demanded by the Labour party during the interwar years. This marked a period of “emerging new growth”²⁵ that Clarke suggested was not always the case at a national level.

²³ Translated as *The Treachery of the Blue Books* and refers to the *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales, 1847 (870) (871) (872)*

²⁴ K. O. Morgan, *Wales In British Politics 1868 -1922*, (University Press, Oxford, 1963) p. 20

²⁵ F. Clarke, Educational research in the new setting. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, (Vol XIV: 1944), 1-6, p. 1.

This research goes some way to offering an understanding of the way in which the early influences on education influenced its subsequent development in south and south west Wales. It identifies the way the LEAs responded to the external pressures brought about by new legislation and makes a causal link between these and other influences which acted as a counterpoint: religion, politics and the socio-economics of the period. It makes an important contribution to an understanding of how Welsh education has developed over time, and particularly during the first half of the twentieth century. It emphasises the role that non-conformity played in advancing a secular structure for state education while allowing some denominational schools to play a different, but equally important function in the life of Wales. These factors combined have ensured that Welsh education has developed a distinctiveness which is not always understood or appreciated, and this despite, until very recently, sharing education legislation with England. A supposition could be made that the long term distinctiveness of Welsh education has made it fundamentally fairer than that in England. Although further comparative research could be made to confirm this, it appears that while much of English education has clung to the old 'sub-sets' which divided provision before the Education Act of 1944, Wales has moved on to confirm a fairer and more equal secondary sector which indeed does give an opportunity for secondary education for all.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – local authorities in south and south west Wales.

Part II authorities

Cardiff Borough Council

Carmarthenshire County Council

Glamorgan County Council

Merthyr Tydfil Borough Council

Swansea Borough Council

Part III Authorities

Aberdare Urban District Council.

Barry Municipal Borough.

Mountain Ash Urban District Council.

Neath Urban District Council.

Pontypridd Urban District Council.

Port Talbot Urban District Council.

Rhondda Urban District Council.

Carmarthen Borough Council.

Llanelly Urban District Council.

Appendix 2 - Secondary Schools evacuated to Carmarthen and Glamorgan

Carmarthen

Home Schools

Evacuated Schools

Alltwalis	LCC Group
Amman Valley County School	Roan Boys School Road Girls School Addey and Stanhope School Grammar School
Queen Elizabeth Boys Grammar School, Carmarthen	Sir Roger Manwood's' School
Model School, Carmarthen	Ennersdale School Lewisham Northbrooke School
St Mary's RC School, Carmarthen	Denmark Hill School, Camberwell, London
Priory Street School, Carmarthen	Brownhill Road School
Trinity College, Carmarthen	Denmark Hill School Camberwell, London
Caio	Woodmansterne Road School Streatham
Kidwelly	Haselrigge Road School –Clapham
Ferryside	Rotherhithe Nautical School Bermondsey
Talley	Hearnville Road School – Balham
St Mary's RC School	Denmark Hill School
Priory Street School	Brownhill Road School
Trinity College, Carmarthen	Senior age children
Llangadock	Mitchum Lane School Streatham
Llangunnick (Llangynog) Vaughn's Charity School	Tower Bridge Junior School, Grays Essex
Penybont Council School	Swansea Unit

Penygroes Council School	All Saints School, Greenwich. Blackheath School, Greenwich. idbrooke School, Greenwich.
Llandilo County School	Coloma Convent School, Croydon.
Llanelly County Schools	St Edwards College for Boys, Liverpool. La Sagesse Girls School, Liverpool. Mary Datchelor School for Girls, Camberwell. Brockley County School, London. St John's Tuebrook C.E. School, Liverpool. Balham Girls School, London. Heath Clarke Selective Central School, Croydon.
Llanybythyr/ Pencader	Tiber Street School, Liverpool.
Whitland County School	Erith County School, Kent. Dunbarton High School, Swansea.
Seion Vestry, Idole	Evacuated Group.
Church Hall, Abergwilli	Evacuated Group.
Myddfai	Evacuated Group.
Philadelphia Council School	Evacuated Group.
Saron Council School	Greek Street Junior School, LCC. Greek Street Senior School, LCC.
Llangathen Methodist Vestry	LCC Group. Swansea Group.
Nantgaredig Vestry	LCC Group.
Peniel Chapel Vestry	Rotherhide Council School, LCC.
Felingwm Council School	LCC Group
Llangadock: Providence Vestry Bethlehem Gwynfe Llandeusant Llansadwrn Llanwrda	LCC and Swansea Groups with evacuated organising Swansea head teacher.
Brooke NP School	Cadle School, Swansea.
Rhandimwyn.	LCC group.

Hendy.	Evacuated Groups.
Penygroes.	Blackheath and Kidbrooke Schools, London.
Gwendraeth Secondary School, Ammanford.	Swansea Secondary Schools.
Llandovery Schools.	Evacuated Groups Swansea, LCC. Dagenham.

Glamorgan

Home Schools

Evacuated Schools

Aberdare Boys County School.	Ilford County High School, LCC.
Bargoed Technical School Bargoed Elementary Schools Caerphilly Secondary School	Sheerness Junior Technical School, Kent. Rochester Junior Technical School, Kent.
Bargoed Council School Tir Phil Council School Brithdir Council School Pontlottyn Council School Gilfach Council School	Sheerness Central Boys School, Kent. Sheerness Central Girls School, Kent.
Ystrad Mynach Schools.	Sheerness Broadway Council School, Kent
Hengoed Girls' Secondary School.	Sittingbourne Girls' County School, Kent.
Pengam Lewis Boys' School	Borden Grammar School, Sittingbourne, Kent.
Hengoed and 16 other schools north of Caerphilly	Sheerness Blue Town J M School, Kent. Broadway Council School, LCC. Clydach Court Group Girls, Rhondda.
Cardiff Rural District Schools.	Barford Road Senior Boys, Birmingham. Barford Road Infants, Birmingham. Dennis Road Senior Boys, Birmingham. Dennis Road Junior and Infants, Birmingham. St Pauls Junior and Infants, Birmingham. Moseley Road Junior and Infants, Birmingham Roland Hill School, Tottenham, LCC.

Radyr Council School	Eglinton Council School, LCC. Downhills Council School, Tottenham, LCC
St Fagans Church in Wales School.	Chatham Schools Group, Kent.
Whitchurch Secondary School	Gillingham County School, Kent. Edmonton County School, Middlesex. Chatham Day Technical School for Boys, Kent.
Whitchurch Mixed Council School.	Chatham Junior Technical School, Kent. Chatham Day Technical School for Girls, Kent. Downhills Central School, Tottenham, LCC.
Lisvane Council School.	Eggerton Road School, Kent.
Greenhill House Open-Air School	Boarders Group, Leytonstow.
Lisvane Council School, Cardiff. Pentyrch, Council School, Cardiff. Radyr Council School, Cardiff. Whitchurch Council School, Cardiff.	North Northolt Group, Ealing Education Committee.
Llanishen Council School, Cardiff. Pendoylan Council School.	Woodend Junior & Senior School, Greenford. LCC. Alum Rock Council School, Birmingham.
Radyr Council School, Cardiff	Group of 23 - Ealing Education Committee Downhills Council School, Tottenham, LCC.
Tongywnlais Council School, Cardiff.	English Martyrs' R C Mixed and Infants, LCC. St John's Church of England Mixed and Infants School, Sparkhill, Birmingham. Cherry Wood Road Mixed and Infants School, Birmingham.
Llysfaen Council School.	Birmingham School group.
Whitchurch Boys Council School, Cardiff.	Birmingham School group.
Llanederyn Council School, Cardiff.	Dulwich House Hospital School, London. Furzedown College, London
Ebbw Vale County Grammar School.	Dover Boys Grammar School, Kent.
Gorseinon Council School.	Forest Hill Girls School, London.

Cyfartha County School, Merthyr Tydfil. Georgetown Elementary School, Merthyr Tydfil.	Harvey Boys' Grammar School, Kent.
Quaker's Yard County Secondary School, Merthyr Tydfil. Mining School and Technical Institute, Merthyr Tydfil.	Fort Pitt Grammar School, Kent. Folkstone Girls' Day Technical School, Kent.
Abertaf J M School, Mountain Ash,	Sheerness Church of England Junior Girls, Kent.
Carnetown Infants School, Mountain Ash Abercynon Infants Mountain Ash Abertaf Infants Mountain Ash	Sheerness Church of England Infants School, Kent.
Caegarw Infants School, Mountain Ash. Caegarw Junior School, Mountain Ash.	Blue Town Infants School, Kent.
Penrhiwcieber Council School, Mountain Ash.	Mile Town Junior Girls School, Kent.
Dyffryn Council School, Mountain Ash. Darranlas Council School, Mountain Ash. Penrhiwcieber, Council School, Mountain Ash.	Marine Town Infants, Kent.
Miskin County School, Mountain Ash.	Sheerness R C School. Kent.
Caegarw Junior School, Mountain Ash. New Town School, Mountain Ash.	Rose Street School, Sheerness, Kent.
Aberpergwm House Glyneath	East Anglian School for Deaf and Blind Children, Gorleston-on-Sea, Norfolk.
Pontardawe Mining Technical Institute.	Chatham Junior Technical School, Kent.

Pontypridd Boys' Secondary School	Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical Institute, Kent. Frindsbury Hall School, Kent.
Treforest Girls County School.	Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical Institute, Kent.
Pontypridd Council Schools	Groups from Faversham, Rainham Dartford Bexley Tilbury Princes Risborough Sheerness Strood Glenmore Road Infants School, LCC. Troy Town Infants School, Rochester. Kent. Holcombe Road Infants School, Rochester. Highfield Junior Boys School, Rochester. Christchurch Junior Girls School, Rochester. Old Park School, London. Wormholt Park School, Hammersmith. Westville Road School, Hammersmith. Whitmore Road Assembly School, Harrow.
Congregational School Rooms, Porthcawl Gilgal Baptist Hall, Porthcawl. Tabernacle Vestry, Porthcawl.	Rochester Girl's Grammar School, Kent.
Porthcawl Senior School. Highfields Congregational Hall, Porthcawl.	Rochester Mathematical School, Kent.
Cwmafan Infants and Boys and Girls, Port Talbot	Greenwich Park Central School. Putney Infants School, London. Nelson Junior Girls, Gt Yarmouth. Saunders Grow School, Notting Hill. Ashington Road School, Sussex. Latimer Endowed School, Hammersmith Wrotham Road School, Gravesend. Uckfield and Framfield Schools, Sussex. Blackboys School, Essex.
Penygraig, Rhondda	Oratory Roman Catholic Central Boys School.
Penygraig Rhondda	Oratory Roman Catholic Central Girls School, London.

Penygraig Rhondda	East London Day Continuation School, LCC.
Treorchy Rhondda	Edmonton Junior Technical School for Girls, LCC.
Clydach Court Secondary School Rhondda.	LCC Girls Group.
Rhymney County School.	Gillingham Boy's County School, Kent
Killay Council School, Swansea	Sandwich Central and Council Schools Juniors and Infants, Kent.
Three Crosses Council School Swansea	Sandwich Central and Council Schools Seniors, Juniors and Infants, Kent
Pennard, Swansea	LCC and Swansea Groups.
Tairgwaith Swansea	Spurgeon's Orphanage, a home for Mother or Fatherless Children, London.
Tonyrefail Council School.	Mixed elementary school party from Whitstable, Kent.